

C O L U M N S



TAKING UP **RESIDENCE**

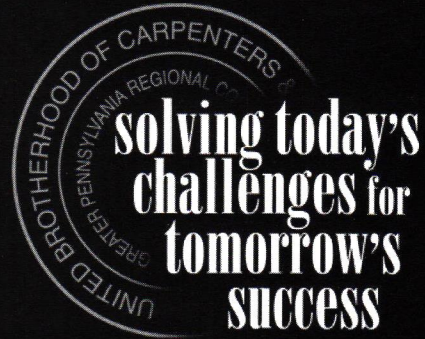
PART II: DESIGNED FOR AND BY ARCHITECTS

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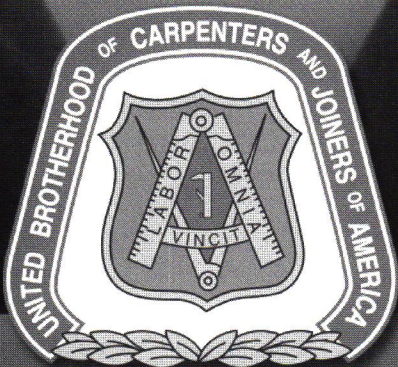
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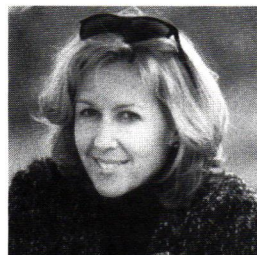
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Sense and Residence

By Tracy Certo



Locals who are understandably passionate about their community, can no longer afford to live there and lament daily treks past mega-mansions that are vacant 90 percent of the year.

Since this issue showcases homes

designed for and by architects, we thought it was a good time to debut a new idea for a feature: Habitat, a glimpse into an architects' home.

We at *Columns* confess a fascination with houses. We are the kind of people who lose whole movie plots as we focus on design elements of a house on screen. We also love touring homes—in fact, we think a tour of architects' homes would be a great idea for a fundraiser.

Which is why we're happy to present a range of residential architecture here, including a 550 square foot studio in Manhattan where owner/architect Richard Glance, AIA, travels often on weekends. In a recent visit to New York, my family stayed in the beautiful old Hotel Wales in a suite that was smaller than 550 square feet. It worked for four of us. With its city rooftop views, it was quite charming in a squeezed, only-in-New York kind of way. And after spending time rediscovering the vibrantly revitalized New York—from the new MoMA and Time Warner Center to classics such as the Cooper Hewitt Museum in Andrew Carnegie's old manse and the sublime Aztec hot chocolate at Marie Belle's in Soho—well, we think Richard Glance is onto something. Along with New York's remarkable rebirth, New Yorkers have reaped astronomical returns on real estate.

AIA Pittsburgh's Maya Haptas and her parents were also in New York at the time and graciously invited us to the impressive Upper West Side condo where they were staying. With its views of Central Park and every room filled with fabulous art, the spacious residence was wicked cool (as were her parents, both documentary filmmakers). In a city where space is valued more than anything, we wondered what it was worth and how with market values so high young people can possibly afford to move to New York anymore.

The next day the New York Times ran an article about the lack of affordable housing in Manhattan and asked the same question. Turns out young people can't afford to move there. They're living outside Manhattan, in neighboring boroughs and beyond which is too bad. In my 20's I remember visiting several adventurous friends in New York, who had claw-

foot bath tubs in their kitchen and the tiniest closets imaginable. (But they felt on top of the world and so did their visitors.)

A month later affordable housing was a topic in another paper I read: in Vail, many locals who are understandably passionate about their community, can no longer afford to live there and lament daily treks past mega-mansions that are vacant 90 percent of the year. Design plans were being unveiled for affordable condo housing in Vail that will only be sold to local residents. The developers are counting on huge demand and assume a lottery will be necessary.

And in Denver, the concern was on a different housing trend: owners enlarging their bungalows, which are abundant in the area, and doing it poorly. This "pop-top" phenomenon refers to blowing out walls and adding levels with little regard for the architectural integrity of their houses. To combat this disturbing trend, a preservation group is leading the charge to educate home owners who need more space. Their concern is twofold: losing the essence of the original neighborhood and affordable housing.

Back in Pittsburgh, the Post-Gazette ran an article on a student who was tired of paying rent and decide to take advantage of the amazingly affordable housing here. So he and his family bought an old North Side house, cheap, and he's renovating. Chances are he'll do very well.

Housing, the number one expenditure of households, is a primary concern no matter where you go. In Pittsburgh we lack the exceptional real estate appreciation enjoyed by other growth areas but we do have an abundance of affordable housing. And we have more than our share of houses that are architecturally notable. It's been our pleasure to feature some of them in the last issue and now in this one. We plan on more in the near future with Habitat. If you have an exceptional house you would like to be featured, we'd love to hear from you.

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On the cover: The home of Art Ruprecht, AIA of RSH Architects. See more about Ruprecht, his home and family, on page 20, in a new feature we call "Habitat". Photo by Tracy Certo.

AIA Pittsburgh serves 12 Western Pennsylvania counties as the local component of the American Institute of Architects and AIA Pennsylvania. The objective of AIA Pittsburgh is to improve, for society, the quality of the built environment by further raising the standards of architectural education, training and practice; fostering design excellence; and promoting the value of architectural services to the public. AIA membership is open to all registered architects, architectural interns, and a limited number of professionals in supporting fields.

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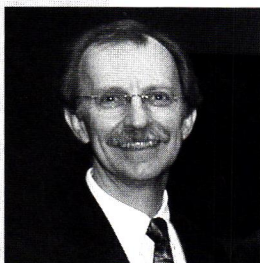
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Why an Architect Really Matters By Rich DeYoung, AIA, WTW Architects

Does an architect really provide value in

designing a new home? This is a reasonable question that many people consider when building a new home and yet the significant majority of new homes in Pennsylvania are not designed by architects.

My experience might prove helpful in measuring the value of an architect. Nearly three years ago, we decided it was time for a larger house that would better fit our lifestyle.



The opportunity to serve as general contractor/laborer in the completion of our home resulted in a newfound respect for the difficulties that home builders face and a clearer understanding why most of them should concentrate on building, not designing, homes.

We proceeded on the parallel track of searching for that wonderfully charming older home, ripe for renovation, in an established community as well as new construction within our township to avoid changing school districts.

We finally settled on a builder's "spec" house in a new golf course community where several custom builders were actively building, resulting in more community character and diversity than the average suburban development. One house in particular had the basic spatial potential, organization, size, and orientation on the site that could work for us. Although the house was framed, it was not yet roughed-in. Based on the willingness of the builder to work with us in revising the design, we proceeded on what became a far greater adventure than we ever imagined.

