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About the Cover
Integrating contemporary design with historical references, the Lee Residence accommodates its owners' requirements for spaciousness and privacy. The complete story of this Stephen Varenhorst project can be found on page 16.

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A real estate developer in Philadelphia proposes that all office buildings more than 20 years old be torn down, the proposal being assisted with Federal funds. Thus, the reasoning goes, will the glut of vacant space be eliminated, paving the way for higher rentals. While the idea is humorous, the developer has not admitted that it was a joke. Another developer buys historically and architecturally significant buildings (among others) and allows them to deteriorate to the point where demolition is often the only available option. This person is also a substantial contributor to the Foundation for Architecture in Philadelphia. The new owner of the Philadelphia landmark PSPS building starts the process of disposing of interior furnishing integral to the design of the building. The list could continue.

How is it that in this environment older buildings survive at all? The story by Beth Kephart Sulit provides at least one way that they do. It is that there are a great many people who do care about their surroundings and are not always willing to let those physical connections to the past be paved over. In this case, it only took a conversation between one person with an interest and another who could give some direction. Many buildings and institutions, large and small, have their "friends" and only survive because of that continual caring and concern. They range from Frank Lloyd Wright houses to libraries to parks and even to railroad engines. In most cases, it only takes a few people willing to put the time, energy and dollars into something that has meaning and links future generations to their heritage. And, in most cases, being responsible for that link is well worth the effort, no matter how large or small.

If the occasion arises, let's all make that effort!

John A. Fatula, A.I.A.
Editor
Jerry Clouse well remembers the day that Joe Farrell, a Harrisburg-area carpenter, walked into Clouse’s office at the Pennsylvania Historical Museum Commission and asked what could be done to save the old Star Barn, a Carpenter Gothic-style barn with a distinct, and memorable, personality.

“Like many people, I had driven by the Star Barn countless times, and I was quite aware of the fact that that historic structure was going down hill,” recalls Clouse, a national register assistant in the Bureau of Historic Preservation. “I strongly supported Joe’s interest in preserving the barn, and I suggested to him that a first important step towards that end would be to determine whether the building was eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.”

A carpenter. A preservationist. A conversation. It was a quiet beginning for what has become a lively and quite extraordinary effort to preserve one of Harrisburg’s great landmarks. Individuals from all backgrounds, the so-called Friends of the Star Barn, have gathered periodically since April of 1991, donating their time, pooling their talents, and brainstorming to all hours of the night on behalf of the old complex. The Central Pennsylvania Conservancy, a non-profit organization, has taken formal responsibility for all the legal and financial transactions of the barn. And local artists continue to remind the public of the special significance of the Star Barn through their watercolors, Christmas cards, and the like.

Ken Henson, owner of the Harrisburg architectural-preservation renovation firm Ken Henson Associates and a leading player in the Star Barn preservation effort, finds the public’s interest in the barn remarkable. “It is not very often that the public decides it wants to do something about saving a building that has no specific historical legends or personalities associated with it,” reflects Henson. “Typically such efforts are undertaken by a private organization or a historical society. In this case, the focus of attention is simply a barn—a barn that no one wants to see torn down.”

Like many of those supporting the barn’s preservation, Henson vividly recalls his first impressions of the barn. “It was the early 1970s, and I was a student at Harrisburg Area Community College,” he says. “I’d often take trips to Lancaster and other surrounding areas, and on my way I would take notice of that great white barn. I had no architectural training at the time, and the thing that struck me as most unusual were the wonderful star-shaped louvers and the pronounced gable on the barn’s rear side.”

Henson soon left the Harrisburg area and did not return for many years. When he did he came back with the eye of an architect and the heart of a preservationist. “When I saw the barn again after so many years, I had a distinct sense of disappointment that the barn had been allowed to deteriorate as much as it had. I was thrilled when a friend approached me with the suggestion that I get involved in the Star Barn preservation efforts.” Today,
Henson's involvement includes co-chairing (with Sharon Lance) the two Friends' committees focused on determining the costs of rehabilitating the structure and identifying any potential new uses of the structure.

How can one rather worn-down building complex generate so much interest? Located approximately one mile north of the Harrisburg International Airport exit of I-283 in Dauphin County's Lower Swatara Township, the Star Barn lies in the heart of former farming country. The timber-frame structure was built in the early 1870s for John Motter, a banker, gentleman farmer, and horse trader who, according to the Conservancy, made his fortune selling horses to the Union Army during the Civil War. Anxious to show his wealth, Motter commissioned master carpenter and designer Daniel Reichert to create the complex in a style known as Victorian eclectic grandeur. Unique star designs in the building's louvered vents inspire the complex's name.

