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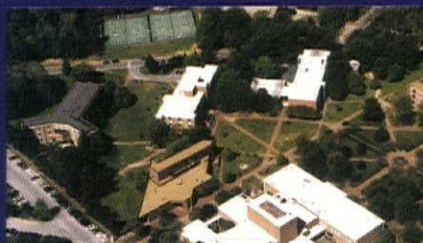
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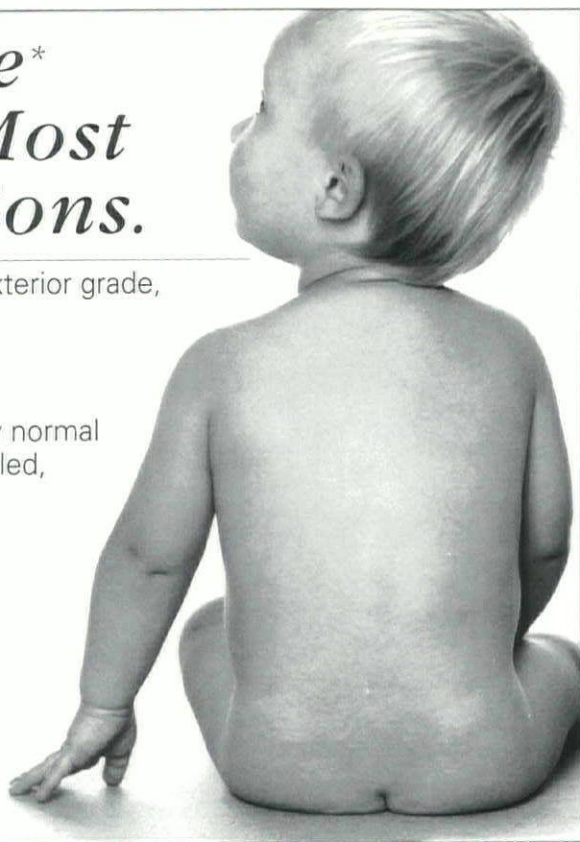
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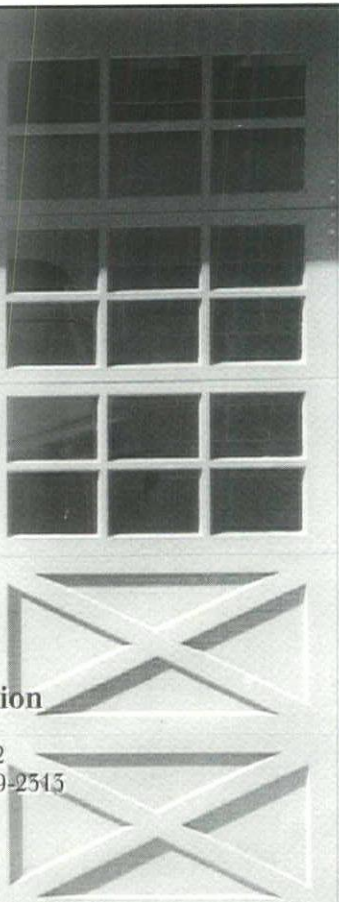
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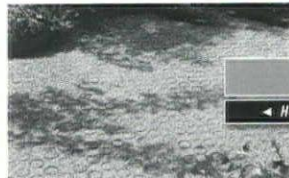
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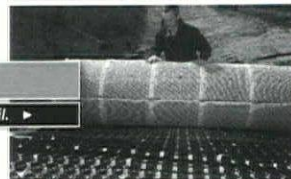
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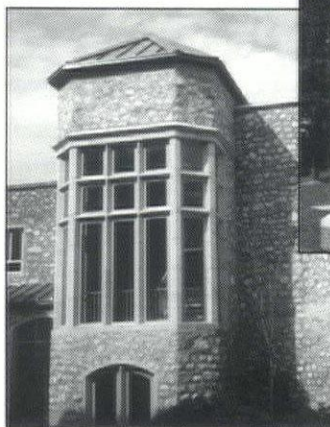
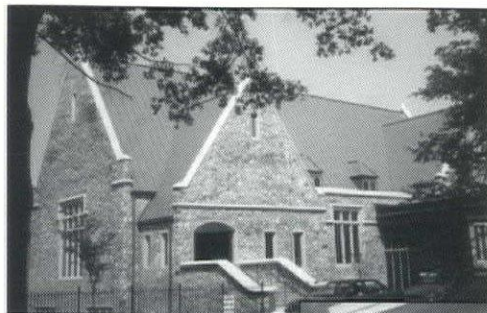
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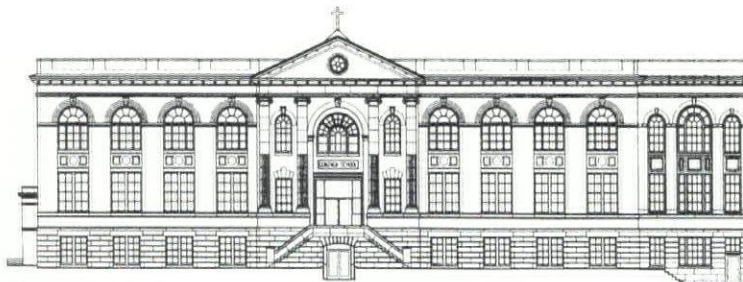
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Buildings for Learning

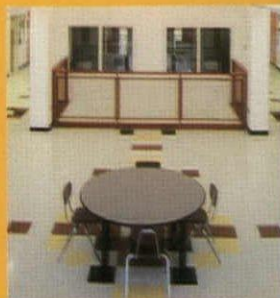
New technologies, new teaching methods, and shifts in population continue to generate a need for new school buildings across the country. In this issue, *Inform* looks at five recent buildings designed with environments that support learning and keep the educational process in step with the times.

Batten Library, Hanbury Evans Newill Vlattas
Monticello High School, Rancorn Wildman Architects
Center for Christian Study, Bruce R. Wardell, AIA
Jamestown High School, HBA Architecture
Cool Spring Elementary, Bond Comet Westmoreland + Hiner

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Sliver of Glass

A striking new glass-and-brick academic center at Clinch Valley College in Wise imposes an organizing structure on a section of campus that sorely lacked a coherent plan. *By Lisa Goff*



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Design Lines

new developments in design

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House & Home

refining cottage chic at Helmhurst

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Taking Note

doing the small thing well

On the cover:

Commonwealth Hall, Clinch Valley College.
Photo by Robert Batey Photography.

In our next issue:
Religious Buildings

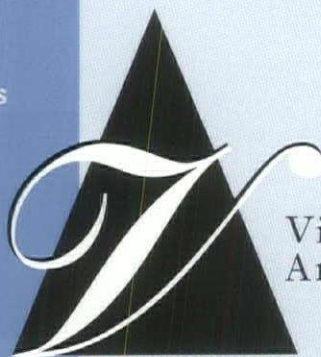


"Visions for Architecture" Debuts

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Visions for
Architecture



Murray Howard congratulates
Lee Stuart Cochran.



Guests filled the Reynolds
lobby to capacity.

6



Peter Dun Grover and
Richard Harrison of APVA.



Trio from SMBW
Architects with Bill
and Marilyn Fields
(left). Noland
Medalist G.T. Ward
celebrates with his
wife Margaret (right).



Emcee Charles
McDowell held court
over dinner.

What better way to link the 40th anniversary of Reynolds Metals headquarters to the Virginia Foundation for Architecture's goals to expand public understanding of architecture than to stage a high-style celebration of architectural accomplishments at the company's corporate headquarters? An enthusiastic audience of 300 celebrants obliged by attending the event, which featured top award winners of the Virginia Society of the American Institute of Architects.

At center stage was Reynolds' 1958 offices, designed by Pritzker Prize-winner Gordon Bunshaft. The building received the Virginia AIA's Test of Time Award – and shine it did. Reynolds' executive chef Claude Broome concocted a fete which started with caviar, buckwheat blini, and vodka – and ended several hours later with creme brulee and Courvoisier.

Between these delicacies, the audience was treated to self-guided tours of the executive suites, marveling at the staying power of the building's innovative uses of aluminum. Following hors d'oeuvres, they were led through a program of awards by journalist and Master of Ceremonies Charles McDowell. While amusing the audience with his own flavor of Virginia storytelling, McDowell highlighted both recent and long-sustained accomplishments in architecture.

For her service as a volunteer to Monticello, the University of Virginia and the Garden Club of Virginia, Lee Stuart Cochran of Staunton was awarded the Architecture Medal for Virginia Service. As a member of the U.Va. Board of Directors, she led the effort to form the Jeffersonian Restoration Advisory Board. And under her leadership, the Jefferson Moment Campaign at Monticello surpassed its \$25 million fundraising goal.

In addition, architect G. T. Ward, FAIA, a principal of Ward/Hall Associates

AIA of Fairfax, received the William C. Noland Medal for his long service to architecture, to his alma mater Virginia Tech, and to the Foundation. Among Ward's many accomplishments, he was lauded for his unparalleled support of the College of Architecture and Urban Studies at Virginia Tech and for his role in expanding the college's Washington/Alexandria Center and helping the university establish a permanent site for study in Switzerland. Other honors and ten design awards were also presented.

The event, generously supported by Virginia's business community, was designed to illuminate the Virginia Foundation for Architecture's efforts to broaden public understanding of architecture's influence on quality of life. The strong attendance at Visions provided valuable support to the Foundation, which in 1999 will host a cross-section of Virginia teachers in a forum to consider architecture as a curricular issue in subjects such as civics and math. To accomplish this, the Foundation will work in concert with the American Architecture Foundation and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, both of which have strong interests in architecture and design in the school curricula.





Although Modern in expression, the Reynolds building incorporates classical elements of symmetry, the courtyard, podium, and peristyle.

Reynolds Metals: "Ahead of Its Time"

It was only fitting that, during the 40th anniversary year of its completion, the Reynolds Metals Headquarters would be selected to receive the Test of Time Award in recognition of its lasting value. As a work of architecture, its appeal is timeless and universal. As a Virginia landmark, it stands out as one of the highest design achievements of the Modern era.

Classically elegant and subtly innovative, the Reynolds Metals building is an archetypal suburban corporate headquarters. Conceived jointly by company founder Richard S. Reynolds, Sr. and architect Gordon Bunshaft of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, the building is both a reflection of corporate ambition and design sophistication.



In 1958, offices had "Italic Style" aluminum desks.