Working with our real estate agent and builders was an interesting exploration into the world of the "custom" home. It didn't take long for us to notice that most of the spec houses, even higher-end houses, are designed to meet the needs of some mythical household more closely related to the Sims than our sense of reality. Certain obligatory features like a two-story entry foyer with chandelier and the Jacuzzi tub are must-haves, presumably for resale value to another family whose only interest in these features is also future resale value.

We soon learned that this particular builder had certain interests that didn't fit our lifestyle: for instance, every house he builds seems to have a wet bar in a prominent location. Ours was planned to take up the only wall space in the great room, making it virtually impossible to place furni-

ture. In his world people must just stand around drinking at home. Apparently they must stand there with their coats on because he didn't seem to see the need or value in providing a coat closet anywhere in the house.

Although the central living spaces were spatially interesting individually, they were disconnected from one another by walls with normal door openings between them. The designer apparently was caught somewhere between the traditional notion of individual rooms and a real open plan concept. With little effort we were able to visually and spatially connect these individual spaces, yielding a much more interesting sense of place and flow. (Our neighbor's daughter has mentioned to my daughter that she likes to be in our house because it is really interesting while her house is "just a bunch of boxes connected to each other.")

In residential real estate, there is a mismatch between the interesting and creative words used to conjure images in buyers' minds and the reality of the descriptions. The "hearth room" is really the kitchen/breakfast room, which happens to be a wonderful space, sun-drenched each morning, due I am sure to pure coincidence on the part of the builder. While the name evokes the notion of a home and hearth, it lacks a fireplace or any other feature to fulfill the promise offered. As a kitchen, the original layout was all but useless, although sufficient room existed to transform it into what has become one of our favorite spaces. Another interesting feature is the "Jack and Jill" bath, which according to the real estate agent, everybody likes. This arrangement fails in many practical ways for any user, especially if they're a Jack or Jill. Aside from the use of wall space for doors that makes it nearly impossible to locate furniture in two bedrooms separated by a bathroom, it suffers the problems of privacy and access that result when one user forgets to unlock an adjoining door when finished using the bathroom.

The site development is another area where the average house in my community falls way short of its potential. It seems that builders don't have a good grasp on how to shape the earth to create a natural useful connection between interior and exterior. Whatever grade existed is what



continued from page 4

you get. For an extra day's work of the excavator, we were able to significantly transform our yard as it relates to the house, the street, and the golf course. Several of our neighbors have recognized the difference between our yard and theirs and have wondered out loud why their builder didn't make their yard more useful and interesting.

One of the major problems that we came to understand in this process was that builders have their minds on many other issues, like subcontractor performance and the cost of the work, to be able to think holistically about the design. Most of them mean well, but only have time to do what worked in the last house and react to what they and real estate agents see as the desires of the typical buyer.

Interestingly, I was offered the opportunity to become far more intimate with this situation than I ever intended in modifying a builder's spec house when the builder gave me the opportunity to take over the project just before he slipped into bankruptcy. No, it wasn't this house that did him in. It had something to do with his fundamental misunderstanding of the laws of gravity as they relate to joists and bearing walls in wood frame construction of a much larger home in a more upscale golf course community. The opportunity to serve as general contractor/laborer in the completion of our home resulted in a newfound respect for the difficulties that home builders face and a clearer understanding why most of them should concentrate on building, not designing, homes.

If there was ever any doubt in my mind about the value of what we architects offer to the average homeowner, this experience only clarified and accentuated the importance of our services. My neighbors continue to express amazement at the impact of simple design intervention on the quality of the spaces created. And I, having survived this adventure, must tip my hat to my colleagues who have committed their professional lives to residential design. They have my utmost respect and admiration.

IN THE NEWS: The Sister Bridges

In case you missed the recent article by Patricia Lowry in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, a new movement is underway to name one of the sister bridges after a woman. It makes great sense and you can only wonder why it wasn't considered earlier. Now that the Sixth St. Bridge is called the Roberto Clemente Bridge and the Seventh St. Bridge has just been renamed the Andy Warhol Bridge, that leaves one sister bridge unnamed—the Ninth St. Bridge—and Lowry, among others, thinks it should be named after a woman. It is after all, a sister bridge. The push is on to rename it the Rachel Carson Bridge, after the biologist who started the environmental movement with publication of "Silent Spring" in 1962. It's a great idea, and would raise awareness of Rachel Carson along with the fact that she hails from Pittsburgh.

Engineering Sustainability Conference Offers Green Building Workshop

A workshop titled *Green Building Guidelines: Meeting the Demand for Low-Energy, Resource-Efficient Buildings* is scheduled for April 12th from 2:00-5:00 p.m. at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center during Engineering Sustainability 2005. Continuing Education Units (CEUs) will be offered to members of the American Institute of Architects.

The workshop will provide essential information about green building and sustainable growth. It will teach a Whole-Systems Approach to development, recognizing that the natural and built environments are intricately linked together. This methodology leads to improved comfort, health, safety, resource efficiency, indoor environmental quality, and environmental appropriateness of a structure.

Workshop instructors include Ron Jones and Sara Gutterman, Founding Partners of Green Builder, a leading development and consulting firm. For questions about the workshop, contact Sara Gutterman at sara@thegreenbuilder.com

About Engineering Sustainability 2005: ES 05 is sponsored by the Mascaro Sustainability Initiative at the University of Pittsburgh School of Engineering. The conference, held April 10-12, 2005 in the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, will bring together scientists & engineers to present cutting edge results on technological advances in green construction and sustainable water use. For conference registration, visit <http://www.engr.pitt.edu/msi/conference.html>.

McGraw Hill Construction Reports

For the year-to-date on a cumulative basis, the totals are:

	2005	2004	% Change
Nonresidential	\$38,565,000	\$104,213,000	- 63
Residential	\$46,459,000	\$71,343,000	- 35
TOTAL BUILDING	\$85,024,000	\$175,556,000	- 52

■ Nonresidential buildings include commercial, manufacturing, educational, religious, administrative, recreational, hotel, dormitory and other buildings.

■ Residential buildings include one and two family houses and apartments.

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Upcoming Issues

MAY:

The Greening of Schools

From rehabs to building new, districts are learning that green features pay off.

Architects' Sketches

Please send electronic files or copies of your sketches to the editor.

