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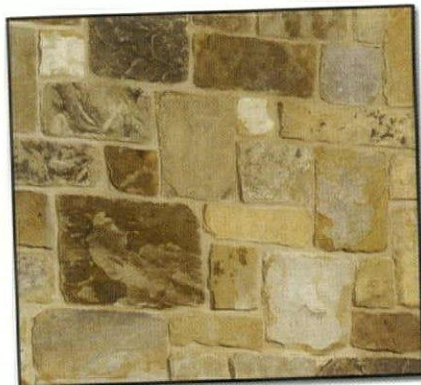
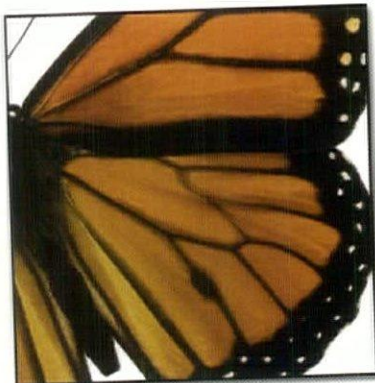
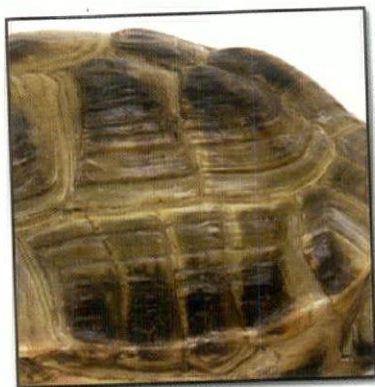
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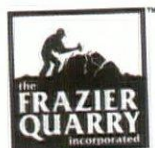
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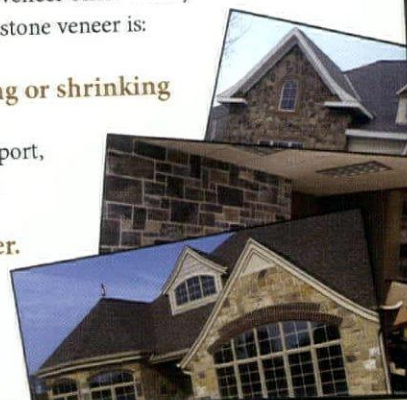
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## FROM THE EDITOR

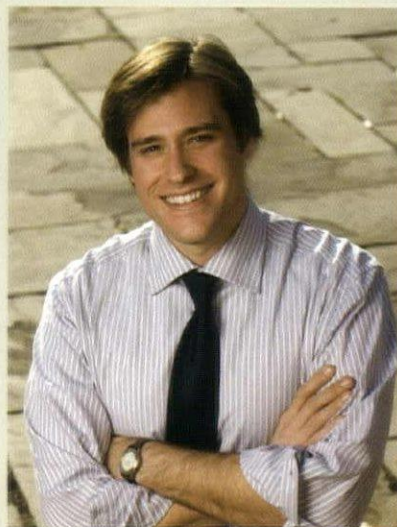
### Context in Landscape

Arriving at the end of winter, as we readjust our expectations for warmer weather, this issue of *Inform* intends to readjust our approach to the idea of landscape. What follows is a series of pieces that address the relationship between the built environment and the landscape that it inhabits, alters, or recreates. A commonly held way to think about this relationship is through "context," as a preexisting condition: spaces, buildings, streets, or sites. Context can also be historical, in the sense that a preexisting fabric, whether it's architectural or social, can be investigated and consulted as a way to move forward.

It seems obvious – but important, nonetheless – to note that nothing is ever built in a vacuum. Architecture as a building enterprise is grounded (no pun intended) in a world of conditions, both artificial and natural. Laurie Olin, the landscape architect and educator, has also pointed to the artificial and natural meanings in the landscape. Artificial meaning is intentional and applied by the designer, as you might find in Lafayette Park in Washington, D.C. or countless other City Beautiful-era landscapes in the United States. Natural meaning, on the other hand, develops over time through use and exposure, which the landscape architect and historian Marc Treib has likened to a patina. Frederick Law Olmsted's "Emerald Necklace" park system in Boston comes to mind, which began as an urban refuge in the nineteenth century and became a linear boundary that influenced development as the city's population swelled.

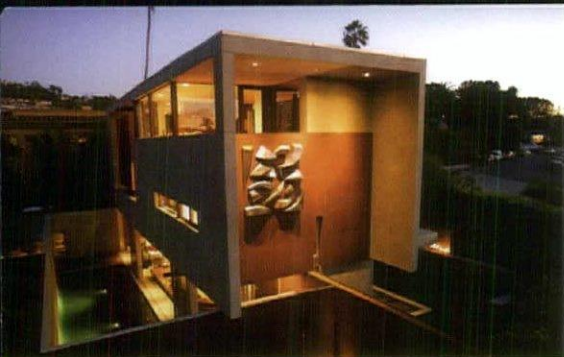
What Olin and Treib imply, and what all of the projects featured here address, is the diversity within a landscape: its ecological, topographical, or historical qualities. The Frontier Culture Museum asks us to consider landscape as a mediator among buildings from different traditions and places. The Garden Club of Virginia's restoration projects in the region reflect past approaches to recreating historic, albeit living, landscapes. Two recent projects, a home in Bethesda, Maryland, and a garden in Charlottesville, address the issue of designing with nature, to borrow an idea from the landscape architect Ian McHarg, through materiality and site.

Speaking about his home in New Caanan, the architect and provocateur Philip Johnson ruefully noted "I have very expensive wallpaper." The building, famously, is a glass box that is set on a bucolic estate among other Johnson-designed out buildings. His unfettered view may have justified the heating and cooling costs, but it was wallpaper for him, nonetheless. "Context in landscape," as a theme for this first issue of *Inform* for 2008, offers a counterpoint: that landscape should not be put into the context of architecture, as it represents its own set of conditions and has many working parts that are artificial and natural, intentional and unintentional. When talking about architecture, then, aren't we really talking about the act of exploring those relationships?



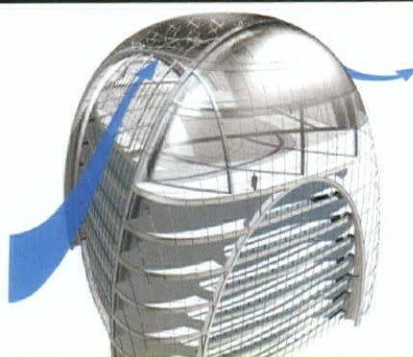
—William Richards



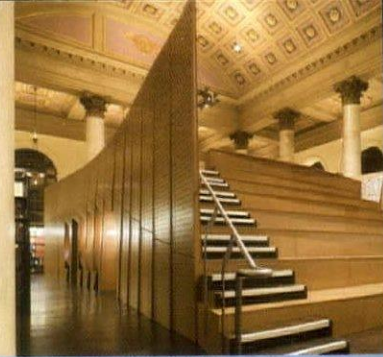


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# inform

volume nineteen number one

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**"...that which existed, and that which definitely existed."**

After 75 years, the Garden Club of Virginia has left its mark on nearly every historic landscape in the region and its own history traces that of preservation theory in the twentieth century.

*By Pamela H. Simpson*

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**Two By Two**

The partnership between the Frontier Culture Museum and Carlton Abbott and Partners begins its third decade of a bold experiment in the Shenandoah Valley.

*By Louis Nelson*

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**Copper Cadence**

David Jameson Architect offers a new interpretation of some old materials in this home, television studio, and tree house.

*By Barbara Karth*

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**Design Lines**

new developments in design and preservation

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**Taking Note**

doing the small things well



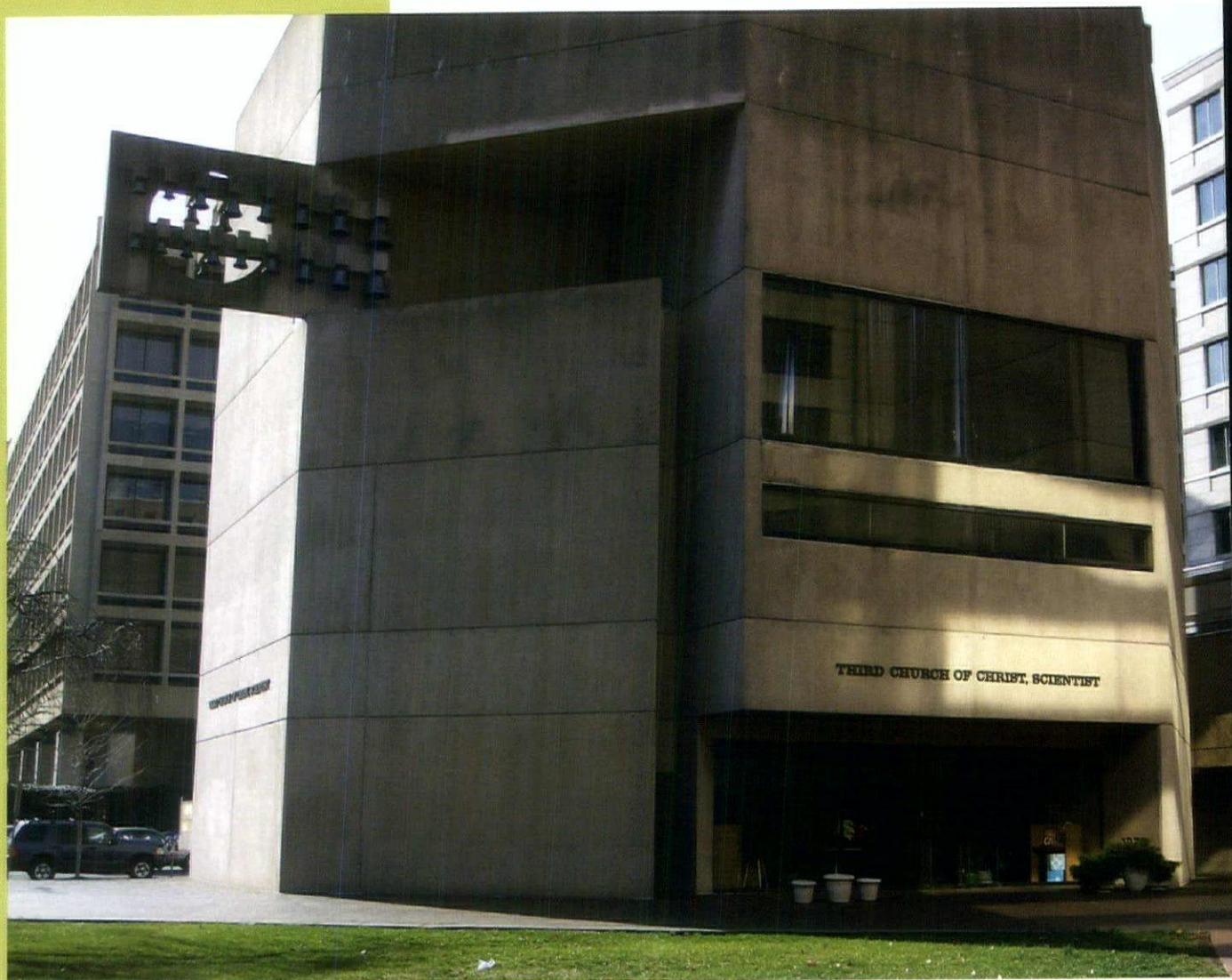
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Next issue: Review of  
Virginia Architecture  
and the Seventeenth  
Annual Inform  
Awards

On the cover: Burning Tree Road addition,  
David Jameson Architects  
Photo by: Paul Warchol



# Church Landmarking Offers a Brutal Lesson



6

The Third Church of Christ, Scientist—a rare example of Brutalism in Washington, D.C.—has been designated a historic landmark over its congregation's objections. What proponents hail as avant-garde and exemplary, others view as forbidding and flawed.

A hulking Brutalist church in Washington, D.C.—designed by the office of I.M. Pei—has been granted landmark status, preventing its congregation from redeveloping the building and igniting debates over the very roles that religion and historic preservation play in American life.

Located on 16<sup>th</sup> Street just two blocks north of the White House, the Third Church of Christ, Scientist, was designed in 1970 by Araldo Cossutta, who was a principal in Pei's practice before launching his own New York-based firm. The poured-in-place concrete

church is octagonal and mostly windowless, punctuated only by a jutting rectangular bell-cote. A small plaza connects the church with the adjacent Christian Science Monitor building, also designed by Cossutta.

