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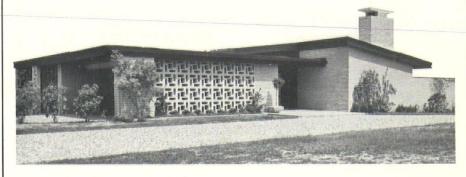
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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



As we plunge headlong into correlation of new super highway systems with the broad concepts of urban planning, slum clearance, airports and heliports, let us not forget our responsibility for preservation of historic beauty.

Our war on community ugliness should also be a war to preserve extant community beauty. Let us not cease to act when our architectural heritage is endangered.

A.I.A.'s active partition in the preservation movement began at the 1890 convention.

In The Library of Congress there are over 27,000 sheets of measured drawings, and 37,000 photographic negatives of more than 10,000 structures. Some of these buildings still stand in our section of the country.

While it may no longer be practical to design in the styles of classic architecture, we cannot logically decry nor can we deny the artistry and excellence of the Ionic column. Indeed, can we match it?

> **HUGH W. ELLIS** President Alabama Council AIA

# ALABAMA ARCHITEC



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ALABAMA COUNCIL OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

JULY-AUGUST 1965

### IN THIS ISSUE . . .

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE	Page 3
MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT OF MOBILE CHAPTER AIA	Page 4
HISTORIC PRESERVATION IN MOBILE	Page 5
LETTERS TO EDITOR	Page 10
CHAPTER NEWS	Page 12
HISTORIC INTEREST AND 50TH ANNIVERSARY NEWS	Page 15

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J. FRED DIETZ President

# MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT MOBILE CHAPTER, AIA

The increasing growth of our cities and suburbs has made advance planning of vital importance if we are to maintain an orderly existence and continue to safeguard the well-being of our expanding population.

The Architects of the Mobile Chapter have been working diligently toward this end, while at the same time maintaining our time-honored tradition with the past. Many of our members have spent considerable time in restoration and planning in our city's historical districts, and in preserving the many classic examples of anti-bellum architecture throughout the area.

Architects of Mobile are currently serving on the city planning commission, the Architectural review board, and the Historical Development Commission, as well as numerous other civic and cultural organizations.

The Mobile Chapter has initiated a local honor awards program to be held in the Fall of each year with primary recognition aimed toward the building owner, and stressing the owner-architect relationship as of prime importance in any project.

We believe the future of our city, as well as of all America, lies in sound planning procedures, a forward look to newly developed techniques and materials, and an appreciation and preservation of the historic past.



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259 NORTH JACKSON STREET (De Tonti Square) (c. 1855). The essence of Mobile's Historic Districts—the Mobile town house, walled patios, iron lacework, mottled brick paving, moss covered oaks, antique gas street lamps.

# MOBILE . . .

# PRESERVATION . . . WITH A PURPOSE

BY EDWARD B. BAUMHAUER, AIA.

For years architectural landmarks of Mobile were freely demolished, and though many were of no value commercially or architecturally, many were. During the period following World War II, when Mobile was straining to catch up physically with its population explosion, very few persons were interested in preservation, the few being the Historic Mobile Preservation Society, several architects and fewer average citizens.

The realization finally dawned that Mobile was allowing some priceless assets to go down the drain, not only aesthetic assets, but good commercial ones. The facts were that the city, located on the East-West Gulf Coast highway, US 90, was seeing 2,000,000 tourists pass along historic Government street each year. The multi-billion dollar tourist business was a prime revenue source for several of our sister states and "historic" tourism accounted for 25% of the total tourist dollar. The final fact was that Mobile was so saturated with history that to ignore it was ridiculous in the extreme.

The first positive step in reversing this trend was the designation of Church Street East as an "Historic Area" on the original City Master Plan. Subsequently, interest developed steadily until, in 1962 the Mobile Association of Architects adopted as a project the planning and preservation of the area. Surveys were initiated by one group of architects to determine which buildings had historical

significance. Another group inspected the buildings and prepared individual cost estimates for their renovation. The Architects, in co-operation with the Allied Arts Council, enlisted the aid of the City Commission in a common effort to stop the indiscriminate demolition, and the Commission responded with the creation of Mobile's two Historic Districts, the Mobile Historic Development Commission and its enforcement arm, the Architectural Review Board. It might be added parenthically that the president of the new Commission and four of the five members of the Board are architects. Almost from that date a dramatic change occurred in the attitude of the city. To cite only two examples, the Tourist and Conventions Bureau of the Chamber of Commerce along with the jaycee headquarters will occupy a renovated building and the oldest mystic society in the United States has moved into another.

