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POTOMAC VALLEY ARCHITECT

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Pan American Congress of Architects – Buenos Aires

by Ronald S. Senseman A.I.A.

There were in Buenos Aires for the 10th Pan American Conference of Architects a thousand architects representing thirteen American countries, intent on solving their many problems. Most of them were so removed from our experience that we were not able to be of much help in attempting to solve them. It was difficult and trying to sit in a smoke filled room, the only contact with the proceedings an interpreter who couldn't keep up and translate the verbose discussions.

Latins do love to talk, and they take every problem seriously. They discuss proceedings as if their lives depended on it. Most meetings started late, some as much as 90 minutes behind schedule.

Organization was not outstanding, but every effort was made to make the Conference a pleasant one. The generous hospitality will never be forgotten. I hope that when we have the next Conference in Washington in '65 we will offer everyone the same type of open friendship that greeted our little group of delegates everywhere we went.

I have always been impressed with the importance of the architect in Latin America which was demonstrated by the Argentinian Government subsidizing the Conference by some \$400,000 dollars, plus the cost of two exhibition buildings. Unfortunately, the United States had no exhibit, which was most disappointing to the delegates from Latin America, particularly since Cuba had a huge social propaganda exhibit where every opportunity was used to stir up sentiment. Unfortunately, the students seemed to be pro-Castro, which was apparent in their demonstrations when any Castroite took the floor; and they persisted in doing this, trying always to attach their social thesis to any resolution on the floor. It was most discouraging and I hope that there will be some opportunity to offset this pro-Castro feeling by offering op-

portunities for students to work in offices in North America.

Our meager registration fee of \$15.00 covered a delightful day cruising the Delta of the Rio del la Plata, a Gaucho style open barbecue with a polo game and folk dancing. The cocktail party at their Institute headquarters was a huge success if cocktail parties are judged by the maximum number of people in the smallest area. A day at the horse races, a flight over the city, bus rides and the formal party and dance at the Country Club were all included in our registration fee.

Incidentally, in Latin America, dinner isn't eaten until 9 or later, mostly later, and dancing 'til the sun comes up. This goes on and on like the Conga lines that seem to form out of nowhere and end at the same place.

The work in the meetings was most intense, and don't be misled into thinking that all South Americans have is one siesta after another. This is not so. They work hard, and they play hard.

Our President, Phil Will, Jr., addressed the Conference in Spanish and was most cordially received with a most hearty reception to his invitation to Washington in '65.

Sam Cooper, of Atlanta, the head of our delegation, with his usual dignified friendliness was the patriarch of our group and a most effective good-will ambassador. He has been elected President of the Federation (F.P.A.A.). Our luncheon and reception at the U.S. Embassy for the heads of the Latin delegations was very successful. U.S. Ambassador Burnbaum is from Chevy Chase, the brother-in-law of Gilbert Hahn.

The plenary sessions were set up in an impressive manner with simultaneous translations which meant, at least, that the heads of the delegations were kept informed of the proceedings. The U.S. delegation helped to stifle more than one Cuban attempt to dominate the proceedings.

These meetings made you feel that
(continued on page two)



THE PALMER FORD Automobile Dealer Plant, Hyattsville, Md., was commended by the Ford Motor Company for outstanding design. The building is fully air-conditioned and has more than 45,000 square feet of floor area, at a total cost of \$350,000. John S. Samperton, Architect.

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NEXT REGULAR MEETING

12 Noon, January 4, 1961

Brook Farm Restaurant

7101 Brookeville Rd., Chevy Chase, Md.

February Meeting — February 1, 1961

(continued from page one)

Architecture, as such, was abstract, but their problems are so interlaced with the economic and political climate of their countries that they never seem to get separated. For instance, one resolution stated that "Architects be given authority to mobilize and administer cultural and technical resources of each nation to provide effective housing."