The design and construction of the office building intentionally demonstrated multiple uses for aluminum in the building industry, with more than 1 million pounds of aluminum used throughout it in various ways. Even the carpets were woven with aluminum fibers. Among the most innovative features of the building are the 14-foot-high solar louvers on the east and west facades. Based on the calculations of an astronomical clock, these rotate during the day to block direct sunlight. The building's interior partitions and openings were modular in design so that changes in the size or function of the space could easily be accommodated – an arrangement considered standard today.

The following companies provided support to the Virginia Foundation for Architecture through their patronage of Visions for Architecture.

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Humor and Surprise Run Rampant in Design Exhibition



"Centerpiece" by Josef Hoffmann (left) questions the utility of handles. Shiro Kuramata's "Side 1" chest (right) pits the stability of stacking against precarious undulating form.

Visitors to the "Designed for Delight" exhibition at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts will see that – in the minds of the artists, at least – one can sit on a flower, hang a hat on a cactus, wear a suit made of leaves, even flirt with a curvaceous chest of drawers.

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"Designed for Delight: Alternative Aspects of Twentieth-Century Decorative Arts," which continues through January 31, includes nearly 200 objects from the collection of the Montreal Museum of Decorative Arts. The exhibition's international scope covers major stylistic movements from Art Nouveau and Art Deco to Pop and Postmodernism.

"Seeing the quality and the fun that designers can bring to our lives is what enlivens this exhibition," says Katharine C. Lee, director of the museum.

The exhibition challenges the accepted notion of Modern design, the idea that form always follows function and that Modern objects are by definition chaste, unadorned, and rational. "By the time the Pop Art movement swept New York thirty years ago, many creative people were questioning 'sacred cows' in the arts and asking for a wider look at legitimate directions for the artist," asserts David Park Curry, curator of American arts at the Virginia Museum. Although the notion that "ornament is crime" was widely held up until the 1960s, an alternative stream has never ceased to flow throughout the century, says Curry.

Objects in "Designed for Delight" are organized around four themes: the appeal of ornament, the role of fantasy, the transformation of standard elements such as handles or bases, and the human body as a design motif.

In the section titled "Is Ornament a Crime?" visitors see that ways of enriching form – say, with floral patterns and geometric shapes – have remained important design elements throughout the century. Illustrating ornamentation are a floral textile by painter Raoul Dufy and an Alessandro Mendini cabinet decorated in the style of Kandinsky.

The section titled "Flights of Fantasy" taps personal experiences and dreams, nostalgic glances at the past, and satirical statements in which objects imitate other objects. Highlights include an armchair in the form of a flower, an ivy-covered jacket, and a necklace fashioned from eyeglasses.

"Inversion and Transformation" pre-

sents objects that rebel against expected notions of form and challenge traditional assumptions about the behavior of materials. Included are Josef Hoffmann's centerpiece with oversized handles and an Andrea Branzi tea service that is tilted, threatening to spill the tea.

Throughout art history, the human body has been a strong influence in art and artists, Curry says. Highlights of the section on "Body Language" include a brightly colored Niki de Saint-Phalle armchair shaped like a seated person and a Wendel Castle chair shaped like a tooth.

What this all amounts to is a "secret history of Modernism," suggests essayist Martin Filler in the 336-page catalog that accompanies the exhibition. Writes Filler, "The selective bias that was an essential component of the International Style program is being exposed as an exercise in aesthetic sanitization. Our sense of innovative 20th century design can no longer be what the polemicists of sixty years ago wished it to appear to be.... Our interpretation of what Modernism was and continues to be has irrevocably changed."

And that sound you just heard? It's Mies rolling over in his grave.



"Moonlit Garden" armchair (left) by Masanori Umeda represents the 1990s.

Architect Finds Joy In "Slice of Life"

Everybody likes the idea of inventing something, says architect Hal Craddock. But he didn't anticipate that one of his home-grown concoctions might someday take off in the marketplace.

Early signs indicate that may be happening with Craddock's zany designs for a necktie that incorporates the tiny tip usually hidden in the back. Rather than tuck the small end of the tie neatly behind the label, wearers of Craddock-designed ties pull it through a slit so it hangs out in front and completes a graphic image. The results are fresh, whimsical, and a little insane.

"When you get an architectural education, you're basically taught to think abstractly and outside of the box," says Craddock, a principal of Craddock Cunningham Architectural partners in Lynchburg. To him, this invention emerged from that kind of thinking.

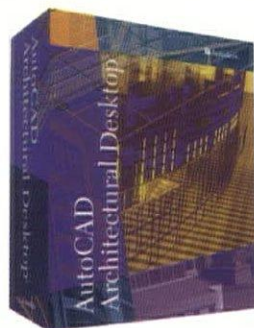
One of the first designs was a cow with its tongue sticking out. Then came another sporting a collection of tools, with a measuring tape protruding from the slot. The most popular version is a computer with a mouse dangling from a cord. Using the trade name "Slice of Life," more than 20 designs are being produced by MBP Neckwear, a New York-based company that bit on the idea and started shipping ties in August.

Craddock's idea took shape at his kitchen table, where he sat down with his son and began sketching concepts. Craddock drew the cow, his son drew clouds. He gave the rough ideas to Matt Tyree, a graphics whiz who works in his office. Soon he traveled to New York to peddle his simple black-and-white designs to neckwear manufacturers, one of whom took a look at Craddock's creation and said, "If I really had to evaluate this, I would say you have scarred a beautiful thing."

But Craddock persisted. He refined the designs on a computer, producing paper versions in color. And his next siege on the Big Apple was a success. By early 1998, prototype ties were being shown at apparel trade shows and orders were placed by Sears and "The Tie Rack" chain. Now interest has stirred on the international market.

"It gives me a real sense of accomplishment," says Craddock, who sees the project as an outgrowth of his architectural education. "It's all about thinking systematically and creatively at the same time."

"Slice of Life" ties include cow with adjustable tongue and composition notebook with No. 2 pencil.



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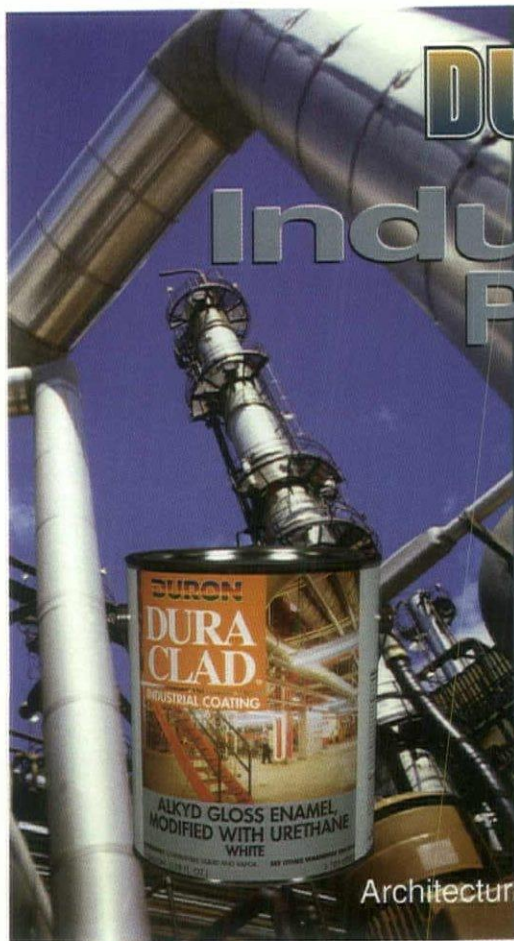
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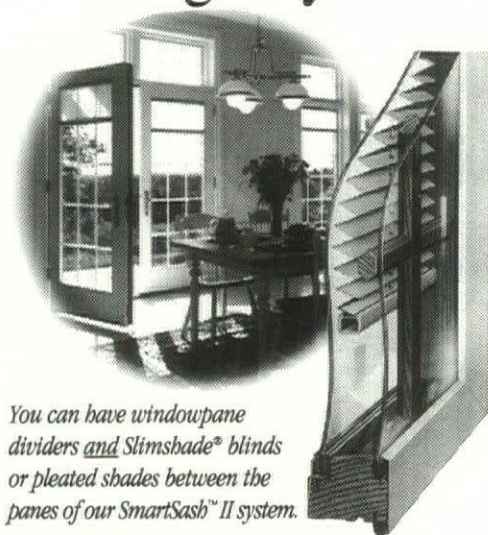
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New Schools on the Horizon

The requirement for new schools, it seems, never goes away. One might easily conclude otherwise, given the fact that America has long prided itself on the value of education and, thus, has been building places to learn from the moment its first colonies were established. But new technologies, new teaching methods, shifts in population, and unattended deterioration of the existing building stock have produced what looks like a staggering need for new buildings.

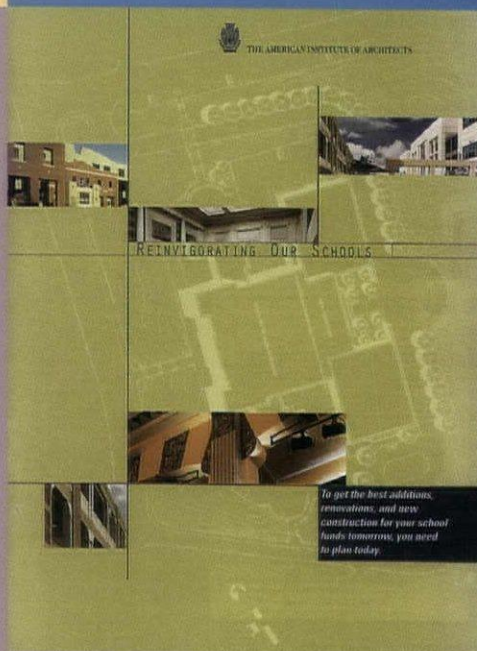
Consider this: Over the next five years, enrollments at public elementary and secondary schools in the United States are projected to grow by 1.3 million students, according to the U.S. Department of Education. Many school districts already are at or near capacity due to population growth and the fact that students remain in school longer. The government's projections indicate a need of well over \$20 billion in new K-12 school facilities over the next five years. And this figure is in addition to the \$112 billion already identified as necessary to return existing school facilities to good overall condition and bring them up to federal standards.

These trends are touching Virginia no less than other parts of the country – and in higher education as well. In this issue of *Inform*, we look at a number of new public schools across the state, a technology-rich library for an independent school in Norfolk, a context-driven solution for a religious study center in Charlottesville, and the award-winning Commonwealth Hall at Clinch Valley College.