The key to all this activity can be found in the previously unrecognized fact that preservation of historic buildings and districts can be very good business, for unless a project is economically sound it will certainly die a natural death. In Mobile's case, the economic justification lay not only in the tourist aspect, but equally in the conversion of these buildings to new uses, such as offices, apartments and shops. Certainly even for the most pragmatic, this is "Preservation with a Purpose."

ALMOST TOO LATE How often in this harried-hurried-industralized pace of 20th century living do we hurry to work, hurry to school, hurry to church, hurry to hurry, and ignore the treasues aound us! A little article entitled "American Panorama East of the Mississippi" in 1960, a small band of Mobile architects, and a Crisis galvanized a significant portion of this 250-year-old community into militant action to take another look at this historic port city, and to do something significant and positive to save the architectural treasures that still exist here.

THE ARTICLE by Carl Cramer, spoke of the miracle and beauty, the charm and uniqueness of Mobile's architecture, her live oaks, her wrought iron galleries, the enchantment of Mobile's Latin past—and concluded with the statement that one by one these treasures, fine old buildings representing the growth of this historic city,



WARING-TEXAS HOUSE (Church Street East) (c. 1852). Under restoration by mystic society, part to be used as a Mardi Gras museum; was a "garconniere" for rowdy Waring boys of 100 years ago.



# MOBILE'S HISTORIC

were disappearing from the scene, and that Mobilians could not care less!

THE BAND OF ARCHITECTS—dug up some startling statistics on the relationship between historic architecture and tourism. Two million travellers annually literally pass right through Mobile—on their way generally from New Orleans, which realizes 150 million dollars a year from tourist business, to, let's say, St. Augustine, Florida, a little town of 14,000 population, but which, nevertheless, realizes a staggering 10 million dollars a year from tourists. And what is the big attraction—historic buildings mostly. Of the 26 billion dollar tourist business recorded in 1960 in this country, almost 8 billion was spent to see tangible evidences of our rich heritage in historic structures and in historic districts.

THE CRISIS In 1961 the proposed location of the new Municipal Auditorium threatened to level six blocks of Mobile's finest old historic buildings on Church Street East. Pandemonium broke loose. Avid preservationists, economists, architects and civic leaders had caught a glimpse of tourist dollars going by. They succeeded finally in moving the auditorium back far enough to preserve, for the time being, the historic structures in question. Then, for a breather, they stepped back far enough to take inventory of "just what is it we have saved," and "where do we go from here?"

HISTORIC ASSETS Mobilians were amazed and rather overwhelmed to rediscover the rich assets already at hand-natural elements for the creation of not just one, but two historic districts. The old buildings themselves were probably the most valuable asset-not just a group of old houses, but many antebellum homes, the indigineous Mobile town house, built under early French and Spanish influence, distinctive early 19th century architecture-the old Phoenix Fire Station, Mobile's first telegraph station, the Skates building, where the C.S.S. Hunley, the first operational submarine in history, was built, many of the buildings marked by the Historic American Buildings Survey and recorded in the Library of Congress. Many were concentrated in two well-defined areas near downtown hotel and motel accommodations (see front cover). The De Tonti Square area, just north of downtown Mobile, contained some 30 of these build-

At Left—Restored home of Captain Abraham L. Meyers, captain of famous steamboat "Mary" (Church Street East) (c. 1856). Said to be Mobile's first telegraph station.

At Right—Restored Phoenix Fire Station (Church Street East) (1859). Dedicated in 1964 by Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson, wife of the President of the United States, as a fire museum.

# DISTRICTS BY C. DEWEY CROWDER PRESIDENT, MOBILE HI DEVELOPMENT COMMIS

ings concentrated in a 15-block area. The Church Street East area, just south of the downtown business core, contained some 60 of these structures in a 30-block area, in varying degrees of historic and/or architectural significance.

OTHER ASSETS The Church Street area possessed additional assets making it a natural for designation as an historic district. It almost surrounded the new municipal auditorium-theater complex, and already had a small historic nucleus designated in the urban renewal plan for the auditorium. Mobile's rich history had already encouraged the city and many civic groups to instigate individual preservation programs, and here was one project they could unite efforts for significant and tangible results. If needs can be called assets here, there were already these-the downtown area needed new activity desperately, new investments, a need to enhance and to renew professional, civic and cultural life in downtown Mobile, to offset creeping economic stagnation, not unique with downtown Mobile.

MOBILE HISTORIC DISTRICTS ORDINANCE In 1962, following the example of many other historic and far-sighted cities in the nation, and guided by the Mobile Association of Architects and the Allied Arts Council, Mobile established the boundaries of the two historic districts; appointed the Mobile Historic Development Commission to develop and safeguard these districts; and established an architectural review board to control the appearances and maintain the historic character of the districts. Mobilians had finally caught the vision—a happy marriage of historic preservation and architectural tourism to provide a delightful and valuable economic tool for the betterment of the entire community.