Another resolution called for a constitutional guarantee of decent housing for everyone. Resolutions were to be implemented by the Architects when they returned to their respective countries.

It is not difficult therefore to see that we ended up on the side lines as observers rather than active participants in the committees; the barrier was not only one of language.

We have a real responsibility in '65. Our help is needed and expected with their problems. Senor Ugarte, President of the Congress, expressed it, "The prosperity and stability of every American country depends on the prosperity and stability of all countries in this hemisphere."

It was a fantastic homeward trip by jet plane from Lima. The day was clear and beautiful, and the scenery was magnificent with a continuous view of the Andes Mountains for hours. A sight such as this cannot be put into words and was certainly the thrill of a lifetime. The speed of the jet exceeded 600 m.p.h., and we arrived in Miami only five hours after taking off from Lima, Peru.

County Architect Injured
By Gas Explosion

John Murphy, Montgomery County Architect, suffered second degree burns on his face and hands Friday night, 16 December, when a gas line, which was being purged, exploded. The accident occurred at the county equipment maintenance depot, Seven Locks Road, Rockville, Md.

John is under treatment at home, 3814 East Washington Street, Kensington, Md.

Chapter President
Receives Award

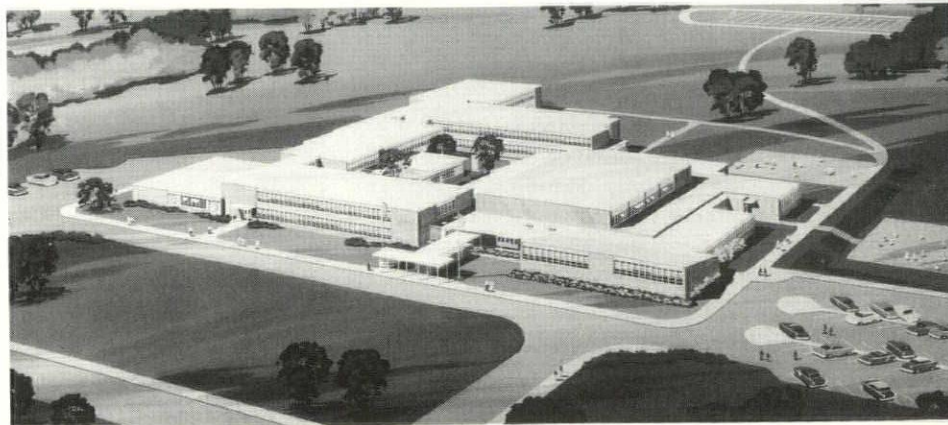
Stanley Arthur, President of the Chapter, entered one of his paintings, a semi-abstract called "County Fair", in the 23rd annual Metropolitan Art Exhibit, sponsored by the American Art League, held at the Museum of Natural History, and received Honorable Mention.

Mrs. Saarinen To Speak

The Vassar Club of Washington, in celebration of the centennial year of the College, presents the distinguished alumna Aline Bernstein Saarinen in a lecture on Tuesday, 31 January 1961 at 8:30 P.M. in the John Wesley Powell Auditorium of the Cosmos Club, 2121 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D. C.

Mrs. Saarinen will speak on architectural principles of her husband, Eero Saarinen, and will show a movie produced by designer Charles Eames.

Members of the American Institute are cordially invited. Tickets are \$1.00 and will not be sold at the door. Order by calling Mrs. Gerald Harwood, EMerson 3-5445. Use the Auditorium entrance through the private parking lot of the Cosmos Club.



ASPEN SECONDARY SCHOOL. Rhees Burkett, Architect.

On the Boards

JANUARY 1961

COHEN, HAFT & ASSOCIATES

Preliminary Phase:

- Office Building, Silver Spring, Md.
- Apartment House, 200 units, College
- Office Building, Arlington, Va.
- Shopping Center, Landover, Md.

