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Wood is better than good.
Editorial / diane d. greer

As a writer and editor, I feel compelled, along every other journalist in the world, to share some profound thoughts about the events of September 11. As a former teacher of architectural history, I feel compelled to speculate about the future of tall buildings and how recent events may have cast them in a less than positive light. Well, no profound thoughts are forthcoming despite the fact that I have thought about little else in the weeks since I stared in disbelief at the crumbling World Trade Centers. I felt then, and I feel now, only horror, shock and sadness. I was in New York City a mere two weeks before the tragedy visiting my son and daughter-in-law. As always, I walked the streets, mostly looking up, and felt the exhilaration I always feel from the majesty of NYC’s towering skyline. On this trip, I walked across the Brooklyn Bridge to a little park on the other side of the river and saw yet another thrilling view of NYC. It was dusk and the city was all lit up and looking fine.

I am still wondering how such terrible things can happen to good people, to good buildings, and to good cities. Much as people surely felt after World War II when they saw the ruined cities of Europe, I look at that gaping smoking hole on the south end of Manhattan and wonder what will rise in its place. I have already heard that parts of Alexander Calder’s sculpture have been recovered from the ashes and that it will be put back in place like a symbolic “Phoenix rising from the ashes.” There has been a lot of discussion about erecting a monument on the site to those who lost their lives. Others say rebuild the towers and still others question the wisdom in doing so. My response is naively obvious. In Manhattan, there is nowhere to go but up. Land is at a premium. When the twin towers came down, thousands of workers were displaced. Those buildings need to be rebuilt for commercial and financial reasons, but also for symbolic reasons. We cannot allow good architecture to become a victim of terrorism.

In a recent article in the New York Times, Anthony Vidler, Acting Dean of the Cooper Union School of Architecture wrote about “Designing Defensible Space.” In response to the events of September 11, Vidler writes, “There will be an understandable impulse to flee (the city).” His commentary goes on to suggest that the “new urbanism” movement, with its low-density developments designed to replicate small town life in premodern America, will no doubt take the opportunity to denounce tall buildings as inherently mistaken.” But, he writes, “terrorism alone will not decrease the importance of city centers for the public life of societies.” I agree. This is a country of great builders and great buildings. As long as we design and build responsibly, we must continue to do so. Leaving a huge void in lower Manhattan will serve no one.

My great hope is that by the time you read this, we will all be safe. The war will be over with its mission accomplished and there will be cause for celebration during the holidays. I pray that we will have struck a blow to terrorism and those who practice it and that the world will be a safe place for good people, good buildings and good cities to thrive.
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President’s Message / Miguel “Mike” A. Rodriguez, AIA

It’s hard to believe that the year is over. It’s amazing how much has happened in such a short time - some good, some bad, and some unexpected. As the year began, we focused our goals on improving the profession, our businesses, and our cities. And we were successful. Our legislative agenda was accomplished and the annual convention was well attended despite the fact that this was not a license renewal year and the CE crowd is thinner. Then on September 11 the world changed and since then our conversations have been about new topics including what will happen to our firms as a result of the changing economy. But, despite the changes we are all experiencing, a lot is still the same and our knowledge, skills, and experience are more important to society than ever before.

From the beginning, my goal has been to inspire leadership among architects and encourage them to get involved in their local communities and show by action, rather than words, that our profession does make a difference. I laud the work of architects like Felicia Salazar, AIA, Miami, who worked to incorporate her neighborhood into the City of Miami Lakes. She has served on virtually every committee and task force involved in the formation of the City since it was incorporated. Ana Rabelo Wallrapp, AIA, Tampa, is an architect whose selfless work on behalf of the youth of her community includes volunteer work at local schools and children’s hospitals as well as fundraising for the local art museum and zoo. Tom Hammer, AIA, Tampa, has provided ARE exam preparation courses for years and mentored countless young architects. Bob Broward, AIA Emeritus, has written several books and is regarded as Jacksonville’s “architectural conscience.” Melody Bishop, AIA, Jacksonville, the Rev. Hap Lewis, AIA, West Palm Beach, and Victor Latavish, AIA, Naples, are all working every day to make a difference and by doing so, are enriching our profession, our communities, and our lives.

After December 31, 2001, I will no longer serve as your President, but that is the only thing that will change. My commitment to continue the work of the Institute remains as strong as ever and I plan to be around for a long time. Next year, the Association will be in the excellent care of Enrique Woodroffe, FAIA, who will step in as the 2002 President. Bill Bishop will follow in 2003. I cannot remember a time when we have been in better shape and it’s a good thing because the work of the next few years is already manifesting itself and we will be very, very busy.

