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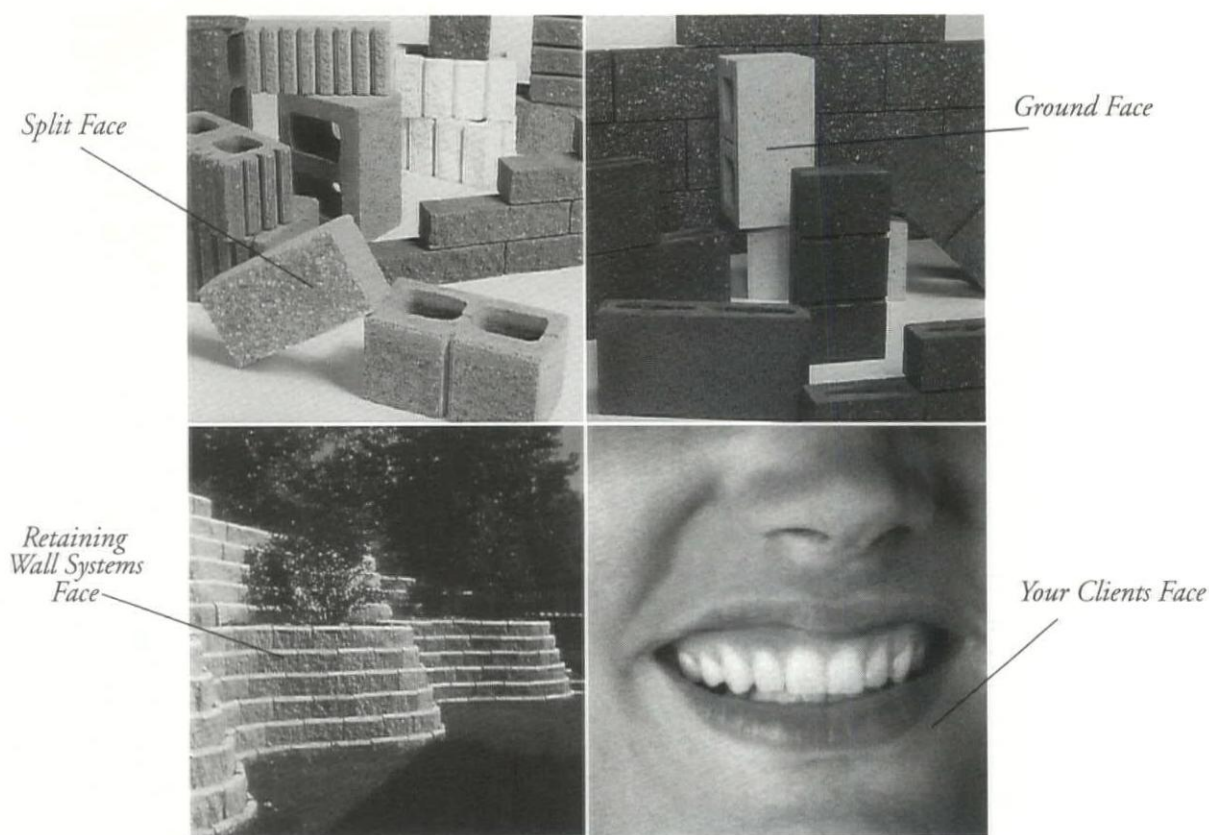
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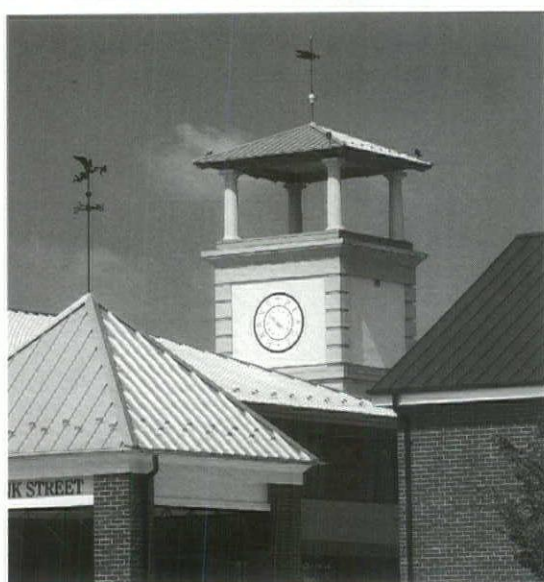
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inform

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For the Sake of Menokin

Where others look at overgrown ruins and see the final demise of a Revolutionary-era estate, the preservationist faithful of The Menokin Foundation see hope for its long-awaited resurrection.

By Mark St. John Erickson

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Historic Preservation: A Portfolio

Virginians are increasingly resourceful in finding new ways to restore and reuse old buildings, as this portfolio of recent projects shows.

Moving Mount Ida, Frazier Associates

With All Due Respect, Browne Eichman Dalgliesh
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New Breath of Life, Cederquist Rodriguez Ripley Maddux

Remaking a Modern Icon, Morgan Gick & Associates

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Dream Quarters, Hanbury Evans Newill Vlattas & Co.



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Taking Notice

doing the small thing well

On the cover:
The Life Building.
Photo by Wadsworth Alliance.

In our next issue:
Review of Virginia
Architecture

*The Little-Known
Accomplishments of*
**GEO. WASHINGTON,
FARMER**

Because of all he did to set his country on course, George Washington has yet to receive the credit he deserves as a conservationist and innovative farmer, according to those who worry about such things. But all that's changing now with the advent of a permanent exhibit at Mt. Vernon that deals with Washington's role in American agriculture.

The centerpiece of the four-acre interpretive site is a 16-sided treading barn, reconstructed using archival and photographic evidence of the barn Washington built at Dogue Run, one of the five farms he operated on his 8,000-acre plantation. The original barn – badly deteriorated and isolated on a site nearly three miles from the legendary manor house – was demolished about 1875.

Visitors encounter a complex of buildings that include the timber-frame barn, two stables, and attached corn cribs. There they learn the story of Washington as a risk-taker and struggling farmer. Even before the Revolutionary War, he moved away from the traditional Virginia tobacco crop because it laid waste to his lands and left him economically vulnerable to the whims of British trade. The result was his creation of a diversified farm where he grew corn, potatoes, and grains – mostly wheat.



The reconstructed barn is the centerpiece of a new agricultural complex at Mt. Vernon.

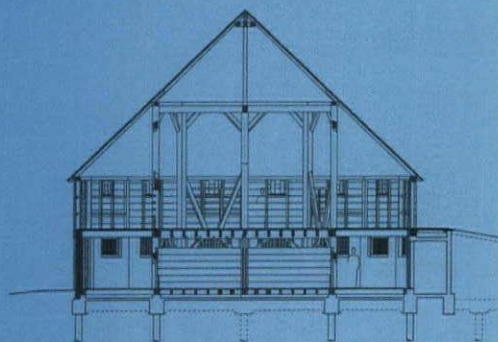
Washington managed his resources with care. Rather than exhaust his slave labor with the time-consuming task of threshing wheat by hand, he adopted the practice called treading, in which horses or oxen were led across layers of wheat. The grinding of their hooves against the floor separated the grain from the straw.

Washington took an activity that most farmers practiced outside and moved it indoors to avoid waste and weather delays. He imagined the building as a large machine. The circular, or nearly circular, form was most efficient for the task. Its main feature was an upper-level treading floor made from a series of narrow planks spaced far enough apart so that grains would fall through to the granary below. But because a truly circular building would have been difficult to erect, Washington settled on a faceted structure 52 feet across.

Quinn/Evans Architects of Washington, D.C., was commissioned to design and oversee the barn's reconstruction. Rather than having to start from scratch, the architects benefited from historians' findings that included a photograph of the dilap-

idated barn (dated c. 1870), Washington's site plan for the barn complex, and a bill of materials specifying the sizes of certain structural members and the type of wood they were to be made of.

The research reports also raised questions that the architects tried to solve using the resources at hand, including computer analysis. Scanned images of the surviving photograph were enlarged and enhanced to reveal key information about the original barn's construction. The designers were even able to count the number of bars on the windows of the ground floor, where the separated grain would have been stored. Security of the grain, after all, was an important concern to Washington, who ordered a substantial lock to keep pilferers at bay.



Reconstruction efforts relied partly on analysis of this c. 1870 photo.



Courtesy Jeff Stodghill/PMA

Vision for proposed facade improvements.

Overdue Upgrades at Hilton Village

Change is coming to Hilton Village, a planned community designed in 1917 for employees of the Newport News shipyard. Long admired for its street layout, landscaping, and building placement, the village features a variety of "cottage style" buildings.

But piecemeal adaptation has destroyed the unity of the village's attached rows of townhouses, which have gradually been converted from residences to shops. The years have taken their toll on sidewalks and alleyways. In truth, a place intended to be pedestrian friendly has turned a bit hostile. Now the city of Newport News is improving the streetscape and encouraging cooperation of village businesses along the commercial stretch.

The first phase of work – including new sidewalks, street trees, lamp-posts, wooden benches, and plants – was completed recently along the south side of one block. Work on the remaining blocks should be done by next summer. "The most dramatic part is that we are widening the median down Warwick Boulevard so we can plant a row of trees to increase the greenery," says architect Jeff Stodghill, president of Citizens for Hilton Area Revitalization and author of a master plan for the commercial area.

Since receiving Stodghill's report last January, the city has made available \$600,000 in loans to encourage Hilton Village merchants to upgrade their buildings. In addition to streetscape improvements, the plan calls for new sign guidelines and rehabilitation of retail storefronts. "The crux of the problem is that the original townhouses had small windows," Stodghill says. "We tried to come up with a credible way to develop retail storefronts that dignify the original architecture."

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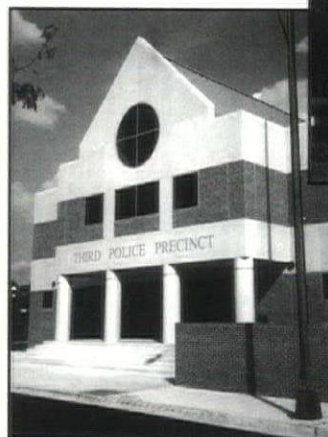
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Saving Towns, Building Communities

On November 6, Pulitzer Prize-winning editorialist Thomas Hylton told an audience of architects that many of modern society's ills can be treated by changing the way we plan our communities. His comments, made at the statewide Building Virginia conference, are excerpted here.

A whole generation of Americans has no idea what a wonderful and enriching place a city or town can be. Most suburbanites think cities are terrible places to live. And the reason they think cities and towns are so awful, even though people have been living in them for 6,000 years, is because they've witnessed the results of 50 years of senseless public and private policies, which have given every incentive for middle-class and affluent people to abandon cities instead of improving them, and which have mandated an ugly, inefficient, environmentally damaging, and socially divisive way of life known as sprawl.

In 1948, Philadelphia was a prosperous, stimulating, and fashionable place to live. It had outstanding public schools. Now whole neighborhoods lie in ruin while the city – abandoned by industry and the middle class, and overwhelmed by poor people – struggles to survive. Throughout Pennsylvania, the story is the same. Virtually every city has lost people since 1950, often accompanied by eroding neighborhoods and debilitated buildings. Pittsburgh, for one, has hemorrhaged nearly half its population.

California and Florida have been transformed since World War II by massive population growth, but in Pennsylvania we've hardly grown at all – less than 15 percent in 40 years. What we've done is spent billions of dollars on new infrastructure to do little more than take our existing population and spread it around in an unhealthy and inefficient manner. We have lost more than 4 million acres of farmland since the 1950s. But perhaps worst of all, we have undermined the spirit of community we used to enjoy when we had people of all ages and incomes living and working in the same town.

Three years before the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln warned that "a house divided against itself cannot stand." Pennsylvania isolates two-thirds of its poor people in its cities and towns, while the middle class and affluent live and work in the suburbs; it is a state where 14 percent of our public school children are black, but more than two-thirds of these children go to segregated city schools; it is a state that even allows the construction of affluent subdivisions closed to public access by guardhouses and gates. The only part of state government that's been growing by leaps and bounds is the prison industry. We have five times as many inmates as we did 25 years ago, but we're not one bit safer. So is Pennsylvania truly a commonwealth or a house divided against itself?