Church leaders and congregants have long decried what they believe are deal-breaking design flaws: High walls and minimal windows shroud the 400-seat sanctuary in gloom, the heating and ventilation system is faulty, and the inward orientation of the front doors toward the plaza is off-putting to visitors, they contend. The congregation hopes



demolish the structure and replace it with a new building that they say would better suit its small congregation and integrate with the historic 16<sup>th</sup> Street corridor. "The original design had nothing to do with the theology of Christianity," says J. Darrow Kirkpatrick, the church's First Reader. "Cossutta is on record saying that it was his vision. Now, the newer members are saddled with the issues of low light, the inward entrance, and a plaza that goes no place."

In a 7-0 vote on December 6, however, the D.C. Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) effectively prohibited demolition by designating the church complex as a historic landmark. In a hearing before the vote, several board members called the church one of the city's most significant examples of Brutalism, an offspring of Modernism characterized by heavy concrete walls and abstract geometries. Although the style is often criticized as oppressive and inhumane, the best Brutalist buildings are boldly artistic and visually arresting. In a city crowded with fluted columns and decorated pediments, a Brutalist building can offer relief and contrast.

"This case presents all the fault lines in historic preservation," says Teresh Boasberg, HPRB chair. "One of them is landmarking churches, which has been a very controversial area for obvious reasons, and the fact that it was less than 50 years old....The third factor was that it was definitely ugly to a lot of people, and a lot of people had difficulty understanding that it's something worth preserving. Finally, it is in a prime downtown real estate area, so you had these four factors working against the landmarking."

What convinced the board, Boasberg says, was the oral and written testimony of more than 40 prominent architects, historians, preservationists, and others in support of the landmarking. He also cited the AIA's *Guide to the Architecture of Washington, D.C.*, which states that both the Third Church and I.M. Pei's office buildings at L'Enfant Plaza "stand well above the level of quality of similar buildings of the period in their maturity of concept and execution." Richard Longstreth, a noted George Washington University professor of architectural history, testified that the building is in "a league of its own."

"This building is striking, unusual, and precedent-setting," Boasberg says,

Kim O'Connell




**Although architect Araldo Cossutta included skylights, the windowless walls, lack of insulation, and faulty mechanical systems contribute to an often dark and dank worship space, church leaders say. Yet the ordered geometry of the building is undeniably striking.**

"and even though a lot of people didn't like it, it is a significant building and an important example of its style. Cossutta was a major designer for Pei. It seemed to us to fit the statute of a landmark."

Many observers, not surprisingly, disagree—criticizing not only the

church's muscular design but also what they say is a lack of connection with the urban environment. "[T]he Third Church building is more of a static urban sculpture than a vibrant, active building," Arlington-based architect Thomas L. Kerns, FAIA, argued in a December





With its interplay of angles, light, and shadow, the Third Church succeeds as an urban sculpture. Its functionality as a church, however, has been challenged by its congregation.

3 letter to HPRB. "If we have learned our lesson from the failed experiment of Urban Renewal in the 1960s, it is that cities do not benefit from empty, lifeless spaces." In an incendiary blog post about the landmarking, *Washington Post* reporter Marc Fisher called the HPRB the "preservation police" and invoked the hoariest cliché about preservationists—that the board wants "the city frozen in amber." Comments on the post were divided.

An October 2007 analysis by Emily Eig, an architectural historian with EHT Traceries, a D.C. preservation firm, also challenges the board's assertion that the church is a Brutalist masterwork. Eig quotes a September 2007 interview with Cossutta himself, in which the architect said that Brutalism was "the wrong word to describe the building," preferring instead to describe it as an example of "skilled architectural engineering." The analysis continues, however, with the claim that the building is not Brutalist as it came to be known, but instead emulates Le Corbusier's raw concrete style known as *béton brut* (whose obvious semantic relationship to "Brutalism" may undercut her argument among some observers).

Beyond the realm of design, church leaders have further argued that the landmarking inhibits their First Amendment right to free exercise of religion. The D.C.-based Becket Fund for Religious Liberty submitted a letter to the HPRB stating that its vote may violate two federal laws that address governmental authority and landmarking as they relate to religious practice. Although HPRB did not address First Amendment issues during the hearing, Boasberg, a lawyer, asserts that several legal cases have held that the act of landmarking does not in itself violate the free expression clause or unduly burden religious organizations.

To appeal the HPRB ruling, the church may now file a lawsuit or seek demolition by claiming economic hardship through an office called the mayor's agent. "I hope it doesn't go that far," says Boasberg, who has pledged to work with the congregation on a new development plan. "We do not want this to be a white elephant. We want it to be adaptively used. We want the church congregation to stay there."

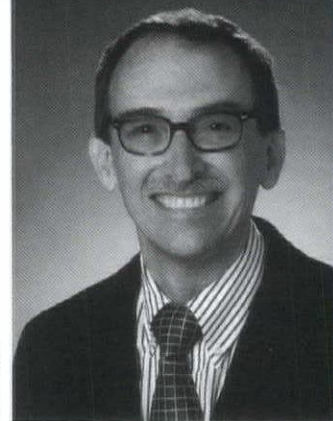
— Kim A. O'Connell



# J. Murray Howard, FAIA

1947 – 2008

Lee Brauer



Writing about Jefferson's design for the University of Virginia, the architect and architectural historian Murray Howard elegantly noted, "It was arcadia suffused with a sense of enlightened purpose. The buildings Jefferson created were a three-dimensional essay in architectural design." Howard directed the restoration of much of Jefferson's arcadia for 20 years as Architect and Curator of Historic Buildings and Grounds at the University of Virginia. There, he forged stronger connections among preservation practice, research, and education and brought a sense of perception and rigor to managing the only World Heritage Site in the United States still used for its original purpose. But, it was his wit and professional verve that left the greatest imprint for students, colleagues, and friends in Virginia and beyond.

James Murray Howard died this past January 4<sup>th</sup> at his home in Charlottesville. He was 60. A native of Talladega, Alabama, he earned a Bachelor of Architecture at Auburn University in 1971, a Master of Architecture from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and a Doctorate in the History of Art and Architecture, also from the University of Illinois in 1982. Before completing his graduate work, he established his licensure at VVKR in Alexandria from 1972 until 1976. Soon after, Howard served as a project director for the Historic American Buildings Survey and taught architectural history for the University of Illinois' architecture program in Versailles, France.

It was in his work for the University of Virginia, however, that Howard left an indelible mark. Hired in 1982 to address the feasibility of maintaining the school's Jeffersonian fabric, he was appointed the following year to direct the restoration program for the Academical Village. Murray set out by establishing an inclusive, curatorial approach that took into account the needs of museum-quality spaces and landscapes, as well as spaces and landscapes that could sustain everyday use by an active university community. In a 1990 *Inform* feature on Howard and his work, he outlined the project by noting, "We are not responding to these buildings simply because they are handsome. There are many levels of concern – most important is they are a physical legacy. In the same sense that Jefferson left his home to his heirs, he also left this physical vestige of 'university'."

His work at the university included a broad research agenda, the archival and documentary preparation of materials, and a return to craft training as a way to restore the original conditions of certain aspects of the site. According to architectural historian Richard Guy Wilson, "His work extended from the minute to the broad and included the reinstallation of Jefferson's original tin roofs to the revamping of Pavilion VII, the first building. He set a new standard for historic preservation." Part of that standard was the introduction of courses in historic preservation that used the Academical Village as a case study, new internships, and post-graduate apprenticeships.

Wilson went on, "Murray Howard possessed an extraordinary knowledge of architecture and its history; he was able to understand and communicate how buildings were put together and how they might be saved. At the University of Virginia he brought a new professionalism to the Academical Village." Howard also brought accolades, notably an Institute Honor Award from the AIA in 1995 for the project. In 2000, he was named Kenan-Lewis Fellow in Historic Preservation at UVa and after his retirement from the school, in 2002, Murray opened his own design firm, Disegno, in Charlottesville. In 2006, he joined Commonwealth Architects in Richmond as Director of Historic Architecture, a post for which he pursued projects at other universities around the state that utilized his training as both an architect and historian.

A member of the AIA since 1983, Howard served on the National AIA Historic Resources Committee and, from 1989 until 1990, as Vice President of the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities. In 1994, he received the Virginia Society AIA Historic Preservation Award and, two years later, was elevated to Fellow, a nomination based in part on his stewardship of the University of Virginia. "Dr. Howard's work," the nomination concluded, succeeded in "creating a model for education and for historic preservation practice at all public institutions." More to the point, perhaps, Murray Howard succeeded in enriching the university's institutional memory and the preservation community at-large.



# New NCAIA Headquarters Announced for Raleigh

*Frank Harmon Architect beats out 45 other proposals in a bid to raise public awareness of architecture*



**W**ant to make an impression on the public? The North Carolina AIA is well on its way to addressing this goal by locating its future headquarters building at a high visibility site in downtown Raleigh. Beginning in 2004, the North Carolina chapter realized that it was outgrowing its present offices in the Old Raleigh Watertower, a designated landmark in the city's downtown core. When expansion there turned out to be unrealistic, the AIA began to look at alternative sites. They finally settled on a triangular parcel at the junction of Peace and Wilmington streets, flanked by a 1970s high-rise to the south and mid-nineteenth century Peace College buildings across the street to the opposite side. A local developer, Empire Properties, not only agreed to purchase the Raleigh Watertower building, but teamed with the AIA to facilitate the acquisition of the new site, with one of its advantages being that it was not included in the Historic Overlay District.

In developing a program, the NCAIA looked at two other AIA headquarters, that of the neighboring Virginia AIA in Richmond and New York's new LaGuardia Place domicile in lower Manhattan. Besides functionality, North Carolina was also interested in the mission the new headquarters building should project. Besides the established goal of servicing their membership, the study committee felt that the new building should also encourage community involvement. Thus, image would play an important role in selecting a design.

The new location was ideal in terms of public exposure; but the site's triangular configuration was going to present an interesting design challenge, as it had to accommodate 35 park-

ing spaces in addition to the new building. With that in mind the NCAIA decided on a design competition as an ideal strategy to select a project architect. Although the competition was open, participation was limited to North Carolina AIA members. Of 69 members who registered for the competition, 40 submitted entries.

The competition was administered by **William McMin** FAIA, who assembled an out-of-state, high profile jury. It included **Daniel Bennett, FAIA**, Dean of the University of Auburn School of Architecture, **Allison Ewing, AIA**, Charlottesville, **M. David Lee, FAIA**, Stull and Lee, Boston, Massachusetts, and **Susan Maxman, FAIA**, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, former national president of the AIA.

From the start, the jury agreed that an east-west orientation of the building — both the first and second place entries chose this option — was the preferred approach to the site. At the end of a day-long session on January 23rd, the jury finally selected **Frank Harmon Architect** of Raleigh, as the winner. Second and third places also went to Raleigh firms, **Pearce Brinkley Cease + Lee, P.A.**, and **Kenneth E. Hobgood, Architects**, respectively. The jury not only praised the Harmon entry for its architectural expression, they liked its site plan, openness to community activities, local reference in use of materials, and emphasis on sustainability, which is a current AIA priority. Several entries would have been buildable, but the jury felt the Harmon entry best captured the spirit of the design challenge. Moreover, it looked to be buildable within the budget — something which could not be said of many of the other entries.

— Stanley Collyer



## Contributors to **Inform** Issue 1, 2008

**G. Stanley Collyer, Ph.D., Hon. AIA**, editor of *Competitions* magazine, was a founding member of The Competition Project, a non-profit clearing house for information on design competitions in the U.S. and abroad. He frequently serves on competition juries, consults for competition sponsors, and has lectured widely. Collyer is the author/editor of *Competing Globally in Architecture Competitions*, published by John Wiley & Sons.

**Barbara Karth** is a freelance writer based in Chevy Chase, Maryland.

**Louis Nelson** is an Associate Professor at the University of Virginia, specializing in American architecture, particularly colonial and early national architecture, vernacular architecture, and theories and methods of sacred space. The majority of his work focuses on the early American South and the Greater Caribbean. Nelson is also the senior co-editor of *Buildings and Landscapes: the journal of the Vernacular Architecture Forum*.

**Kim O'Connell** is a writer based in Arlington, Virginia, who specializes in historic preservation, sustainable design, and conservation. She has written for *Preservation, Architect, Traditional Building, National Parks*, and *The Washington Post* and has a master's degree in historic preservation from Goucher College.

**Pamela H. Simpson** is the Ernest Williams II Professor of Art History at Washington and Lee University. She is co-author of the *Architecture of Historic Lexington*, author of *Cheap, Quick, and Easy: Imitative Architectural Materials, 1870-1930* and co-editor of *Monuments to the Lost Cause: Women, Art and the Landscapes of Southern Memory*.