JUNE:

Roundtable

Starting Your Own Architecture Firm

Contact editor Tracy Certo at 412-563-7173 or at tcerto@adelphia.net

TAKING UP **RESIDENCE**

PART II: DESIGNED FOR AND BY ARCHITECTS

*What happens when architects become their own clients?
They realize their dreams, within a budget that is, whether it's
through a transformed urban loft or a spacious
contemporary on several acres.*



O'Hara Township "Farmhouse"

The long and level entrance road to this house drove some of the design decisions, says its owner and architect, Joseph Indovina, AIA. Although it appears to be a farmhouse from a distance, as you get closer you realize things aren't quite what they seem.

"The architecture uses vernacular forms and materials manipulated and pulled apart to suit the terrain, the path of the sun and the penetration of light," says Indovina. "If you parachuted into any suburban subdivision, you could probably find these forms and materials in their unaltered state." The exterior is white clapboard with double hung windows and broad eaves. The wood detailing was inspired by the houses in Seaside Florida where Indovina spent a summer vacation.

Located in O'Hara Twp., the 5,000 square foot house is sited at the end of a private road on a 2 1/2 acre south-facing slope contiguous with the Guyasuta Boy Scout Preserve. "Part of the land was formerly used as farmland and the remaining portion was steep and heavily wooded," explains Indovina. "Because of the steep nature of the site and inaccessibility to utilities, the land stood undeveloped until it was acquired and subdivided it in 1994." Of the original six acres, the least severely sloped portion was set aside for Indovina's house while the remainder was sold as a separate parcel.

He laughs recalling how a visitor once described the house as an "exploded colonial." Which Indovina says is probably as valid a description as any.

As he explains, a 15 foot difference in elevation from one end of the house to the opposite was accommodated by introducing three incremental steps in the first floor level. The highest elevation at the garage was established by the driveway elevation and steps down to the main living level. The lowest level is a large volume of open space which looks out over the surrounding forest through a large expanse of glass. A "Bird Walk" extends out from this space and into the trees. Below that is a sculpture studio. The plane of the front door was rotated to meet the terrain and allows for a covered outdoor summer living space extending under the center portion of the house from front to back. It acts as a breezeway on hot summer days and is closed off during the winter months.



In what a friend describes as an "exploded Colonial", the architecture uses vernacular forms and materials manipulated and pulled apart to suit the terrain, the path of the sun and the penetration of light, says Indovina.



PHOTOS BY INDOVINA ASSOCIATES ARCHITECTS

Although the house was built in 1998, it's not quite completed. "An old Chinese proverb says, 'House finished, life over,'" says Indovina. "This applies doubly to architects."

ARCHITECT: Indovina Associates Architects,
Joseph P. Indovina, AIA

CARPENTRY CONTRACTOR: Edward Scherling Jr.

INTERIORS CONTRACTOR: Andrew Matvey

ELECTRICAL: William Moss

The Dahl Ritchie House

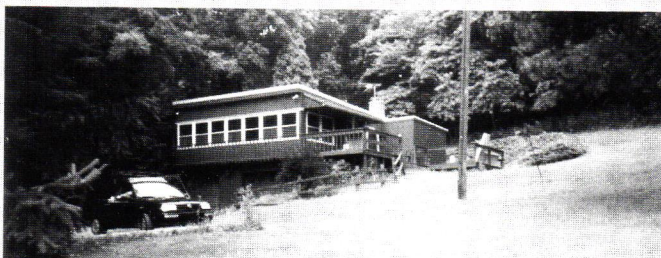
This house was originally designed for the Lloyd Youngs, by Dahl Ritchie in 1950 as a summer house in Bradford Woods. Back then, explains the current owner, Mark Edelmann, AIA, the North Hills area was considered country and Windwood pool, built in 1912 and located five minutes from the house, was a resort destination.

Eight years ago when Edelmann bought the house, it was "very much a fixer-upper." So much so that his wife cried when he told her he wanted to buy it. "It had been aesthetically cheapened and adorned with added railings and dodads that greatly reduced the purity of Dahl's contemporary vision for the home," explains Edelmann. After convincing his wife of the hidden potential, the Edelmanns bought the place and spent considerable time and money to restore Ritchie's original vision.

As they added decks and trellises, they referenced the original detailing of the home. A year ago, they added the stepped-back upper level, again using simple detail references in keeping with the integrity of the house.

Dahl Ritchie lived most of his life in Bradford Woods until he died a few years ago, in a house he designed, where his wife still lives.

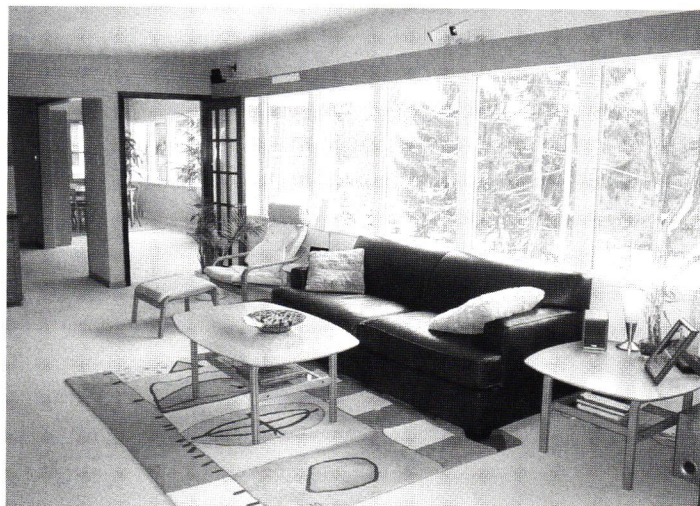
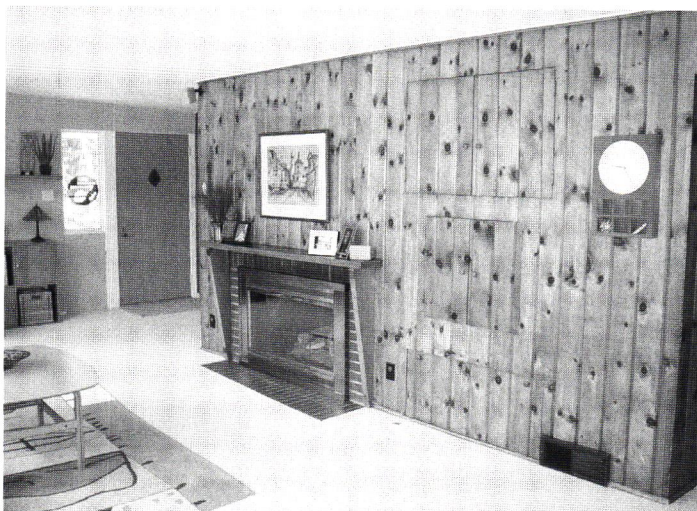
ARCHITECT: EPM Architecture (Mark M. Edelmann, AIA)
ORIGINAL ARCHITECT (1945): Dahlen Ritchey, AIA
CONTRACTOR: Horn Corp. (For latest renovations)



The original house was designed as a 2200 square foot summer cabin for Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd A. Young of Pittsburgh by Dahlen Ritchey in 1945.