Thanks to a journalism fellowship, I had a chance to look at 11 states with comprehensive planning programs. Statewide planning is a simple concept. It often starts by asking people, what kind of society do we want for our children and grandchildren? And once we've decided on a plan, let's write it down, just as any corporation would do. And then let's require every state agency to follow the plan. Let's require every local government, from school districts to sewer authorities, to follow the plan.

And citizens' task forces, from Vermont to Washington, reached remarkably similar conclusions about what they want. They want economic development to provide a steady source of good jobs. They want to make their cities and towns safe and attractive places to live. They want to protect their farmland and open spaces. They want good government services at the least cost. They want housing everyone can afford. And they want to foster a sense of community.

These ideals may seem obvious, but only a handful of states have actually defined them as goals and made plans to carry them out. And most of these states decided they need to build communities, not sprawl. By my definition, a real community is a place where at least some people live near where they work, and where all children can walk to school. A real community has a mixture of people of all ages, all incomes, and all races. A real community is built to a human scale, rather than a car scale, with a full range of housing types placed close enough together so residents can walk if they want to and enjoy informal meetings on the street. A real community inculcates in its children, from a very young age, that they have a responsibility to each other.

And I've come to believe that virtually every problem we have in America – crime, poverty, the degradation of our cities, the loss of farmland and forests, pollution, the high cost of living – could be greatly alleviated by building real communities.

"Virtually every problem in America – crime, poverty, and the degradation of our cities – could be alleviated by building real communities."



■ "An American Embassy in Berlin." This exhibition presents the semifinalist entries for the first American architectural competition for an embassy since 1955. Winning entry was by Moore Ruble Yudell with Gruen Associates. No charge. Through March 23 at The National Building Museum, Washington, D.C. 202-272-2448.

■ "In Pursuit of Gentility: Signs of Fashion and Taste in Polite Society." The 29th Annual Tryon Palace Decorative Arts Symposium will be held March 16-18 in New Bern, N.C. Lectures, tours, and dinners in historic homes. Fee. 800-767-9111.

■ "Thomas Jefferson." The three-hour televised biography by filmmaker Ken Burns appears in two segments Feb. 18-19 on PBS channels. The documentary features archival paintings, photos, lithographs, and modern footage of the places in Jefferson's life: Williamsburg, Philadelphia, New York, Paris, and – need we say it? – Monticello.

■ "Impressionist Dynamics: Constructions by Perez-Melero." An exhibition of the three-dimensional participatory constructions of this Spanish-born artist. No charge. Jan. 30-March 26. AIA Headquarters Gallery, Washington, D.C. 202-638-3221.

■ "Monumental Miniatures." An exhibition featuring hundreds of souvenir buildings collected over 150 years. Best represented are the first decades of the 20th century, when tourists collected miniatures from Independence Hall to Old North Church. Fee. Feb. 7-May 4 at The Octagon, Washington, D.C. 202-638-3105.

■ "Universal Limited Art Editions: Forty Years of Printmaking, 1957-1997." The ULAE celebrates its 40th anniversary with this exhibition of 160 prints, books, portfolios, and three-dimensional objects by 24 artists, including Helen Frankenthaler, Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg, and Kiki Smith. Fee. Jan. 11-March 31 at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. 202-639-1700.

■ "Views of Washington: Perspective Drawings by Mori Shizume." This exhibition features drawings of well-known buildings in Washington, D.C., by this Japanese-born artist. Shizume's renderings include depictions of the Capitol, National Archives, and the National Building Museum. No charge. Feb. 14-May 18. National Building Museum. 202-272-2448.



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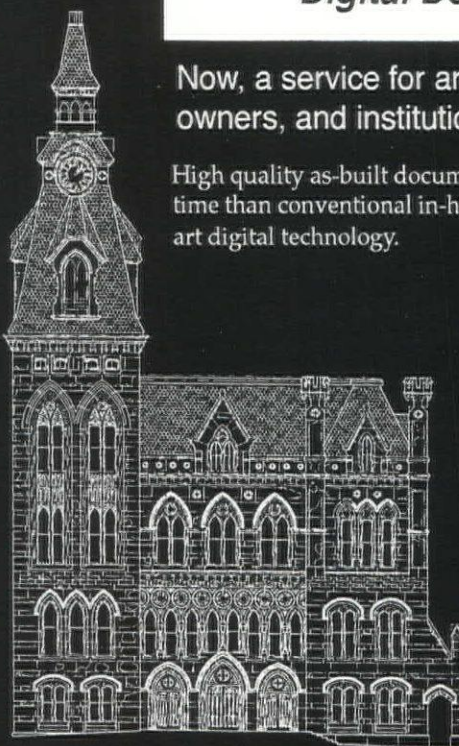
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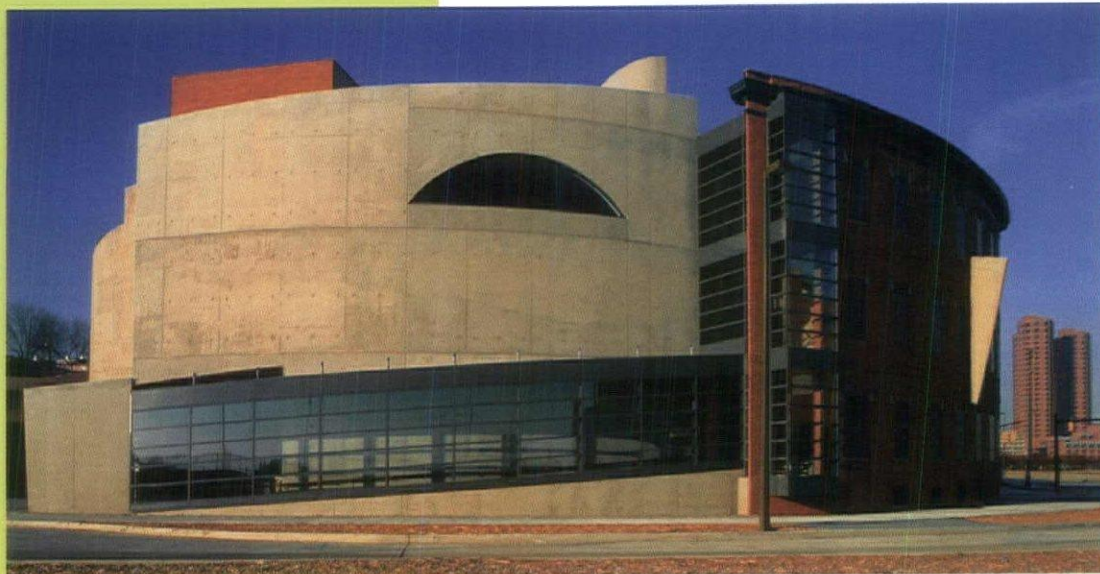
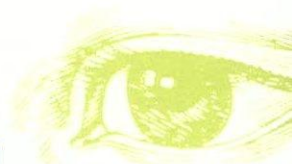
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Building photos: Alan Gilbert

The new museum is built in and around two former warehouses at the foot of Federal Hill (left). The 55-foot-tall "Whirligig" (below) dominates the courtyard, hinting at what can be found inside.

Where creativity – and Nothing Else – Counts

By Edward Guntz

8

"Vision is the art of seeing things invisible," observed the 18th century writer Jonathan Swift. That rare ability to see what others miss – and share the view – is the driving force behind the American Visionary Art Museum, a waterfront attraction in Baltimore dedicated to the wonders of creativity.

Unlike traditional museums that focus on works by acknowledged masters, this is an "un-museum" where outsiders are in. Open since late 1995 on the Inner Harbor's south shore, it is focused on the study and exhibition of art produced by self-taught individuals independent of mainstream influences. Works range in scale from Gerald Hawkes' studies of the human figure, made from matchsticks, to Vollis Simpson's 55-foot-tall whirligig, fashioned from scrap metal. The delightfully eccentric collection includes paintings, collages, and many other objects.

While the artists come from all walks of life, many have been institutionalized for mental illness or are elderly or disabled. Often they work with found materials, such as egg shells or soda can tops. What they have in common is that they do not adhere to any specific school or style of art and typically do not create their works for commercial sale. They simply are driven by their own impulses to create.

Europe has nearly a dozen museums devoted to visionary art, including Jean Dubuffet's Musée de l'Art Brut in Lausanne, Switzerland. Baltimore's is the first museum in North America built expressly for the display of visionary art, and it has been sanctioned by Congress as the "national museum, education center, and repository wholly dedicated to visionary art."

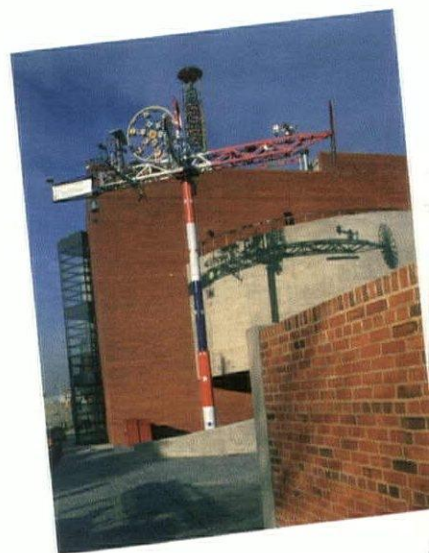
The museum is the vision of Rebecca Alban Hoffberger, a Baltimore native who singlehandedly raised \$7 million to build it after she became intrigued with the subject as a result of visiting Dubuffet's museum. She started planning it more than 10 years ago – before visionary art began to receive exposure through exhibits by mainstream museums and books by established publishers. That gave her a head start on raising funds.

Built in and around two former brick warehouses at the foot of Federal Hill, the museum is as unconventional as the art it contains. Most of the exhibit space has been created within and alongside a 1913 paint company warehouse whose curving wall follows the bend of adjacent Key Highway. Last used to store trolleys, it was awarded to Hoffberger by the Baltimore Development Corp., which wanted to encourage a "museum row" at the base of Federal Hill.

The lead designers are Baltimoreans Rebecca Swanston, an architect, and Alex

Castro, an artist, architect, and museum exhibit designer. They were assisted by Davis, Bowen & Friedel, a Salisbury, Maryland-based firm that produced the construction documents.

To house the 35,000-square-foot museum, the designers saved the trolley barn's shell and created a rectangular structure at the south end of the block to house mechanical systems, restrooms, and elevators. Between these brick bookends they created a new structure that swirls in concert with the shell of the old building, forming a unified whole. Enclosed by curved concrete walls, the addition suggests the movement and energy of the art inside. In many ways, it's a metaphor for the creative process.



Starting at the Key Highway entrance, visitors ascend a ramp that leads them along the building's perimeter. Once inside, they circulate through the museum in a counter-clockwise motion, spiraling from gallery to gallery and floor to floor. At the top, they find the Joy America Cafe, a rooftop restaurant boasting panoramic harbor views. "We wanted the building to prepare you gently to see something that is different from what you may have experienced in the past," says Castro. "It's an attempt to say, 'Here's a new way of looking at art.'"

While the other interior spaces are distinctive, they never upstage the art. Galleries are curvaceous and almost womblike – no two are exactly alike. The public spaces are enhanced by unexpected touches of craftsmanship, the best example of which is the exquisite series of hand-wrought, bronze stair railings that incorporate intertwining forms of tree trunks and branches.

From the beginning, Hoffberger encouraged the architects to "share the vision" with artisans. "It was an inclusive process," Swanston said. "That's what made it so rich." Needing display space for large sculptures, the museum also took over the old Four Roses whiskey warehouse nearby. The tall Sculpture Barn, as it is now called, is a foil for the mother museum, which Hoffberger likens to a "zaftig woman, spilling over."

Although it has been open for more than a year, the museum is far from complete. Designers want to cover its concrete surfaces with a mosaic made from donated bits of family china, pottery, tile, sea shells, and fragments of colored glass – particularly cobalt blue, known widely as "Baltimore glass" because it is the color of Bromo Seltzer and Noxzema bottles once made in the city.