**Courtney Cook Spearman** is a landscape designer with EDAW in Alexandria, Virginia. Her research interests lie where historic landscapes meet contemporary cultural and social needs. She has master's degrees in landscape architecture and architectural history from the University of Virginia.

## Letters to the **Editor**

**K**udos to William Morgan for his comments on the restoration of the Rotunda at the University of Virginia, and his suggestion that it is time to expand our idea of the Jeffersonian legacy ["Facelift or Folly," Issue 4, 2007].

During my student days I recall one of my professors lamenting the 1976 renovation, when they had "pulled out real Stanford White and put in fake Thomas Jefferson." I also remember listening—first with pride, later with amusement, finally with impatience—as we of the University congratulated ourselves for "preserving Mr. Jefferson's heritage." Here is a man whose great contributions include reasoned and passionate arguments for radical change, and we seem more inclined to memorialize than to apply his example.

Jefferson was constantly experimenting, trying new things, tearing down and rebuilding—consider Monticello, another "preserved" Jeffersonian landmark, which looks as it does today because that was its state when Jefferson died. I agree that an authentic renovation of the Rotunda would take into account everything that has happened since the walls originally went up. The building itself, however, is only part of the story.

My fondest memories of the Lawn are of casual interactions—walking in the fog, studying under trees, playing music on the Rotunda steps. It is of such things—unrestricted access by students, teachers, and the general public to an unquestioned architectural treasure—that an authentic Jeffersonian legacy is made.

—T. A. "Tadd" Clarkson, AIA  
Architectural Design Studio, PA

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### Correction

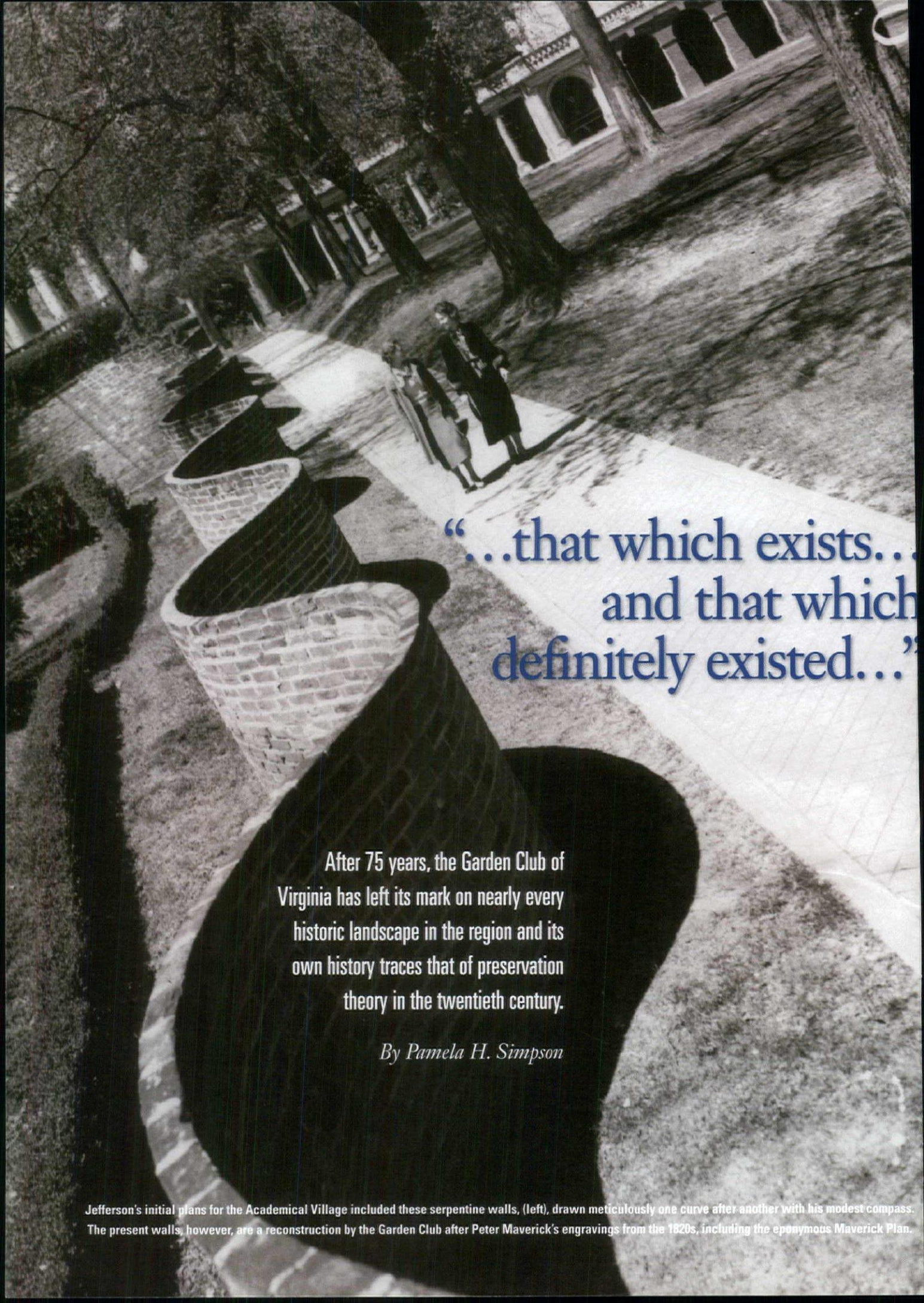
Our feature on the American Civil War Center at Historic Tredegar (Issue 4, 2007) incorrectly identified 3North as 3 North (note the space) in the text of the article. We regret the error.

In "Expanding the Narrative," (Issue 4, 2007) the name of 3North architect Jason Dufilho was incorrectly spelled "Duifilo." We regret the error.

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A black and white photograph of a historic garden. In the foreground, a large, dark, curved brick wall dominates the lower left. A path winds through the garden, with several people walking on it in the middle ground. In the background, there are large trees and a building with arched windows. The overall scene is a well-maintained historic landscape.

“...that which exists...  
and that which  
definitely existed...”

After 75 years, the Garden Club of  
Virginia has left its mark on nearly every  
historic landscape in the region and its  
own history traces that of preservation  
theory in the twentieth century.

*By Pamela H. Simpson*

Jefferson's initial plans for the Academical Village included these serpentine walls, (left), drawn meticulously one curve after another with his modest compass. The present walls, however, are a reconstruction by the Garden Club after Peter Maverick's engravings from the 1820s, including the eponymous Maverick Plan.



If the words "Garden Club of Virginia" make you think of white-gloved ladies sipping tea in the boxwood-lined, brick-path gardens of the founding Father's estates, then you are not alone, but you only know part of the story. "It is a bum rap," says William D. Rieley, the Charlottesville-based landscape architect who currently works with the group. "It might have been true to some extent forty years ago, but things have changed." The modern club is as much interested in conservation and environmental issues as with historic gardens as the range of projects they undertake involve all sorts of gardens. Many of its leaders, including president Sally Guy Brown, have professional degrees in landscape design and the 3,300 members in 47 garden clubs across the state comprise a very well-informed group of women who take seriously their educational mission.

It all started in 1920 when eight local garden clubs joined together to form a state-wide group. A shared passion for gardening and for American history led them to their first project, a 1927 flower show at Monticello. Amazing themselves and everyone else, the ladies raised over \$7,000, to preserve some endangered trees at the historic site. That experience inspired them to try an even more ambitious tour. In the last week of April of 1929, at the height of the blooming season, the Garden Club of Virginia held its first Historic Garden Week. The tour of historic houses and gardens brought in over \$14,000, which was enough to begin the restoration of the gardens at Kenmore, the colonial era home of George Washington's sister in Fredericksburg.

The event became an annual one and has continued ever since. Last year, according to Suzanne Munson, Executive Director for Historic Garden Week, ticket sales totaled approximately \$700,000. Over the years the tour has earned the Garden Club more than \$13 million and that has supported over 40 restoration projects. This year, 2008, will be the 75th season of what is billed

**Built in 1762, Kenmore was the home of George Washington's sister, Betty, and was the first project undertaken by the Garden Club. Its gardens, according to this 1984 Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) plan, include over 50 plants and trees.**

Walter Smalling

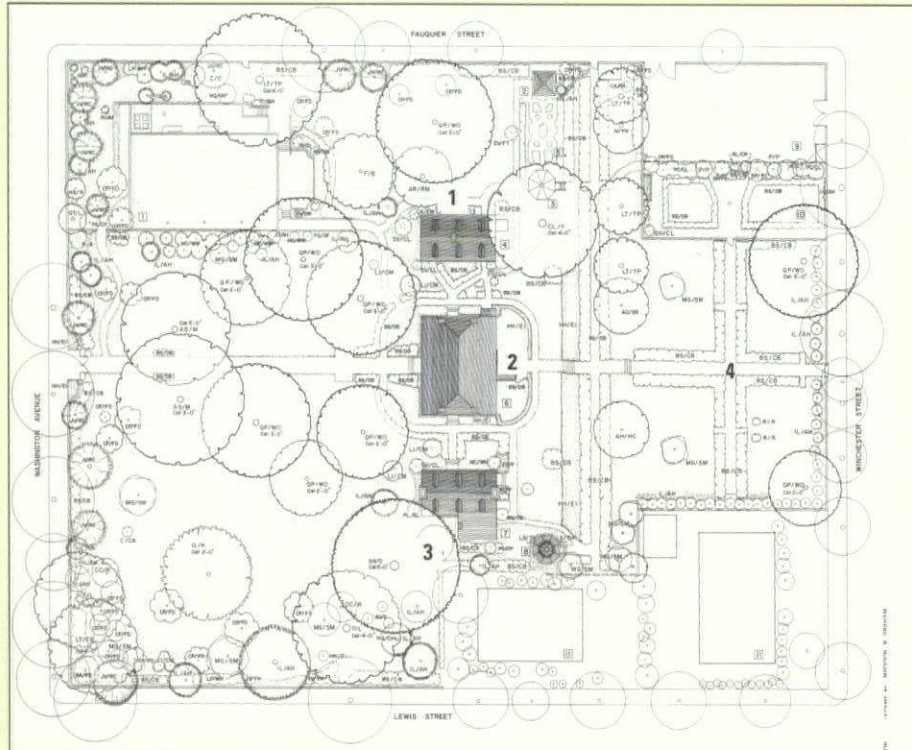


Acquired in 1922 by the Kenmore Association, the plantation house originally sat at the head of 863 acres west of the Rappahannock River.

as the "oldest and largest statewide house and garden tour event in the nation."

That is quite a heritage. White-gloved or not, the women have established an impressive reputation for sponsoring historic garden projects. "You also have to give them credit for always hiring professionals," says Rieley. Indeed, some of the most respected landscape architects in the country have helped the Garden Club of Virginia leave a lasting mark on the state.

The first was Charles Gillette, probably the best-known landscape architect in Virginia in the 1920s and 1930s. He was the principal designer for Kenmore's recreated gardens and he was responsible for much of that boxwood-brick-path legacy. Modern historians have sometimes taken the disdainful view that Gillette and others imposed an English, high-style conception on American colonial landscapes. His gardens were always beautiful and often grand. But while the



- 1 North Dependency
- 2 Main house
- 3 South Dependency
- 4 Formal garden



Courtesy Historic American Building Survey, National Park Service





The garden at Gunston Hall Plantation, lined with boxwoods, sits atop an engineered plateau intended to be exactly one acre that overlooked the Potomac River. As a viewing platform and a formal garden, it is a composition in both plan and elevation.

formula succeeded at Kenmore, it was less appropriate when imposed on a mid-nineteenth century middle class house such as the Woodrow Wilson birthplace in Staunton. There formally patterned boxwood terraces and a Colonial-style well house give a dubious interpretation of the past. Still, as Rieley points out, Gillette's gardens are now old enough that we value them for what they are--the Colonial Revival.

Rieley had his chance to work on one of Gillette's gardens when he was asked to restore the Virginia Governor's Mansion grounds in 2000. No histor-

ical problems of interpretation encumbered him on this project. The grounds were entirely Gillette's 1954 creation and they were well documented in plans and photographs. "It was particularly gratifying to see this garden brought back to its original conception," notes Rieley, adding that the simple act of returning the flowers revealed how lively the original composition was.

Gillette had a private practice in Richmond for over 50 years, and while the Garden Club turned to him for a variety of projects, they also relied on moonlighting Colonial Williamsburg land-

scape architects for much of their work. Men like Arthur Shurcliff brought state-of-the-art methods to recreating historic gardens in the 1930s, relying on documentation and extensive archaeological investigation. Critics have pointed out, however, that as well-intentioned as these men were, there is no doubt that they unwittingly imposed their own Beaux-Arts training on their conception of the Colonial. The results, as at Smith's Fort Plantation in Surrey County, may be what the public conceives of as "colonial" but it is, in reality, just as Colonial Revival as Gillette's creations.