Free School Planning Booklet Available

In a 1994 report, the federal General Accounting Office projected costs of \$72 billion for new school construction to serve enrollment increases nationwide. The GAO also reported that one-third of the nation's schools need extensive repair. Meanwhile, sixty percent of public schools in the country identified at least one major building feature in a state of disrepair.

For administrators and parent groups who want help thinking through the process of renewing their schools through innovative planning and high-quality construction, the American Institute of Architects has published a handy guide intended to help interested groups identify their problems, produce feasible solutions, and bring in the right people to keep their good ideas moving forward. For a free copy of the booklet, "Reinvigorating Our Schools," call the American Institute of Architects at 1-800-365-2724 (ask for publication W-866) or visit the Institute website at www.aiaonline.com.





Books and Bytes

Batten Library • Hanbury Evans Newill Vlattas & Co.



A grand staircase and projecting balconies greet visitors as they enter the library (facing page). The building's concave corner announces the library's location at a critical site in the campus plan (right).



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Norfolk Academy – Virginia's oldest secondary independent school – was not about to let tradition stand in the way of its passage into the information age. Recognizing the transformation necessary to meet the changing information technology needs of K-12 students, the 270-year-old private school commissioned architects Hanbury Evans Newill Vlattas & Co. to design a 26,000-square-foot library to house a technologically advanced learning center as well as a collection of 45,000 books.

Prior to selecting an architect, the school administration had already chosen a site for the new Upper School library on the front of the campus. The design team examined the mission, philosophy, and growth goals of the school and recommended that the chosen site be reconsidered in favor of one that would respond to future campus needs, provide a closer link to the Upper School academic core, conserve land for parking and playing fields, and minimize the impact of the new two-story structure on a campus dominated by one-story buildings.

The architects expanded their involvement by helping to develop campus growth guidelines that anticipate the school's physical and academic goals. Ten sites were studied for the new building, now known as Batten Library. By talking with students, the design team learned that adjacency of the new library to the Upper School was strongly desired, given the short time between classes and the school's emphasis on research. Ultimately a new site was approved – one that offered the desired proximity while conserving land, reducing sitework costs, and healing an unsightly edge of the campus.

In the heart of the library is a classroom for 300 students, smaller lecture rooms and work rooms, and the school's media center –

all wired for information technology. Each seat in the reading rooms offers access to the school's digital network and the Internet. Seating is a mix of traditional library carrels and library tables designed with individual reading lights and data ports.

The library's contemporary interior of cherry, black metal, and translucent glass provides a stimulating interpretation of technology, while the interior colors and fabrics create a warm and inviting place to read.



Seen from the balcony, the ground floor includes banks of computer terminals where students can conduct research digitally.

Stewards of the Earth

Monticello High School • Rancorn Wildman Architects



Photos: J. Christian Wildman

Monticello High (above) features well-insulated walls, high-efficiency mechanical systems, and rooftop light monitors that reduce the need for artificial lighting. Light shelves adjacent to windows (below left) bounce daylight far into the building.

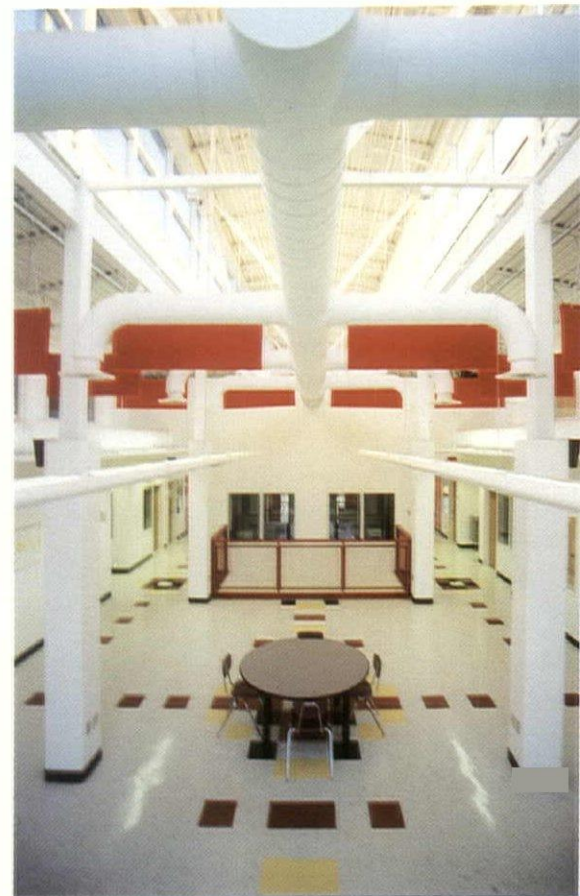
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Completed this year at a cost of \$21.3 million, Monticello High School in Albemarle County is a model of energy efficient and environmentally responsible design. Although implementation of the energy-saving recommendations added about \$780,000 to the initial construction costs, the reduction in operating costs those strategies will produce are projected to pay back the investment in 12 years. Beyond that point, the energy-efficient aspects of the building will generate significant annual savings for the county.

William McDonough + Partners of Charlottesville prepared the energy/environmental analysis that was integrated into the school's design. The firm was part of an architectural team that included Rancorn Wildman Architects of Newport News and Hammel Green & Abrahamson of Minneapolis.

McDonough's recommendations ranged from increasing the amount of glass in the school (including windows, roof monitors, and skylights) to improving the energy efficiency of light fixtures and the bulbs that go in them. In addition, the wide range of energy-efficient initiatives include optimizing the thermal characteristics of the roof and walls, improving the performance of the heating and cooling system, and purchasing energy-efficient office and kitchen equipment.

Designed around an interdisciplinary curriculum, Monticello High School consists of three, two-story academic "houses" that allow students to learn in smaller, more intimate groups. Organizing the space this way encourages interaction among students of the same grade level by enhancing their identity with peer groups.



Interior spaces are bathed in light from clerestory windows.



Wood-framed tower provides requisite stair without creating an eyesore.

Deferential Treatment

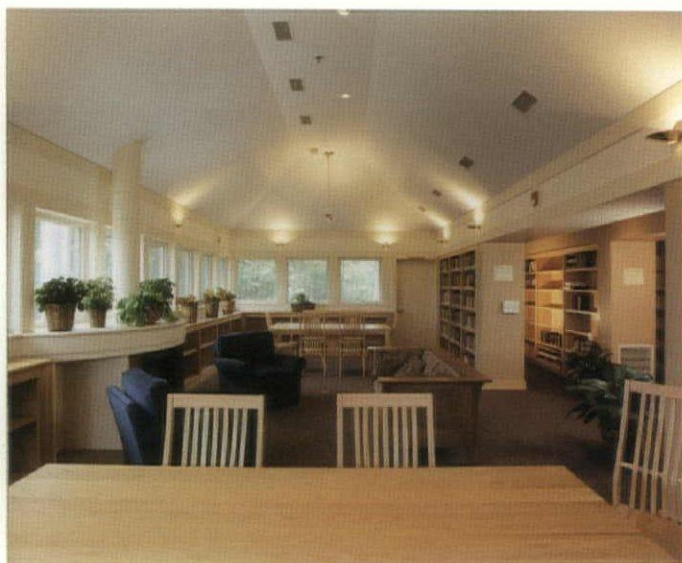
Center for Christian Study • Bruce R. Wardell, Architect

The Center for Christian Study, which was making do in a traditional shingle-style house set in a Charlottesville residential area, desperately needed to improve its facilities. Its program for expansion – completed in 1996 – added meeting space for 125, a library with a reading room and research stations, new offices, and residential facilities for interns.

Site constraints required that any new construction occur to the rear of the existing building, says architect Bruce Wardell, AIA, who designed the addition with particular attention to the relationship between it and the surrounding neighborhood. The project consists primarily of an addition to the rear of the house, which allows the existing building to maintain its existing scale and relationship to its context. The massing and symmetry of the original house is mirrored in the addition, with the two separated by a wood-and-glass connector that is painted to differentiate it from the two main building masses.

An enclosed exterior staircase allows direct access to the addition from the street. The building is clad in unpainted wood shingles, giving it a human scale and warmth. The connector piece helps create an overall massing which is appropriate to maintain a residential scale. On the upper level, the primary meeting space incorporates views of the distant Blue Ridge Mountains, framed by a hearth and bookshelves.

15



The building respects the residential scale of the neighborhood by stepping down the hillside behind the old house (right). Library/reading room enjoys views through generous upper-level windows (left).





Courts Befitting a King

Jamestown High School • HBA Architecture



Two-story wings of the school create a private courtyard (left) outside of the media center.

Photos: Jeff Goldberg/Esto

16

Opened in 1997, Jamestown High School in James City County was designed using the “school within a school” concept of space organization. The design team at HBA Architecture of Virginia Beach grouped the functional areas in largely self-sufficient “houses,” each of which holds classrooms, faculty offices and workspaces, and restrooms.

HBA built the outside of the school mostly of Williamsburg brick, using traditional banding and recesses in the facade to make the change in scale between the academic block and the arts and athletics blocks. At the core of the two-story academic area is the media center, which borders an exterior courtyard. Organizing the school this way provides each class with daylight and allows for windows – hence, views – at the ends of corridors.

The four academic houses contain single- and double-width classrooms for flexibility to support block scheduling and team-teaching. Connecting the academic block to the taller arts/athletics blocks is a light-filled commons. The commons extends the length of the north-south axis and serves as a gathering space for events



Drawing (above) shows separation of U-shaped academic wings from large theater and gym. Inside, auditorium has a high level of finish (right).

in the the auditorium and gymnasium. Fronting the commons is another semi-enclosed courtyard, where students eat outdoors or socialize.

Designing the building in three parts allows people to enter the school in many ways. Buses discharge students directly in front of the academic block and its light-filled stair towers. People arriving by car enter at the south commons entrance, while the north commons entrance serves as a way into the arts block.





Photos: James Adcock

Curved gymnasium roof and canopies along wall give school a distinctive profile (left).

Elementary Forms

Cool Spring Elementary School • Bond Comet Westmoreland + Hiner

Cool Spring Elementary School had its beginnings a decade ago when Hanover County purchased the site for a K-12 learning community that now includes an elementary, middle, and high school. Completed in August 1997, it is Hanover's first new elementary school in more than twenty years.