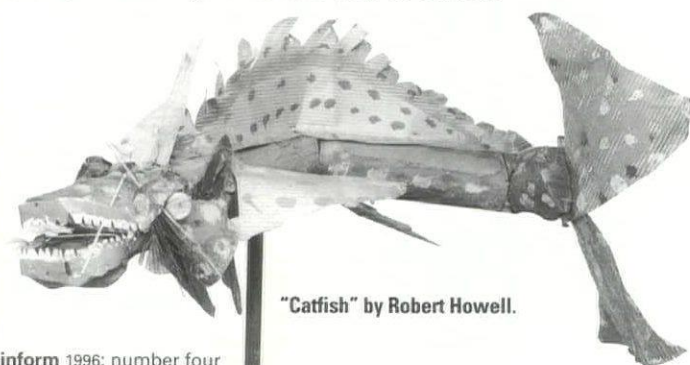
Rather than establish a large permanent collection from the start, the museum has gotten its message across by engaging guest curators. The current show, open through April 21, is "Wind in My Hair," featuring art that interprets speed, flight, and space. Once inside, part of the pleasure of touring the galleries is reading the witty biographies that explain how the artists came to create the work. Other components are rare to art institutions, visionary or not. What other museum has a wedding altar made from tree limbs? Or gargoyles depicting the chief donors? Such offbeat touches set this place apart.

As they wander through the galleries, visitors are likely to discover that the museum is about self-empowerment as much as anything. Most visionary artists are inspired by "a still, small voice" that comes from deep within, Hoffberger says. So the museum's primary goal is to celebrate human creativity without being judgmental. "Some museums are so analytical," she says. "I don't want to overinterpret anything here. I just like to set people loose and let them draw their own conclusions."

Edward Guntz is the architecture critic at The Sun in Baltimore.

■ Getting In

The American Visionary Art Museum is located at 800 Key Highway in downtown Baltimore. It is open daily except Monday, year round, and is also closed Tuesdays from September to May. For information, call 410-244-1900.



"Catfish" by Robert Howell.

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WHERE OTHERS LOOK
AT OVERGROWN RUINS
AND SEE THE FINAL
DEMISE OF A CHERISHED
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FUL OF THE MENOKIN
FOUNDATION SEE HOPE
FOR ITS LONG-AWAITED
RESURRECTION.

By Mark St. John Erickson

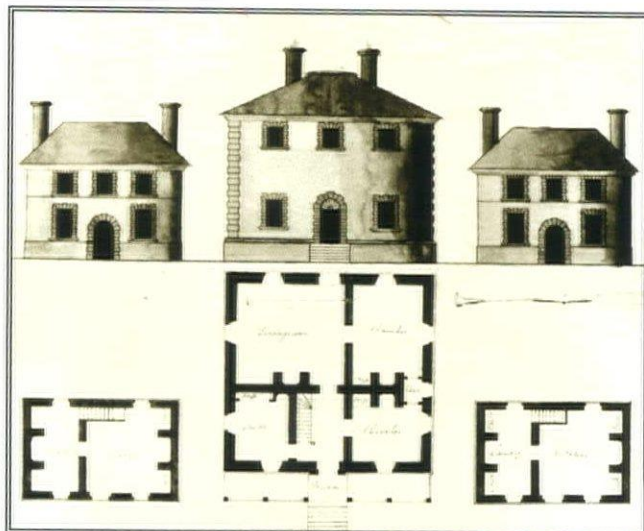
Martin King pulls his truck off the road and shifts into low gear. He sucks on the end of his cigarette with a tight-lipped grin, worried that some people might think he's crazy. Half-ripe soybeans fill the field to the right, flickering green and yellow in the warm autumn sun. Freshly plowed-under corn stalks dot the field to the left, peppering the brown, sweet-smelling soil.

But King keeps his eyes focused straight ahead, watching the clusters of stone, brick, and plaster that loom up at the end of the bumpy dirt lane. There, newly freed from a suffocating shroud of Virginia creeper, stand the ruins of Menokin. Two corners of



Dave Bowman/Newport News Daily Press, Inc.

Martin King surveys the landscape from the stairs of Menokin (left). Original drawings of the house survive in papers kept at The Virginia Historical Society.



Courtesy Va. Historical Society and Tayloe family of Mt. Airy

his allies hope to reverse decades of near-fatal deterioration. The result, paradoxically, could be one of the best preserved 18th century houses in Virginia – if the foundation can raise the cash.

“When you first look at the place, it’s just – Jesus! Goodbye old house!” says King, standing in the shadow of the broken doorway. “But it’s do-able. And it’s worth doing. We just need to find people to believe in it.”

Completed in 1775 after six years of planning and construction, Menokin was a wedding gift from wealthy planter John Tayloe to daughter Rebecca and son-in-law Francis Lightfoot Lee. Though far smaller than Tayloe’s Mt. Airy or the other grand Colonial plantation houses of Virginia’s Northern Neck, the two-story, roughly 5,500-square-foot dwelling clearly rose from the ground as the home of somebody important.

Carved sandstone framed the windows, the doorways, the corners, and the English basement of the house, marking the owners as people of substance. Two similarly constructed outbuildings stood on the flanks of the house, forming not just a single dwelling place but the core of a sprawling plantation village. “It’s not a great house – but a great house on a smaller scale,” King says. “It has all the attributes that you’d expect – the elegance, the appointments, the formality, the detail. It’s almost like a dollhouse version of a mansion.”

Lee himself gave Menokin the second reason for its importance. Only a few months after the house was finished, the quiet yet widely respected Virginia burgess left with brother Richard Henry Lee for the Continental Congress in Philadelphia. One year later, he risked life and limb by stroking his name at the bottom of the Declaration of Independence. “Menokin is a great patriotic treasure as well as an architectural landmark,” says Calder Loth, senior architectural historian at the Virginia

the old house struggle to remain erect, while the rest lies in chaos around the foundation.

Most people would shake their heads at the sight of these naked chimneys. But, where others see the last gasp of a once glorious past, King and Virginia’s preservation community see a long-hoped-for future. That’s why they labored for years to ease the property from the hands of its well-meaning but cash-strapped owners. And that’s why they gathered to celebrate in October 1995 after the house and 500 acres became the wards of The Menokin Foundation. Over the next 20 years or so, King and

Department of Historic Resources. "And all the other homes of the Virginia signers have been restored and protected."

Lee's death in 1797, in the same month as the passing of his beloved wife, signaled the beginning of a long period of decline for Menokin. Over the next 140 years, the plantation passed back and forth between several families. The original 1,000 acres was cut in half. Still, the property's significance was recognized as early as 1928, when the state erected a historical marker on the nearest highway.

Virginia, made his first pilgrimage to what had become a much-worried-over preservationist shrine. "Even then, it was regarded as one of the important works of Virginia Tidewater architecture," Loth says. "Houses of this rank are among the most endangered species you can have."

Just how endangered became clear only two or three years later, when a corner of Menokin began to give way. Still, the very neglect that had conspired to destroy the house over time also made it uniquely valuable in the eyes of preserva-

"It's not easy to get back to an original Colonial house. Most have had too many changes over the years," says Virginia Historical Society curator William M.S. Rasmussen. "Menokin hasn't been touched. It hasn't been ruined. So no one has to guess about what's there."

Menokin's significance only grew as its condition worsened. Eleven years ago, a group of architectural historians and archaeologists met at nearby Stratford Hall, the ancestral home of the Lees, to draw up preliminary plans to restore the house through a long-term field school project. That approach would give students from institutions such as William & Mary, Mary Washington College, and the University of Virginia the chance to work directly with original historic fabric, Loth says.

Archaeologist William M. Kelso, now head of the excavations on the early fort at Jamestown, says there is a tremendous opportunity at Menokin. "They have the plans from the 18th century, plus the detailed [building survey] plans, plus the interior woodwork, plus all those photographs. Add that up and it's not as disastrous as it looks. It could be one of the most accurate buildings from the period—if it's finished."

Both King and Loth are quick to point out that no rescue would be possible without the patience and generosity of the former owners. T. Edgar Omohundro, now in his 70s, and his late sister, Dora O. Ricciardi, held the valuable piece of waterfront property for nearly a decade, giving preservationists time to meet the purchase price. When Ricciardi passed away, her brother, a William & Mary graduate-turned-farmer, decided to make an outright gift of the home in her honor.

That has enabled King to begin his work without the handicap of a massive mortgage. "The Omohundro name has often been maligned in the past for the destruction of Menokin," King says. "This was a chance for them to be recognized as its savior."

Still, whether or not the project succeeds depends largely on the fund-raising skills of King, a former Exxon oil executive who returned to his boyhood stomping grounds when he retired 11 years ago. Smart, persuasive, and passionate all at once, the former Harvard history major is no stranger to the world of architectural preservation. He and his wife restored



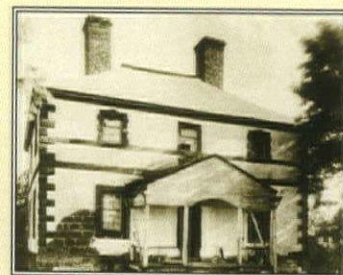
Although now in ruins (above and right), Menokin has been documented well enough to erase many questions regarding its reconstruction.

Architectural historian Thomas T. Waterman described it in *The Mansions of Virginia*, his pioneering 1940s book on the great houses of the Old Dominion.

More importantly, a draftsman from the federally funded Historic American Buildings Survey came by in 1940 and made 20 sheets of measured architectural drawings. The survey of the house also produced dozens of detailed photographs documenting it inside and out. In 1964, a period architectural plan—one of only two such documents associated with 18th century Virginia houses—came to light in the Tayloe family papers. That was about the same time that a young Calder Loth, then a student at the University of

tionists. Unlike most of the state's other great Colonial dwellings, Menokin had never suffered the damage of misguided remodeling or restoration. It had never been torn apart to install electricity or plumbing. Luckily, it had never been ravaged by fire.

Moreover, the last private owners had the presence of mind to act when the roof began to fail. Though short on cash and often divided in opinion, they agreed to remove almost all the original interior woodwork and store it at a protected location. Even after the walls began to come down, that foresight gave Menokin an importance unparalleled by any other major 18th century dwelling in the state.



"A 50-Year Project"

Dreams for the future of Menokin began to take tangible form when The Menokin Foundation announced its intention to hire an architect in early 1997. Interested historical architects, conservators, and contractors are urged to send letters of interest by January 31. "We need someone to come up with a development master plan and to program and design a conservation lab and storage facility," says Hugh C. Miller, FALA, a foundation board member. "That becomes key, because as soon as you start to do excavation on the site, what do you do with all the stuff?" The new facility also would allow for the return of original interior woodwork now stored at Bacon's Castle.

Complete plans for a laboratory also would lend focus to fundraising efforts. Already, in addition to initial private gifts, the foundation has received a matching grant from the General Assembly which provides \$50,000 for each of two years. Some of that money has been earmarked for emergency stabilization of the remaining walls and roof, which should be complete by spring. "Right now, the roof is sitting there by good habits," Miller notes. Meanwhile, University of Virginia architectural historian Camille Wells is conducting an initial study to locate primary historical documents – relevant papers from the Lee family, for instance, or title documentation on subsequent owners of the house – that might inform the site's later interpretation. Discussions also have been held with U.Va., Virginia Tech, and Mary Washington College regarding the creation of a "learning from a landmark" education program for students.

Is the foundation's ultimate desire to rebuild Menokin? "Desire is the right term, if feasible," Miller says. "But the idea would be a long-term reconstruction as a learning exercise. It's a 50-year project." – V.M.

their own 18th century hilltop home, Grove Mount, before turning their interest toward Menokin.

King estimates that he needs \$250,000 to begin work, then as much as \$3 million over the first five or six years. After that, it's anybody's guess how much money or time the process of resurrecting Menokin will consume. Beyond the house itself, there are the fallen outbuildings, the now-invisible plantation village, and the mysterious suggestions of other structures dotting the surrounding land. There's the newly rediscovered series of terraces on the waterfront side, sprinkled with patches of vinca minor ivy and daffodils, and the old roads leading to

what was once the Menokin wharf.