The primary building on the 30-acre site is a three-story barn measuring 60 x 120 feet; outbuildings include a pig pen, a carriage house, and a chicken coop. According to John Patterson, an Associate Professor of American Studies and American History at Penn State Harrisburg who chairs the Friends of the Star Barn, the buildings were used by various farmers right up through the 1980s, when the construction of the nearby four-lane I-283 ended its role as a working farm.

Today, while the site remains occupied and some of the outbuildings shelter equipment, the complex is in terrible disrepair. It has been estimated that it would take $5,000 simply to stabilize the structure through such tactics as the construction of temporary patching over the floor, siding and roof, the installation of structural braces, and the reinforcement of the masonry foundation. Exterior restoration cost estimates range from $300,000 to $400,000.

How much more would it cost to open the building to new uses? The answer to that question depends, of course, on which new uses the barn is adapted for. Says Henson: "We are trying to be true to the public's wish that the barn be allowed to remain a barn. We have therefore looked for uses that are agricultural and educational in nature, uses that won't change the fundamental character of the structure." Those goals have led the Friends of the Star Barn and the Conservancy to consider options ranging from restoration as an agricultural and/or historic preservation education facility for seasonal use without heat to restoration as a year-round educational center with some heated office space to full adaptive re-use with heat providing year-round office and educational space to, finally, adaptation to a seasonal performing arts facility.

But how achievable are any of those goals? Can a devoted group of citizens really make a difference in the life of a building? In recent months, reports Professor Patterson, the Conservancy signed an option to buy the whole 30-acre complex from the Star Barn's current owner.

More recently, a feasibility consultant was hired to assess just how much money could be raised on the barn's behalf; the Friends are currently awaiting the results of that study. In the meantime, the Friends are busy compiling technical reports on the barn's condition and further studying possible future uses. A ten-person committee is also at work conducting the research necessary to placing the building on the National Historic Register. And, says Henson, all sides of the equation—the current owner, the Conservancy, and the Friends—are working with the same goal in mind: to let the building be the final winner of the process.

"The Star Barn is a reminder of the agricultural tradition of this area that has been eaten away by development," concludes Professor Patterson. "People have a nostalgic sense about that tradition, and they don't want to let it disappear."
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Local Architect Honored by AIA

P. Richard Rittelmann, FAIA, executive vice president and managing partner of Burt Hill Kosar Rittelmann Associates, has been honored by the American Institute of Architects (AIA) with their nomination for the International Union of Architects' Prize in Applied Technology in Architecture.

Rittelmann, recognized internationally for his research in energy-efficient building design and the use of alternative energies, has been previously honored by the AIA and his peers, when he was named to the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Architects in 1986.

In addition to his leadership in energy fields, Rittelmann has taken active roles in extensive applied building research and the design of numerous technology-driven facilities. He has worked with a variety of public and private organizations in order to research building technology and develop tools for architects and engineers to use in the design of energy-efficient buildings. These groups have included Westinghouse Electric Corporation, the National Science Foundation, the U.S. Department of Energy, the International Energy Agency and Pacific Northwest Laboratories of Battelle Institute, among others.

Rittelmann has led his firm in projects that have set the standards for energy consumption, including the Biomedical Science Tower at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center; the Comstock Building in Pittsburgh, PA; the Software Engineering Institute at Carnegie-Mellon University, and the development of a 680,000-square-foot combined office and electronics research facility for Compaq Computer Corporation in Houston, Texas.

Additionally, the firm, under Rittelmann's leadership, has been responsible for the research and publishing of books relating to applied research. These include the Small Office Handbook: Design for Reducing First Costs and Utility Costs; Commercial Building Design: Integrating Climate, Comfort and Cost; the Tennessee Valley Authority Energy Nomographs; and the Tennessee Valley Authority Energy Guidelines for Restaurants.

The International Union of Architects was founded in 1948 to unite architects form all countries. Currently the organization represents 900,000 architects in 92 countries. In tribute to the memory of the first Presidents of the UIA, four prizes, plus a Gold Medal, are awarded at each triennial Congress of the Union. The next meeting will be held in Chicago from June 18-21, 1993. The UIA Prize for Applied Technology in Architecture has been awarded ten times over the past 25 years. Rittelmann is the only United States architect nominated for the prize.

continues on page 28
The Snyder Residence

Location: East Bradford Township, Pennsylvania
Architect: Cee Jay Frederick Associates

The site of this project is unwooded save an existing hedgerow along the street frontage and is located adjacent to the floodplain and stream valley, with views toward the stream corridor and hills beyond to the southwest. The future residents are a family of four and four or more Irish Wolfhounds, depending upon the status on an on-going breeding program.