In response to site conditions – and in an effort to shrink the building's footprint – one classroom section of the school was designed two stories high. Architects Bond Comet Westmoreland + Hiner of Richmond placed the second story at the rear of the building to minimize its apparent size from the street and allow more classrooms to benefit from pleasant views.

Simplicity of design and layout makes the school an inviting place to be. The plan is a simple square of intersecting corridors

formed around an interior courtyard. Visitors enter through a massive wall of wood-molded red bricks and precast concrete – a wall that makes for easy orientation by separating the classroom wings from the public spaces. Floor tiles laid in a “train track” pattern are typical of the blended colors and use of materials that appear throughout the school.

Natural light, color, pattern, and texture work in combination to clarify circulation paths. Students can easily identify special activity spaces throughout the building because of their prominent placement and distinct architectural features. Guidance and resource rooms, for example, are found at the junction of the first floor academic halls, where curved walls of glass block signify their presence.

17



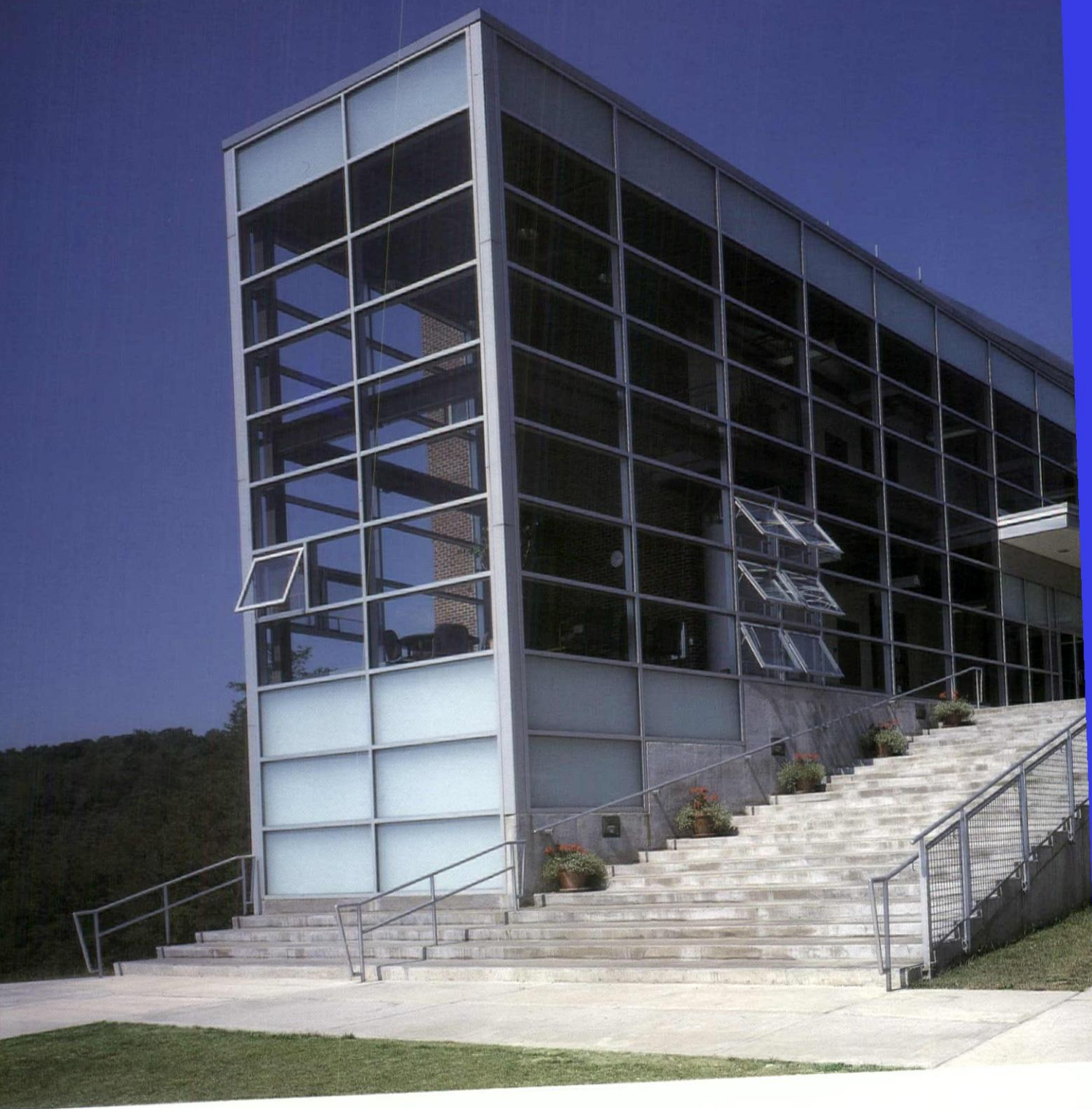
First Floor Plan



- 1 Entrance
- 2 Administration
- 3 Media Center
- 4 Art Room
- 5 Gymnasium
- 6 Cafeteria
- 7 Music Room
- 8 Fine Arts
- 9 Courtyard



Ceiling beams lend rhythm to the corridor.



The last time a major new building was built at Clinch Valley College, LBJ was in the White House and faux-van der Rohe governed institutional architecture. "It was time to build something new," says Elizabeth Lawson, AIA, a capital programs manager in the facilities planning department at the University of Virginia, which is the parent institution of the small liberal arts college in the far southwest corner of the state.

In 1992 the university made funding available for three projects at Clinch Valley: a library expansion, a renovation of a classroom building, and a new 30,000-square-foot building to provide classrooms and multipurpose space for a host of college departments, from computer science to visual and performing arts. "We also saw an opportunity to build something architecturally distinctive, something that would really enhance the campus," says Lawson. In addition, college officials wanted a new

master plan for the site, which was loosely arranged into upper and lower campuses.

Clinch Valley College sits on a 50-foot-high plateau in Wise, Virginia, a tiny town tucked among the Appalachian Mountains at the western tip of Virginia. Spit and you hit Kentucky. The college is built on land reclaimed from a strip mining operation. But the campus at the time had the feel of a suburban office park, with bland brick-and-glass shoe-box buildings dotted among winding lanes. The layout and architecture

Sliver of

Glass

A striking new academic center at Clinch Valley College by Balzer and Associates with Pasanella + Klein Stolzman + Berg imposes an organizing structure on a part of campus that sorely lacked a coherent plan.

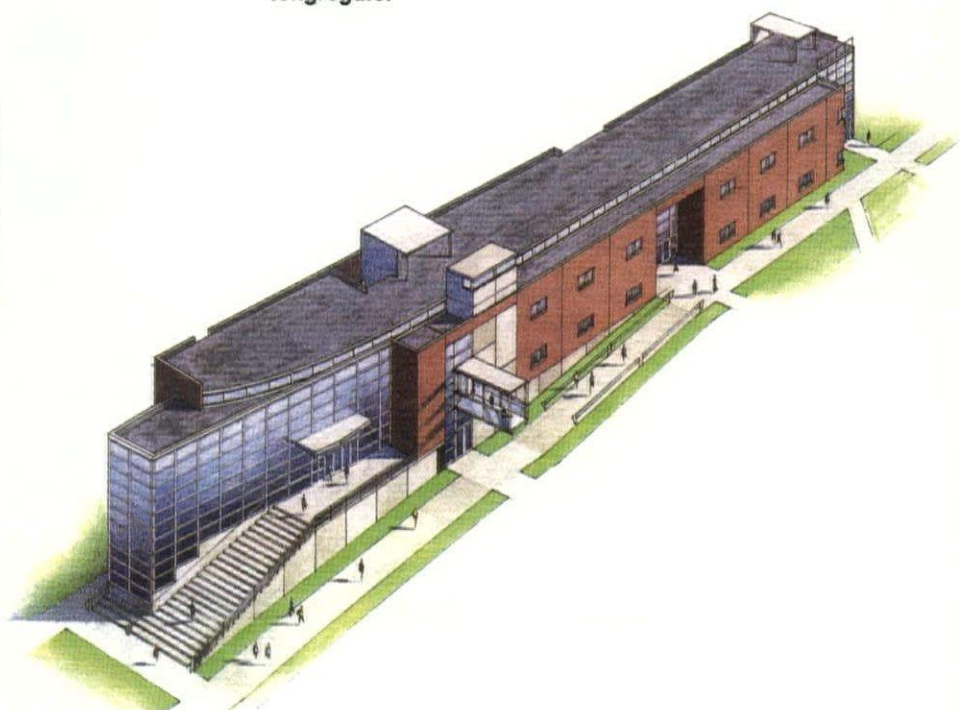
By Lisa Goff

Commonwealth Hall (left), the college's new education and development center, provides a sense of arrival and a popular place for students to congregate.

19



Robert Batey Photography



acknowledged neither the robust beauty of the rural location nor the region's rich industrial history.

The architects selected to design the new building and master plan, Pasanella + Klein Stolzman + Berg of New York City, had recently completed a physics building addition and a new chemical engineering building on U.Va.'s Charlottesville campus. "There was a level of comfort with them," says Lawson. Collaborating with Pasanella + Klein was the Roanoke firm of Balzer and

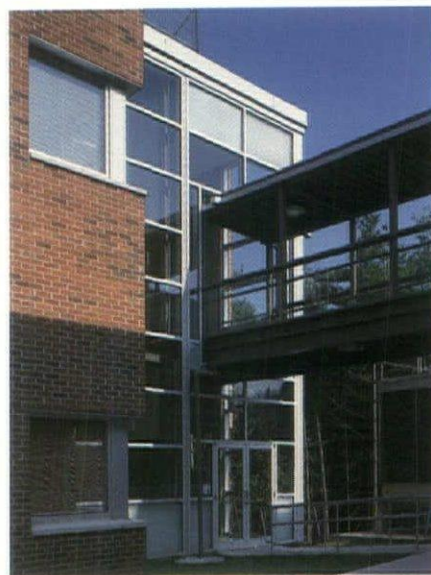
Associates, which functioned as architects of record.

John Fulton, AIA, Balzer's project manager for the job, remembers the first time the design team visited the campus. "Here was this school a long way away from anything – a very long way – that was essentially a conglomeration of nondescript buildings." Adds Wayne Berg, FAIA, partner-in-charge of the project for Pasa-nella + Klein: "The campus looked as though it was planned by dropping buildings from a great height. The first question we asked ourselves was: How can we make a place out of this campus?"