King would like to see it all explored and turned into the object of a long-term study. But right now, he's just happy to see the old house escape its leafy shroud. "Just a few days ago, you couldn't see the walls. You couldn't see the piles of fallen stones. You couldn't see anything but the trees," he says. "Even people who knew this place well have been amazed at what they can see now."

Mark St. John Erickson is a feature writer at The Daily Press in Newport News, where a similar article appeared earlier.

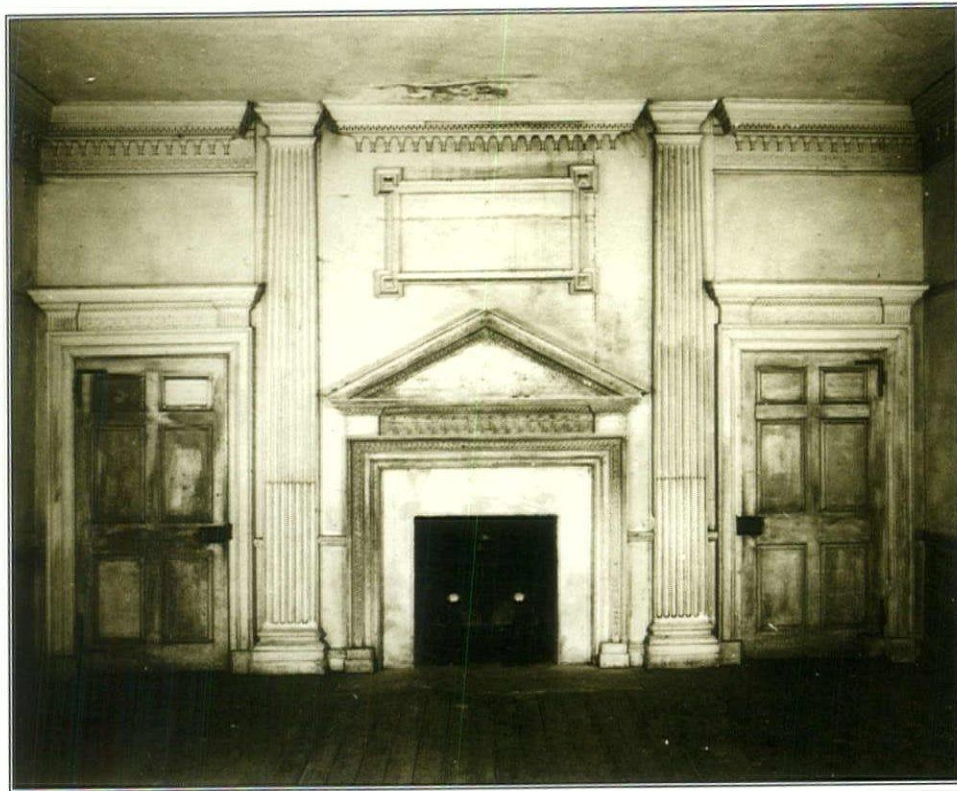
Moving Mount Ida

Mount Ida, one of Virginia's lesser known late 18th century treasures, has been of great concern to historians for years. Built about 1795 and enlarged during the mid-19th century, the original parlor of the Buckingham County house contained woodwork so spectacular that museum curators eyed it for possible acquisition.

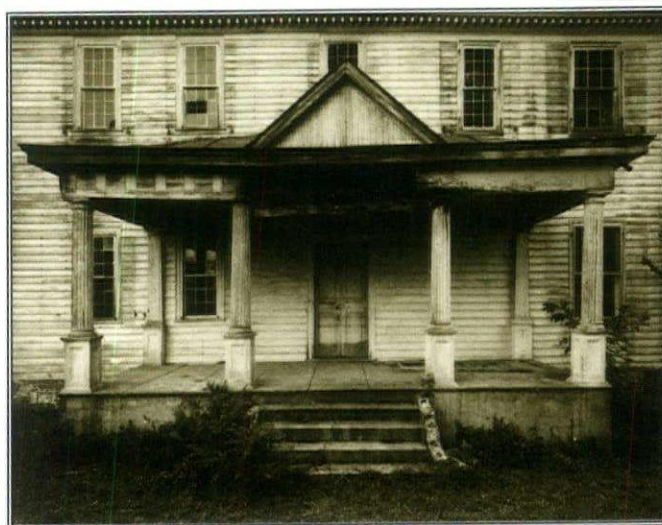
Abandoned and in a state of extreme disrepair, the property was offered for sale to anyone who would take it away. So when Charlottesville attorney James Brady Murray bought the house in May 1995, he hired Frazier Associates of Staunton to oversee its dismantling and relocation some 30 miles away to Albemarle County. "Our goal was to move the property and reconstruct it in a site condition and orientation that was as close to the original as possible," says principal William Frazier.

Because the house is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the architects took extra measures to protect its historic designation. The elaborate interiors were documented with large-format photography and a system for labeling all the dismantled pieces was devised. In addition, the state was provided with plans that illustrated similarities between the building's new site and the old one. "We oriented it to the south, just like the original," Frazier says. Using computer technology, the firm also created a 3-D video to help historians at the state Department of Historic Resources envision the approach to the relocated house.

To satisfy the owner's needs, the architects also designed a new great room, master bedroom, and bathrooms – all of which are placed in a wing connected to the historic structure by a new stair hall. "Based on the fact that the interior is the most significant portion of the house, we have received preliminary approval that the National Register status will be maintained," Frazier says. "But we won't know for certain until the reconstruction is complete." While new framing and foundations are part of the reconstruction, original wood siding and chimneys are being reused. By late next summer, Mount Ida should be whole again.



Mt. Ida was known among many historians – and coveted by curators – for the remarkable quality of its interior woodwork



Documentary photographs of the weathered house (above and left) comprise part of the historical record of the National Register property.





Photos: Philip Beaufline

Powhatan County's 1849 courthouse anchors a prototypical town green.

With All Due Respect

Designed by A.J. Davis and completed in 1849, the Powhatan County Courthouse is one of the prime examples of Greek Revival architecture in Virginia and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Yet, although it has functioned effectively as a courthouse since its completion, the landmark building was surrounded by a collection of smaller, inadequate facilities serving the county sheriff's department, the General District Court, and two busy court clerks' offices.

Powhatan County's goals for the project were to restore the historic temple-form court building and upgrade its systems while integrating the varied

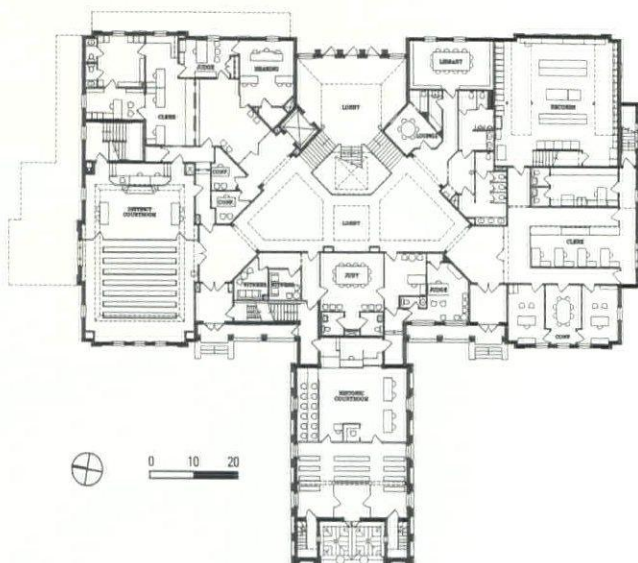
departments that shared the bucolic courthouse square. A key requirement was that the building continue to be used as the Circuit Court. To this end, the historic edifice was restored to its former appearance by Charlottesville architects Browne Eichman Dalglish Gilpin & Paxton. Modern heating, cooling, lighting, and security systems were disguised.

To the rear, the architects attached a 20,000-square-foot addition conceived as a series of small building masses that step respectfully back from the main courthouse. This concept allowed the addition to complement the character and scale of the square by taking advantage of the slop-

ing site and employing the concept of an English basement for the sheriff's office. That, in turn, allowed a reduction of the building's outer dimensions and massing. New functions are organized around a shared lobby entered from the back.

The architects created enough contrast between the new and old buildings to keep the Classical courthouse as the primary focus, a goal achieved through subtle strokes. They built the addition of brick, as opposed to the lined stucco of the historic courthouse. And the scale of the addition's gable ends and pediments were made purposely smaller than those of the old courthouse.

15



New glass vestibule leads into historic old courtroom.

Preservation

New Breath of



Life

Norfolk was aglow with pride in 1899 when a seven-story bank building, the city's first "high rise," opened in the Main Street business district. No doubt the elegant lobby was a local topic of conversation, but accounts in *The Public Ledger* were more preoccupied with the up-to-date telephone system that allowed bookkeepers and bank officers to communicate efficiently.

Nearly 100 years later, modern telecommunications systems are taken for granted. It's the rich architectural detailing of The Life Building—returned to brilliance after years of neglect—that is turning heads now. A \$3.2 million restoration by architects Cederquist Rodriguez Ripley Maddux of Norfolk has revitalized this important city landmark and given heightened presence to the Life Savings Bank headquartered there.

When work began on the three-year project, its scope was limited by a \$1 million budget. But as renovation began and new architectural treasures were uncovered, the bank decided the job was worth doing thoroughly or not at all. Archival research formed the basis for recreating the original interior ornamentation. And a survey of the building indicated additional needs such as restoring the terra cotta cornice on top of the building, refurbishing a Seth Thomas street clock, relocating the bank's main teller lobby into the historic marble lobby, restoring the board room, developing an arcade-style entrance from the rear parking lot, and creating space for new retail shops.

Among the many challenges faced by the architects was the restoration of the unarticulated east wall. As was customary at the time of construction, the east facade of the bank was built of common brick because another building abutted it. Although it was rough parged and painted, the current owners wanted the unsightly wall to match the rest of the building. Recognizing the lack of structural support for seven floors of new brick, the architects devised a brick-face system that combined a layer of rigid foam, followed by ridged aluminum panels and half-inch-thick brick faces. "The result was a perfect solution, in terms of using contemporary materials to create the effect of the late 19th century," says project architect Karl Hossli, AIA.

Twenty-nine terra cotta brackets from the once-grand cornice along three sides of the building were missing or damaged. To complicate matters, the metal support system for the brackets was rusted through. Stainless steel angles, pins, and bars were installed to support new brackets molded of glass-reinforced plastic using a surviving bracket as a pattern. A further

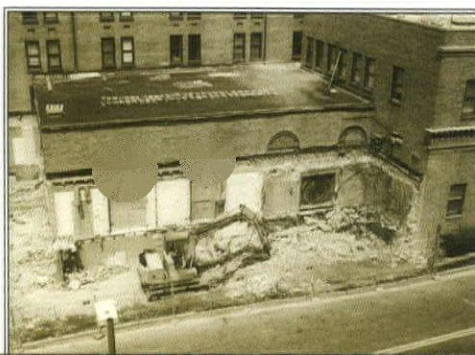


The historic bank lobby (facing page) was refitted with Classical ornament removed in a mid-century modernization. Now the former side annex (above and below, during demolition) is an entrance from rear parking.

benefit was the brackets' light weight, which freed up dollars for additional restoration elsewhere in the building.

More than two tons of plaster were cast on site to repair or replace a wide range of decorative elements inside the building. As with the cornice brackets, part of the process involved removing intact architectural features and using them as forms for plaster molds. Where necessity demanded, entirely new elements were designed and cast, including all the Corinthian capitals for the lobby. The cost-effectiveness of the process sparked the idea for casting additional pieces—from egg-and-dart ceiling tiles to tenant signs—for use throughout the building. Traditional shapes made for the interior include lion faces, garlands, dentils, keystones, and acanthus crowns.

Now the building is fully occupied and Norfolk has a taste of banking the old-fashioned way.



