



# POTOMAC VALLEY ARCHITECT

AMERICAN INSTITUTE  
OF  
ARCHITECTS

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March 1, 1957

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## ABOUT US

## LIBRARY

CELEBRATIONS of A.I.A. architects across the nation began last week to mark the Institute's 100th Anniversary.

With the privilege of providing the Vice Chairman (Charles B. Soulé) and Vice Chairmen for all sub-committees for the major observance May 14 to 17 when the A.I.A. holds its national centennial celebration in Washington, this chapter today proudly briefly reviews the history of the Institute—an organization dedicated to the betterment of the profession of architecture as a vital social force concerned with the planning of human environment in the United States.

Architecture became a profession on February 23, 1857 when 13 idealistic architects met in New York to found the A.I.A. The service they performed to the benefit of the profession and the public was acknowledged on the founding site on February 23, 1957 when A.I.A. President Leon Chatelain, Jr., of Bethesda, unveiled a plaque affixed to the building at 111 Broadway which has replaced the original house. The birth of the A.I.A. followed establishment of the American Medical Association by 10 years. It preceded the formal organization of the nation's lawyers by 21 years. Like the other two great professional bodies, the A.I.A. has maintained throughout its history a high code of professional standards and ethics which govern the practice of the profession and the relationship of the architect to his client. Today, at the urging of the A.I.A., state registration laws require the architect to demonstrate his competence. It guides and supports accredited schools of architecture.



Following the Civil War, A.I.A. chapters began springing up throughout the nation. The organization's scope was further broadened by the merger, in 1889, of the A.I.A. and the Western Association of Architects. At the present time, there are 124 A.I.A. chapters and approximately 11,500 registered architects in the United States.

In the 1890's, one of the A.I.A.'s earliest public contributions was its fight to restore to the nation the original concept of the national capital in Washington, D. C. as formed by Thomas Jefferson and L'Enfant. Few will remember, or even believe that this national shrine had been desecrated to the point that a railroad station squatted at the foot of the Capitol building and railroad tracks ran across the Mall. Led by its president, Daniel H. Burnham, a renowned architect of his day, the A.I.A. waged a determined fight and ultimately succeeded in having the original plan restored and the eyesores were removed. In the twentieth century, both the national organization and local chapters of A.I.A. work perpetually to safeguard and restore the esthetic, functional and economic values of the community. The quarters for the national organization is housed at the famous Octagon House in Washington, D. C. which was occupied by President Madison after the White House had been burned in 1814. The A.I.A. has restored the historic building to its former grace as one of the most beautiful structures in Washington.

Today, the national organization is planning a major cultural contribution to the nation to mark the national Centennial Celebration. In this May 14-17 program, to be held in Washington, D. C., distinguished representatives of government, science, business, labor and the arts have been invited to participate in a grand forum. This forum will define the forces which will shape the environment of the future and guide the planning of man's shelter of tomorrow. The theme for the national program is "A New Century Beckons."



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MEETINGS

First Monday of Every Month  
at 12 o'clock noon

NEXT MEETING

Monday, March 4  
Stone House Inn, Silver Spring

LETTERS

Florida Central Chapter

I have been very much impressed with your publication, the Potomac Valley Architect, and it is my hope that our Chapter may be able to emulate your example. I wonder if you would be so kind as to arrange that I might receive one-hundred (100) copies of an early issue to use same in interesting our members and prospective advertisers?

Very truly yours,  
Roland W. Sellow  
President

Virginia Chapter

We of the Virginia Chapter wish to express to you our deep appreciation in receiving your very splendid new publication, POTOMAC VALLEY ARCHITECT. We only hope that we too may be following in your footsteps with our own publication.

Cordially yours,  
Richard L. Meagher  
President

Wisconsin Chapter

Thank you very much for sending me the Potomac Valley Architect as I enjoy reading it each month. In my opinion this is a very good way of architects' groups knowing what each other is doing.

Very truly yours,  
Arthur O. Reddemann  
President, Wisconsin Chapter A.I.A.

Split-Level Schools Authorized

FRANK J. DUANE, Silver Spring, Chairman of the Washington Chapter's Centennial Committee, has had approved preliminary plans for the first split-level school in Montgomery County. They call for this type of design for the Burning Tree Elementary School in Bethesda.

Damascus Adopts Elliott's Plans

After three year's work by planning consultants, Damascus has a plan for future development which was approved by UMCPC and adopted. Last year our Veep Ben Elliott, who lives in the community, got into the act with practical redrafting which speeded up the adoption.

100th School Opens Today

Montgomery County's 100th school, the \$467,000 Harmony Hills Elementary School, to be opened today near Aspen Hill Road and Georgia Avenue was designed by William N. Denton, Jr., A.I.A. architect of Kenwood.