The house was allowed a potential stylistic range from French Provincial to Contemporary/Modern, with the latter winning out in light of a need to more appropriately address lifestyle, context and cost considerations. It evolved around the concept of an abstract assemblage of barn/farm building components indigenous to southeast Pennsylvania in form, color and nature of materials. Four bedrooms, a large eat-in kitchen, a large family room, separate studies/libraries/dens for the man and woman of the house, a library/play area for the children and a formal living room and dining room were required. One of the bedrooms needed to be on the first floor to potentially accommodate a future elderly relative. In terms of appearance, the owners expressed a desire to incorporate, as meaningful, "special walls," to "look like no other," and freely express such detailed features as the rainwater conductors. Spaces should be interesting and varied, terraces were
preferred over decks, and a walk-out condition at the basement was desirable.

Most importantly, however, this new residence was required to reconcile the family's dichotomous lifestyles of formality and casual/country living (all of which may revolve around the ability of the dogs to mix with the family within designated areas of the house). Site organization needed to provide plenty of room for the dogs to run. Finally, the materials used were to result in a relatively "maintenance-free" building (exterior and interior), particularly relative to the presence of the dogs.

Given the somewhat equal importance of such factors as family lifestyle(s), the dogs, costs, maintenance and aesthetics; and, the fact that all of these needed to be resolved within a split-family personality, the house evolved to take on a schizophrenic appearance. To that end, there is a formal, white, comparatively dog-free sector and a casual, light grey, functional portion. The two are demarcated by a large, dark grey concrete block wall, which originates by forming a portal to the garage court and extends through the house and alongside the pool deck, where it forms a corner of the large dog paddock. The grey portion of the house contains the dog room area, laundry, garage, storage, the father's

continues
den and the bedroom of the "dog-loving" daughter. A back stair allows for the separate integration of the first and second floors of this area. The white part of the house contains all of the formal rooms, guest bedroom, kitchen and master bedroom suites.

Interior spaces are either single or two level volumes, with or without balconies, or curved walls within or without. Special curved walls (one even of painted CMU) form or occupy spaces; and, in one case, "stock" curved windows have been incorporated. Standard concrete, colored concrete, struck face colored concrete and painted concrete block walls occupy both the perimeter and interior of the building. Although the dichotomy of the separate parts of the house are strong and the identities distinct, the disparities are lessened by the common farm/barn format, and the vines proposed to cover the dark grey divider wall softening its otherwise hard expression of the reality of the different family personalities.

Principle-in-Charge & Project Designer: Cee Jay Frederick, AIA
Project Architect: Chard F. Webb, AIA
Project Staff: Mohammed U. Bilbeisi, David L. Holecz, John W.G. Rosecrans
Structural Engineer: Kenneth W. Holt
Photographer: Hugh Loomis

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The Buzby Residence

Location: Bala Cynwyd, PA
Architect: Reed Axelrod Architects

The transformation of this suburban home on Philadelphia’s Main Line included updating its interior to accommodate the needs of a family with three young children and putting new sparkle back into the 70-year old stone Tudor. The primary objective was to turn the garage into living space, gaining a combination family room and breakfast area on the expanded first floor. A new shed dormer was added over the garage creating a generous-sized bedroom for the oldest daughter. This second floor addition may be reached by a wainscoated stairway. Most of the first floor rooms adjacent to the new family room were also upgraded: The original kitchen was gutted and enlarged by 70 square feet, while the main entry hall, study, laundry room and side entrance were all remodeled.

The exterior of this classic stone house was respectfully restored and new elements were made to blend, rather than compete, with the existing architecture. A new fieldstone gardener’s shed and terrace with bordering stone walls were added to enhance the landscaped yard. Many visitors claim that they are unable to detect what is new and what was existing on the exterior. One look at what had been the front of the garage offers eloquent testimony: the steeply pitched roof now supports a carefully scaled bay window. Both are continues
designed and detailed in a way that recalls turn-of-the-century English manor homes.

The new interior layout affords visual connections between the rooms and promotes comfortable flow through them. The rooms visually borrow space from one another which offers the feeling of larger, more contemporary interiors. From the kitchen, one can look through its large wall openings and across the family room for views of the terrace and garden beyond.