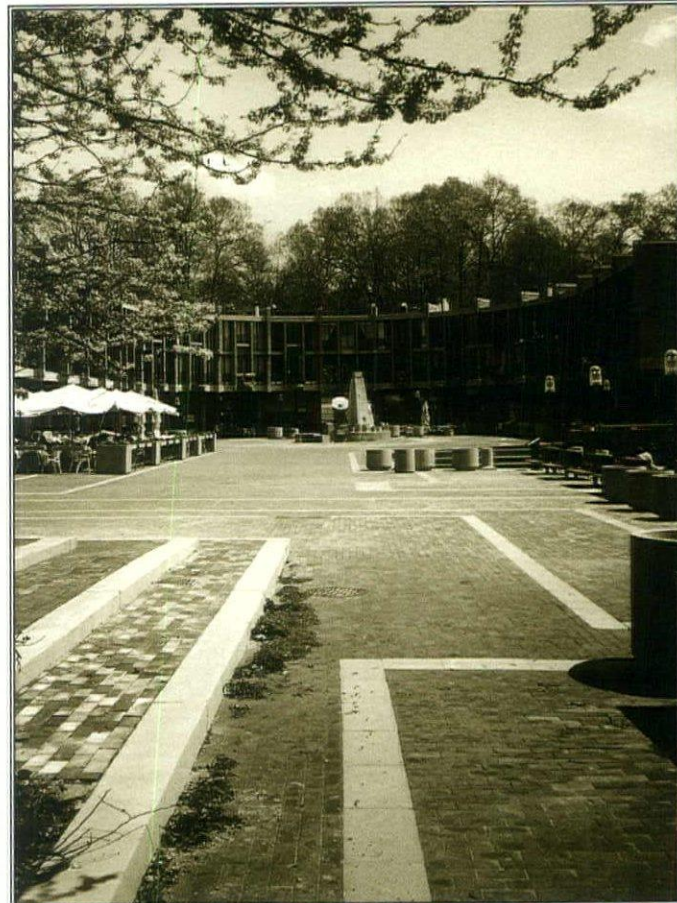
Remaking a Modern Icon

Little more than 15 years after its incorporation in 1965, the Lake Anne community of Reston was declared a historic district by Fairfax County. But after three decades of fame as a groundbreaking example of urban design, Reston discovered the combination of insufficient retail activity around its focal point, Washington Plaza, and poor construction of many original elements were too great a problem to solve alone. With the aid of a community block grant, the county hired architects Morgan Gick & Associates of Falls Church and landscape architects Stephenson & Good of Washington, D.C., to renovate the plaza, including the Brutalist water fountain and boardwalk along the adjacent manmade lake.

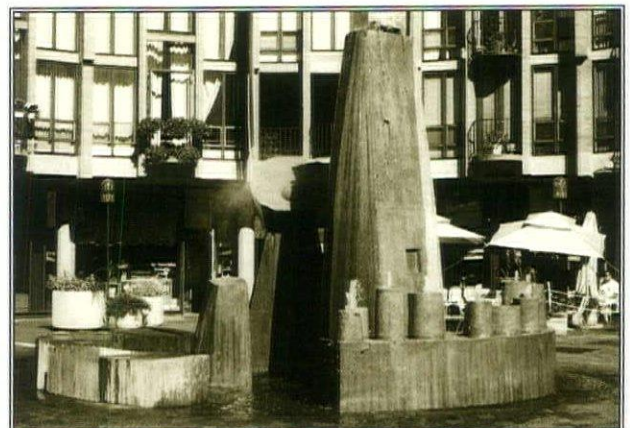
To guide the design team, a partnership of public officials, residents, and retailers was selected. The process benefited from close collaboration with James Rossant, the plaza's original designer. Each change from the original design – including modifications recommended as a result of modern construction methods and alterations of the original concept to better suit the community's evolution – required approval of the county Architectural Review Board.

The fountain's degraded condition made replacement the only alternative. It was photographically recorded and the location of each of the 13 elements precisely measured to ensure proper placement of the new pieces. New formwork was built around each of the original pieces and then removed prior to the fountain's demolition. An entirely new waterworks system, required by code, will mimic the original fountain effects and improve water quality.

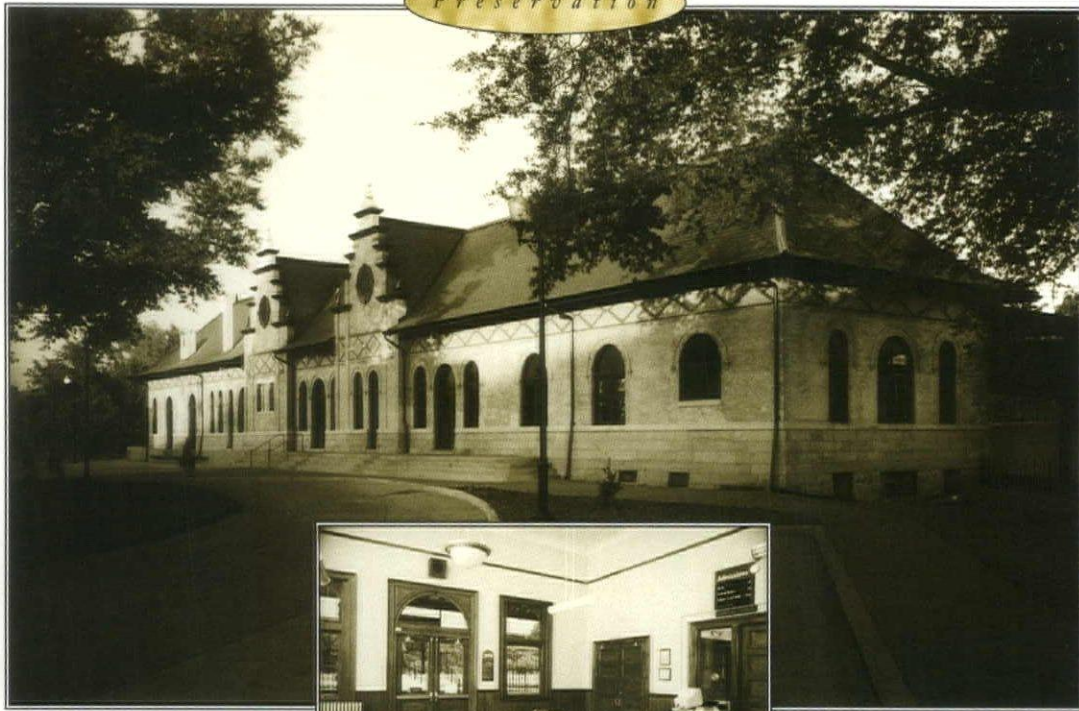
Over the years, the angled wall panels that physically and visually bridge the gap from the higher plaza to the boardwalk had shifted so much that they were as dangerous as they were unsightly. The redesigned wall provides better drainage and stability, while Boston ivy offers the desired accent with the promise of less maintenance than the original honeysuckle. Now Reston's central landmark is again a source of pride.



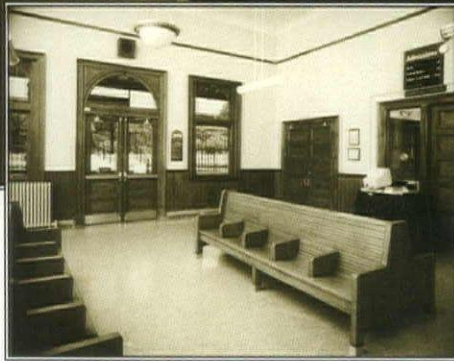
Repairs to the pavement, retaining walls, drainage system, and fountain have returned this icon of the New Town Movement to like-new condition.



The plaza's signature fountain was cracked and dysfunctional after 30 years of use (above left). Now a complex recasting is complete and new waterworks are in place (above).



Photos: Compson Studio



Renovation of the station (above) has stimulated other improvements in town. The redone lobby (inset) offers access to exhibits at both ends of the building.

Down at the Station

19

Restoring a building as an object serves memory. Restoring a building as a living, functioning piece of the community serves life. The Danville Rail Passenger Station and Science Center, whose revival was guided by Wood Swofford & Associates of Charlottesville, proves both are possible.

With the advent of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Enhancement Act (ISTEA), money became available from the federal government for restoring transportation-related structures. With years of discussions and planning behind them, Danville officials became one of the first applicants for the money. To enhance the project, the city received the backing of the Virginia Science Museum to place its first satellite facility within the completed building.

"This would not have happened without private support," says Community Development Director Jerry Fischer. "The community has raised almost \$1 million to get the science center up and running." Combining the center with the train station

feeds the entire community, he said. "The renovation excites the historians and many of the city's residents who remember the station as it used to be. The science center excites the education community, which in turn excites the business community." In part as a result of the renovation, a restaurant and retail center have opened within a block's walk of the station.

The train station was only Danville's first ISTEA project. Phase II, scheduled for completion in April, includes the old freight warehouse and property adjacent to the train station. With financing from a second ISTEA grant, the building and property were bought for conversion into a community market and special events center. Phase III, to be financed through a third grant, is in the planning stages. It will link the train station with both banks of the adjacent Dan River via a series of walking trails using an old train trestle to cross the river. It will also connect to the old canal system on the south bank and to Dan Daniel Park on the north side.



Before the renovation, the derelict station was a painful reminder of Danville's lost past.

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Preservation

Dream Quarters



Having the chance to work on the historic family quarters for the U.S. Army Military District of Washington was a dream project for Greg Rutledge, AIA, of Hanbury Evans Newill Vlattas in Norfolk. With an educational background that included concentrations in history and preservation in addition to his architecture degree, Rutledge says an assignment like this one was "all I ever wanted to do."

The military district encompasses historic Ft. Myer, built in 1863 to defend the Union capital; Ft. McNair, the oldest Army installation in continuous use; and Ft. Belvoir – totaling more than 230 historic residences and two National Register districts. Surveys of the structures established the basis for new stewardship standards for their repair and renovation. Other highlights include:

- A 10-year master plan outlining a systematic approach to the management of these residences. Since most Army housing was built according to standardized Quartermaster Corps plans, the Washington residences establish guidelines for posts nationwide.

- The development of Historic Component Guidelines booklets for each type

of house with recommendations for maintenance procedures and outlines of procurement information for every fixture, finish, and component.

- The whole-house renovation of eight prototypical houses as a demonstration project.

Rutledge says he considers Ft. McNair one of the rare jewels of the nation's forts. Established as an arsenal in 1794, the site came to life in 1902 when it was selected as the site for the Army War College. A new Beaux Arts urban plan was created by architects McKim, Mead and White, who also designed many of the buildings along the parade ground. "It was a real treat to work on buildings designed by one of the foremost architectural firms of the time to keep them vibrant and alive for the next 100 years," says Rutledge.

Although funding cuts delayed the start of the renovations, the work has now begun and will continue as money is appropriated. Hanbury Evans' plan for the district received a Presidential Design Award in 1995 from the NEA and was a key factor in Rutledge's receiving the Award for Preservation this year from the Virginia Society AIA.