CHAPTER AGAIN OFFERS HELP AS NEW  
HIKE IN PRICE OF "BEDROOMS" LOOMS

President Ronald S. Senseman again offered the Chapter's help to Montgomery County. This time the offer resulted from an announcement by Manager M. L. Reese of plans for a steering committee to promote proper and tax-relieving industrial development.

"We feel that as architects we have much to contribute in this type of planning," Mr. Senseman told the Manager, "and we want you to know we stand ready to be of help in any way that you feel we can be of most service. We would be glad to have one or more of your members serve on such a committee."

Manager Reese expressed his gratitude and said the chapter would be called on "should the occasion arise."

Meanwhile, in both Prince Georges and Montgomery Counties, sometimes referred to as the bedrooms for the nation's capital, record-smashing budgets for 1957-1958 were under consideration. In Montgomery a tax rate increase of 31c per \$100 of assessed valuation may be in store for residents. The "occasion" for the red carpet treatment to desired industries appears to be very much present.

Kea Wins Architectural Plaque

The new Administration Building of Suburban Trust Co., 6495 New Hampshire ave., designed by Paul H. Kea Associates has been awarded a plaque for architectural beauty at ceremonies conducted by the Prince Georges Chamber of Commerce.

Arthur Fixing for a Swim

Program Chairman Stan Arthur will have his own summer swimming and any winter bowling program lined up when this summer construction of a 100-foot swimming pool, with elaborate bath house, wading pools and six bowling alleys from Stan's designs are completed by the Columbia Country Club at East-West highway and Connecticut ave. The Arthur-conceived project includes a modern up-to-date kitchen and a new tennis house.

Soulé Now a President

When members of the Exchange Club of Bethesda heard Charles B. (Chuck) Soulé had been made a vice chairman of the Centennial Convention Committee they said, "Shucks, we can give the man a better title than that." Last week the club unanimously elected Chuck as its president.

Prassas' Town Hall

Glen Echo will have a town hall meeting center with true Colonial treatment. The building, now under construction, was imaginatively conceived by Milton J. Prassas & Associates.

Toast at Dry Run

Frank G. Beatty, big as life and probably with a flask of tap water on his hip, was shown in several newspapers last week with other V.I.P.'s in a "Salute to Silver Spring." This was at the site of the very dry but historic Blair Spring.

Murphy Now With Big "Boss"

J. B. Murphy is now associated with Leon Chatelain, Jr., in the firm of Chatelain, Gaugher & Nolan—and with everyone's best wishes.



## BIEN—EXAMPLE OF A.I.A. MEN WHO MADE ARCHITECTURE A PROFESSION

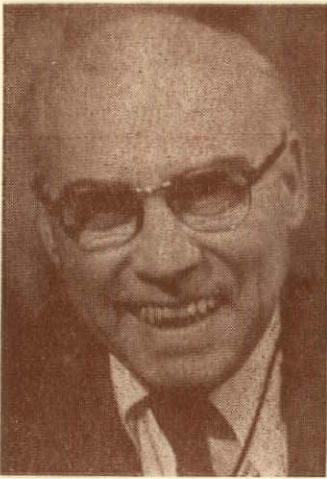
WE SIT on the edge of a chair in some architects', doctors' and lawyers' offices with the impression our consultant is anxious to take off—probably to a luncheon meeting where he can flash his professional presence among better prospects.

We sat in the rambling basement studio of Director V. T. H. Bien in "Boxford," his authentic early American home, set back in Bethesda's Green Tree Road woods, and relaxed—as comfortable as the bug in a rug.

This Grand (never old), distinguished man has it made because he had the calling, and God-given talent but, above all, because he has always conducted himself in the quiet, helpful, gentlemanly yet justly authoritative

manner that brings a devoted, respectful clientel. If he can't equal Frank Lloyd Wright for gold medals, we will say the man the chapter affectionately calls Bieny has no need for wall paper. He uses award certificates, as far as the wall can accommodate them, while his good lady Friday—Miss Corabel Bien tries to find room in files for the rest.

Now as to those many initials, about which new, young members may be curious, we'll tell you the "Boxford" squire's middle name is Tuyl. Since members already written about have asked us to cut down on space for profiles, we direct you to the A.I.A. Directory and "Who's Who" for the full name.