CURRENT EXTERIOR: New owner architect Mark Edelmann added decks in 2002 then last year added an 800 square foot third-floor addition that includes two bedrooms, bath and open playroom area for his two daughters. He also put in a Brussels Block tumbled paved lower patio and fire pit.



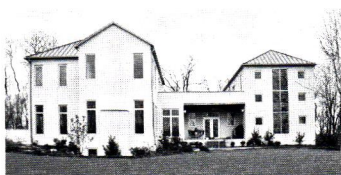
Opposite the front windows of the living space is the original knotty-pine paneling and simple fireplace mantel.

Cecil Twp. Contemporary

The good part about being the owner/architect/contractor is the fact that you control everything, says Mali Torriero, Assoc. AIA. The flip side is, that's also the bad part. "It's all encompassing. It's really tough," she adds with a laugh. Since she's about to do it all again, how bad can it be? The house Mali and her husband, contractor Gino Torriero, completed in 2003 is now for sale which was the plan all along. Since she's an architect and he's a contractor, it makes for an ideal partnership in this design/build/flip venture. This was their first attempt, built on a large piece of property they bought and then sub-divided, and it wasn't small-scale. It was not only the first house they built, it was also the first house they ever lived in since they've only been married for two years.

Their 6000 square foot house on five acres in Cecil Twp, which was completed in November 2003, is perched on the top of the hill for maximum morning and evening light.

Although it was built to sell, it was very much suited to their lifestyles. The kitchen is vast and modern, a perfect setting for their large family gatherings. They love the open floor plan along with the abundant natural light that pours in from numerous windows and the use of natural materials. In the next house they design/build, they will repeat these favorite features but this time, they'll start small and add on. They were hoping to get a few design/build/flips underway before having children but this could be their last for a while, says Mali, who grew up in a military family and likes the idea of change. Gino, she says, simply likes the challenge. With an asking price of \$860,000 the very large contemporary house might make a tough sell in the South Hills, Mali admits. Time will tell. Meanwhile, Mali is taking her own advice of really thinking things through as she draws plans for the next house.



With an architect and a contractor behind the creation of this expansive house, the result is a dream come true, even though it was built to sell.



One of the architect's favorite rooms, the kitchen was designed to hold large family gatherings.



The Manhattan Studio

Richard Glance, AIA, spent a full year living in his newly-acquired 550-foot Manhattan, New York studio apartment to determine how to utilize the space most efficiently. Three issues needed to be resolved: not just maximizing the space but also creating sufficient storage and providing flexibility—all at a budget of only \$2500.

He started by removing the partition that had created the front bedroom which commanded the best views. Then he bought four moveable kitchen industrial shelves, stacking identical cardboard boxes to achieve both privacy and storage. Since the shelves are on casters, they are moved into position to create a sleeping area at night.

To accentuate the length of the six-foot entry hallway, he painted the end-wall flat black and laid contrasting high-gloss yellow stripes that converge at the center of the wall, on the floor with another stripe rising from the floor to ceiling.

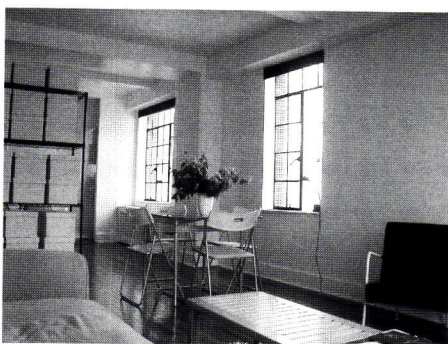
He carried the color into the kitchen with a plastic yellow screen (cost: \$20) installed across the opening. With the kitchen light on, a yellow light emanates from the space creating a sculptural "light box."

Finally, he resurfaced the kitchen cabinets with a self-adhesive plastic sheet material to make them appear high-tech metallic. (Cost: \$25 in materials, seven hours labor, all his.)

The actual cost for the studio transformation, minus the Alto coffee table and area rug, was slightly more than \$2000. Glance and his wife greatly enjoy the compact but highly efficient space where they spend most of their weekends.



When you're working with a total of 550 square feet you have to be efficient and imaginative. With portable shelves and a limited budget, Richard Glance, AIA used many space-saving and creative solutions.



The sofa is a daybed and the shelves are portable allowing for maximum space flexibility in this 550-foot space in Manhattan.

The Hillside House

When Mary Cerrone, AIA and Kevin Wagstaff, AIA bought the 1950's ranch house, it had an in-ground pool, concrete-paved yard and a tool shed on a pad of concrete. They started work in September and moved into the unfinished house in February while they completed a lot of the work on their own.

Not that it was easy, even with two architects on the job. "It was a huge learning experience," says Cerrone, who along with Wagstaff, acted as General Contractor. Most architects, she explains, are not Do-It-Yourselfers, but she and her husband are. Having completed a successful restoration of an old house in the South Side, they were experienced, and very conscious of issues such as how much money the house could hold.

Although there were no plans to "flip" the house, they knew the trick of finding a low price in a neighborhood of more expensive property. With a level backyard they also knew they could create the indoor/outdoor house they desired, while making the space feel a lot bigger than it is.

"People want a good connection to the outdoors and this space is as practical as you can get," says Cerrone. Their two young children play in the yard, supervised by their parents who can watch closely from the breakfast seating area. The open kitchen/living/dining area serves them well at all times, especially during parties and large family gatherings. Overnight guests enjoy the only room on the second level, a tree house-like space with great views.