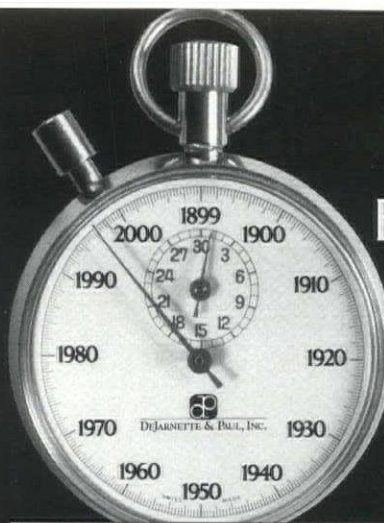
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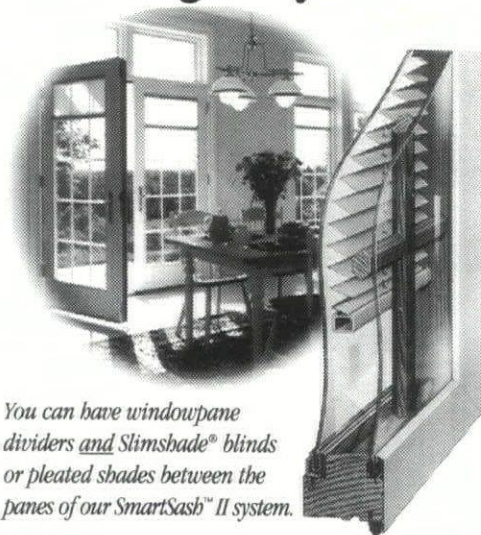
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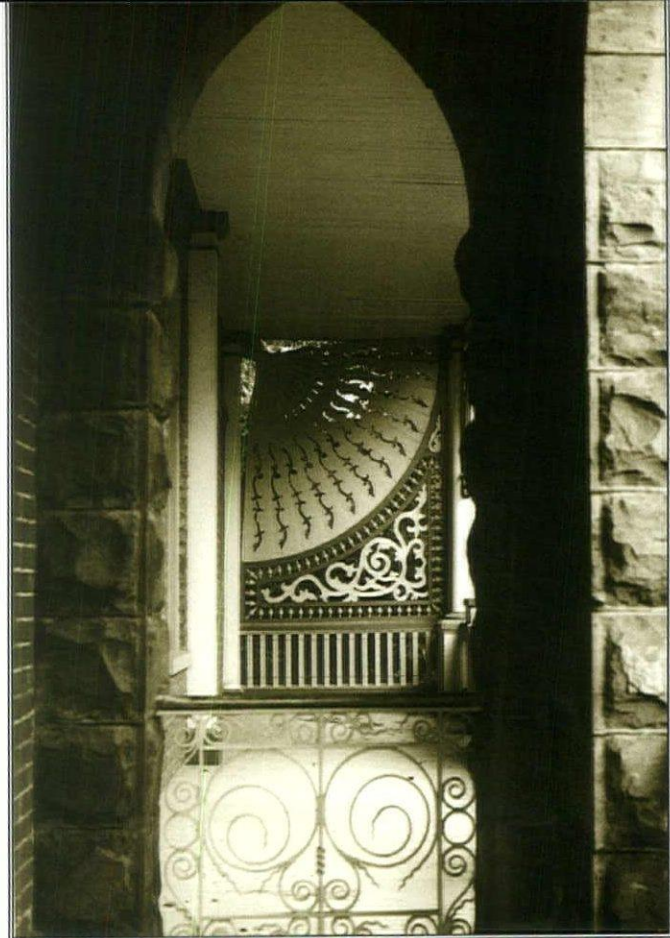
By David J. Brown

People from all walks of life understand the role building construction plays in local economies. But when asked to name an activity that has an economic impact in Virginia measured in the billions of dollars, few Virginians would think of historic preservation. Consider these facts:

- The investment of over \$350 million in the rehabilitation of some 900 buildings across the state in the past 15 years using federal tax credits has provided Virginians with 12,697 jobs and an increase in household income of nearly \$275 million. The result: good jobs and good wages.
- Visitors to historic sites stay longer, visit more places, and spend more money in Virginia than do other visitors. The result: visitors coming to see Virginia's vast inventory of historic sites add their dollars to the state's economy.
- Property values of historic buildings and sites in communities as diverse as Fredericksburg, Richmond, and Staunton significantly out-perform the appreciation rates of non-historic properties. The result: benefits to Virginians of every economic status.
- In the past ten years, 20 small Virginia communities participating in the Main Street program have seen more than \$54 million of private funds invested in the rehabilitation of over 1,600 buildings. The result: new businesses and new jobs.

As preservationists have long suspected, the economic benefits of historic preservation are enormous while the understanding of those economic benefits is limited. With this deficit in mind, the Preservation Alliance of Virginia undertook a study last year aimed at remedying that problem. Those concerned with the state's heritage have, for many years, sought to justify and encourage preservation activities by speaking of the sense of place provided by Virginia's historic districts, the unparalleled craftsmanship found in older buildings, the knowledge gained from archaeological excavations, and the human scale visible on Virginia's Main Streets.

Those are strong arguments. But often they fell short when placed, for example, against developers' desires for a new mall and the strong pull of government policies favoring suburban sprawl at the expense of existing cities. The Preservation Alliance study should help change all that, based on the advantages it documented in four areas: job creation, tourism, property values, and downtown revitalization.



JOB CREATION

In the past 15 years, rehabilitation of some 900 historic buildings in Virginia has created 12,697 jobs – slightly more than half in the construction trades and the rest in spinoff areas. This historic preservation activity has resulted in a total increase of \$275 million in household income in Virginia. These figures reflect only projects completed under the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program, a federal incentive to encourage preservation of commercial projects in which private-sector participation has exceeded \$350 million. That figure doesn't reflect the hundreds of millions of dollars spent by individual Virginians restoring their own historic homes or local governments restoring public landmarks.

Rehabilitation is generally cost competitive with new construction, but it is much more labor intensive. Each million dollars spent on rehabilitation creates 15.6 construction jobs, 14.2 jobs elsewhere in the economy, and adds \$779,800 to household income. That totals 3.4 more jobs and \$53,500 more in household income than created by the same amount spent on new construction.

HERITAGE TOURISM

Historic preservation visitors are a major portion of Virginia's \$9 billion tourism industry. They stay longer, visit twice as many places, and spend two-and-one-half times more money than do other visitors to the state.

Historic sites, museums, and battlefields are by far the top draw for first-time visitors to the state. Three times as many first-time visitors take in historic sites as visit beaches, four times as many as visit theme parks, and 15 times as many as visit golf courses. By a lesser margin, historic sites are also the number one attraction for repeat visitors.

Colonial Williamsburg alone accounts for more than a half-billion dollars a year to Virginia's economy. But the historic

triangle of Williamsburg, Jamestown, and Yorktown is not the only magnet for tourists seeking to understand Virginia's rich history. Old Town Alexandria now attracts over 1.2 million visitors a year, Winchester has begun to capitalize on its considerable Civil War heritage, and communities between Petersburg and Appomattox are linked in a cooperative venture to market the route of Lee's final retreat.

PROPERTY VALUES

An often overlooked aspect of preservation's impact on the economy relates to property values. "The claim that Virginia historic districts somehow reduce property values is simply a claim with no basis in fact," says the report. "Increasingly, the marketplace recognizes both the short- and long-term economic value of historic properties."

The study looked at several Virginia cities and numerous neighborhoods within those cities in assessing the financial impact of historic designation. In Richmond's Shockoe Slip, for instance, the property tax assessments of historic buildings between 1980 and 1990 made a quantum leap upward by 245 percent. By contrast, the aggregate value of real estate citywide increased by only 8.9 percent. A study of Richmond's Franklin Street district found that renovated historic properties appreciated at rates substantially greater than did new construction and unrestored historic properties.

Studies in Fredericksburg found that properties within its historic district gained appreciably more in value over the last 20 years than properties located elsewhere in the city. And in Staunton, where the City Assessor conducted a detailed study of property values, non-historic residential property averaged a 51 percent increase from 1987 through 1995. Residential properties in the city's five historic districts averaged property value increases from 51.9 percent to 66 percent. The rise was even more dramatic for commercial structures. While the values of non-historic properties rose an average of 25 percent during that same period, commercial property values in the historic districts increased in value from 27.7 percent to an astounding 256 percent.

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

Since its inception in 1985, the 20 communities in Virginia's Main Street program – whose goal is downtown economic development within the context of historic preservation – have netted more than 1,100 new businesses and added 2,170 new jobs. The program has spurred the rehabilitation of 1,622 historic buildings in those communities, representing a private-sector investment of more than \$54 million.

Virginians have been involved in preservation since the rescue of Mount Vernon in the 1850s, and in the preservation of real communities since the pioneering work in Alexandria and Richmond in the 1940s and 1950s. We now find that saving and reusing those communities has benefits to society that include building a strong economy. Today, when economic development is a top priority of virtually every mayor, when fiscal restraint is a mantra at every level of government, and when the private and public sectors are committed to creating more jobs, it makes sense to consider the dollars and cents of historic preservation.

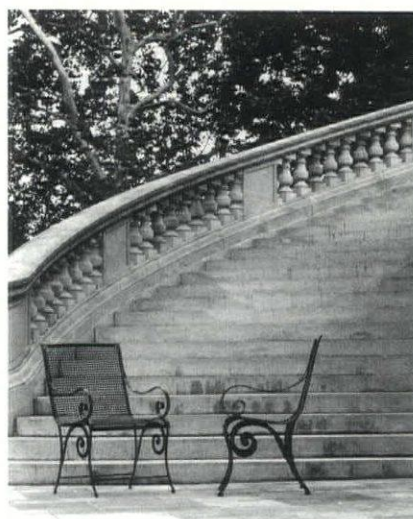
Until recently, David J. Brown was executive director of the Preservation Alliance of Virginia. In September he assumed duties as director of the southern regional office of the National Trust for Historic Preservation in Charleston, S.C.

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Halfway 'round the World and Back Again

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By Rob Walker

In H.C. Yu's American dream-come-true, success takes shape all over the world in huge coliseums, high-tech towers, sophisticated laboratories, hospitals, and airports. He never would have predicted such things. "It's crazy how life has its twists," Yu says.

The self-described "architect's engineer," a native of China, spreads credit generously from the Catholic priest who prodded him to attend school in the Philippines, to his college professors in America, to colleagues who appreciate his talents, to the wife from Manchuria whom he met in Richmond. "I am very grateful," Yu says. "I have made lots of friends."

And he gives credit to the creative freedom available in America, where "nobody is going to tell me no," unlike in China and Japan, where he maintains everybody is regimented into little space and little cubicles. "I travel all over the world," Yu says. "But when I come back I say, 'This is home sweet home.'"

Yu founded his consulting engineering practice, H.C. Yu and Associates, in his Richmond basement in 1980. It is a comprehensive mechanical, electrical, and plumbing firm that integrates



H.C. Yu (above) says architecture comes first – followed by the engineering systems required for human comfort.

telecommunications, security, central utility, and energy conservation into the designs generated by architects. Today, the company – a general practice with a list of projects that is long and varied enough to support that description – has 80 employees in offices in Richmond and Taiwan.

Yu's footprints can be found on college and university campuses from Stanford on the west coast to Cornell on the east, and back home to Virginia Tech, the University of Virginia, and others. He's the man who figured out how to cool the Louisiana Super Dome after it opened and was unable to withstand New Orleans' withering humidity and heat. Elsewhere, huge signature projects bearing his stamp include the Virginia Air & Space Center in Hampton, the 1.3 million-square-foot World Trade Center in Taipei, the Orlando International Airport in Florida, and the expansion of Dulles International Airport outside of Washington, D.C.

And if this list appears to place Yu somewhere out in the high-tech future, his work also is hidden discreetly at Colonial Williamsburg, Carter's Grove, and a host of renovated churches, theaters, and private homes across the region.

People who've worked with Yu inevitably choose the same two adjectives when describing him: innovative and enthusiastic. "I go back with him 25 years," said John E. Wilson, FAIA, chairman of the Richmond architectural firm Rawlings Wilson & Associates. "He works well with architects, particularly when we come to problems related to integrating systems. He's extremely dynamic and innovative. And his enthusiasm is contagious."

Yu says engineers should work with architects from the beginning to ensure that building systems will be invisible or, at the least, incorporated gracefully into a building's form. "Design excellence begins with a thorough understanding of, and an unconditional respect for, architectural intent," he says.

Yu's comfortable middle-class life bears few marks of the difficulties he faced as a youngster. He remembers running from school to hide from Japanese bombers in a cave. He found that same cave again last summer on a trip to China with his wife and son. As World War II ended and the Communists seized control of his homeland, Yu's family fled to Taiwan. His father would become deputy prime minister in the government of Chiang Kai-shek.