Before closing, there is one other person I must thank. My wife and I have been married for over 20 years and during that time she has provided constant support and counsel. Without her help, my work with the Association might not have been possible. She has rearranged her own schedule to accommodate mine and she has “made do” without me while I “gallivanted” around the state working on behalf of the AIA. Although she claims that getting “rid” of me has been the greatest benefit of my participation in the AIA, I know it has not been easy for her. So, I add Lourdes Rodriguez, AIA, to the list of “regular” members in recognition of having put up with me for 20 years and for being such a large part of who I am.

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News

Preservation on the Move

Casa Feliz, a 1933 Spanish farmhouse designed by architect James Gamble Rogers II, FAIA, has found a new home. After a painstakingly slow two-week move, a crowd gathered in Winter Park on September 8, 2001, to applaud the arrival of the 750-ton brick building. Its new site is on Park Avenue adjacent to the ninth tee of the Winter Park golf course.

There is still a lot of work to be done before this project is complete. All of the funding for moving and restoring the house is being raised through private donations. About $350,000 more is needed for a new foundation and to prepare the building for use as a historical house museum.

A limited edition of 1,000 bricks is being sold for $50 each. These 115-year old handmade foundation bricks originally came from the downtown Orlando Armory and Market House, which was razed in 1930. In 1933, Robert Bruce Barbour purchased the bricks to use in the construction of Casa Feliz. For information about the purchase of any Casa Felix commemorative items or to make a donation, contact Betty Spangler at 407/647-1039, or by e-mail at ems@rlfe.com.

Continuing Education Reports Available

Catalogs and copies of research reports and reports of continuing education projects that were produced by the Building Construction Industry Advisory Committee (BCIAC) are now available. You can obtain copies by contacting Michael Ashworth at the Florida Department of Community Affairs, either in writing at 2555 Shumard Oak Blvd., Tallahassee, FL 32399-2100, email at Michael.ashworth@dca.state.fl.us or by telephone at 850/922-6075.

Charles D. Grant, AIA, Dies at Age 61

Charles D. “Chick” Grant, AIA, died on June 9, 2001 at the age of 61. He was a 1963 graduate of Clemson University’s School of Architecture and a principal in the firm of Nichols Carter Grant Architects in Atlanta, Georgia. At the time of his death, Mr. Grant was the vice president of development for the West Florida operations of Arvida in Seagrove Beach, Florida. Prior to joining Arvida, he was vice president of development at Sandestin Resort in Destin, Florida. Chick Grant was a long time member of AIA Florida and a caring mentor to many.
Work-in-Progress

C.T. Hsu + Associates, PA, Orlando, has completed the design phase of the Boone High School Comprehensive Needs Project for Orange County Public Schools. The $28 million expansion and renovation project involves the reorganization of the Boone High School campus by relocating parking, bus and parent drop-off and replacing portables with permanent buildings.

John Clees, RLA, ASLA, a Landscape Architect with Harvard Jolly Clees Toppe Architects, won first place in a design competition to replace the fountain in the “roundabout” traffic circle at the entrance to Clearwater Beach. Clees’ design was clever in its simplicity. He designed a grove of Medjool date palms set in a grid with repeating parallel berms, suggesting the waves in the Gulf of Mexico. The design leaves a 15-foot-wide circle of open space in the center.
visibility around the palms, allowing drivers to see all views around the traffic circle. It will be illuminated at night with up-lights installed in the ground cover beds.

Schwab Twitty & Hanser Architectural Group, Inc. (STH) was commissioned to design the Education and Training Center for Workforce Development at Palm Beach Community College. This new education and training facility is a response to the community’s need for qualified individuals in the workplace. Valued at $28 million, the 150,000-square-foot complex will be built in two phases. The design of the facility integrates elements from existing campus structures. Internally, the design of the multifunctional complex must address numerous training needs, including plumbing, electrical, welding, automotive and medical, as well as computer-related functions. Large computer labs will have computer-networking capabilities, including overhead video processing, supported by state-of-the-art cable infrastructure.

HHCP Architects in Tampa is designing a “Tuscan” look for University Village’s community center, The Commons. New design features will extend to both interior and exterior areas of the 38,000-foot building, including dining, activity and recreational center. Interior treatments are also planned for the lobby, lounge areas, library and auditorium, as well as administrative, employee and marketing areas of the building.