Working Drawings:

- Apartments, 176 units, Congressional Airport, Md.
- Apartments, 255 units, Fairfax County, Va.
- Apartments, 350 units, Kember Heights, Va.
- Apartments, 234 units, Laurel, Md.
- Apartments, 143 units, Hyattsville, Md.
- Custom House, Lake Barcroft, Va.
- Custom House, Kenwood Park, Md.
- Synagogue, Temple Israel, Silver Spring, Md.

JOHN SULLIVAN

Preliminary Phase:

- Industrial Building, Gaithersburg, Md.
- Industrial Center, Rockville, Md.
- Industrial Building, Rockville, Md.
- School, Church and Convent, Seabrook, Md.
- Office Building, Bethesda, Md.
- Residence, Potomac, Md.
- Home for the Aged (in assn. w/ Mr. F. Dixon), Gaithersburg, Md.
- Office Building, Rockville, Md.
- Municipal Center and Recreation Park, District Heights, Md.

Working Drawings:

- School and Convent, Indian Head, Md.

Addition to a club, Bethesda, Md.

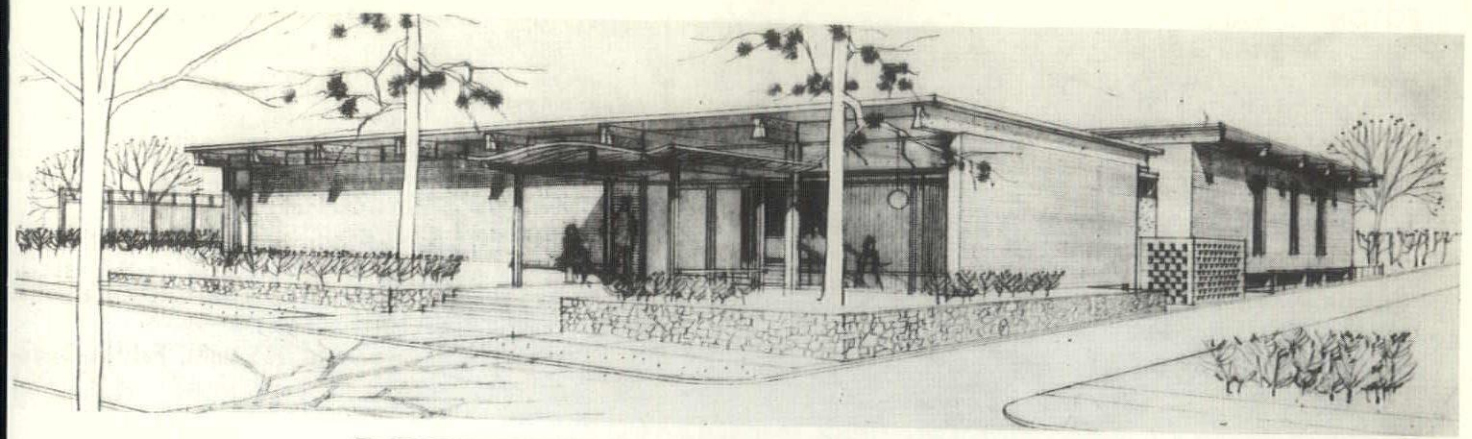
WALTER BUCHER

Preliminary Phase:

- Hotel, 110 rooms, District of Columbia

Out for Bids:

- Addition to Latter Day Saints Mission Home, Bethesda, Md.