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2550*	2.5	8.2	50	164	1.2	4	125	1346	233	513

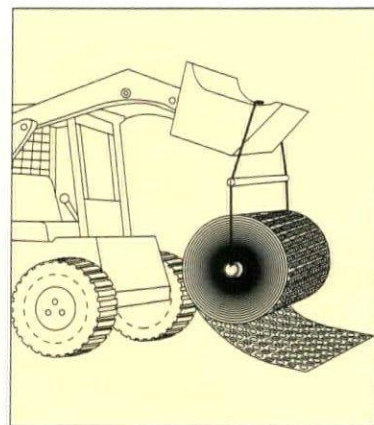
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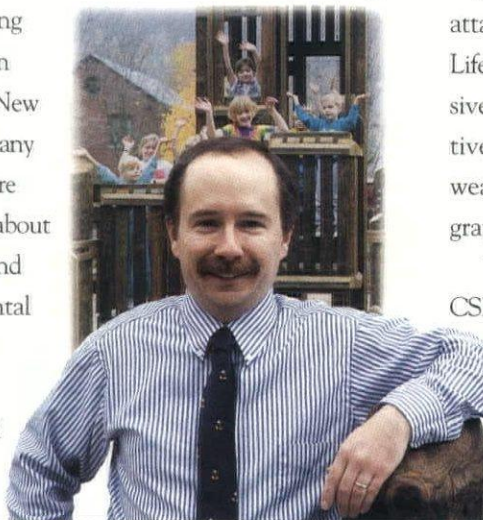
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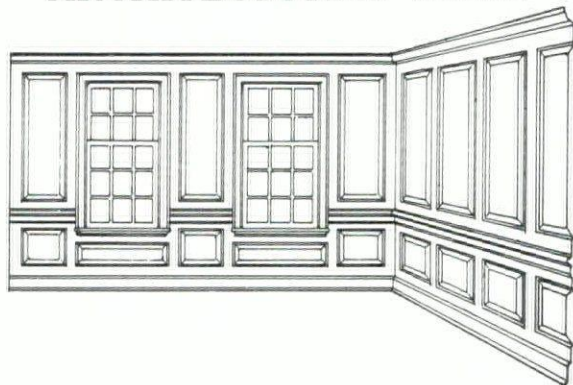
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Yu left to study science in Manila but outdistanced his classmates and soon followed a cousin to far-off Blacksburg, Virginia. He remembers stepping off the train in Christiansburg, half a world away from home. "There were maybe five or six Chinese students," he says. "I was a rare animal."

Yu earned a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering in 1957. With a thesis focused on auto transmission design, he was offered a fellowship to the Chrysler Design Institute — then it was promptly withdrawn. This was the Cold War era and much of the work at Chrysler had military applications. Because he was not a U.S. citizen, Yu was considered a security risk.

Instead, he took jobs in New York, Pennsylvania, and back in Southwest Virginia, learning about industrial instrumentation, power plants, and piping design.

He came to Richmond in the early 1960s, where he worked for several firms including Hankins and Anderson Inc., before setting out on his own.

By then, Yu's expertise had begun shifting into air flow and air conditioning systems. He found ways of integrating air conditioning and environmental control systems for a chemistry laboratory at U.Va. That success led to larger projects requiring similar systems.

Today, anyone familiar with Yu will point to his work on ice thermal storage systems that save energy by making ice at off-peak hours and then using it to cool the building when electricity is in greater demand, and more costly, the following day. The process also reduces the need for larger cooling units that strain utilities' capacity. His design for the Christopher Columbus Center in Baltimore won a \$450,000 award for efficiency.

"He brought ice storage to this area," says Pete Dunbar, president of the structural engineering firm Dunbar Milby Williams Pittman and Vaughan and a longtime friend of Yu. "His firm is one of the most progressive and innovative around," Dunbar says, "and we've been introduced to some talented people, some big-name national firms, as a result of working with him."

Yu's biggest current project is the ROC Center in Taiwan, a 2.1 million-square-foot software park whose design commission was awarded through a worldwide competition. For the building, he designed work stations with individualized environmental controls. Although thousands of tenants will occupy the building, the unique system allows workers to control the heating, air flow, cooling, lighting, telecommunications, and sound masking at their desks. The building's systems also are designed so that groups of tenants can work freely together in infinitely varying, secure collaborations, or with total independence.

Though Yu is 63 and nearing the point at which most people start angling toward retirement, the suggestion that he may slow down anytime soon seems a foreign notion to him. "I enjoy what I do," he says. "People see me running all around doing a lot of work and they say, How can you take it? I really choose to do this. Someone calls with a project and we take off. That's the way we are."

Rob Walker is a Richmond freelance writer.



An ice thermal storage system cools the massive Air & Space Center.



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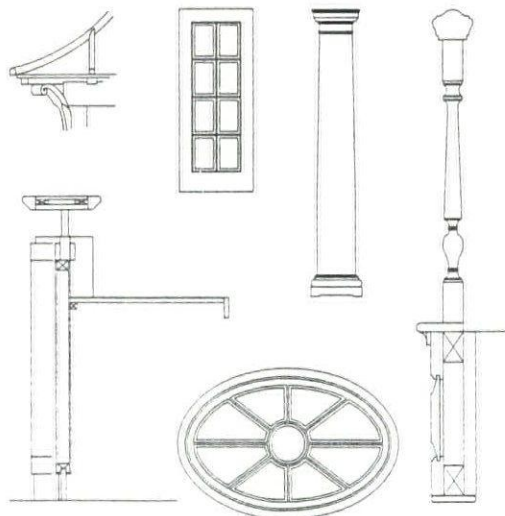
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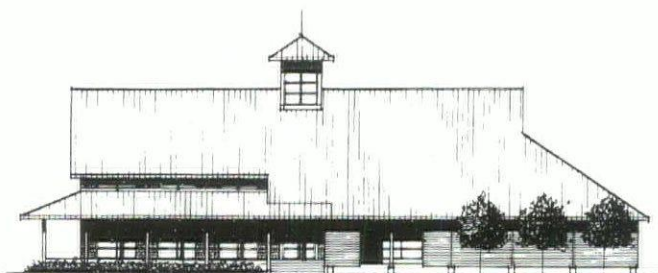
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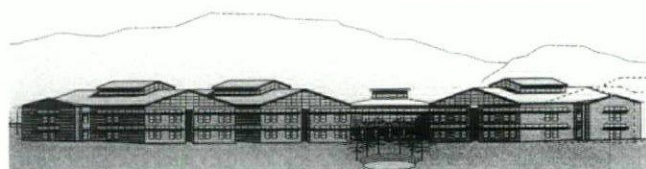


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Architect: Odell Associates Inc., Richmond
Project: Accomack County Airport

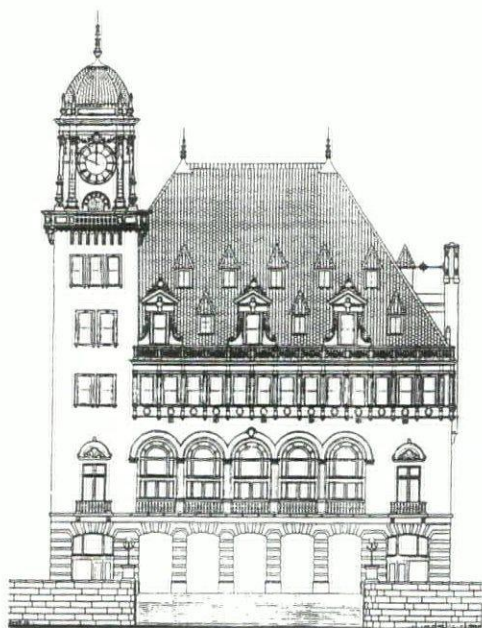
An exposed steel structure supporting a wood-frame facade expresses both the high-tech nature of modern aircraft and the architectural heritage of Virginia's Eastern Shore. Consisting of 4,000 square feet of space, this replacement facility is due to open in June 1997. 804-644-5941.



Architect: Rancorn Wildman Krause Brezinski, Newport News
Project: Monticello High School

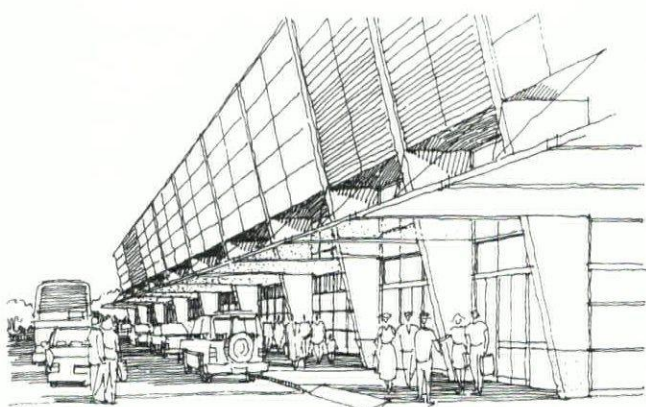
Designed for interdisciplinary teaching, this 180,000-square-foot school in Albemarle County consists of three academic "houses" that foster learning in intimate groups. Also incorporated are sustainable design strategies. Project is in association with Hammel Green Abrahamson. 757-873-6606.

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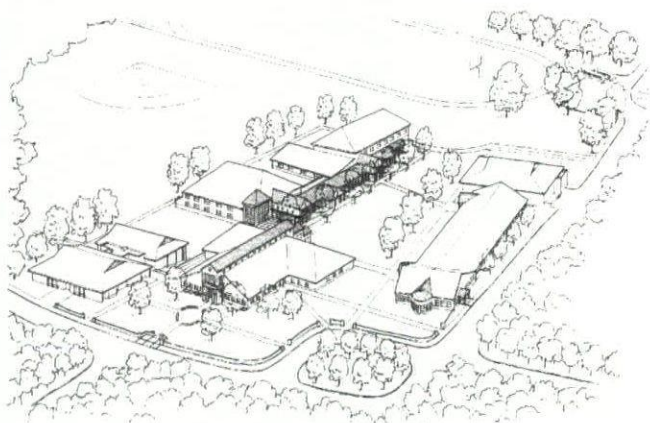
Architect: Harry Weese Associates, Arlington
Project: Main Street Station

Through conservation of the brick, stone, and terra cotta facade; preservation of the historic interior; introduction of current technologies for code compliance; and adaptive reuse of existing spaces, this French Renaissance landmark in Richmond will become an urban transportation center. 703-875-0400.



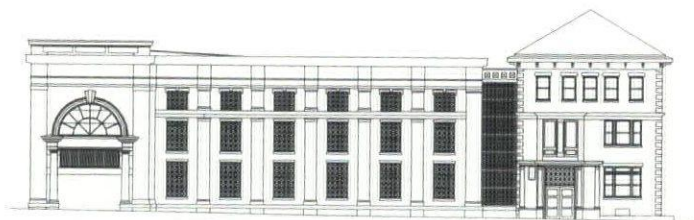
Architect: HNTB Architecture, Alexandria
Project: McGhee Tyson Airport Renovation and Expansion

This \$40 million project adds a 118,000-square-foot concourse and renovates the existing 109,000-square-foot terminal in Knoxville, Tenn. The airport will offer state-of-the-art operation while harmonizing technology and nature. Contact Robert Busler, Director of Business Development, at 703-684-2700.



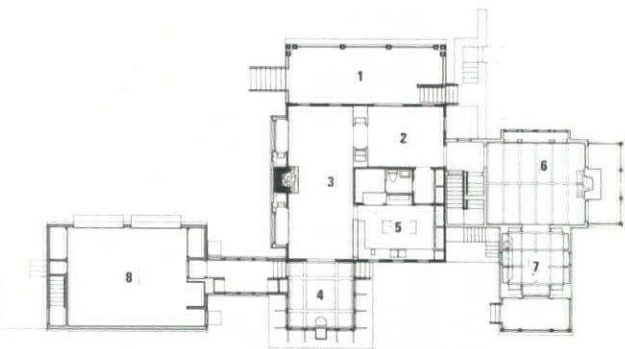
Architect: Bond Comet Westmoreland + Hiner Architects, Richmond
Project: Collegiate Lower School Expansion

Renovation and expansion of the campus in Richmond will replace outdated facilities, provide space for a broad range of programs, and improve and maintain the campus setting. Existing and new buildings, including a Learning/Technology Center and new classrooms, will form an academic courtyard. 804-788-4774.



Architect: Marcellus Wright Cox & Smith Architects, P.C., Richmond
Project: St. James's Church/Temple Beth Ahaba Parking Deck

This deck will serve two urban congregations in Richmond. Finish detailing is in response to the existing institutions and apartments along the block. Original facades of the apartment building on the corner will be kept, while the infill facades follow its height and scale of its window openings. 804-780-9067.