THE CHURCH STREET EAST HISTORIC DIS-TRICT The plans for this district, developed through the cooperative efforts of the Mobile Association of Architects, Mobile Housing Board, Planning Commission, City of Mobile and the Mobile Historic Development Commission call for a mile-long restoration of old Mobile, a coordinated garden-like area from the old yellow fever, above ground graveyard to the waterfront, a compatible blend of the old and the new, a pavilion of culture and history, a setting for exciting activities, a place of delight for Mobilians, tourists and conventioners, a valuable asset to an auditorium-theater complex, which could be invaluable in helping it to become outstanding in the nation. The emphasis would be "Mobile under Six Flags," 252 years of rich heritage, a blend of Spanish, French, English, deep South and authentic Alabama culture and architecture, a joint development between city, civic and individual enterprise.

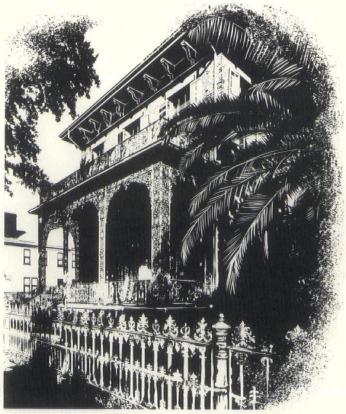
THE DE TONTI SQUARE HISTORIC DISTRICT Named after Bienville's legendary lieutenant, De Tonti

of the Iron Hand, this delightful area already is sporting handsome conversions of century old houses into apartments and business offices, with compatible new construction, gas street lamps over the district, a planned and natural location and setting to supply the demand for urban gracious living right in the downtown area.

SPECIFIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS The Mobile Historic Development Commission, composed of representatives of each of the City Commissioners and eight member organizations, Allied Arts Council, Downtown Mobile Unlimited, Federated Garden Clubs, Historic Mobile Preservation Society, Junior League of Mobile, Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce, Mobile Chapter-American Institute of Architects and the Mobile Junior Chamber of Commerce, this past two years has made substantial progress in implementing the entire master plan for the two historic districts.

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS The Mobile Historic Development Commission has published and widely disseminated news letters, articles in national publications of the H.H.F.A., Urban Renewal Journal, Antiques Magazine, a brochure, PRESERVATION WITH A PURPOSE; have made color slides and have made over 150 presentations to civic groups; have presented television programs; and have participated in preservation programs in Williamsburg, Virginia, Tampa, Florida, New Orleans, Louisiana, San Antonio, Texas and other cities. This group has sponsored walking tours in the districts; has surveyed and marked structures of historic and/or architectural significance; put on Mobile's American Landmarks Celebration; sponsored and produced the first Gulf Coast Folk Festival; have set up the Historic Mobile

(continued on page 11)



256 NORTH JOACHIM STREET (De Tonti Square) (1850), Richa Home—restored as VIP offices for Ideal Cement Company, Home—restored as VIP offices for Ideal Cement wrought iron lacework representing the four seasons.

# IN DEFENSE OF EVOLUTION

BY NORMAN H. GRIDER

Four white fluted columns; their purpose is more hollow than the steel tubes they surround. These same four columns enable most tract houses to be advertised as "The Colonial."

Here in Mobile we are blessed with still another symbol of a bygone era; iron lace! Everywhere, buildings are going up and they are foul. Today once again we are haunted by history; the past has returned to us. This obsession with trying to relive the past represents the reason true indigeneous American architecture has not been developed here in the South.

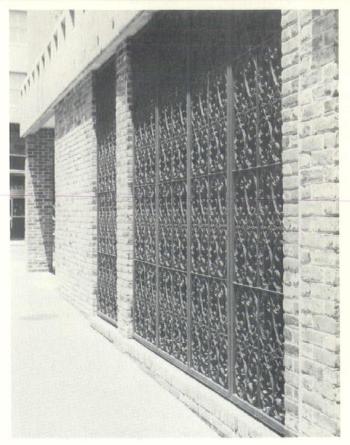
The restoration of good examples of historic architecture here in Mobile is a very exciting endeavor. Some of these buildings were beautiful and can be again. Although they contain many borrowed elements of the original Greek Orders, they are almost as close to being indigenous as the northwest redwood idea. Restore these beautiful evolved ideas but please, let us not fail to continue evolving.

There is a place for iron lace in 1965 used as a material honest for its own sake, but certainly not as an applied cake frosting to give every new building the character of being "Old Mobile."

Yesterday's iron lace was imaginative, delicate, and graceful and because it contained very little carbon it resisted rust and did not need painting. Today's, because of its great expense has become only a watered imitation losing even more character when painted white, as it must be painted, since it contains so much carbon.