VOA Associates Incorporated will provide architectural and engineering design services for the new Learning Resource Center (LRC) and Library at Santa Fe Community College in Gainesville. Completion of the 60,000-square-foot, $7.6 million project is scheduled for early 2002.

CBB Architects is putting the final touches on the new Tampa YMCA. Heavily-wooded areas frame the building which has a 50-meter pool situated in front of it. The architect limited the number of walls and included glass wherever possible to open up views into the gymnasium, climbing wall and workout areas. The gymnasium is unique in that it sinks about 16 inches into the floor, enabling spectators to sit along the perimeter to watch action on the court. Using circulation areas for observation saved the cost of bleachers and their storage.

Gordon & Associates, Architects, Mount Dora, provided comprehensive architectural design services for two new health care facilities in Vero Beach. The firm, which has been committed exclusively to the private medical community since 1977, recently designed the 5,400 square-foot Medical Specialties Procedures and the 8,200-square-foot Aesthetic Surgery Center.
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than a blank sheet of paper
Is the blank stare
on a client's face
The challenge faced by design architect Dale Parks was to reinforce an existing aesthetic while breathing new life into a building long associated with being a library. The G. Wiz/Blivas Science and Technology Center is housed in a 32,000-square-foot building designed by Walter Netsch in Skidmore, Owings and Merrill’s (SOM) Chicago office. Netsch had originally designed the building in 1975 for use as the Sarasota County Library. Utilizing his Field Theory parti, Netsch oriented the structure on a 30’ by 30’ structural grid that was overlaid by a corresponding 45-degree grid system. The resultant plan generated a series of triangulated spaces that in turn were extruded vertically to create the wedge volumes evident on the exterior of the building.

With a long term lease, cooperation from the City of Sarasota and generous contributions from donors, the design of a new science and technology center was undertaken. The scope of work included the demolition and redesign of the existing interior spaces to accommodate the program established by the client and the architect.

Recognizing the need for incorporating exhibits as an integral part of the design process, industrial designers created the exhibits and graphics. In cooperation with CC+P Architects in Sarasota, Design Architect Dale Parks, AIA, sought to give the building a new iconography. Acknowledging the uniqueness of the original parti, he accentuated the building’s geometry by introducing a crystalline design element that would reinforce the original aesthetic. By peeling back the existing roof along the grid lines and enclosing some exterior spaces, the new glass prism follows the grids established by the original architect. This long triangulated space serves as the gallery for traveling exhibits and the arrival/transitional point between the exhibit space and the classroom/administrative areas. Within this space, the architect designed a staircase and bridge structure to elevate patrons into the glass prism as they move to the second floor.
exhibit space.

The overall plan utilizes the former two-story book stack areas as the primary exhibit space and gift shop while the single-story east end houses the administration, classrooms, and support spaces. In addition to the large glass structure evident on the exterior of the building, Parks replaced the existing cement tile roofs with a standing seam roof system that plays off the triangulated vaults and bold profiles. He also added an exterior terrace for social events on the north side of the central lobby space and introduced color to set off the dynamic volumetric geometries that previously displayed a monochromatic paint scheme.

The new G. Wiz Center provides a striking profile along the Sarasota waterfront and it provokes curiosity in everyone who sees it for the first time. The building is very respectful of the original architect’s design and it provides a dynamic addition to the city’s cultural center.

Project Credits: Dale S. Parks, AIA, Design Architect with Associate Architect CC+P Architects; Jenkins and Charland Structural Engineers; Stewart Engineering, MEP; Design/Joe Sonderman, Industrial Design; Mero Structures, glass prism engineering and fabrication; Kellogg and Kinsey, General Contractors.
The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis, a Center of Excellence at the University of Miami School of Medicine, is the world’s largest, most comprehensive research center dedicated to finding more effective treatments, and ultimately, a cure for paralysis that results from spinal cord injury. The development of the Lois Pope Life Center was conceived to bring all of the Miami Project researchers, clinicians and therapists together under one roof.

Destined to be the premier research facility in the world for spinal cord injury research, the basic design of this building was directed by its function. However, the very prominence of the facility in the scientific arena and its premier location on the University of Miami (UM) School of Medicine campus also demanded a significant aesthetic response.