BETHESDA YOUTH CENTER

Keyes, Lethbridge & Condon, Architects

This Youth Center, now under construction for the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission on Walsh Street in Bethesda, is the first of a number of buildings planned as a supervised recreation center for teen-agers in the Maryland suburban area. The Center was also planned with the senior citizens in mind. Since teen-agers will be in school from 9 A.M. to 3:30 P.M., it is planned to have the building available to this adult group during these hours under supervision of a paid leader. Certain features were incorporated in the building plans with this age group in mind, such as ramps, street level entrances and a minimum of steps inside. The plan provides for a Social Hall on the first floor with a seating capacity of 250. This room will be used for lectures, theatrical productions and dancing. A Lounge and Game Room with adjacent Snack Bar, storage area and Supervisor's Office have also been provided on this floor. The Supervisor's Office is located centrally so that all areas on the first floor can be controlled by one paid supervisor. On the ground floor a Hobby Room is located under the Social Hall with secondary outside ramp access. This room will be divided by the owner into work areas for such activities as ceramics, woodworking, photography, etc., and will be under the supervision of an instructor. The remaining portion of the ground floor is devoted to a large storage area suitable for future use as Game Room and space for future toilet rooms. A paved terrace in the rear of the building will be used in connection with the Lounge and Social Hall for outdoor recreation, dancing, etc. A walk from the street to the terrace at the west end of the building provides a

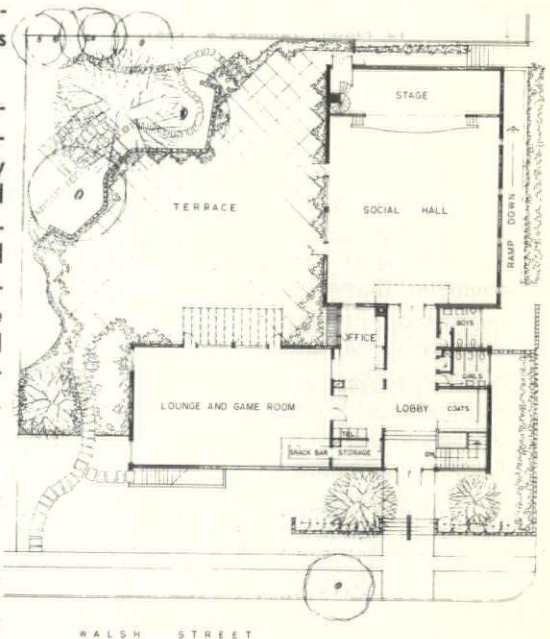
grade entrance to the first floor. A public parking area is immediately across the street.

The structural system is reinforced concrete up to the first floor level. Construction above the first floor is masonry bearing walls with steel columns and beams at large openings. Roof construction is 3x6 T&G wood decking supported on laminated wood beams. The top surface of these beams is shaped to provide a gradual roof pitch to the exterior wall line without the necessity of gutters at the eave. Roofing is built-up, gravel surfaced over rigid insulation.

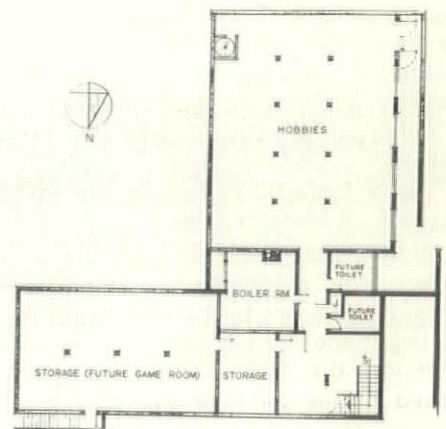
The mechanical system consists of warm air heating with air conditioning provided for the Social Hall and Lounge.

The program stipulated that the building was to have the character and scale of a clubhouse. An effort was made in the design and selection of materials to avoid the "institutional" look. The walls of the Lounge are panelled in natural finished Hemlock. Walls in the Social Hall are exposed concrete block laid up with projecting headers to provide a decorative pattern and acoustical surface. Ceilings in both of these rooms have exposed laminated beams painted and natural finish wood decking. The exteriors walls are of gray brick and painted wood window trim. The entrance canopy will be of wood and all eave fasciae copper. The building will be completely landscaped, new plant material, paving, etc., being combined with the fine trees which have been saved on the site.

Construction cost, including outside walls and paved areas, is \$135,000. This figure averages out to \$12.00 per square foot.



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