The answer lay in using the new education and development center, now named Commonwealth Hall, to impose an organizing structure on the upper campus, which sits at the top of a steep slope. The team decided to place the new building with a north-south orientation along the western edge of the upper campus, where the two main classroom buildings – the Science Building and Zehmer Hall – face each other across a wide grassy lawn. Together the three buildings would create a "U" shape.

A future building would provide a fourth wall on the eastern side, creating a spacious courtyard. A quadrangle, that time-honored campus form, would bring order to the jumble of buildings.

It was immediately clear to everyone involved that the new building would be the linchpin for the campus master plan.



Photos: Robert Batey Photography

Happily, there was consensus on the idea from the very start. "Conceptually, both firms envisioned a long and slender building," says Fulton. "One side of the building would respond to the architecture of the quadrangle, the other side to the surrounding landscape of forests and mountains. And on one end, it would be very open and airy, a glass prow."

The team also hoped the design could somehow acknowledge the mining history of the region. The original design showed an all-glass student lounge cantilevered over an arcade of columns descending to a grand entrance. But the vivid allusion to mine entrances was inadmissible. The

client vetoed it outright. "They felt it was too much of a reference to strip mining," Fulton recalls.

Practical demands guided many aspects of the design process. "The new building had to be not only a boundary for the quadrangle, but a connection node, a point of entry for all three buildings," explains Fulton. It also had to provide wheelchair access to those three buildings.

In an early meeting with the client, the architects decided to limit their choice of building materials to those used in existing campus buildings: red brick, anodized aluminum, glass curtain walls, and concrete. "We didn't want the new building to contradict what was already there," says Fulton. Instead, the team focused its energies on the footprint, setting out to create a sculptural form that transcended the building's function.

The east side, facing the quadrangle, respects the scale and form-language of the existing Science Building and Zehmer Hall. But on the southern end of the building, where the facade flies in front of Zehmer Hall, and on the western facade, facing the mountains, Commonwealth Hall makes the kind of bold architectural statements the client desired and the campus so badly needed.

The architects designed a slim ingot of a building, measuring 410 feet long by only 40 feet wide, aligned along a slightly splayed axis. A concrete base anchors the

New building ties into two existing ones via enclosed bridges (left and below). View from downhill shows variety of materials and window pattern (above).





building to the hill. On top of it a large brick section, scaled to complement the adjacent buildings, houses faculty offices and opens to the formal courtyard on its east side. A glass enclosure at the southern end holds a student lounge and is scaled more grandly to distant views of the valley. Gliding beside the southern tip of the building is a monumental stair, providing a commanding entranceway to the building and the quad.

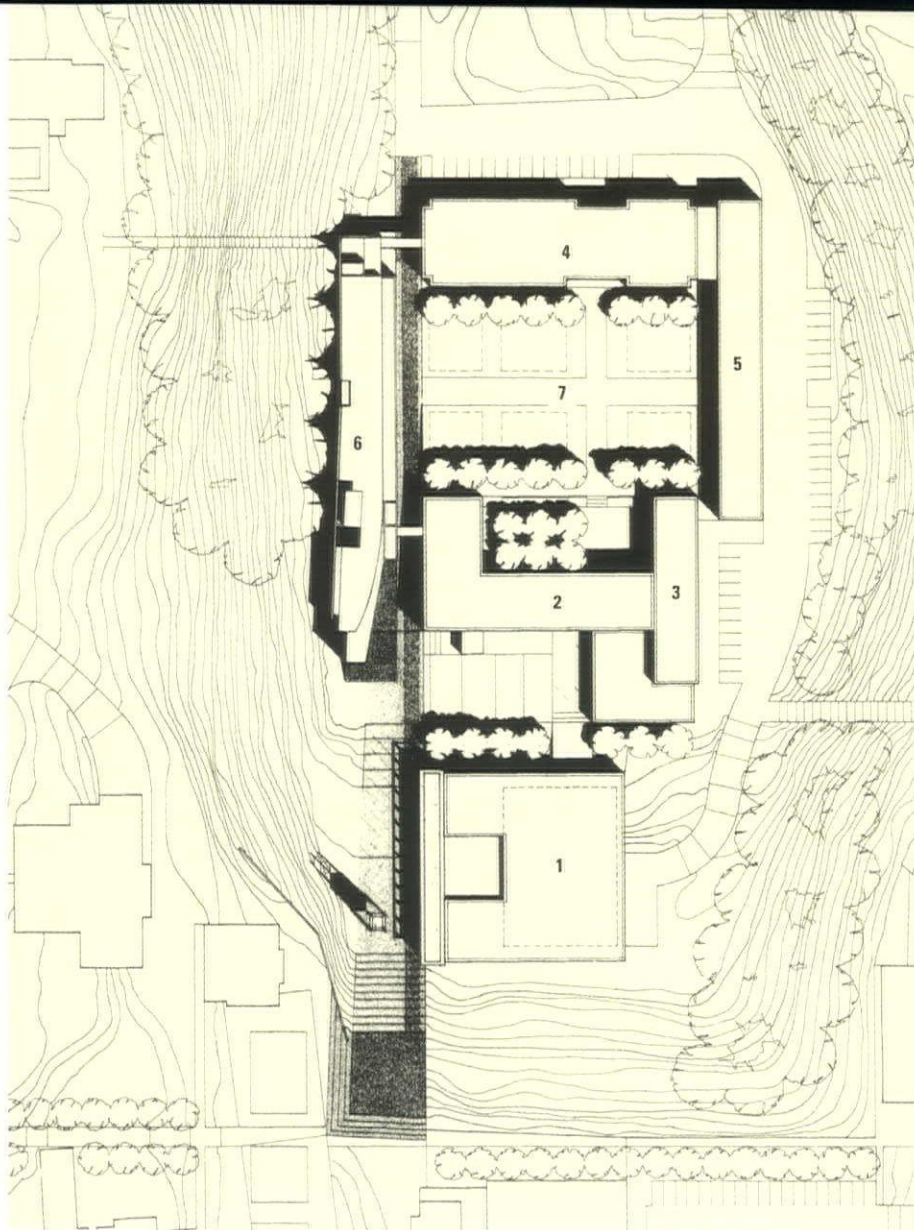
The stair exposes all three stories of the building while emphasizing the glass-enclosed prow. By day it glistens. By night it shines like a lantern, announcing the entrance to the campus.

Exterior fenestration reflects the building's functional organization. Art classrooms are clustered behind the glassed-in sections, which open to the outside, while computer terminals blink away in classrooms placed within the solid brick areas. The faculty did not want departmental "ghettos," so each department is stacked on three floors and clustered around an internal stair, says Berg. Organizing the academic units that way allows students to come in contact with all the departments by moving horizontally through the building.

In its finished form, Commonwealth Hall serves as connector, organizer, and beautifier of the Clinch Valley College campus. Its real accomplishment is that its functional success is subsumed by its pow-



Large-scale portal faces new quad.



Site Plan



- 1 Library Addition & Renovation
- 2 Zehmer Hall
- 3 Zehmer Hall (Future Addition)
- 4 Science Hall
- 5 Science Hall (Future Addition)
- 6 Commonwealth Hall
- 7 New Quadrangle

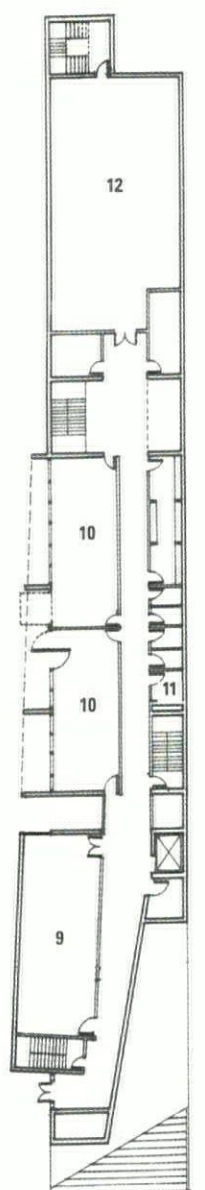
erful aesthetic identity.

"It acts as a circulator between all three buildings, but yes, it also has a sense of itself," says Fulton, who adds that the building's individuality comes largely from its slightly bowed shape and the imaginative way the materials are assembled.

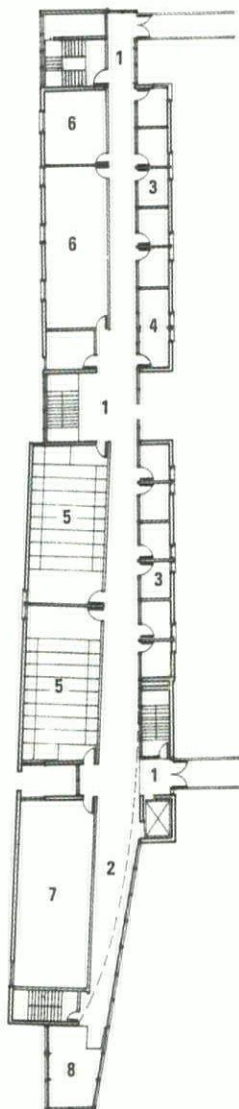
Inside, a Modern attitude toward systems and materials sets a contemporary mood. Ducts are exposed, lighting is industrial in character, and concrete floors openly declare their utilitarian origins. As students walk the hallways, they can feel the subtle splay of the walls, the slight angular offset that gives the exterior facade

its character. "It's essentially a linear progression, but done with a much more contemporary gesture than in the '60s buildings that make up the rest of the campus," says Fulton.

And while the exterior materials may echo those employed in the existing buildings, the conversation they're having is unmistakably current. The brick envelope debates the concrete platform, sitting on it in places and overlapping in others. Likewise, portions of the concrete base thrust upward through the brick mass, a design gesture that also serves to mark circulation points. A glass spine, visible the length



Ground Floor Plan



Second Floor Plan

- 1 Lobby
- 2 Gallery
- 3 Faculty Offices
- 4 Seminar Room
- 5 Auditorium
- 6 Science Lab
- 7 Computer Lab
- 8 Student Lounge
- 9 Music Department
- 10 Art Department
- 11 Practice Rooms
- 12 Mechanical Room



Wide expanses of glass in the student lounge (right) allow sweeping views of the campus. Exposed systems inside make for a clean, but no-frills, aesthetic (below left).

Photos: Robert Batey Photography



of the building as a clerestory ribbon, showcases a glass stairwell on the northern end and erupts, like the tip of a sleek glass stem, to embrace the student lounge at the building's southern end.