Project Principle: Reed M. Axilrod, AIA
Contractor: Pilone Construction
Photography: Tom Bernard

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Located in the landmark Society Hill/Washington Square area of Philadelphia on an unusually commodious 60' x 100' lot, the Lee residence harmoniously integrates a contemporary design with historical references into a neighborhood of 18th and 19th century townhouses. Its dignified exterior of limestone and layered brick, with its rusticated base, carefully scaled street level, tri-partite window arrangement, and offset entry, courteously acknowledges the surrounding architecture. While retaining its individuality, the house blends unobtrusively into its historic location.

The Lee residence is conceived as an urban courtyard home - a building type with a long history and enduring appeal. Through a series of structural refinements and thoughtfully considered details, the house accommodates its owners' overall requirements for spaciousness and privacy as well as their particular need for adequate space to showcase an extensive art collection. Indeed, in its gracious deployment of space and elegant simplicity, the Lee house suggests itself as a scaled-down, American version of a European palazzo.

Upon entering the marble-floored foyer, the deliberate distinction made between the building's reserved public aspect and the luxurious...
The warmth of its interior becomes immediately apparent. The major living areas—library, living room and dining room wrap around and provide views into the courtyard. A sense of open circulation and easy flow among the rooms is achieved through transitional spaces, while red oak flooring and a recessed ceiling treatment throughout provide continuity. An eat-in kitchen with granite cooking island overlooking a rear, informal garden, parking and a maintenance entrance, complete the first floor arrangements.

The courtyard itself, to which access is given by a series of French doors encircling its perimeter, floods the main floor with natural light. It is bounded by the house's two one-story wings, the three-story main house and the adjacent party wall. Brick and stone-banded screen walls in conjunction with glass towers allude to the exterior facade, but also function to define the edges of the courtyard, and mediate between it and the three-story walls of the main house. The square grid of its paving, also of the same brick and limestone, defines a "room" for outdoor entertaining as it mirrors the dimensions of the adjacent dining room. The courtyard's highly ordered formal play of geometry and materials imply an idealized space and make it a serene refuge from the city outside.

continues
A half-turn geometric staircase, whose rise and run were subtly adjusted to remain the same, sweeps toward the upper floors in a compact, graceful arc. The master bedroom suite, with balconies overlooking the courtyard, a smaller study and gallery area comprise the second story. The staircase terminates in the third floor sky-lit hall that displays a collection of Pre-Columbian pottery. The hall leads to two guest bedrooms and baths, as well as a greenhouse.

Custom work throughout the entire exterior and interior such as the marble fireplace.
surrounds, wood trim, steel window patterning and exterior metal work, enhance the house’s richly nuanced overall effect. An elevator services all levels. The basement houses mechanical systems and provides storage for that part of the art collection not currently on view.

The Lee residence was prominently featured in the October 1991 issue of Philadelphia Magazine. It also won the 1992 Commerce Bank/Philadelphia Business Journal Building Excellence Award in the residential category and in 1991 won the Center City Residents and Washington Square West Civic Association award for “Best New Residence.”

Principle in Charge: Stephen Varenhorst, AIA
Project Manager: Ellen Seitchik
Structural Engineer: A&R Engineering
Mechanical Engineer: Bruce E. Brooks & Associates
Electrical Engineer: John G. Zafiropoulos & Associates
Photographer: Tom Bernard

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A Private Residence

**Location:** Stockton, NJ  
**Architect:** Tony Atkin & Associates

The clients for this project are a botanist and an amateur equestrian and their young son. The site was an open field that sloped gently southward to a stream and an area proliferated by stands of walnut, poplar, ash and maple trees. The style, siting and massing of the new house were influenced by the landscape and the couple’s interest in the works of architects C.F.A. Voysey, Edwin Lutyens and the English Arts and Crafts movement. The owners chose to nestle the house in the woods at the edge of the field furthest from the road. In this way the approach to the house would be through a sequence of woods and open fields with the house eventually becoming visible through a clearing at a break in the trees. The siting also influenced the room orientation: breakfast, kitchen and daytime use rooms face the fields to the south; bedrooms and evening use rooms face the dense woods and stream to the north.