Functionally, the building design was developed using the basic research laboratory floor as the primary building block. Extensive exploration of floor plate configurations resulted in selection of an open, modular laboratory planning concept. This decision gradually presented an “L” shaped building plan to appropriately satisfy efficiency, functional and operational needs.

The seven-floor, 118,000 square-foot building is very rational and organized at a human scale. The building’s structural grid provides both flexibility and the ability for expansion while integrating with the laboratory modules. The laboratory module plan also permits horizontal expansion.

The basis of this modular planning concept was the development of a series of highly flexible lab spaces developed from a typical “kit of parts.” The plan utilizes a
standardized series of laboratory configurations as a way of customizing the labs for individual user needs.

The research laboratories require limited and controlled public access so public areas are concentrated on the first floor. A series of card access elevators and doors help insure the necessary security in research areas. For ease of access,
and to protect security in other parts of the building, the clinical research program is located on the first floor with entry through the courtyard. The courtyard itself serves as an extension of the clinical program area.

Both laboratory wings provide open plans that feature circulation between laboratory benches and “people spaces” or between postdoctoral workstations. A central linear equipment corridor provides a “backstage” route for the movement of materials, animals and equipment. This plan offers maximum access to exterior perimeter windows from laboratory pods. Centrally located elevators, with card access control, permit the research staff direct access to the laboratory floors.

With neutral-toned precast concrete panels, the building is compatible with its surroundings. Large expanses of glass accent the contemporary style of the building and allow natural light to flood into the laboratory pods. Energy-efficient glazing was put into the precast panels in operable, fixed, opaque and transparent combinations.

The Lois Pope Center was completed in October 2000 at a total cost of $23 million or $195 per square foot. The vast majority of the floor space, 64%, is laboratory space.
This design for a 50-story tower preserves the existing sidewalk character of the city block. The plan retains the 100-year-old historic low rise brick buildings that currently edge the sidewalk while a new entrance arcade connects to the tower inside the brick buildings. In contrast to the nearly monoculture high rises nearby, this project will be multi-use, including communications, apartments, offices, hotel and retail.

The building concept is a steel-trussed tube where the outer wall face is framed with diagonal structural members placed at regular intervals. At the four corners, vertical tensile cables stretch from the foundation to the top and are periodically fixed to the building frame and floor.

The base diagonal wall members are 2.5 to 3-foot-square steel tubes filled with reinforced concrete for additional strength and fireproofing. With this system, each floor becomes column free between the elevator/stair core and the perimeter walls.

Exterior walls consist of insulated glass windows and spandrels made up of translucent solar panels. The energy generated here is transmitted to the mechanical floors where it is coupled with natural gas turbines to produce air-conditioning, heat and electricity. Hot water is a by-product. It is estimated that this system will produce about 92 percent of the building's energy requirement.

Finally, the building components, including the frame and cable system, become a communications tower for wireless satellite transmissions.
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Interior finishes
- Marble, gray granite, Italian travertine floors and walls with natural anodized aluminum ceiling panels in lobby area
- Curtain wall and truss
- Structural tripod glass system with cable truss

Top: Rendering of new entrance arcade; Above: designs for the Pinnacle courtesy of the architect.
The island of Bonaire in the Netherlands Antilles is located 38 miles north of Venezuela. After spending ten winters on the island, the owners of this house bought property on which to build a permanent winter home. Bounded on three sides by residential lots and a two-lane road, the house faces west toward the ocean.

With 3,000 square feet of floor space, the two-story house has three bedrooms and two bathrooms on the first floor along with family room, storage and kitchen and a large master suite and library on the second floor. The plan resulted from a clear program and specific site conditions. For reasons of noise, privacy and security, the front of the house has two wings, garage and guestrooms, connected by a privacy wall that creates a barrier between the house and the public road. The house can be entered through an ornamental doorway leading into the courtyard or through the garage. The courtyard is enclosed by the guest wing on the north, the living room on the west and the garage on the south. A stairway leads from the courtyard to the master bedroom suite on the second floor. This suite is directly above the living room and fronted by a terrace on the west that overlooks the court-
yard as well as the ocean beyond. The courtyard, with its 30-foot long fountain fringed with seven water-spouting frogs on each side, acts as a buffer against roadway noise while providing privacy for the three guest bedrooms. The guest bedrooms have access to the main living room from the courtyard, as well as to the ocean.