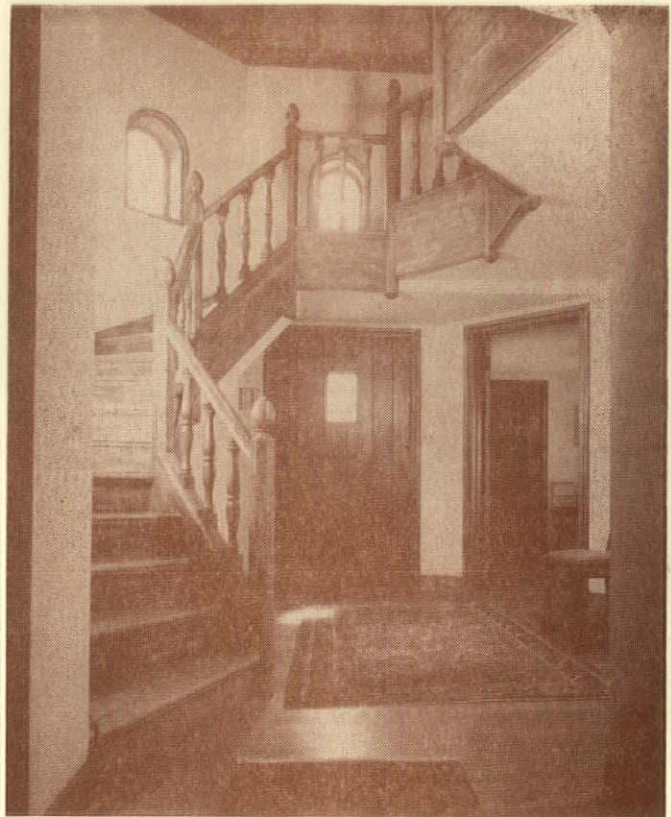


V. T. H. Bien

This director was one of those rareties actually born in Washington on 16th St. There is now a memorial church on the site which V.T. is careful to point out is a memorial to someone else. He also emphasizes (so you'll know he once had more of it) that he was pulled thru college entrance exams by his hair after which he was graduated from M.I.T. with a B.S. in Naval Architecture. He was a ship designer with Bethlehem Steel and we (who have lived on ships) suggest this is where Bieny so well learned how to make every inch of a house usable space.

With some investments turned sour, and only \$128 cash, having thoughts about the blondes many such gentlemen prefer, the resourceful V.T. left his nautical activity successfully to establish himself in the building business. By 1915 he had found and married the beautiful blonde his mind had conjured—Bertha "Babbie" V. Conn of Middletown, Conn. from Smith College. Now Babbie and Bieny decided it was a day of specialization. In arranging premiums from their happy bond, they concentrated on a blessed all-girl trio. If you are lucky enough to receive Bien's Boxford Christmas Bulletin, you know of the daughters' varied and interesting accomplishments. We can't record them here without a yet un-invented type squeezer but the sisters are Bettina Herbert Bien, Mrs. Landon D. Walker, Hickory, N. C. and Mrs. Herbert Conn, Custer, S. D. Mother Babbie's hair never needs a permanent, we must take a line to say, because from Custer Julie Ann Conn regularly sends hair curling pictures showing her fighting her way up a treacherous mountain climb.

By 1930 our director's exceptional talents as a designer and real artist had taken full possession of him. He knew he must be an architect. In 1936 he became a charter member of the Maryland Society of Architects. From here in, and as recorded in the first issue of this chapter organ, architects locally and nationally know the story of Bieny's actually indispensable service to A.I.A.—always herculean by reason of his own sterling professional example—and



Many homes look nice outside but, once you are inside your curiosity is too often killed—never, however, if you have entered any one of the hundreds of exciting residences designed by Architect Bien. He likes to have interest maintained in a house full of surprises containing no stock material except framing and sub-flooring. Such is his award-winning French Norman type home for Captain L. M. Harding in Greenwich Forest, Bethesda. Shown above is the Captain's eye-stopping, eight-sided hall with the unusual fixture hung from the peak of the tower. You'll pause before the doors and run your hands over them—they are Pecky Cypress.

resulting in 1954, with his being made chairman of the "Octagon Committee" which organized the Potomac Valley Chapter.

To the young architect, some older, too, we suggest "Go West"—to that Boxford Studio in Bethesda, there to be better indoctrinated in the Profession of Architecture for "The Century That Beckons."

### This School Needed Temporary "Chic" Sales

WHILE JOHANNES & MURRAY was doing the firm's usual skillful school job in designing the new Bannockburn elementary school, and G. Leonard Daymude & Co., Inc. correctly installed the specified plumbing and heating, some others must have been asleep at their coordinating switches. (Editor's observation entirely, unguided by professional architectural consultation.) Result: No roads, gas, sewer or water service—and no students until next fall. The resourceful Daymude company keeps the building warm by hosing in water from some distance to the boilers. Hardy county school inspectors are expected to wade through muddy pathways to accept the job and—some day—all contractors concerned will get final payments on this and other work which, for similar reasons, cannot be completed.

### Bulldozers May Have To "Spare That Tree!"

SUB-DIVIDERS will have to "Spare That Tree" if a bill in the Annapolis hopper is passed. Delegate Blair Lee introduced the legislation which is designed to curb the bulldozers and better preserve more of Mother Nature's beautiful Maryland ruralness.



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