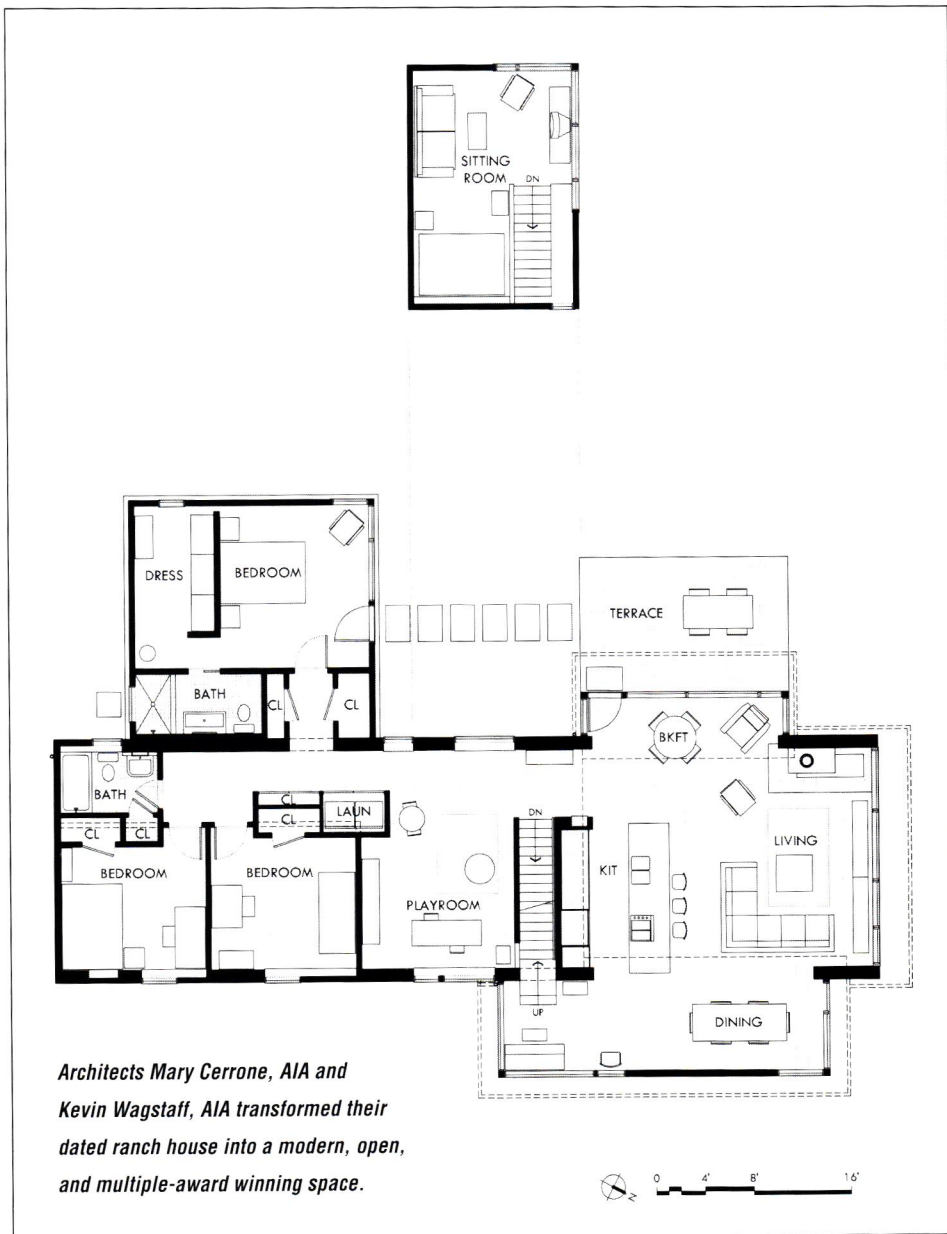
Problems arose as they always do on these kinds of ventures. Most notably, they hit rock in the lower level which prevented them from enlarging the full extent of the basement/two-car garage/home office area. They lost two feet on either side, says Cerrone so storage space was crammed. Their downstairs bath doubles as a closet which also houses the furnace.

But the upstairs, with its wonderful views over Negley Avenue and the East Side, couldn't be sweeter. Dubbed the Hillside House, it won an Honor Award and the People's Choice Award at AIA Pittsburgh's 2004 Design Awards and was featured Pittsburgh Magazine's Superior Interiors in March 2005.

A great learning experience, yes, but well worth it. It's just what they wanted, a winner in every way.

CONTRACTOR: Glunt Contracting Services

OWNERS: Mary Cerrone, AIA and Kevin Wagstaff, AIA



Centre Avenue Loft

Anne Rainbow Savage, Assoc. AIA, acted as a contractor as well as designer in transforming her East Liberty loft in an 1890's building that was once a chocolate factory. Although she loved the unit's 14-foot ceilings and the existing materials—the brick walls and the concrete floors—overall it felt more like a condo than a loft to her.

The WTW architects designer changed that by opening up the space—demolishing the top half of a 14-foot wall to build a bed platform over the kitchen bathroom area and installing a ceiling and lighting in the bathroom. That not only added a comforting sense of enclosure to the bed but also allowed her to see from one end of the loft to the other, she says.

To create more storage, Savage built a continuous ribbon of birch plywood storage area extending from the kitchen and continuing into the loft platform. Then she ripped up the linoleum and carpet to expose the concrete floors. Using a concrete grinder and a “really great, non-toxic resin product” from BioShield Paints, she created a slate-blue-green concrete floor. With a total budget of \$5,000, she also installed pendant lights and wall sconces in the living room and built all new birch plywood cabinets in the kitchen with sanded acrylic windows and exposed hardware and a barn door-style bedroom closet.

The only item she didn't build herself was the Silestone counters in the kitchen.

With more than 80 units in the building, owned mostly by artists, there's a range of styles that is impressive, says Savage. During a recent Loft Open House, she was amazed by the variety, from the traditional to ones splashed with art all over. Even more impressive, perhaps, is the appreciation she's enjoyed since buying her place in May of 2001. Since Whole Foods went in next door in May of 2002, she says the value of her unit spiked 100%.



Anne Rainbow Savage removed a wall to open the space in her loft and exposed the concrete floor.



PROJECTS OF MERIT

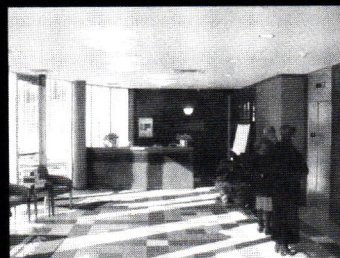
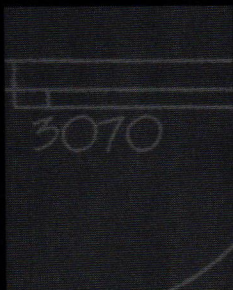


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Safety is important to Associated Builders and Contractors of WPA members as they participate in the STEP award program and Platinum award winners are eligible to qualify for OSHA partnership.