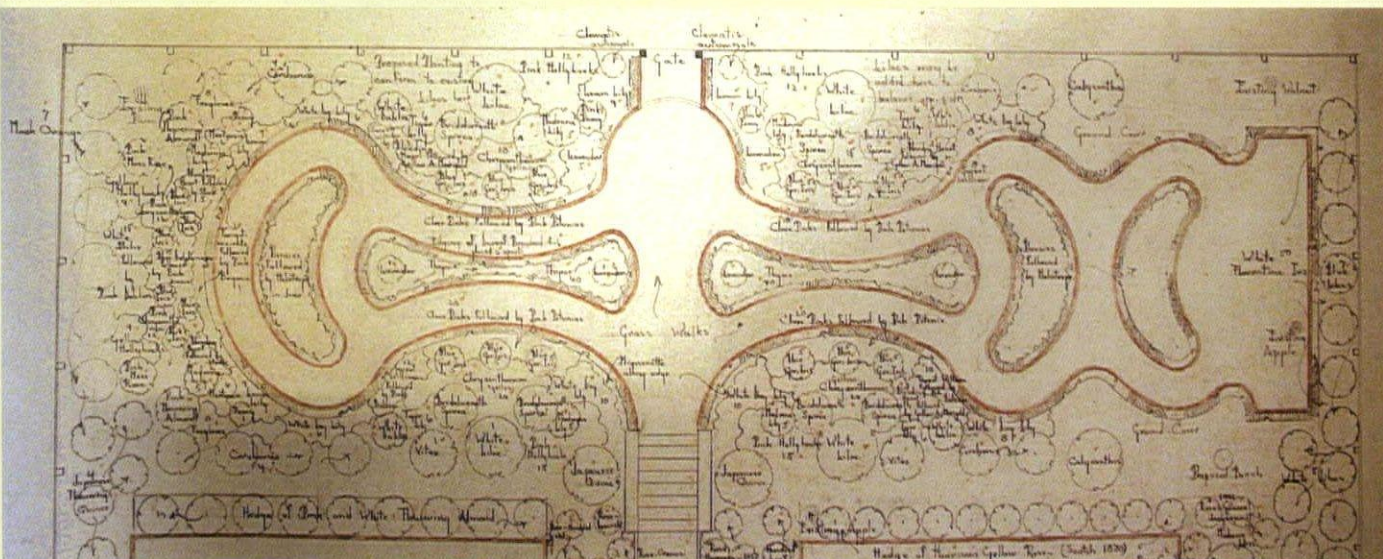




Designed in 1933 by landscape architect Charles Gillette, the garden at Woodrow Wilson's birthplace was enlarged by Ralph Griswold in 1968 and Rudy Favretti in 1990.

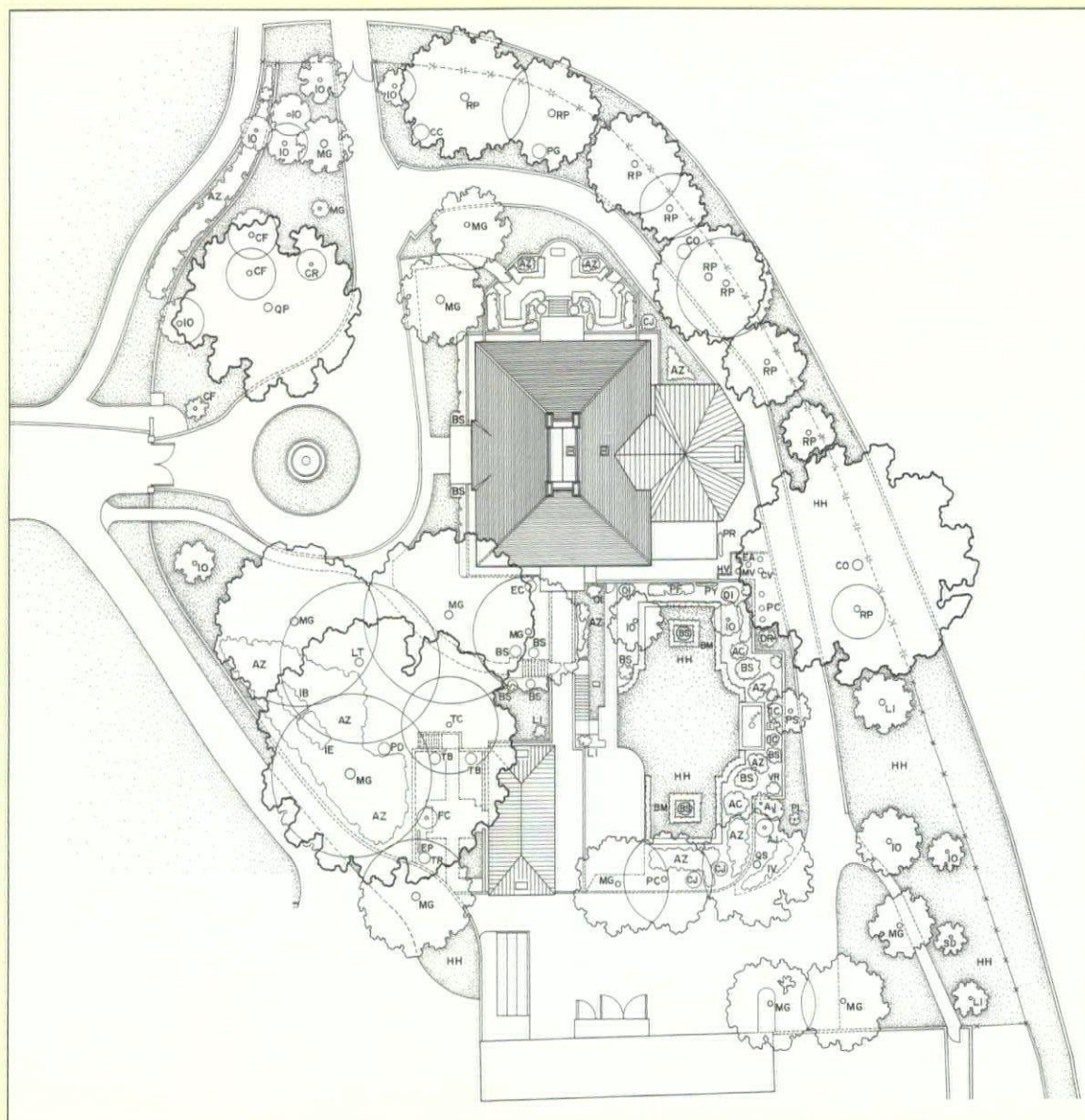
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Courtesy Garden Club of Virginia



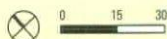
Now part of the Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library, the garden was originally conceived as a "restoration" of a Victorian garden from 1846, when the house was built. It is considered the only known example of a "bowknot" design in Gillette's career.





Designed by Gillette in 1954, the Governor's Mansion gardens in Richmond demonstrate the amalgam of formal, Continental garden design and more informal, English "landscape gardening."

Site Plan



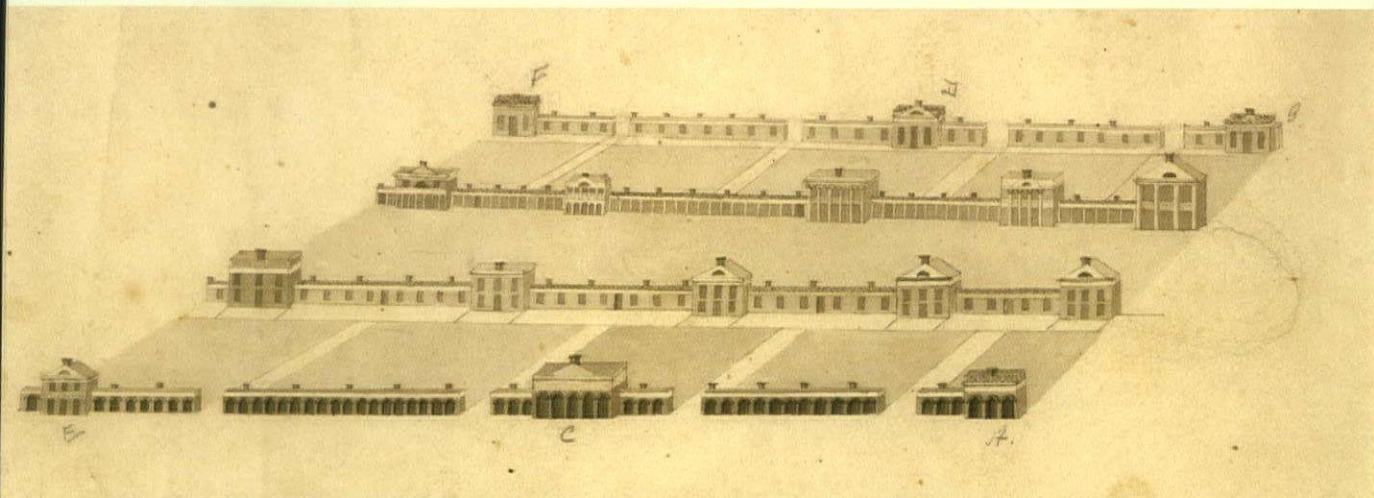
Alden Hopkins, who succeeded Shurcliff at Williamsburg in 1940, was responsible for the landscape design for the University of Virginia, the "largest and most ambitious" restoration project ever undertaken by the Garden Club. They managed to get the university to move parking lots and even a road to recreate the serpentine-walled gardens behind the pavilions. With little physical or documentary evidence to guide him, Hopkins thoroughly studied what there was and immersed himself in Jefferson's writings. He made no claims for originality beyond what he could document. Instead he created what Rieley calls a "collage of designs" inspired by the traditions that Jefferson knew from books and travel.

Ralph Griswold succeeded Hopkins in 1960 as the Garden Club's chief landscape architect and Rudy Favretti succeeded him in 1978. Both men contributed a great deal to changing the prevailing Colonial Revival mode with greater sensitivity to differences in class, scale, and geography for their various projects. "You have to think of gardens as in transition," Favretti said in a recent interview, "You can't freeze it at one point. It would be ridiculous to cut down trees just because they grew up later. They are also part of the story. You have to show what happened over the years." Favretti takes greatest pride in his efforts to help the Garden Club establish a fellowship program to document private gardens. Now named for him and administered

by Rieley, the fellowship is one of several the Garden Club of Virginia offers to graduate students to support summer research for documentation of gardens not normally open to the public. The result is a growing archive on historic garden practices, and there are even efforts, with the help of the Virginia Historical Society, to digitize all the Garden Club records so they will be available to the public. And that is typical of what the Garden Club of Virginia has become: a thoroughly modern organization, working with professionals, concerned with state of the art practices, whose primary mission is not only preservation but also education.

At a February 2008 Garden Club symposium in Fredericksburg to cele-





Attributed to both Thomas Jefferson and John Neilson, one of Jefferson's master builders, this ink-and-wash scheme for the Academical Village offers little in the way of evidence regarding the actual design of its gardens. It is widely held, however, that no design ever existed for the Pavilion gardens as Jefferson intended that residents would plant and maintain them. Here, the Garden Club's task was largely interpretive as well as restorative.

to celebrate the 75th anniversary of Historic Garden Week and the 79th anniversary of their founding, experts in landscape and horticulture, including Rieley and Favretti presented papers and discussed the nature of restoration and how one balances historic accuracy with contemporary use. Nancy Campbell, Chairman Emeritus of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, gave a keynote talk entitled, "America's Historic

Homes and Gardens: Custodians As Best We Can Be in Our Time," a title that encapsulates what the Garden Club has been doing for decades. The practices of preservation, restoration, and reconstruction, all employed by the Garden Club at various times since its inception, reflect the history of preservation theory in the twentieth century. The result has had an enormous impact on the historic fabric of the region.