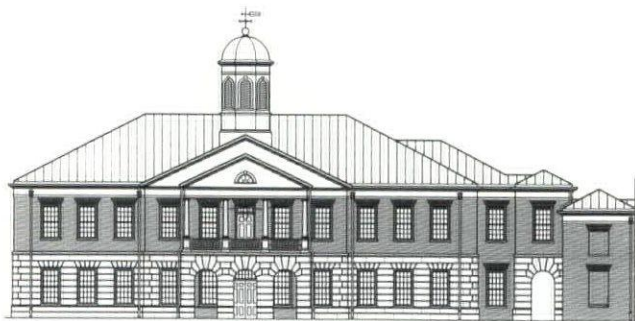


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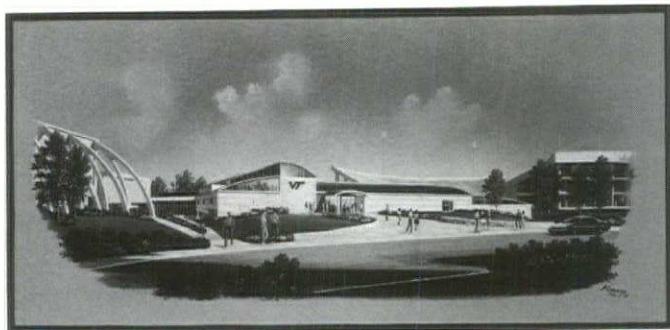
Architect: Train & Spencer Architects, Charlottesville
Project: Addition to Private Residence

Construction on Laurelwood, a mountain home in Rappahannock County with views to the Blue Ridge and the Piedmont, has moved into Phase II with the addition of the library and living room. The expansion includes two major additions and a total renovation of the original house. 804-293-2965.



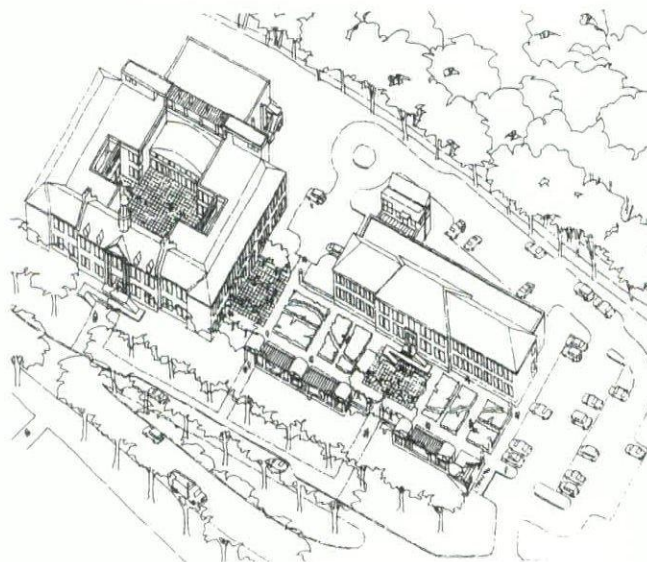
Architect: Wood Swofford & Associates, Charlottesville
Project: The Danville Courthouse

This expansion and renovation of a relatively new courthouse for the booming Danville area revisits late 19th century courthouse design in Southside Virginia. The classical precedents referenced in the facade speak to traditional values, the basis for the judicial system, and founding of the nation. 804-979-7407.



Architect: Ward/Hall Associates AIA, Fairfax
Project: Merryman Athletic Facility at Virginia Tech

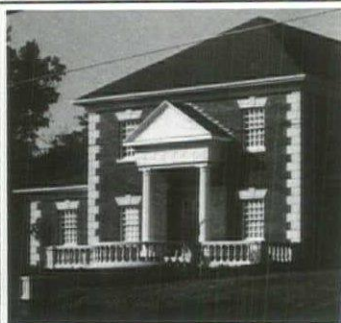
Construction begins soon on this multipurpose complex to include the Athletic Department entrance, exhibit area, academic center, football team auditorium and meeting rooms, sports medicine center, weightlifting area, and gym. Worley Associates is the sports facility consultant. 703-385-5800.



Architect: Thompson + Litton, Wise
Project: The Appalachian School of Law

Buildings originally designed as elementary and secondary schools will be transformed into a new campus. By removing unsuitable components, a new Law Quadrangle is created as a means of organizing the program, which includes new classrooms, offices, and a law library. 540-328-2161.

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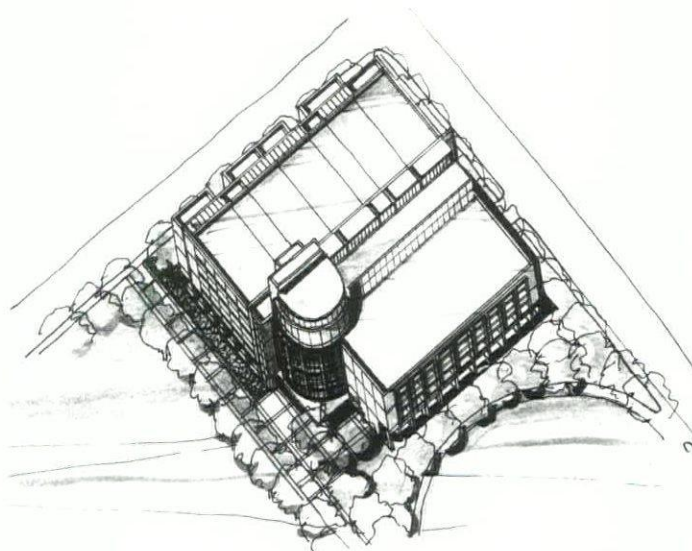
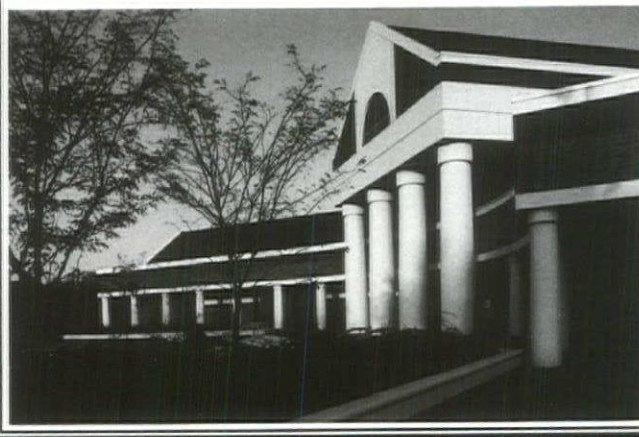


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Architects: The TAF Group, Virginia Beach, and
 Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum, Washington, D.C.

Project: Chesapeake Circuit and General District Courts

This 170,000-square-foot courthouse replaces two outdated municipal buildings with eight new General District courtrooms, seven Circuit courtrooms, clerks' offices, Commonwealth's Attorney's offices, and support functions. 757-340-0322.

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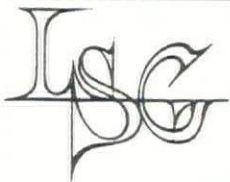


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Restoration, rather than rehabilitation, conjures demons of all description when trying to remain faithful to an original building while adding modern conveniences. Architects Michael Bednar, FAIA, and Elizabeth Lawson, AIA, approached the rejuvenation of their own Charlottesville home with an eye toward distinguishing the new while restoring the old.

The lineage of the house they bought in 1993 traces back to mason William Phillips and carpenter Malcolm Crawford, lead artisans on Jefferson's academical village. Sadly, by the time Bednar and Lawson bought the 167-year-old house, a National Register property, it had lain abandoned for years and been condemned. But its noble proportions survived.

In striving to return the two-story house to its earlier glory, Bednar says, "we were fortunate in that virtually all of the fabric was intact." The brick, windows, and portico on the outside – and all but the staircase inside – were in good shape. In making the house habitable, the couple did nothing to it that could not later be undone. They preserved the integrity of the main rooms by not adding closets or plumbing. New interventions such as woodwork or doors were kept modern in appearance and painted gray to make them distinct from the original fabric.

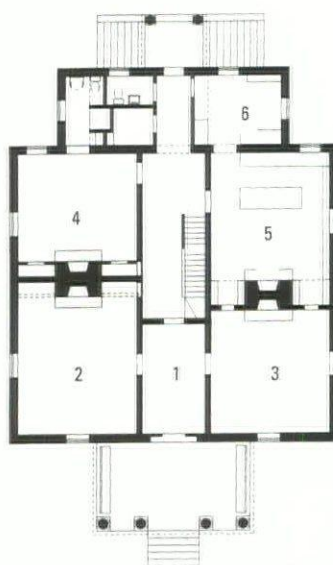
An addition, built in the 1850s, contains the new plumbing. Electrical outlets were placed in the floor or the baseboards in most rooms. Where overhead lighting was necessary, channels were cut through the plaster and into the masonry walls. Air conditioning was not added, Bednar notes, "but the mass inertia of the brick and the large windows keep it comfortable."

After two-and-a-half years in the house, Bednar says the house is a thrill to live in. "The graciousness of the spaces and the light are wonderful." Bednar and Lawson's desire to restore as much as possible stems from a sense of responsibility. "We are stewards while we are here. Obviously, the home will be passed on to someone else." – *T. Duncan Abernathy, AIA*



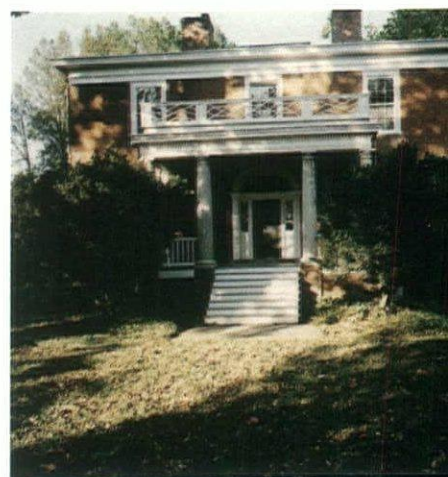
Photos: Walter Smalling, Jr.

New doors and trim reveal modern detailing (above). The finished house (below) contrasts sharply with the weathered shell bought in 1993 by Bednar and Lawson (left).

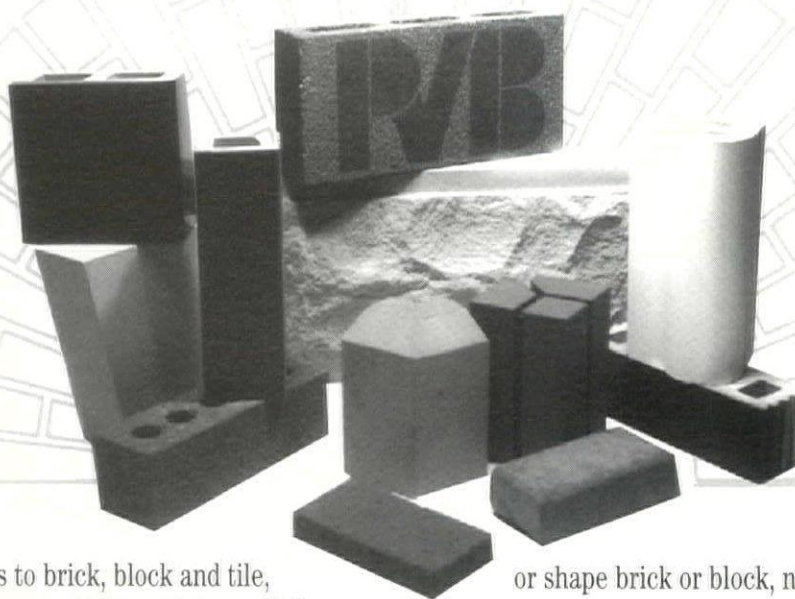


First Floor Plan

- | | |
|---------------|-----------|
| 1 Entry Hall | 4 Den |
| 2 Living Room | 5 Kitchen |
| 3 Dining Room | 6 Pantry |

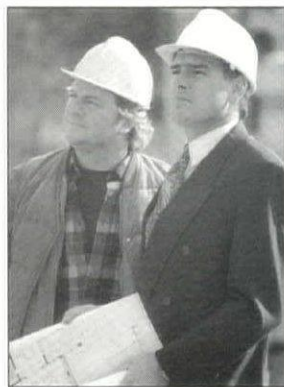


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