The design incorporates a pebble-dash stucco facade, wood casement windows with true divided lights, terra cotta chimney pots, copper gutters and downspouts, limestone trim, wrought iron brackets and hinges, and a slate roof. These materials all contribute to the whimsical, continues.
English vernacular look of the house's exterior. Protruding bays, hipped roofs, gabled and shed dormers further reinforce the romantic aspect of the traditional arts and crafts building aesthetic. Interior finishes include strip oak wood floors, Mercer tile and limestone fireplace surrounds and heavy, barn-like exposed timber framing at the library inglenook and entrance hallway. A custom, wrought iron chandelier hangs from the twenty-foot high ceiling of the library. The chandelier’s design incorporates the repeated pattern of a plant specimen discovered by the client on a trip to the Amazon Rain Forest. Overall, project architect, Sam Olshin, worked with sixteen different skilled trades in the construction, making both the process and product in keeping with the craftsman tradition.
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The Clark Residence

Location: Erie, PA
Architect: Weber Murphy Fox

This residence was designed for an empty nester couple in a residential subdivision on the banks of Lake Erie.

The subdivision is composed of two-acre lots, with upscale houses of uneven aesthetic quality. The client's lot was largely wooded and when approached from the south affords prominent views to the north and sunsets to the northwest.

Frequent overnight visits by children and grandchildren determined the bedroom size and arrangement. The program called for the normal menu of spaces including a ground floor exercise room, a second floor master bedroom suite and public spaces, living, dining and kitchen on the first floor. The dining room, breakfast nook, screened porch, living room window seats and sitting area, master bedroom deck, and study, all provide varied opportunities to view the lake, individually or in groups, ranging from wide panoramas to small carefully framed views. The screened porch is located at the west end of the house to provide easy serving through the dining room and to capture typical evening off-shore breezes.

The solution was a three story scheme with lake views from most of the major spaces. The first floor was raised allowing for a ground level at grade on the north side and to enhance lake views. A series of outdoor spaces were

Continues
provided including a northwest patio, future gazebo at the bank's edge, balconies at the dining and master bedroom and a south facing entrance/sun court. In addition to the formal entrance sequence, the court provides outdoor sitting during the spring, fall and summer when the prevailing northwest breezes make outdoor sitting uncomfortable on the north side of the house.

Exterior materials are brick and cedar shingle to minimize future maintenance. The formal/symmetrical arrangement of the house was designed to give it presence and dignity in relationship to its adjacent neighbors.
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Geddes Brecher Qualls Cunningham: Architects Celebrates Forty Years of Practice

Geddes Brecher Qualls Cunningham: Architects (GBQC), a nationally recognized and award-winning architectural firm, is celebrating forty years of professional practice in 1993. The anniversary will be marked throughout the year by tributes to the founding partners and a rededication to the principles and practices of the firm.

Founded in 1953 by Robert Geddes and Melvin Brecher, who first met as classmates at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, the firm soon included George Qualls, also from Harvard, and Warren “Barney” Cunningham, from the University of Pennsylvania. Their team proved solid and established the collaborative work model for architecture, interior design and graphic design which the firm has maintained throughout the years, and upon which the younger partners at GBQC base their work.

Today, the second and third generation of partners manage the firm, as they have for over a decade. In February 1993, GBQC received the commission from the Smithsonian Institution to design the National Museum of the American Indian. The museum will be built on the last available site on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. under the direction of GBQC’s second and third generation partners. Wesley M. Heilman, III, AIA will serve as principal-in-charge and James P. Snyder, AIA will serve as design coordinator. GBQC will work in association with Douglas Cardinal Architect of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

The four founding partners have remained with the firm throughout its history, each making a unique contribution to its success. Geddes and Qualls are credited with taking the lead as planners and designers, with Geddes having especially strong ties to educational institutions and Qualls noted for his success in design competitions. Brecher took primary responsibility for business management and was the firm’s ambassador to professional associations and community organizations. Cunningham took the lead in technology and construction management programs. Together they set high standards for design excellence for themselves and for the succeeding generations within the firm.

As of 1993, Geddes, Brecher and Qualls have officially retired, but continue to serve as consultants to the firm. Geddes maintains his academic position as a chaired professor at New York University. Cunningham still works full time within the practice.

From the small group which began in the 1950s interweaving architecture and urbanism, teaching and practice, and private and civic projects, GBQC grew substantially with the commission to design an addition to the Moore School of Electrical Engineering at the University of Pennsylvania in 1956. The firm became still larger and solidly established as a leader in the profession with the new Police Administration Building for Philadelphia in 1958, which used the most advanced pre-cast concrete technology of its time. In 1979 the firm won the American Institute of Architects’ most prestigious award, the National Firm award, for its “consistent regard for design quality, respect for the environment, and social concern...” In 1982 the firm again received national recognition with the Management Achievement Award from the Professional Services Management Association. Since 1953 GBQC has won over eighty professional design awards.
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