**Project:** selected restoration projects underwritten by the Garden Club of Virginia

**Landscape Architects:** William Rieley & Associates, Rudy J. Favretti, Alden S. Hopkins, Charles F. Gillette, Donald Parker, Ralph E. Griswold, James Greenleaf and others

**Consultants:** Plank Road Studios; Sass Conservation, Inc.

**Contractors:** P.L. Anderson & Sons; Conrad Brothers; C.L. Lewis; R.M. Crickenberger Construction; Watkins & Company; Village Garden Center

**Owners:** various public and private entities

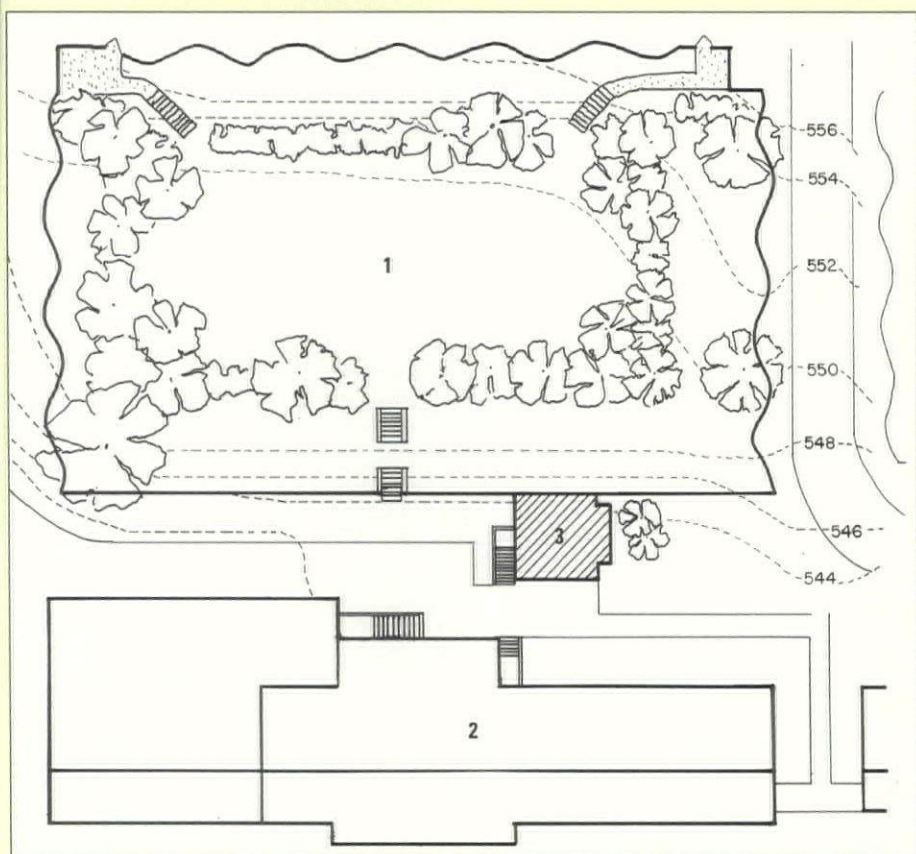
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## RESOURCES

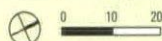
Other Vendors: **WOODWORK & FENCE WORK:** William Drumweller Construction **GRAPHIC DESIGN:** Joseph Beery Graphic Design; **PLANT MATERIAL:** DeHaven Nursery, Inc.; Grelen Nursery; Winn Nursery; **PHOTOGRAPHY:** Roger Foley Photography; **IRON:** Robinson Iron; **MASONRY:** Traditional Masonry of Virginia

The anomalous "Crackerbox," thought to be a kitchen or out-building for Hotel F, is now a dormitory. The garden behind Hotel F, now lined with boxwood trees, was established before the Garden Club's restoration, begun in 1954. Like the other gardens on the southeastern side of the Academical Village, it responds to the severe grade changes with terracing and stairs.

- 1 Hotel F Garden
- 2 Hotel F (Levering Hall)
- 3 The "Crackerbox"



Site Plan







# Two By Two

*The partnership between the Frontier Culture Museum and Carlton Abbott and Partners begins its third decade of a bold experiment in the Shenandoah Valley.*

*By Louis Nelson*

The significance of vernacular architecture lies in its capacity to tell stories. By rooting us in a particular place and time, the stories woven by vernacular architecture help us better understand who we are, and sometimes who we are not. A deep commitment to architecture's narrative potential lies at the heart of the Frontier Culture Museum, an extraordinary institution just outside Staunton, Virginia, that will this September celebrate its twentieth anniversary.

The museum was the brainchild of Irishman Eric Montgomery and American folklorist Henry Glassie, who in the early 1970s envisioned a place that celebrated those folk cultures that shaped Appalachia. Through the course of the eighteenth century, Germans, Scotch-Irish, and English immigrants found their way to the Appalachian Mountains and built a distinctive way of life that was fairly isolated through the nine-

teenth century and by the twentieth century was enthusiastically studied by folklorists and anthropologists. Montgomery, Glassie and a host of others wanted to find a way to root the contours of that culture in a particular place.

Inspired by similar museum sites in Europe, they seized on architecture as the cultural "place-holder" to use the words of Carlton Abbott, architect and long-time proponent for the Museum. "Buildings," argues Abbott, "provide a way to talk about these cultures." And so the search began for appropriate buildings from the South of England, Ulster in Ireland, and the Palatine of Germany that could be disassembled and transported to Virginia. These were to be situated near an Appalachian farmstead that would also be moved to the site, giving the visitor the opportunity to compare life in the Virginia mountains with those in the Old World. The re-



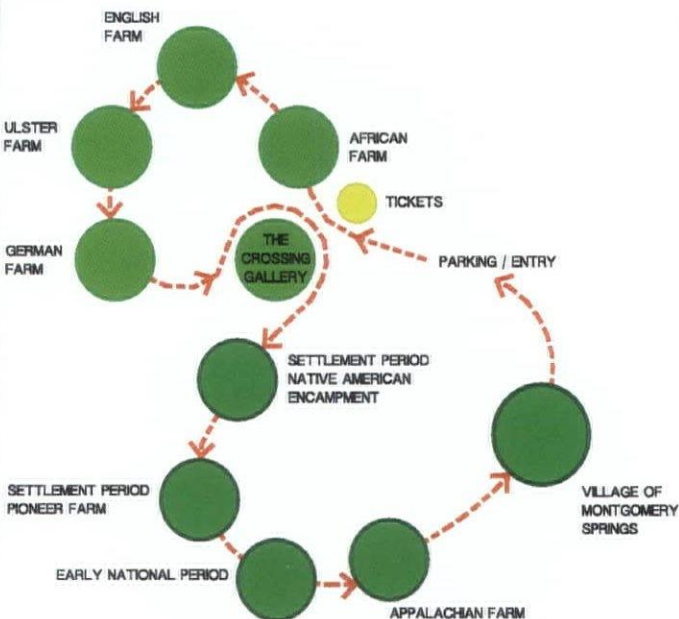


With the Igbo compound, the museum hopes to interpret the lives of West Africans before their enslavement.

From Worcestershire, in the West Midlands of England, the English farm is a half-timbered structure with diagonal bracing to prevent racking.



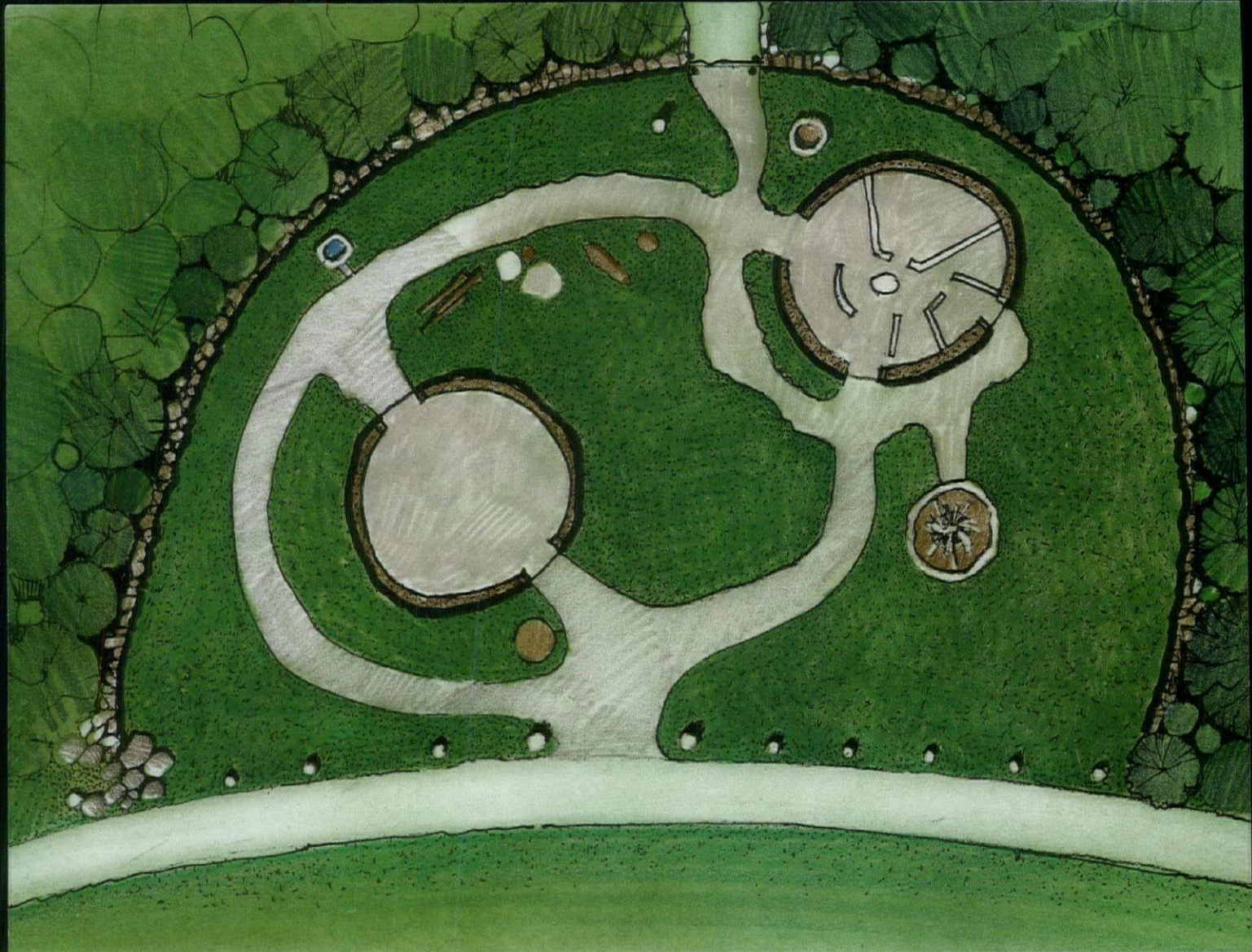
Demonstrating the museum's evolving narrative, the 1850s American Farm, also known as the Appalachian Farm, was moved across the property in 2006. It will, however, still reflect the life of the southern-American yeoman, or independent land-owning farmers in the nineteenth century.



Once completed, the visitors to the newly expanded Museum will first travel through the Old World sites then explore the complex narratives of emigration, both free and forced, in the "Crossing Gallery" before arriving at New World sites.

sponsibility for overseeing this process fell to the museum's first curator, Walter Heyer. In moving each of these buildings, "we embraced," Heyer explains, "the preservation guidelines of the country. When you visit the German farmstead you see German preservation techniques." The same is true for the English and Irish sites. In 1988, the museum opened with the Scotch-Irish and the Appalachian farm in place with the German and English buildings soon to follow. The result is an extraordinary collection of seventeenth to nineteenth-century buildings: the tall *fachwerk* (a German timber-framing technique) Hordt house with its two enormous barns, the low, stone and thatch Irish house nearly indistinguishable from its cattle sheds, the half-timbered English house, and the log and frame Appalachian farmhouse with its dairy, threshing barn, and tobacco shed. The story of immigration and the formation of culture was well underway.





The granary, at left in the Igbo compound plan, and what can be called the domestic unit, at right in the plan, are intrinsically tied. The Frontier Culture Museum hopes to adapt its findings in Nigeria to a Virginia context this summer, as the compound will be built using traditional methods by a team from southeastern Nigeria.

As it anticipated its twentieth year, the Frontier Culture Museum came to recognize that sometimes certain actors are written in and others written out of any plotline. As a corrective, the Museum has embarked on a remarkable journey to write in the story of Africans. But now, rather than importing buildings, the museum will be importing builders. Visitors to the museum this summer will have the opportunity to watch a team from southeastern Nigeria plan out and erect a traditional Igbo compound, complete with individual houses for the farmer and his wives, small religious shrines and a yam barn.

These will be mud-walled and thatched buildings surrounded by a dense living hedge or a mud wall. The Museum's current Associate Director Eric Bryan and Curator of Buildings Ray Wright, have spent time over the past year or more traveling in Nigeria recording Igbo compounds and speaking with specialists on traditional West African architectures. This summer's construction project is a landmark event that will add a critical dimension to the ways museums interpret the African contribution to Southern history and culture.