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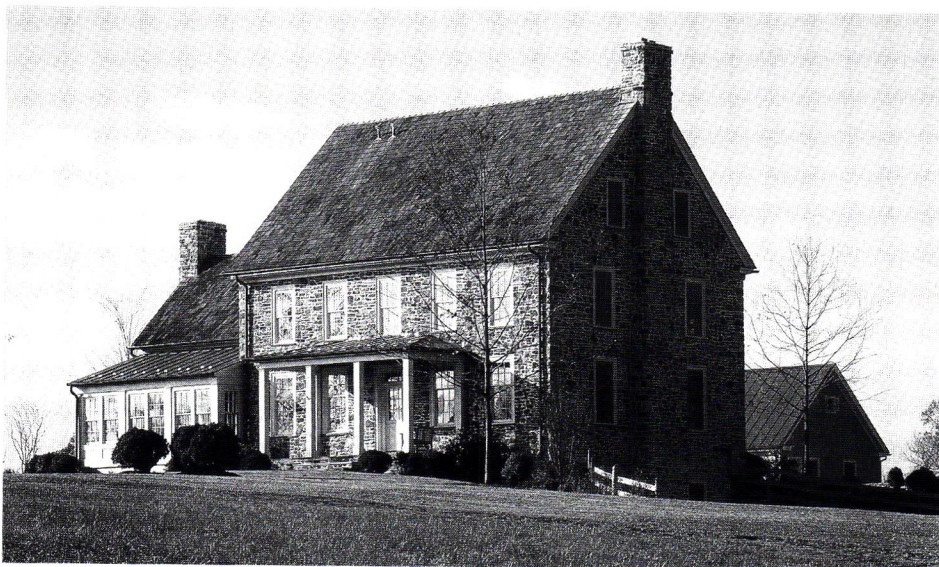
The Adelphia Business Solutions Office Building, located in Southpointe, PA is a state of the art four-story office building. Canova Electric completed the building's electrical power design, and our suggestions to the architect to change the lighting from standard 2x4 to indirect lighting helped give the building an excellent office lighting environment. This indirect lighting allows the employees of Adelphia to work more comfortably and productively since energy efficient indirect lighting reduces glare on the computer screens.

Architect: Gerard/Nagar, Associates Architects

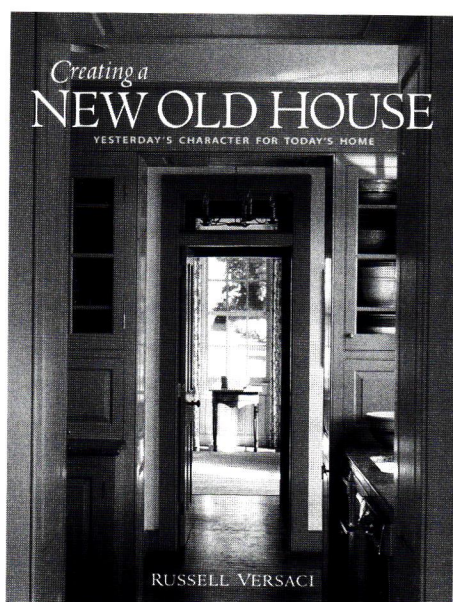
CREATING A NEW OLD HOUSE:

YESTERDAY'S CHARACTER FOR TODAY'S HOME

BOOK REVIEW BY ROBERT J. BAILEY, AIA



This new old house was designed by the author's firm. It is one of the more successful examples in the book.



Author: Russell Versaci
**The American Institute of Architects/
 The Taunton Press, 2003, \$39.95**

The essence of this book is the concept of the "new old house" which author Russell Versaci describes as a "vintage home designed for modern living."

In the new old house, the architect seeks to blend "the emotional comforts of the past with the creature comforts of today," writes Versaci. A partner in the D.C.-based Versaci Neumann & Partners, which designs homes "built on tradition," the author states eight Pillars of Traditional Design for architects and clients seeking a traditional home. "What we really want," he says, "is a brand new house wrapped in the raiment of an old house."

The book primarily deals with the new old house's appearance — what Versaci seeks to avoid is the faux traditional house of the typical residential subdivision, "houses built with a veneer of history pasted onto the surface like wallpaper." He's not going as far as privies and well water.

How should an architect approach the design of a tradition building (in this case a residence)? Just as a writer should read avidly from many different sources to develop a style, so should the architect look to what has been done in the

past to thoroughly understand the style tradition they are working within—not to copy but to properly adapt. One might elaborate on Pillars #1 and 5 by adding "study the drawings of architects of the past," such as those made during the traditional revivals of the 1920's. Another way is by examining pattern books, something most young architects today have likely never seen. To be fair, Versaci does note both points in a number of examples and describes how architects (and clients) have observed and studied traditional examples.

This book includes eighteen examples of "new old homes" from around the United States, from northeast to southwest, Pacific northwest to deep south. Each project is a separate chapter with many illustrations, most of them by architectural photographer Erik Kvalsuik, and with floor plans included. For architects, a floor plan goes a long way in being able to understand the project; it is the mediator in our language between the photographs and the text. The floor plans presented here are to scale, including wall thickness, but are more on the diagrammatic side (with notes and arrows) as a means of illustrating the architect's intent.

Anecdotes within the project descriptions help bring the stories of the homes to life, such as the couple from Michigan who fell in love with Greek Revival-style farmhouses. They purchased twenty-five acres with a deed that allowed them to build only a Greek Revival-style home on the property.

One couple moved their home piece by piece from Connecticut to Virginia. Immediately you are aghast at the logistics, which included numbering and graphing each stone in the fireplace. This might seem over the top until you learn about the wonderful oval bake oven that was part of the original fireplace that they wanted to take with them as it was. How far did they go? To the extent of salvaging the original home's eighteenth-century wrought-iron rose-head nails that proved still usable af-



Salvaged period items help lend “the patina of age” to the new old house. Note the push-button light switches and the cast-iron rim lock on the door.



In this new old farmhouse, the kitchen is at the center. Traditional details abound, yet the cooktop is contemporary.



This example illustrates materials that are appropriate to the style of home as well as robust: brick flooring, plaster, substantial wood doors.

ter two hundred years of weathering. In what must have been a huge relief to the architect, the owners had the good sense to hire the same company that dismantled the old house to build the new home.

Architects will be interested to learn about certain methods and techniques described here. How, for instance, it was necessary to simulate thick stone-covered stucco walls using modern framing methods since such walls would not meet California's seismic codes. Or how we typically think of untreated adobe but there is “semistabilized” adobe that is made with a small amount of asphalt emulsion or cement that gives the brick a measure of water-resistance during the lengthy outdoor curing process.

An eyebrow-raising technique Versaci notes to “age” stone walls involves a slurry of buttermilk, mold spores (gasp!), beer, and a bit of cow manure, which is brushed onto the stone and left to react with the environment. The ingredients spoil on the walls, turning the stone tan brown and promoting mildew growth (attorneys need not make note of this).