Landscape freely penetrates the building from many angles. Classrooms open to views of the countryside and valley. The glass-enclosed student lounge feels like a Modern treehouse from within and reads like an extension of the hill from without. Seen from the lower edge of the site, the hill appears to slip into the building along its edge. And, viewed from a distance, buildings and landscape merge on the horizon.

A growing list of awards testifies to the strength of Commonwealth Hall's design resolution. Both the Virginia Society and New York City chapter of the American

Institute of Architects have recognized the building with design awards, as did *Progressive Architecture* magazine with one of its heralded P/A Awards.

Today, another round of construction is in the works at Clinch Valley, including an addition to the Science Building, a new student activities building and more student housing. All conform to the master plan designed by the architects, but there are no immediate plans to erect the fourth building that will enclose the quadrangle.

Fulton says the campus works just fine without it. "Frankly, I like the vista that's created by looking at this Modernist building between two older buildings. It's a nice artistic expression in and of itself."

Lisa Goff is a Charlottesville freelance writer.



Project: Commonwealth Hall, Clinch Valley College
Architects: Balzer and Associates, Inc. (R. Craig Balzer, AIA, principal-in-charge; John D. Fulton Jr., AIA, project manager; Dennis Stevens, project architect) with Pasanella + Klein Stolzman + Berg (Wayne Berg, FAIA, design principal; Jonathan R. Knowles, AIA, project architect; Albert Ho, AIA, project designer)
Contractor: Branch and Associates
Consultants: Whitescarver, Hurd and Obenchain, Inc. (mechanical, electrical, and plumbing)
Owner: Clinch Valley College of the University of Virginia



At night, a glowing landmark.

23

Value Engineering: A Study in Compromise

Beauty is infrequently the result of efficiency-minded approaches to building. So when the first round of plans for the new education and development center at Clinch Valley College was completed, the \$3.7 million project was a cool million dollars over budget.

The easiest route to substantial savings would have been to straighten out the bow in the slender building. But Balzer and Associates and design consultants Pasanella + Klein Stolzman + Berg were dedicated to the idiosyncratic shape of the floor plan.

The architects had worked hard to preserve the flex in the building, convincing university representatives to release them from state-mandated net-to-gross square footage

requirements that the narrow building didn't quite meet. "A long narrow building is never going to be as efficient as a square building," says John Fulton, the project manager for Balzer and Associates. But the architects were blessed with a client that wanted to produce fine architecture and was willing to make small trade-offs in efficiency to get it.

No way were the architects going to give back such hard-won ground. That meant everything except the footprint was open for discussion when it came to cutting costs. "We value-engineered for three months," says Fulton. He and his associates adjusted finish selections and made small but thrifty changes in plumbing, mechanical, and electrical components.

Every design choice was revisited. The architects reduced the amount of clear glass on the exterior and changed the type and pattern of glass in remaining curtain wall sections. A series of cantilevered concrete mechanical unit enclosures was sacrificed. A third-story clerestory window seemed doomed, but survived the scalpel in the end.

Consensus on what was most important about the design allowed the architects to emerge from a brutal cost-cutting process with their good feelings intact. Unswerving protection of the building's narrow floor plan offered justification for other cuts, even when they were deep. "Our priority was the footprint, not the materials," says Fulton. —L.G.



Land-facing side of cottage abuts a broad lawn (above). Dining table occupies new oval room (right). Entrance was rebuilt with stained glass door (below right).



New Life

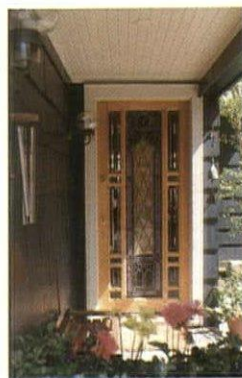
By Sue Robinson

“As the century draws to a close, there seems to be a sea change in the way people are thinking about true wealth, true happiness, and the homes in which they want to live,” writes cabinetmaker-turned-author Jim Tolpin in his current book, *The New Cottage Home*.

Noting how homes grew in size as the American family size shrank, he observes: “As our lives are becoming increasingly accelerated by the demands and trappings of the cybernetic future, many Americans find their hearts turning toward visions of mellower, unpretentious, modest-sized houses that offer simplicity of form and construction; that are less consumptive of resources and energy; and that so fit the landscape that they look like they were ‘grown’ rather than built there. We are ready for houses that belong comfortably to their site and regional heritage, houses to which we, in turn, can comfortably belong.”

for an Old River Cottage

To a visitor pushing through the white picket gates of Helmhurst, strolling through its tidy garden, and softly knocking on its stained-glass front door, it feels as if Tolpin might have been picturing this renovated cottage – perched on a bluff overlooking the York River – as he was writing. With its compact footprint, informal interior, stout construction, and lush natural setting, Helmhurst defines “cottage.”



Architect Gregory S. Brezinski, AIA, purchased the property in 1992. His goal was to retain the character and integrity of the shingled 1920s vacation home while converting it for contemporary living on a year-round basis. Brezinski has created a new cottage home from the original. In so doing, the architect-owner may well rep-

resent a national trend toward seeking modest comfort while bucking a local trend that virtually demands knocking down quirky old houses and replacing them with oversized symbols of financial status. For supporting evidence, the observer needs only to look next door to Helmhurst, where a tall new house is rising on the neighbor's lot.

But Brezinski feels fortunate to be here in the cradle of the Revolution. A point in the triangle of colonial towns that include Jamestown and Williamsburg, the village of Yorktown was the scene of the culminating battle of the American Revolution. After George Washington defeated Lord Cornwallis here in 1781, Britain sued for peace.

Today the town, situated at one end of the National Park Service's popular Colonial Parkway, retains many colonial-era dwellings. Yorktown consists of little else but battlefields, the residences along Main Street, and the wharfside Water Street running along the York River. Visiting Helmhurst requires turning off near the

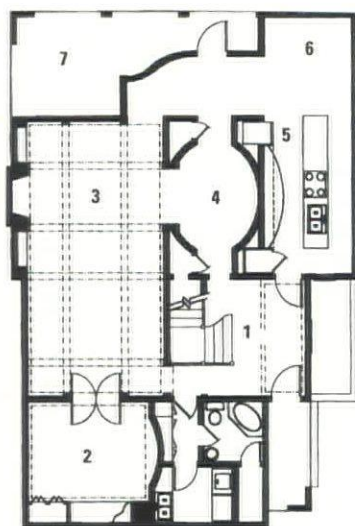
visitor's center and meandering through the somber green battlefields. "The federal government maintains 15 miles of my front yard," grins Brezinski.

Helmhurst hugs the bank overlooking the York River. The daily ebb and flow of the Chesapeake Bay rules the tides along this broad salty estuary, which enters the bay between the Guinea Marshes and the Goodwin Islands. Its choppy water is rich with bluefish, croaker, flounder, gray trout, and spot.

"It's a great way of life," Brezinski says, staring down at the river from Helmhurst's upstairs bedroom. A turn-of-the-century brass telescope stands ready. "Having coffee here on the balcony we've seen pelicans, ducks, osprey, golden eagles. We've even seen porpoises," Brezinski says. "The river can be fierce or quiet. The York seems to pick up storms that follow the river. It's exciting to watch."

Brezinski has lived in Yorktown off and on since 1974. After stints in South America, Houston, and Saudi Arabia, he settled in Tidewater and, in early 1996, established a general architecture practice in Yorktown called A2RCI Architects.

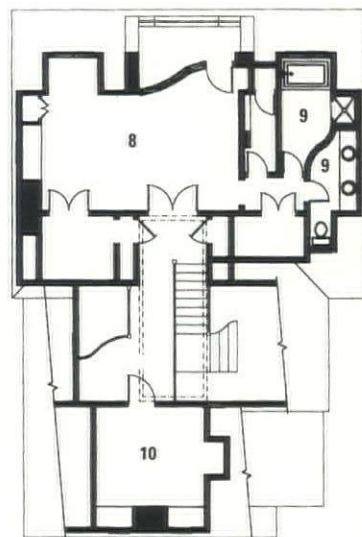
When Brezinski laid his claim to Helmhurst, it was an ugly duckling with a gravel driveway through the front yard. "The only way to give the house presence was to create a foreground," he says. New fencing pushed the parking area for cars beside the road near the cozy, 700-square-foot guest cottage. Interlocking concrete pavers form a sidewalk that connects the parking and the house. Brezinski's landscaping plan is



First Floor Plan



- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| 1 Foyer | 6 Breakfast Room |
| 2 Study | 7 Porch |
| 3 Living Room | 8 Master Bedroom |
| 4 Dining Room | 9 Bath |
| 5 Kitchen | 10 Bedroom |



Second Floor Plan

reminiscent of the gardens of the '20s – with a lush yard, flower and vegetable gardens, and a white picket fence. "Now the house has a sense of arrival," he says.

When Brezinski shifted his focus from the site to the house itself, openings in the exterior walls presented huge challenges. Seven doors cluttered the space. Worst of all was the front door, which opened directly into a guest room. Brezinski returned the main entrance to its original



Nautical touches inside the house include a racing shell on the kitchen ceiling.



Open coffers in the living room ceiling reveal original second-floor joists above.

location on the side inside a screened porch. He then removed the screen, erected a curved roof to announce the new entryway, and installed the stained-glass door made from an old church window. Stripping and refinishing the cedar shake siding, he updated its color from barn red to teal.

In earlier times, the old summer cottage supported a lifestyle of long days outside on boats or on the porch before visitors retired to the sleeping dormitory upstairs. The new house supports the year-round life of a professional couple that likes to entertain.

Showing deference to the old cottage, Brezinski preserved its defining elements: the shingle exterior, wood flooring, wood ceiling, double-hung windows, slate roof, abundant light, and captivating river views.