The addition of the Igbo compound is part of an expansion of the museum that will take a visitor from the Old World sites—Germany, Ireland, England and Nigeria—through a gallery that focuses on immigration, to a series of New World sites. Working with Anthropologists at the University of Virginia

and James Madison University, Bryan and others at the museum are exploring the various possibilities for a Native American site that will be installed in coming years. Marking the arrival to Europeans to the region will be a settler's log cabin, which, like the Igbo compound, will be built on site using local materials and traditional tools and technology. The settler's cabin will lead to the Bowman House, a German-American log house erected in the late eighteenth and expanded in the early nineteenth century. Already on its new site, the house was donated to the museum by a family who found it necessary to remove the house from their property.

The two phases of the Bowman house reveal quite explicitly the transformation of German to American building practices over these same decades. The Appalachian farmstead has been moved to follow the Bowman house, showing the completed process of acculturation, a culture that is now entirely distinct from those that came together to create it. This expansion of the museum, which is already underway, certainly finds its roots in the earliest visions of what the museum might be but simultaneously reflects the importance of incorporating Africans and Native Americans in the story of early American cultures. When discussing these new ventures, Bryan expresses a deep conviction that these stories of immigration and acculturation should be broadly representative and that is cer-



At the front of the chief's compound, within the Nigerian Ikwu village, is the "obi," or his day house. Researchers disagree on the method by which these compounds are organized, but this one struck the Frontier Culture Museum for its similarity to accounts of other traditional compounds.



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A dwelling under construction in an Umuoka village, Enugu State, Nigeria, showing the basic frame that would inform the Frontier Culture Museum how to construct an authentic West African village.

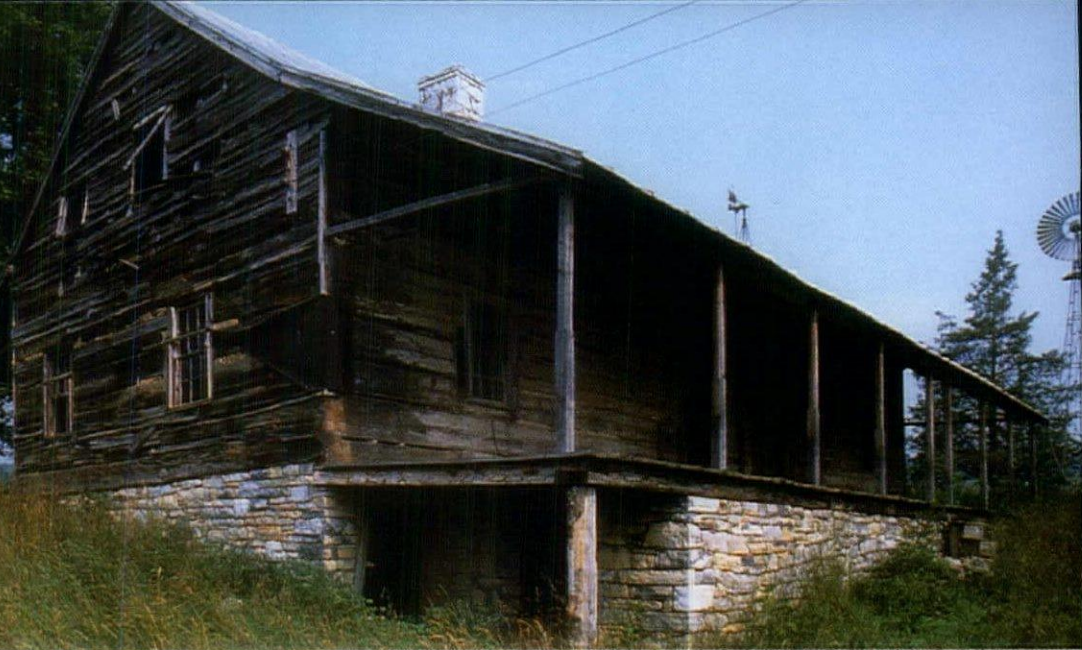
tainly reflected in the Museum's commitment to the broadening discourses on American history.

The final stage of the museum—the creation of a small cross-roads village that brings the visitor back to the beginning of their journey—is in many ways the most complicated. Named Montgomery Springs in honor of Eric Montgomery, the village is intended to be 15 or so buildings, emulating the many small hamlets that dotted the Valley of Virginia by the nineteenth century. The complication with Montgomery Springs lies in the acquisition of buildings. It is absolutely true that those buildings finding their way to the Frontier Culture Museum facilitate an important storytelling project; it is public history.

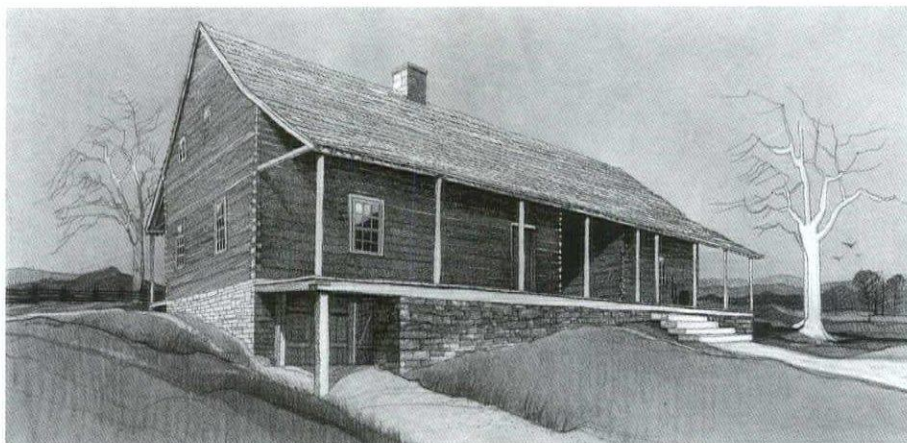
But it is also an artificial narrative, as these buildings did not inhabit these spaces and did not tell this particular story. Using buildings to tell a story in this way means the destruction of other,



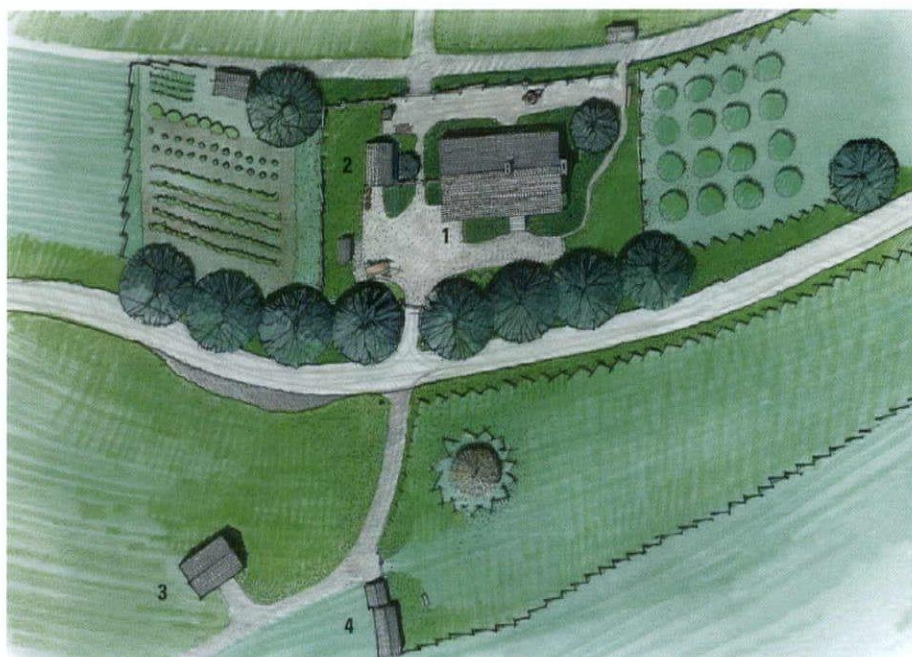
The flürkückenhaus, or roughly the "entryway kitchen house," is believed to be the oldest part of the Bowman House structure. Constructed in 1773 by Georg Baumann, the original three-room floor plan was later expanded in the nineteenth century.



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The Bowman House, erected in 1773 and modified around 1820, reflects a process of acculturation, or gradual adaptation, as it passed to several generations of German-Americans.



Site Plan 

- 1 Bowman Homestead
- 2 Root cellar
- 3 Granary
- 4 Animal shelter

actual stories of architecture in place. The Waffle House and Cracker Barrel signs that loom over the Bowman House are reminders enough of the expanding placelessness of the American landscape, even in Appalachia. This reality means curators at the Frontier Culture Museum and open air heritage sites across the country must face some difficult questions as they move into the twenty-first century.

What does it mean for a heritage site to participate in such placelessness by moving buildings from their original sites? Is the construction of history in this way actually good history, or, is it history at all? Does the authenticity of an "original" building have educational efficacy that a reconstruction does not? The Frontier Culture Museum has become increasingly sensitive to its responsibility to not only tell its story but also to preserve the story of buildings in place. They do so by only accepting buildings that are inevitably slated for destruction or that have already been removed some marked distance from their original locale. These are good ethical guidelines that must remain the benchmark for this and other museums. Such high, ethical

Courtesy Carlton Abbott

Courtesy Frontier Culture Museum





The Ulster house was the first of the European house complexes to be installed. The small, two chamber dwelling with appended animal sheds is typical of the house-types occupied by the majority of Scotch-Irish prior to emigration.

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standards will synthesize well with the rigorous research and sensitive cultural engagement that marks the work of the museum. From the house and barn of the German Palatine to the Igbo farmer's compound, the Frontier Culture Museum, is a place with a deep recognition of the power of architecture to tell stories, to shape history, to help us understand who we are.

**Project:** Museum of American Frontier Culture  
**Architect:** Carlton Abbott & Partners, PC  
**Consultants:** Hanover Engineers, PC (Allen Lambert, President); Robert Staton; Hurd & Obenchain (J.B. Obenchain, Jr., Vice President)  
**Contractor:** Menno Kinsinger; Harmon Construction (Carl Harmon, President)  
**Owner:** Commonwealth of Virginia

#### RESOURCES

Other Vendors: **MECHANICAL, ELECTRICAL, & PLUMBING ENGINEERS:** Blauch Brothers Mechanical; Myers & Whitself, Inc. **FIRE PROTECTION:** Piedmont Sprinkler Company, Inc.; Roanoke Sprinkler; **PLUMBING:** Draft Electrical and Plumbing Services



The single "hall" of the Ulster house is an excellent example of the shared spaces that the majority of Europeans and new Americans occupied into the nineteenth century.



# Copper Cadence

David Jameson Architect  
offers a new interpretation  
of some old materials in this  
home, television studio, and  
tree house.

By Barbara Karth





Once a mid-century split-entry home located with traditional elements, the BTR, or Burning Tree Road, House has been transformed. Architect David Jameson gently raised the entrance to the upper level, wrapping it in stucco and stone, and doubled its size.

Paul Warchol



**R**ain pours down and the three young Andres girls play soccer (with a soft ball) or conduct a talent show with their friends in the glass-walled multi-purpose room of their home where the woods are but two feet away. Other days the room is filled with tables, a staff of prep chefs, and technicians. Upstairs in the kitchen a new television program is being filmed, "José, Made In Spain." This is the Bethesda, Maryland, home of José Andres, renowned chef, author and entrepreneur. "Cooking is his passion ... and entertaining," says his wife, Patricia Fernandez de la Cruz.

From the outside of architect David Jameson's addition to an existing rambler, the glass wall offers both a transparent and reflective skin, uninterrupted by protruding mullions—today's technology. Behind the stucco exterior of the original home, recast in the image of Adolf Loos, is a mid-twentieth century split-entry structure that was once adorned in Georgian affections. For Jameson, fortuitous events set the house at an angle to its current street, on a cul-de-sac that never came to fruition. "To me, that was a beautiful condition," Jameson says.

A bird's-eye view of the home reveals two linear volumes, rectangles on parallel axes; one is the original house and the other is the 3,000 square-foot addition, connected by a small circulation core. Jameson developed his concept from this airborne vantage point echoing the parallel forms in the landscape. He began where a hedge of skip laurel meets the drive, followed by lawn panels separated by a ten-foot strip of vinca, or periwinkle. "It is a series of thresholds through the landscape ... a manicured, curated environment of the landscape in the front blurring until it ends in a forest environment," he explains.



Site Plan



- 1 Existing house
- 2 Addition
- 3 Entry drive





"Juxtaposition" notes Jameson, characterizes many aspects of his total design concept of opposites, notably, light and heavy. The front, or the original home, is "sort of armaturesque, rooted to the earth," he continues, "so visually, it is a very heavy line. The stone gives it a solid feeling. In the back, that copper volume is light, it cantilevers out." This standing seam copper bar culminates with a two-story screened porch at one end, "but it doesn't read [as a] screen," he adds.