The floor plan is axial. From the ornamental courtyard gate that serves as the front door, there is a direct view of the ocean through the courtyard, living room and terrace. The terminus of the axis between the front door and the sea is a radial cedar deck that cantilevers over the cliff. This deck is edged with cedar bollards housing indirect lights. Below the deck are lights that illuminate the sea.

Views from the house were important to the client so most of the rooms have direct views to the sea. Windows and doors are typically located opposite one another to allow cross ventilation during the months when air-conditioning is not necessary. All of the floors and bathrooms are finished in limestone and all other surfaces are painted stucco. Doors and windows were custom designed and made of mahogany by craftsmen on the island.

Photo, top: Courtyard and 30-foot fountain with water-spouting frogs acts as a noise buffer for the guestrooms. Photo by Chuck Wilkins. Plan and elevation courtesy of the architect.
Legal Notes: Architect/Engineer Exposure on the Rise
J. Michael Huey and Michael D. West

For many years in Florida, architects and engineers generally could not be sued by anyone other than their clients for economic losses allegedly caused by the errors or omissions of the architect. Third parties such as contractors, subcontractors, lenders and others who claimed such economic losses could not sue architects who allegedly caused their loss because they lacked a contractual relationship with the architect. The sole exception to this rule, known as the “economic loss rule,” was when an architect had independent job-site authority over a contractor and caused the contractor to incur financial losses due to the architect’s negligence.

In 1999, the law protecting architects and other design professionals against suits from third parties eroded as a result of the Florida Supreme Court’s decision in Moransais v. Heathman. In that case, the Court ruled that an individual engineer could be held liable to a homeowner for economic losses resulting from a negligent home inspection by the engineer, notwithstanding the lack of a written agreement between them. The homeowner’s contract was with the engineering firm, rather than the individual engineer. The Court pronounced that “professionals” could be sued by “aggrieved parties” despite the lack of a contract with the professional. Because the Supreme Court used the term “aggrieved party,” it was only a matter of time before plaintiffs’ lawyers began stretching the limits of liability to third parties with whom professionals – lawyers, accountants and others – had no direct contractual relationship.

In November 2000, the economic loss rule was further eroded in the case of Hewett-Kier Construction, Inc. v. Lennel Ramos and Associates, Inc. There, a general contractor filed suit alleging that it suffered economic losses from defects, omissions, and lack of specificity in the design documents prepared by an architect who designed the building for a school board. The trial court dismissed the contractor’s complaint, finding that there was no contractual or special relationship between the contractor and the architect. It also found that the architect was not a supervisory architect under its contract with the owner.

The contractor appealed and the District Court of Appeal, relying on the Moransais opinion, reversed the dismissal and reinstated the contractor’s suit against the architect. However, this Court went one step further, stating that the economic loss rule does not prevent a suit for economic losses where a “special relationship” exists between the professional and a third party who is “affected” by the professional’s negligence. The Court found that the contractor’s complaint alleged that the architect prepared erroneous design documents, with the knowledge that the owner would supply them to the successful bidder, and that the successful bidder would suffer economic damages if the design documents were inadequate. The Court concluded the allegations were sufficient to establish a “special relationship” between this architect and contractor.

The ramifications of Hewett-Kier are truly significant for architects, engineers and others. In order to establish a special relationship sufficient to sue the architect, it appears a contractor or other third party now need only allege that the architect prepared negligent design documents knowing the contractor or other third party would receive them and be financially injured if the plans were inadequate. Since almost all design projects involve preparation of plans with knowledge that the owner will supply them to a contractor and other parties, architects will have potential liability to such parties for errors or omissions in such plans. Indeed, we have already seen a significant rise in the number of claims filed...
by contractors against architects since the Hewitt-Kier decision.

Under the Court's logic, architects, presumably, will know that their plans will be provided not only to contractors, but also to subcontractors, for purposes of constructing the work, to sureties for purposes of issuing bonds, to banks for purposes of issuing construction loans, and to suppliers for purposes of furnishing materials. We are presently defending architects against claims brought by subcontractors and sureties based upon economic losses they allegedly incurred as a result of defective plans or specifications. Until the Florida Supreme Court re-addresses the liability of architects to third parties and draws a reasonable line where that liability ends, we anticipate a major increase in economic loss claims brought by third parties against architects and other design professionals.

Huey, Guilday, Tucker, Schwartz & Williams, P.A. serves as General Counsel to AIA Florida and represents design professionals and insurers throughout Florida.
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McGraw-Edison VFS Flood Luminaire, by Cooper Lighting

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