Readers will learn about silvered mercury glass door-knobs, crackle-glaze paint, a roof that changes pitch from steep to shallow (such as from main roof to porch) is known as a “cat-slide” roof, and that coffee grounds can

be used as an ingredient in a wood floor finish. Versaci goes as far as to say, “Flooring is the most prominent finish material that has the ability to make a new house look authentic and old.” If one of the very resourceful architects featured in this book has found coffee grounds to work to that end, so be it.

One of the most convincing projects is by Versaci's firm: a German stone farmhouse in Maryland. Versaci notes, “Profiles for authentic trim moldings, chair rails, and stair parts were developed from measured drawings of eighteenth-century millwork in our library of historic architecture.” As evidenced by the photographs, this project goes far beyond these details to create a worthy “new old house” proving that Versaci can convincingly practice what he preaches.

The pleasant to read text is written in a way that is not beneath architects while it serves to educate owners without being overwhelming. The layout of the book and the photography makes it suitable for your coffee table as well as a resource. It's easy to imagine a follow-up edition delving more into the hard facts of a “new old house” project and discussing in detail aspects such as material selection and systems integration. Concluding this worthwhile and interesting book is a list of architects whose projects are featured. All in all, a good read.

VERSACI'S EIGHT PILLARS

- 1. Invent Within the Rules. Respect the rules (proportions, details, typical materials) of the particular traditional style in which you are designing.**
- 2. Respect the Character of Place. That is, respect the natural features of the land and the pattern of the neighborhood. Don't, for instance, contort the land to make the site.**
- 3. Tell a Story Over Time. Versaci advocates that the “new” traditional home can recreate or allude to a fictional remodeling or addition.**
- 4. Build for the Ages. Consider materials from a life-cycle cost standpoint. Poor quality materials invalidate the traditional look. In other words, don't even think about “value engineering.”**
- 5. Detail for Authenticity. This is similar to Pillar #1.**
- 6. Craft with Natural Materials. Versaci advocates stone and wood, not vinyl siding and plastic laminate.**
- 7. Create the Patina of Age. This can be done by incorporating salvaged/recycled materials. Other means include special finishing techniques.**
- 8. Incorporate Modern Conveniences. The challenge being to integrate systems so that their appearance is not blatant or incongruous.**

From the Firms

► **The Hayes Design Group – Architects** was awarded the contract to renovate and upgrade The Anatomy and Microbiology Lab for the School of Nursing at the University of Pittsburgh. Construction is scheduled for the summer of 2005.

L. Robert Kimball & Associates, Architects and Engineers, Inc. was awarded a \$1.3 million contract by Lockheed Martin to design the production facility where the new US101 Presidential Helicopter will be built. Lockheed Martin has been chosen by the United States Navy to provide 23 "Marine One" helicopters. The new secure presidential helicopter facility will be located at an existing Lockheed Martin site in Owego, New York. Kimball will provide architecture and engineering services for the new 176,000 sf administrative and hangar building.

Celli-Flynn Brennan was commissioned to design a complete \$24 million renovation to the Hillman Library at the University of Pittsburgh. Following a complete re-roofing by the firm, design will include all new stacks, group study areas, special collections and government documents, seating for 1300, new elevators, a sustainable plaza garden and two-story glass curtain wall entrance. CFB received the "Timeless Award" from the PA Society of Architects for the original design.

Celli Flynn Brennan is also in schematic design for renovation of the Southeastern Greene School District's Mapleton High School and a new Parish Hall Design for St. John Neumann Parish.

Harchuck Construction is in the process of building a Starbucks Coffee Shop at Duquesne University. The new Starbucks will be in the Students Union Hall, located across from the Duquesne Book Store. Architect is **WTW Architects**.

Business Briefs

► **The Hayes Design Group – Architects** announced that **Mark P. Duane, AIA** has joined the firm as a Senior Associate.

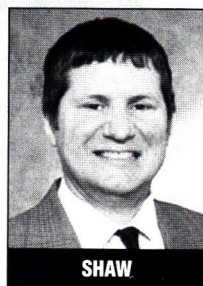
Burt Hill Kosar Rittelmann Associates announced five new additions to the firm. Ed Moore, registered landscape architect; **Rebecca Henn, AIA** and **Michael Kuchera, AIA**, will be located in the firm's Pittsburgh office. Bryon Schmidt, electrical engineer, and Jim Firrell, corporate contracts administrator, will be based in Burt Hill's Butler office.

John Phillips recently joined **KTH Architects, Inc.** as a CAD Operator in the Commercial & Private Division.

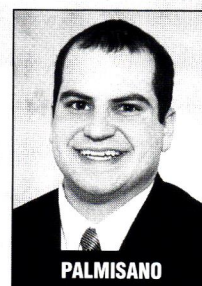


PHILLIPS

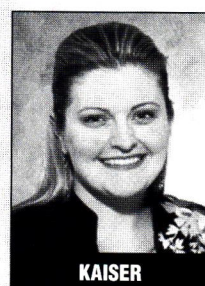
L. Robert Kimball & Associates, Architects and Engineers, announced the appointment of three new staff members to their Architecture and Engineering Building Systems Group in the downtown Pittsburgh office: **Charles J. Shaw, AIA**, brings more than 15 years of experience to Kimball in his role as a project manager; Brad Palmisano joined the firm as a mechanical EIT, and Jacqueline S. Kaiser will serve as an interior designer.



SHAW



PALMISANO



KAISER

Radelet McCarthy Architects, a downtown-based architectural and interior design firm, has recently hired Lauren K. Campbell as an interior designer.

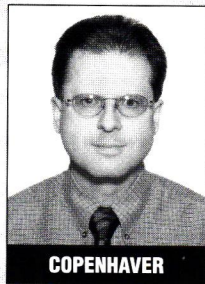
Celli-Flynn Brennan welcomes Carla Shettel as project manager. Carla specializes in historic preservation, adaptive re-use and interior architecture. Alistair Lowe and Jeff Amos have also joined the firm as project architects.



CAMPBELL

GAI Consultants, Inc. announced the promotion of Jay Copenhagen from Information Technology Director to assistant vice president/chief information officer.

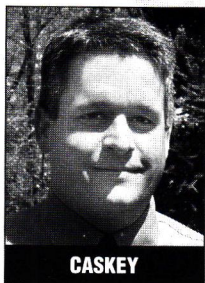
GAI Consultants, Inc. added two new engineers to their Land Development staff. James D. Roman joins GAI's Pittsburgh Land Development Group as a lead engineer in training. Gerald J. Klodowski, Jr. joins as a senior project designer in GAI's Pittsburgh Land Development Group.



COPENHAVER

Ragnar Benson, Inc. announced that Joseph Castellano has been promoted to vice president and assistant general manager.