Seams of copper echo the vertical lines of the thin tall trees. "There is this beautiful cadence of the landscape when you look at the copper," says Jameson. Contrasting with those vertical lines, the steel sunscreen slices through the stone in front, emphasizing horizontal lines. The stucco is a storm-inspired gray-green. "I find storms to be a beautiful color. Right before a thunderstorm the sky gets bluish, grayish-green color," Jameson notes. The stucco will endure in its current state, but the copper will change and develop a patina, a blending of orange, purple and green. Trees and plants will grow, reseed and die for an entirely different vista a year from now, ten years from now and on.

Approaching from the street, a walkway of one-foot by three-foot Pennsylvania bluestone in a thermal finish, com-

monly used for slip-reistance, is laid horizontally. The stone walls continue with the bluestone in a horizontal strip finish, and this geometric concept is carried thorough in your path to the house, a sharp left, up two steps and then a sharp right—no curves. A heavy, foot-deep door establishes a barrier, albeit a welcoming one, privacy and ownership verses hospitality and intrigue. It is a series of horizontal bands of standing cedar reiterating the concept of parallel geometry. A thin, light, translucent, Lexan strip contrasts with the heaviness of the thick door, another juxtaposition.

The entrance is now on the upper level of the former split-entry home, and yet the height above grade is not apparent "because you have these series of stone walls that are these linear bars in the landscape," Jameson explains. Inside, mahogany flooring has been laid lengthwise on the central hall running through the width of the house, emphasizing the pull through the house to the trees beyond. "Everyone says you have to run the floor the opposite direction of the floor joists. That was 1900 building technology," Jameson says.

Paired-down Modernism, circa 1910, is alive and well, however. The dining room has no permanent fixtures, and Andres has made it an adaptable space for living with four tables: a



A kitchen floats in the approximately fifty-foot-by-twenty-foot, copper-clad addition and is large enough for homeowner and chef José Andres' to film his new television program "José, Made in Spain."

Photos: Paul Warchol



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large round for twelve, two smaller rounds for seating twenty, and a long rectangle. Family and close friends enjoy dinner at the table adjacent to the kitchen. "This is a sustainable house," notes Jameson. For the family, Jameson's work serves multiple programs, and for the extant structure, the architect made the most of its good bones. "It reclaims an existing house and reuses it as opposed to tearing it down. Stucco and copper: these are lifecycle choice materials. They never have to be changed."

Views to the outside are often met with views to the inside, reinforcing the duality of the project: the breakfast room is partially visible from the living room and vice versa. This same back and forth vista exists between the dining room and family room for an constantly changing interplay of stucco, copper and intervening vegetation. "It is like living in a tree house," says Fernandes de la Cruz. "Light plays in a different way in all the spaces. It calls to you," she says, as she moves through the events of her day.

Mediating between the original house and the addition is a circulation tower, which is the core, linking the more public spaces, such as the living room, dining room and library, to more intimate spaces of Jameson's copper-clad addition: a breakfast room, kitchen and family room. Cabinetry sepa-



Jameson created a living room where bedrooms previously existed, which becomes a focal point around the fireplace. A powder room is located in its counterpart between the library and the foyer.





Paul Warchol

A series of stone walls emphasize the horizontal concept Jameson repeats throughout the design of this home. A steel sunshade slices through the stucco for greater emphasis while dramatically defining the entrance.

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rates these family spaces and a large island in the center of the kitchen defines its center. Everyone gathers around the island as Fernandes de la Cruz and Andres cook.

The inside, from this center, reaches out in every direction. Yet, there is a sense of privacy between this family and their neighbors. Jameson has judiciously controlled the views, essentially editing out the neighbors. Upstairs, four bedroom suites are located above the original home. In the new addition, doors in the master suite bedroom open for a balcony view to the screened porch below or the landscape beyond. Two stories below, a terrace flows from the glass enclosed multi-purpose room, a continuation of the flagstone floor where the screened porch cantilevers over a "rain terrace." There, after an impromptu indoor soccer match or a taping of "José, Made In Spain," the family can sit and listen to the counterpoint of raindrops hitting the copper and the leaves.

**Project:** Burning Tree Road House

**Architect:** David Jameson Architect

**Consultants:** Linton Engineering; Gregg Bleam, Landscape Architect

**Contractor:** David Jameson Architect

**Owners:** José Andres and Patricia Fernandez de la Cruz

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- 1 Bedrooms
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- 5 Dining Room
- 6 Family Room
- 7 Kitchen
- 8 Breakfast Room
- 9 Multi-purpose room

Second Floor Plan

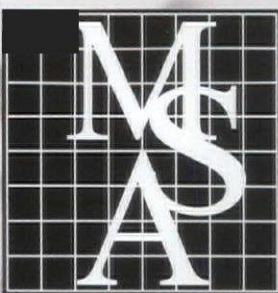
First Floor Plan

Basement Floor Plan





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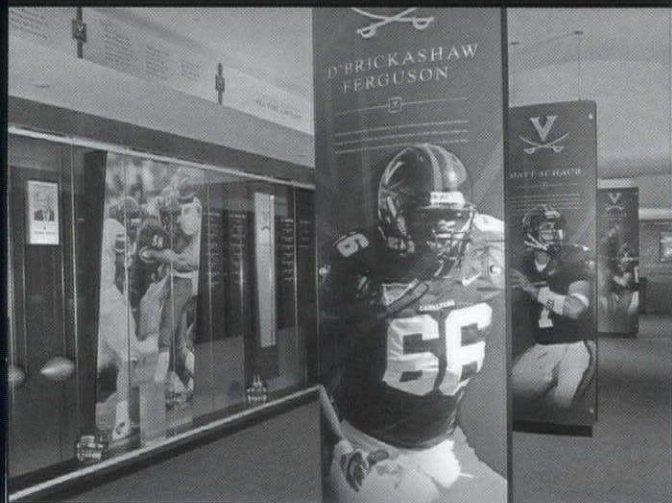
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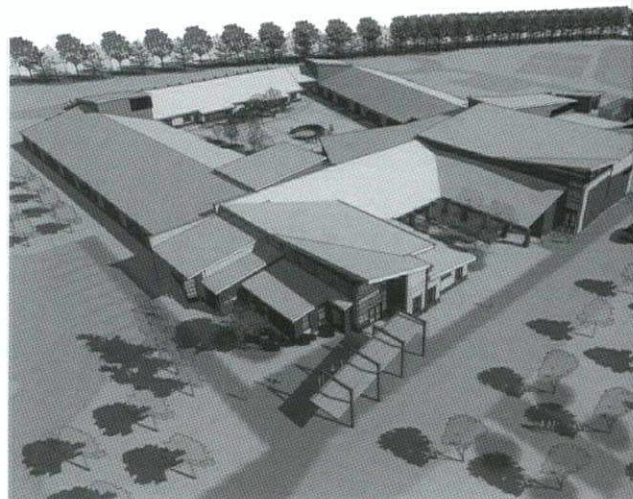




**Architect:** Baskervill, Richmond

**Project:** Gables Shopping Center, Blacksburg

This 35,000 s.f. expansion provides a pharmacy drive thru, new bistro, wine cellar, and walk-in beer cooler to the existing Kroger at Gables Shopping Center in Blacksburg. The entire front façade of Kroger plus adjacent shops will be re-designed. [www.baskervill.com](http://www.baskervill.com)



**Architect:** BCWH Architects, Richmond

**Project:** Henrico County East Area Elementary School #1

Henrico County's newest elementary school includes public spaces to the front of the school and an interior courtyard for outdoor art and science classrooms. 78,500 s.f., 750 students. Tel: 804-788-4774 / [www.bcwh.com](http://www.bcwh.com)

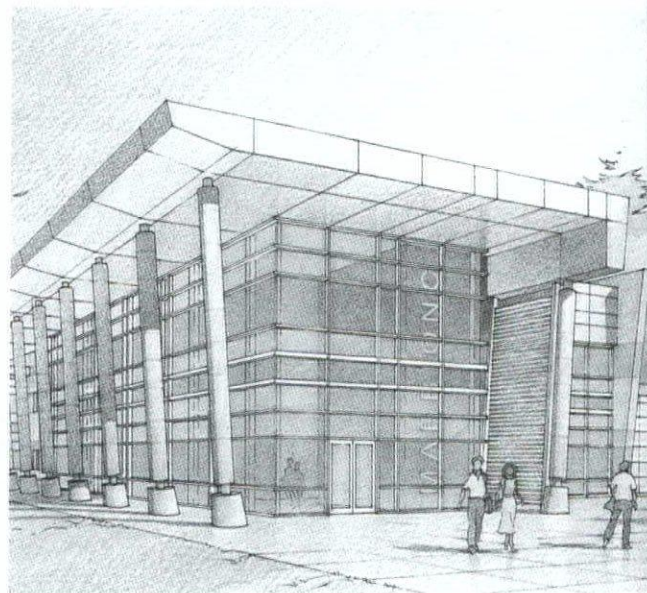
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**Architect:** BerryRio, Springfield

**Project:** LA Fitness Center, Gambrills, Maryland

A variation on the standard LA Fitness prototype, this new building is a 48,000 s.f. Health Club designed as a tilt-up concrete with thin brick inlay construction. The tilt-up construction will allow for completion of the facility in eight months. [www.beeryrio.com](http://www.beeryrio.com)



**Architect:** Clark-Nexsen Architecture and Engineering, Norfolk

**Project:** Williams Hall Renovation, Raleigh, North Carolina

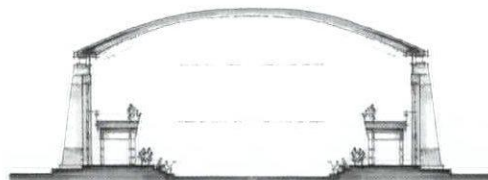
The project is a modernization and renovation of an 82,000 s.f. building at North Carolina State University. Comprehensive design services include assessment, programming, site analysis, landscape design, and construction administration. Contact: David Keith at 757-455-5800 / [www.clarknexsen.com](http://www.clarknexsen.com)





**Architect:** CMSS Architects, PC, Virginia Beach, Reston, Richmond  
**Project:** Rocketts Landing, Village Hall

On the James River in Richmond, this 12,000 s.f. adaptive reuse project includes a community lounge, fitness center, event spaces, catering kitchen, 2,300 s.f. pool house, and performance pavilion. Tel: 757-222-2010 / cmssarchitects.com



**Architect:** DMJM Design, Washington, DC  
**Project:** Naval Station Master Plan, US Navy

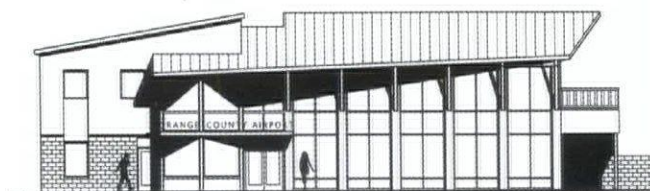
Master planning support for the Department of the Navy, including image, historic resources, restoration, circulation, and campus sustainability. Development of building prototypes will guide future site development at the Naval Station. Tel: 703-682-4900.

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**Firm:** Dominion Seven Architects, Lynchburg  
**Project:** New Sandusky Middle School, Lynchburg

The first new school constructed for the City of Lynchburg since 1976 will be approximately 134,000 s.f. and be constructed behind the existing school. The project has been designed to obtain LEED certification. Tel: 434-528-4300

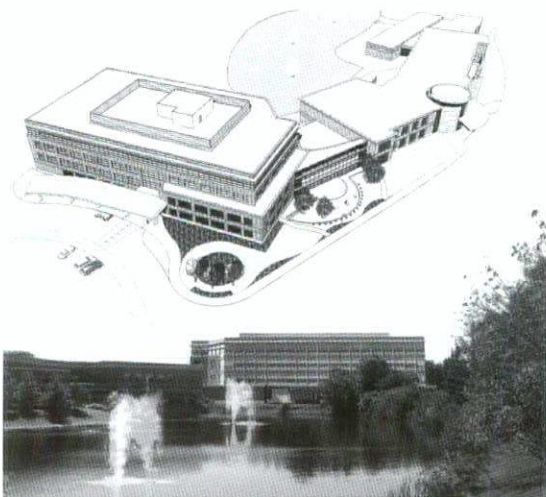


**Architect:** Evolve Architecture, Richmond  
**Project:** Orange County Airport

A two story, 8,500 s.f replacement terminal serving the local and general aviation community. The structure references the adjacent hangar buildings and the traditional masonry of the downtown area. Contact: Syd Tetterton at 804-649-9400 / syd@evolvearchitecture.com



## On the Boards



**Architect:** HKS, Inc., Richmond

**Project:** The Pavilion at Helen F. Graham Cancer Center, Newark, Delaware

Roof gardens overlook a quiet pond at The Pavilion, a 125,000 s.f. expansion that will complete the full services available: counsel, treatment, research, and prevention, at a world-class care facility. [www.hksinc.com](http://www.hksinc.com)



**Architect:** HSMM, Washington, D.C.

**Project:** United States Air Force Global SIGINT Operations Center

This new 113,000 s.f. headquarters building features a command center and courts facilities. Using brick, cast stone and glazing systems, the facility is designed to meet LEED Silver criteria and features a green roof. Contact Gregg Spagnolo at 202-721-7703 / [gspagnolo@hsmm.com](mailto:gspagnolo@hsmm.com).