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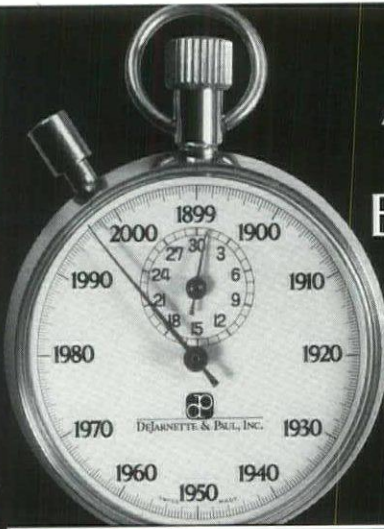
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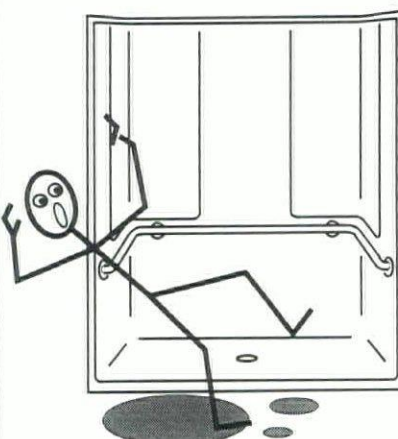
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But he also renewed and redefined the space through a generous use of problem-solving curves and Arts and Crafts-style references.

Five sleeping spaces gave way to two. Out went the drywall, sliding glass doors, and jalousie windows installed in the 1940s. With the original timber framing and wood flooring exposed, Brezinski designed an exposed coffered ceiling for the living room that shows off 2x10 joists. Up went cherry paneling in the music room. And original doors, stripped down to worn wood, were resized and rehung.

Collections of pond boats, maritime paintings, architectural drawings, art, and carousel horses are thoughtfully positioned throughout the two floors. But this is not a museum – comforts are plentiful. A single, deep easy chair occupies the center of the music room. The living room – with a grand stone fireplace – is furnished with smooth, sea green leather seating. Downstairs, a sunken tub in the guest bath invites a serious soak. Upstairs, the two-part bath works for privacy and space management.

The L-shaped kitchen space, finished in cool gray, nods to the water through a wall of windows. Overhead hangs a theatrical touch, a tangerine racing shell. But the 16-foot-long island and trim, galley-style design beckon a serious cook. A healthy bed of fresh herbs flourishes outside the kitchen door.

The oval dining room is a conversation piece, for sure, as is the Tom Wessells oval oak table with a modern curved pedestal. This work of art centers the room. But it's easy to envision guests working their way around the table, flowing comfortably into the spacious living room.

Working in stages, Brezinski says "this was a difficult house, full of constraints to live with or invent around." Because nothing would line up, he played with curved walls to resolve misalignments in the building's structure. In just such a fashion, the "double curve" became a design motif that shows up in cabinets, stairs, balcony, and balcony rail.

"I did far more than I probably should have in terms of what's economically sane," Brezinski allows. As he went along, he also learned that as he lived with the house, he would reject earlier thoughts. But throughout the process of transforming his humble cottage into a place for contemporary living, Brezinski stayed true to one thought – "trying to make it clear this work was the product of another time."

Sue Robinson is a Richmond freelance writer.



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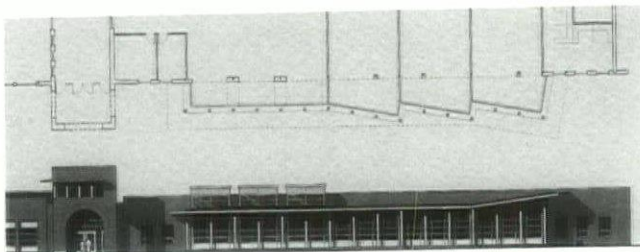
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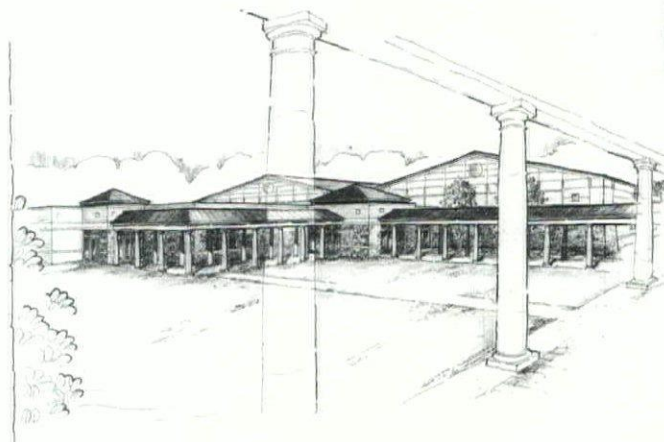
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Architect: Bond Comet Westmoreland + Hiner Architects, Richmond
Project: Meadowbrook High School Addition/Renovation

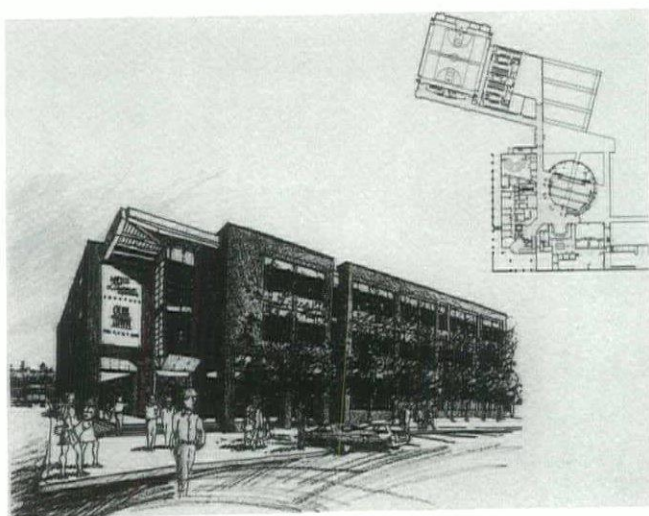
Almost 90,000 square feet of additions to this school in Chesterfield County will eliminate temporary facilities, overcrowded classrooms, and cramped conditions. New performing arts and athletic wings will reshape the image of the school and provide a sense of identity. Tel: 804-788-4774.



Architect: Marcellus Wright Cox & Smith Architects, Richmond
Project: Recreation and Athletic Center, The Steward School

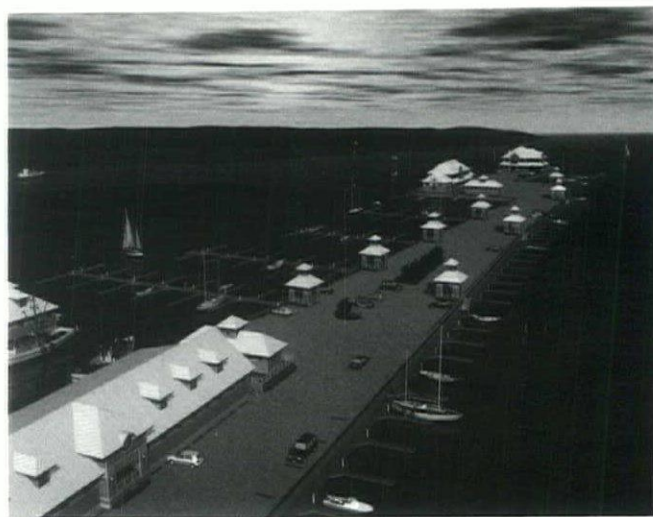
This is the first increment of a master plan for a growing private K-12 school. While providing interscholastic sports with a performance court and spectator seating, the center doubles as a recreational facility. The plan also aims to strengthen the school's architectural image. Tel: 804-780-9067.

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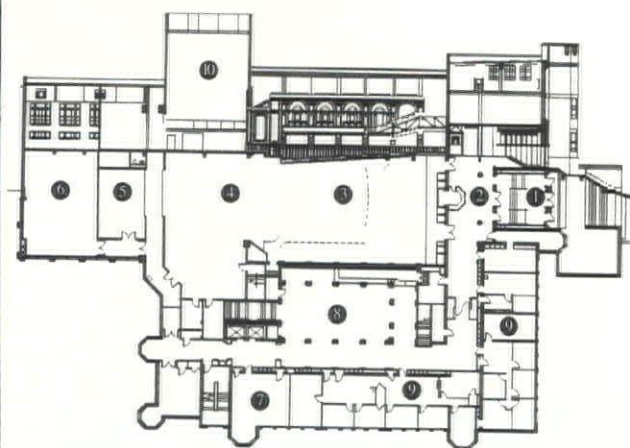
Architect: VMDO Architects, P.C., Charlottesville
Project: Manassas Park High School

Designed to convert underutilized spaces into places for learning that are fully equipped for Internet access, this technologically-advanced high school will be a vehicle for implementing progressive curricula that incorporate computer technology and create opportunities for many ways of learning. Tel: 804-296-5684.



Architect: Lyall Design Architects, Norfolk
Project: Long Bay Pointe Marina

The project located on the Lynnhaven Inlet in Virginia Beach will be a state-of-the-art marina and tourist destination. Amenities will include a marketplace, restaurants, tackle shop, and dock pavilions. The architecture is a Caribbean theme of colors and materials. Tel: 757-622-6306.

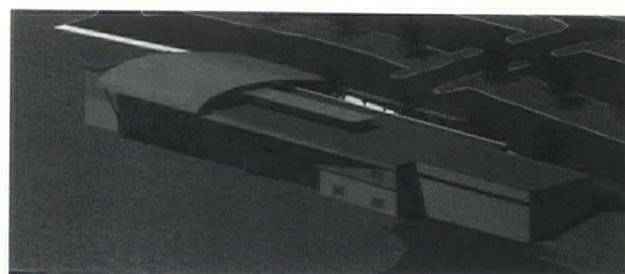


- | | |
|--------------|----------------|
| 1 ENTRY | 6 REHEARSAL |
| 2 TICKETS | 7 GREEN ROOM |
| 3 AUDITORIUM | 8 ATRIUM |
| 4 STAGE | 9 OFFICE SPACE |
| 5 SCENE SHOP | 10 FLY LOFT |

Architect: Hayes Seay Mattern & Mattern, Inc. (HSMM), Roanoke

Project: Center Stage at Jefferson

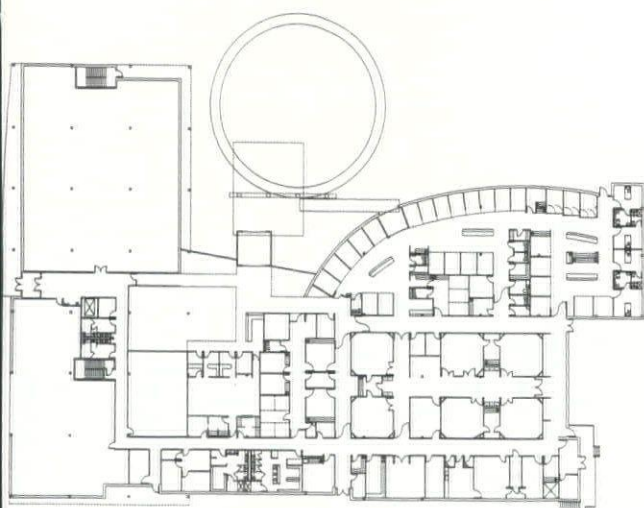
Renovation of the former Jefferson High School auditorium and associated core areas will result in a state-of-the-art multipurpose performance hall featuring superb acoustics, luxurious seating, and classic appointments. It will provide a much-needed 1,000-seat facility for the city. Tel: 540-857-3100.