General Industries of Charleroi, PA named Mark D. Caskey the corporate director of marketing.



CASKEY

Kudos

► The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), Seniors Housing Council, recognized two **Perkins Eastman** projects with Platinum Awards as among the "best of the best" in the seniors housing industry. Silver Lake Commons, a 76-apartment development in Pittsburgh and the first new model for designing, building, and managing low-income elderly housing, won the Platinum Award for Affordable Rental Apartments. Willow Towers Assisted Living Residence in New Rochelle, NY, received a Platinum Award for Large Assisted Living Facility.

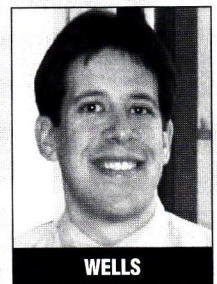


Honored projects by Perkins Eastman: (top) *Silver Lake Commons, Pittsburgh, PA*, and (bottom) *Willow Towers, New Rochelle, NY*.

Marc Mondor, AIA, Kent Suhrbier, AIA, and Christine Mondor, AIA (pictured below), are proud to announce the formation of *evolve environment::architecture* (*evolveEA*) with an office on Penn Avenue in Friendship. Christine, Kent and Marc will build upon their past experience to offer sustainable design consulting, and architecture and landscape design services. Take a look at www.evolveEA.com.



David J. Wells, AIA, of **Radelet McCarthy Architects**, is now registered as an architect in Pennsylvania. He is also certified as an Accessibility Inspector/Plans Examiner through the International Code Council.



Astorino won the *Singular Residential Space Over \$25,000* category of *PITTSBURGH Magazine's* 11th annual *Superior Interiors* awards.

Celli Flynn Brennan would like to congratulate **Rebecca Schwartz, LEED**, on passing her architectural registration exams.

Radelet McCarthy Architects announced the naming of **Kelly W. Brown, Assoc. AIA** as a LEED Accredited Professional™ by the United States Green Building Council (USGBC). — *By Maya Haptas*





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CALENDAR

AIA ACTIVITIES

APRIL 1, FRIDAY

AIA Communications Committee Meeting

Noon at the Chapter office. All members are welcome.
412-471-9548

APRIL 12, TUESDAY

AIA Pittsburgh Board Meeting, 5 p.m. at the Chapter office. All members are welcome.

412-471-9548

APRIL 18, MONDAY

Hornbostel Lecture, 6 p.m., Doherty Hall, Carnegie Mellon University. Larry Scarpa, AIA of Pugh + Scarpa.

APRIL 20, WEDNESDAY

Mayoral Candidates Forum, 6 p.m., David L. Lawrence Convention Center. Call AIA Pittsburgh for details at 412-471-9548

AROUND TOWN

APRIL 13, WEDNESDAY

SDA Meeting on Stress Management presented by the American Red Cross. For more information please contact Christine Stewart at 412-261-066.

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HABITAT

photos by tracy certo



Art Ruprecht, AIA and his wife Jan in their newly decorated living room.

Art Ruprecht, AIA, of RSH Architects lives on Parkview Drive in Mt. Lebanon with his wife Jan. He has two daughters, Lindsey and Ashley.

A LITTLE HISTORY: "The house was originally constructed by Landau Brothers as a prototype to introduce steel prefabrication into the residential market in the late 1930's. All the exterior walls were painted sheet metal panels set between structural "T" studs. The floor was a concrete slab on metal deck, as was the original flat roof. It looked like a BP Station without pumps. All of the inner partitions were constructed of gypsum block, which at that time was used extensively in commercial construction. Unfortunately, the house had not been well maintained, and inside, plaster was falling off the walls. The two elderly women who then lived in it poured boxes of moth crystals in the wall cavities to kill the odor of mildew. When when the realtor saw a newlywed couple (us) looking at it, she said, "Oh, it's the perfect honeymoon cottage." Right. My bride Jan and I spent the next year of our "honeymoon" with a bolt cutter, a sledge hammer and a sawzall, demolishing over half of what we just bought, in order to renovate it to habitable standards. By the following Thanksgiving, we moved into our "honeymoon cottage" and will celebrate our thirtieth year of continuous occupancy there this year.



A New Feature • A Glimpse of Architects at Home

The little home has seen three subsequent additions and renovations as we made accommodations for two daughters. We added a double garage, a master bedroom suite, and expanded our kitchen and dining room, doing the majority of the work ourselves. (Every architect should be required to do this – it bestows a valued appreciation for the abilities and talents of quality trades people.)

We enjoy our home because it reflects our contemporary taste and most importantly, it is in appropriate scale for our lifestyle – an attribute I strongly encourage residential clients to carefully consider."

ABOVE (top): Jan and Art Ruprecht in front of their house. (center): Art's daughter, Ashley, 25, painted the wolf and the Little Red Riding Hood. His other daughter, Lindsay, 22, is an AmeriCorps team leader. (bottom): The couple in the back of their house.

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MARKETPLACE

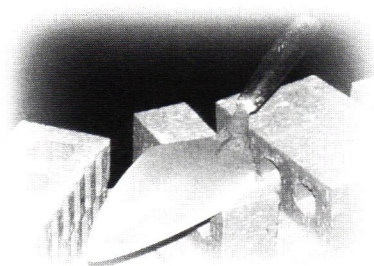
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Mistick PBT

The Commons at North Aiken
Architects: Perkins Eastman Architects

The Commons at North Aiken is a senior independent living community developed by Affirmative Investments and Presbyterian SeniorCare. The apartment building has 66 apartment units plus a separate manager's apartment. Five separate duplexes house ten, single-level bungalows. Amenities include a full service commercial kitchen, spacious dining and activity rooms, and laundry facilities on each level. Perkins Eastman Architects complemented their efficient and friendly building design with a circular drive and enhanced landscaping to create a strong sense of community for the residents.

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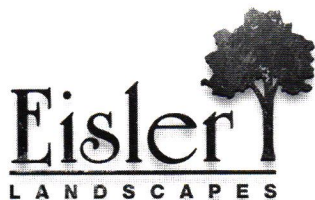
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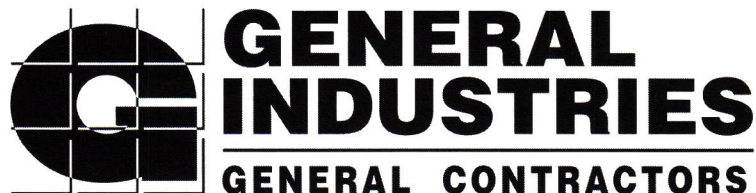
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