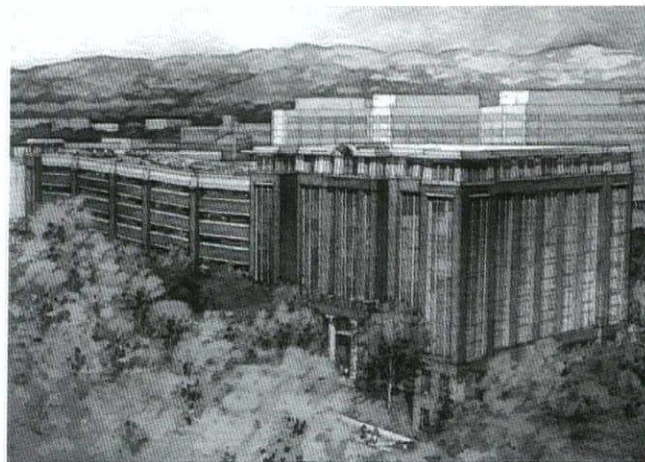
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**Architect:** Kishimoto Gordon Dalaya, Rosslyn

**Project:** Tower III & IV Office Buildings

Tower III & IV are the final pieces to the Tower Oaks Complex located in Rockville, MD. The 9 story buildings will be over 450,000 s.f. The complex is being designed to meet LEED-Platinum Standards. Tel: 202-338-3800 / [www.kgdarchitecture.com](http://www.kgdarchitecture.com)



**Architect:** Mitchell Matthews, Charlottesville

**Project:** Grove Square

Grove Square is a multi-phase, mixed-use project located adjacent to the University of Virginia Medical Center. This first phase will provide approximately 115,000 SF of office and 928 parking spaces. Tel: 434-979-5220 / [www.mitchell-matthews.com](http://www.mitchell-matthews.com)





**Architect:** Moseley Architects, Richmond  
**Project:** CISAT Campus Dining Hall, James Madison University

The 45,000 s.f., open dining space will feature windows on three sides to maximize daylight in the space. The CISAT dining hall is being designed according to LEED standards. Tel: 804-794-7555 / moseleyarchitects.com



**Architect:** Odell Associates Incorporated  
**Project:** Peninsula Resort and Club, Grand Lake, Oklahoma

Plans include 160 hotel rooms, a wellness center/spa, a 45,000 s.f. conference center, dining/yacht club facilities, pool, marina, and 73 luxury condominiums, ranging from 1,200 to over 4,000 s.f. www.odell.com

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**Architect:** PSA-Dewberry, Fairfax  
**Project:** Falls Church Corporate Center

First stage of expansion for this commercial complex includes a landscaped pedestrian promenade connecting the mass transit shuttle stop, two existing office towers, and a new office tower complex to the west. www.psa-dewberry.com

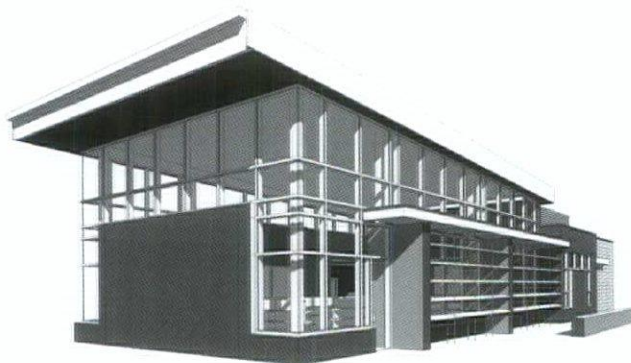


**Architect:** SFCS Inc., Roanoke  
**Project:** Mariposa at Bethany Beach

This 42 acre CCRC in Delaware includes retirement housing choices from carriage homes to apartments and nursing beds, as well as a community/wellness center and memory support unit. LEED certification sought. Tel: 540-344-6664 / rjennings@sfcs.com



## On the Boards



**Architect:** SHW Group, Reston

**Project:** Allied Concrete Showroom, Culpepper

A 4,500 s.f. retail outlet for a premiere manufacturer and supplier of concrete products will utilize high performance building strategies with company building products and sustainable design. Tel: 703-480-4020 / [www.shwgroup.com](http://www.shwgroup.com)

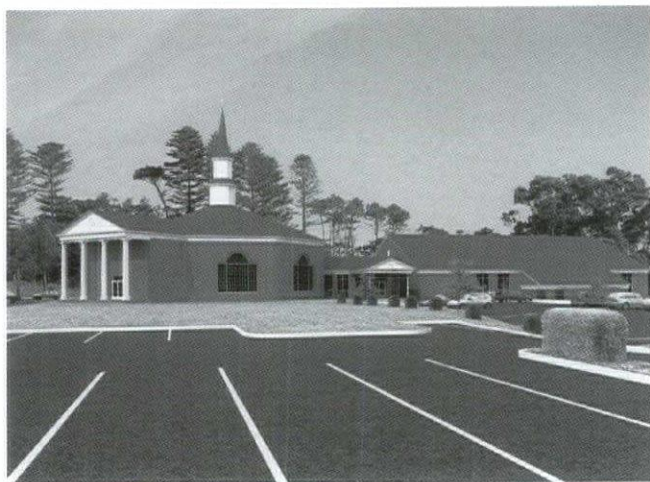


**Architect:** Wiley & Wilson, Lynchburg

**Project:** Nelson County New Courts Facility

Carefully proportioned to fit the scale of the campus, this new courts building provides much needed space while preserving all the existing structures. A new connector will allow access between all buildings while providing an appropriate public entry. Tel: 434-947-1901 / [www.wileywilson.com](http://www.wileywilson.com)

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**Architect:** William Henry Harris & Associates, Inc.

**Project:** Beulah Baptist Church, Culpepper County

Brick-clad and white trim sanctuary and multi-purpose educational wing for an existing church shall include a 650-seat auditorium, administration space, education space, a Christian Life Center and support spaces. Tel: 800-473-0070 / [www.harrisarchitects.org](http://www.harrisarchitects.org)



**Architects:** Dalgliesh Gilpin Paxton Architects, Charlottesville

**Project:** New Residence, Albemarle County

The house opens to the South and views of the Piedmont and is surrounded by stone walls so that the house appears to grow out of the mountain landscape. Its clients sought a European feel, achieved through form and material. Tel: 434-977-4480 / [dgparchitects.com](http://dgparchitects.com)



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**H**ow has Cor-Ten steel, designed for its immense strength and low-maintenance longevity, ended up here?

When Joe and Elvira Hoskins contacted Pete O'Shea's firm Siteworks, they had a specific problem to solve: replace their patio's rough stone slabs and railroad tie walls with materials conducive to both active play for their children and attractive for outdoor gatherings. The rough patio surface was replaced with smooth, stained concrete perfect for kids' bicycles. The shallow terraces were converted into thin Cor-Ten steel planting trays, the same color as Virginia red clay. The existing retaining wall, a heavy, clumsy stack of railroad ties, was transformed into a textural canvas of steel, floating in front of the old wall.

Cor-Ten steel was introduced in the 1960s as a strong, weather-resistant material for civil engineering and industrial uses. But it also immediately found an audience with artists and architects for its low-maintenance durability and its warm, rusty patina. The material has continued to be pushed and explored, as dramatically demonstrated by Richard Serra's recent exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. His immense room-like ribbons and folds illustrate the rich visual, textural and aural potential in this particular industrial steel.

Parallel to these applications, Cor-Ten steel has been developed for industrial uses: shipping containers, bridges, and warehouses. It is this aspect of the material that is harder to reconcile in a children's play space. Transferring Cor-Ten steel from the dirty roughness associated with industry to a residential environment requires a change in attitude about the nature of industry and its materials.

At the same time Cor-Ten was introduced, the Earth Art movement began to challenge perceptions of industrial sites. Through writing and site-specific art, Robert Smithson and his peers looked differently at these places that were invisible to design culture. They paved the way for new thinking about the meaning of industrial detritus for designers and the public.

## The Meaning of Material



What makes the Hoskins project remarkable is not its form or size, or even the highly successful collaboration that both designer and client describe. It is the use of a material that is explicitly industrial yet perfectly appropriate for a small-scale, residential garden.

Since that time, landscape architects have pursued an agenda of reinventing the neglected industrial landscape. Richard Haag's Gas Works Park in Seattle is a transformation of a coal gasification plant into a vital urban park. Peter Latz of Latz + Partner converted an entire steel processing plant in Duisburg, Germany, into a 570-acre park. It is a place of crumbling walls, smokestacks, and steel scraps, re-imagined as climbing walls, swimming pools, and sheltered paths for wandering. Julie Bargmann's work at D.I.R.T. Studio in Charlottesville recognizes abandoned sites and their polluted remains as important traces of human activity. Her collaborations on vast rural parks, former mines from Wyoming to Pennsylvania, reveal the former histories of their sites, the workplaces and centers of now-forgotten communities. These parks and others like them are destinations for the public, and fertile ground for landscape architects.

Siteworks' willingness to use Cor-Ten steel, and the Hoskins enthusiasm for it, reveals a fundamental shift in the meaning of the material. Re-invented parks and re-claimed spaces are part of



a changing perception of neglected industrial sites. With growing acceptance of these places, their materials change meaning and become appropriate in new contexts. Cor-Ten steel is both a symbol of industry's changing role in our culture and the creative act itself. It represents the designer's ability to respond to context and transform it.

— Courtney Cook Spearman



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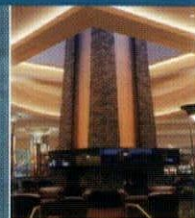
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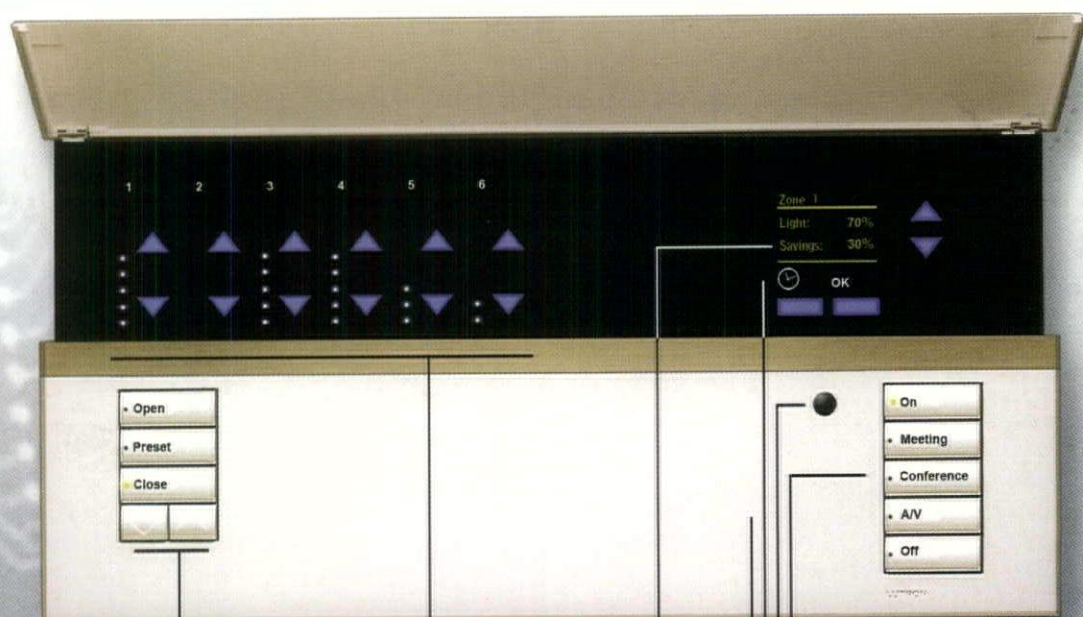


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