Architect: SFCS, Inc., Roanoke

Project: Greenfield Education and Training Center

This 40,000-square-foot education and training center in Botetourt County will serve as the gateway into the park. Major components include distance learning and interactive classrooms, a tiered lecture hall, computer labs, offices, and labs for heavy and light industry. Tel: 540-344-6664.



Architect: Odell Associates Inc., Richmond

Project: Richmond Medical Commons

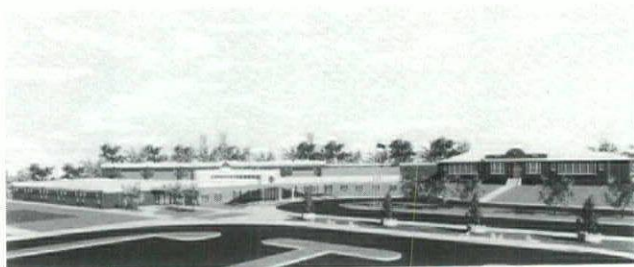
Richmond Medical Commons is a new 31,000-square-foot Ambulatory Surgery Center for Richmond Eye & Ear Hospital. Attached to the Surgery Center will be a two-story 35,000-square-foot Medical Office Building. This replacement facility will provide outpatient care. Tel: 804-644-5941.



Architect: Mitchell/Matthews & Associates, Charlottesville

Project: South Pointe

Located on Charlottesville's southern boundary, this 37-acre mixed-use commercial, retail, hotel, and restaurant project incorporates many of the architectural attributes of Charlottesville's downtown while integrating "big box" tenants with a flexible mix of smaller spaces. Tel: 804-979-7550.



Architect: Murray & Associates Architects, Glen Echo, Md.

Project: Highland Park Elementary School

An addition is sited to complement the 1928 building which once housed the county's oldest black high school and now houses Head Start. The remainder of the facility was modernized with new plumbing, HVAC, sprinklers, fire alarms computer networks, finishes, and kitchen equipment. Tel: 301-320-6305.

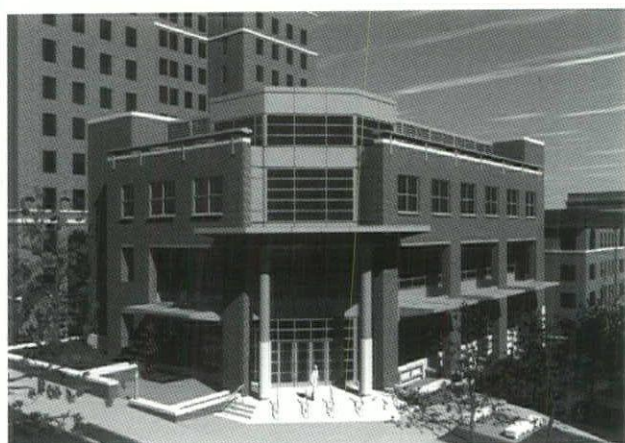


Architect: Opus Architects & Engineers, Inc., Bethesda, Md.

Project: Campus Commons

Visible from the Dulles Toll Road, this 25,000-square-foot office project occupies the last site in a Reston office park. Three requirements drove the design: a distinctive form for easy identification from the highway, a fit with adjacent buildings, and a current approach to the office building type. Tel: 301-493-9637.

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Architect: Lavigne Associates Architects, Alexandria

Project: University and Community Bookstore

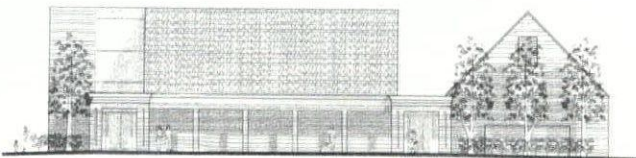
With a design that respects the residential fabric of North Charles Village, this 25,000-square-foot building reflects the character and quality of a bookstore providing retail sales to the public while serving the academic needs of Johns Hopkins University's Homewood Campus. Tel: 703-739-3206.



Architect: Bond Comet Westmoreland + Hiner Architects, Richmond

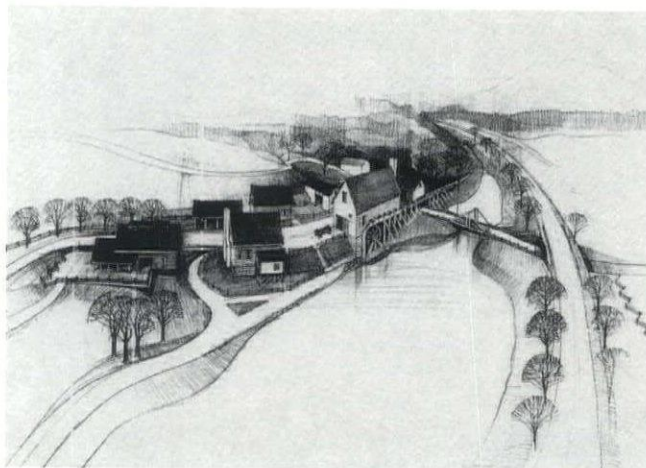
Project: Chancellor Elementary School

This 18,500-square-foot addition to a Spotsylvania County school is designed to integrate seamlessly with the character of the existing facility. The addition includes a new media center and multipurpose room, as well as fine arts classrooms. Tel: 804-788-4774.



Architect: Dalglish, Eichman, Gilpin & Paxton, P.C., Charlottesville
Project: Gunston Hall Visitor Center Expansion

Plans are being developed for a 10,000-square-foot expansion to the 1970s Ann Mason Building at historic Gunston Hall. The project will contain a multipurpose auditorium and theater, library and research facilities, collections storage, and administrative offices. Tel: 804-977-4480.



Architect: Carlton Abbott and Partners, P.C., Williamsburg
Project: Master Plan for Frontier Culture Museum of Virginia

This Shenandoah Valley "Crossroads Village" is an assemblage of early valley structures that would illustrate town life in the 19th century. Buildings that would be lost to development and otherwise not preserved would be relocated to the museum site. Tel: 757-220-1095.

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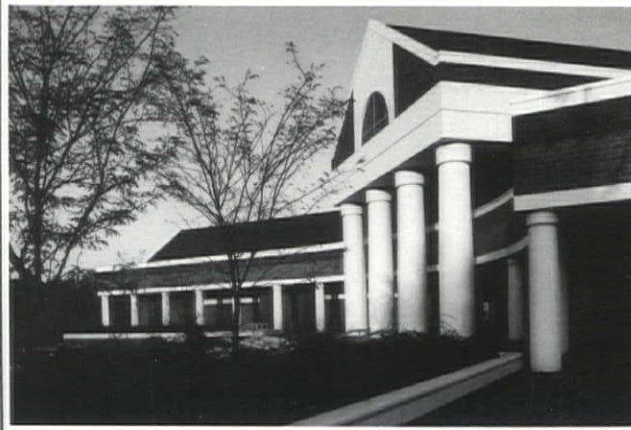


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Administrators at Powhatan School in rural Clarke County knew they were at a crossroads. What they didn't realize was that, by building new classroom space for their 180 pupils, they could set the direction for campus construction long into the future.

That's just what happened when they commissioned Boyd & Nelson Architectural Design, a young firm with offices in Winchester and Alexandria. The architects provided a scheme that fulfilled

the building committee's fundamental wishes, says principal Andrew Boyd, AIA. But he and partner Chase Nelson went a step further, recommending the placement of the building as the anchor for a new campus quadrangle. The committee warmed to the idea right away.

"It's interesting how this building not only provides a focus (for the campus), but pulls it together," says Nelson. "In many ways, this has become a symbol for the school."

With its formal pedimented entry atop a double stair, Lee Hall stands out as a separate element of the campus. But its function, placement, and materials inextricably bond it to the whole. Like the existing administration building at this K-8 school, Lee Hall is square in plan and built of similar materials. Boyd & Nelson employed split-faced block, brick, stucco, and metal roofing in a classic hierarchy of textures. "The form of the building has something of a Palladian feel to it without radically departing from what was there," Nelson observes.

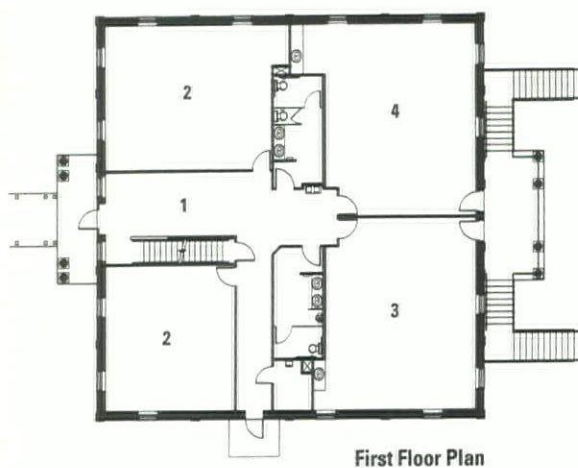
Their gesture toward campus planning establishes a framework for future expansion of Powhatan School. But it also begins to bring order to what is currently a disorderly arrangement of buildings. For example, the existing circular library, while awkward in its current location, occupies the heart of what may someday be a kind of campus green. "Then," says Nelson, "the library becomes something of a campus center, which a circular building is well suited for."

— T. Duncan Abernathy, ALA

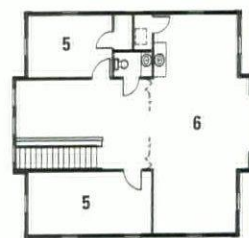
A Classical Solution



Boyd & Nelson set out to contrast the Classically-influenced Lee Hall with the stripped-down Modern character of other campus buildings.



First Floor Plan



Second Floor Plan

- 1 Entry Hall
- 2 Upper School Classroom
- 3 Fourth Grade Classroom
- 4 Fifth Grade Classroom
- 5 Office
- 6 Open Offices / Conference



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