This word imitation has stagnated architecture and any imaginative new uses of the screen; "iron lace." American inventiveness has given us a never ending supply of miracle gadgets that every new house should not be without if it is to sell; yet also in order for it to sell it must have one of the traditional styles, pasted to its front facade. The two philosophies are not compatible.





BUILDING FOR MOBILE SAVINGS AND LOAN ASSOCIATION Dietz, Prince & Fishrupp, Architects

An excellent example of iron lace that has been made integral with a new contemporary building. It is used for what it is; a screen, rather than attempting to convey the illusion that a new building is old.

"For some, architecture has entered the time of refinement and classicism, and the growth of "styles" are again smothering us. We should know that architecture is not the result of techniques, materials, accountancy, and statistics, but rather of dreams, secret reasons, and dark obsessions."

As architects we have an excellent opportunity to dispel the well accepted and often used idea that our new buildings must be faced with a "style" if they are to have any character at all.

Either we must be honest with ourselves and design for the miraculous age in which we live or we will continue to put electricity into the shape of candles for crystal chandeliers.

New construction in the historic districts of Mobile was intended and should be compatible with the "old" rather than being what I affectionately refer to as "new old."

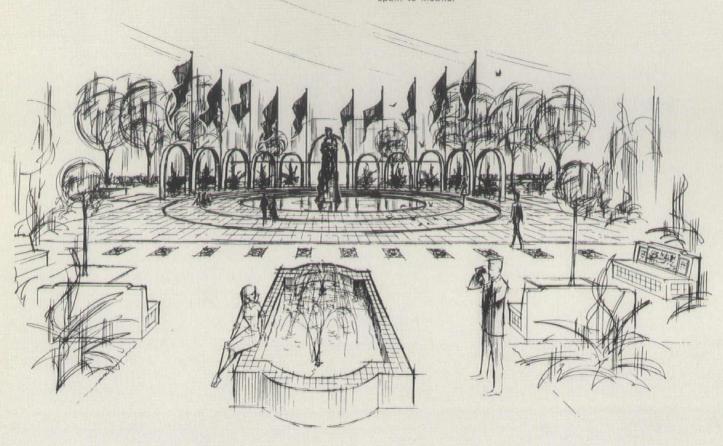
"We should be free from all schools of thought, from all masters, from all movements."

I am without a reply to those of the public who say they see no character in what they term "modern architecture," because they are right it is not architecture at all; but rather mere buildings; only watered imitations of the thoughts of today's esthetic geniuses.

I will use iron lace for what it is and for what I see in it if I use it at all. It will be iron lace that I have designed from my "dreams, secret reasons, and dark obsessions" rather than an imitative form out of the past.

ALABAMA ARCHITECT

MOBILE'S SPANISH PLAZA. A joint effort of Mobile and Spanish artists and architects; to be dedicated March 1966 by a Mission from Spain to Mobile.



# MOBILE'S SPANISH PLAZA

BY C. DEWEY CROWDER, AIA., DIRECTOR, MOBILE'S HISTORIC AND CULTURAL MISSION TO SPAIN AND PORTUGAL

In memory and in honor of Spain and the Spanish rule and influence over Mobile's rich architectural heritage, her culture, traditions and commerce, and in keeping with the emphasis in the Church Street East Historic District of "Six Flags over Mobile," the City and the Mobile Historic Development Commission have designated the block immediately in front of the new Municipal Theater as Mobile's "Plaza de Espana."

Artists and architects from Mobile for the past year have exchanged design ideas and sketches with Spanish architects and artists over the composition and design of this monument to Spain. The final designs were discussed and determined when some 36 Mobile citizens visited, during March 1965, some 15 Spanish cities on an Historic and Cultural Mission to Spain, co-sponsored by the City of Mobile and the Mobile Historic Development Commission. Each of the cities visited, plus the Spanish Cultural Institute and a number of the provinces, are contributing monuments, benches, ceramics, statues, flags,

etc. or an aggregate of some \$300,000 worth of artwork and services towards the Spanish Plaza.

The final concept will be truly a joint effort, and typically Spanish—a light and colorful garden-like plaza, dominated by a statue of the Catholic Queen, Isabela, which now is located at the Spanish Pavilion at the New York World's Fair. Spanish mosaic pavings, fountains, reflecting pools, benches of granite and mosaic, each depicting scenes and landmarks of each of the cities visited on the mission, ceramic coats of arms of each of Spain's 53 provinces, flags, gardens of native plants and flowers, light, trees, movement—this is the Spanish Plaza—to delight and to remind all who see of that part of Mobile's rich heritage which is Spanish.

And in March 1966, a Mission from Spain will help us to dedicate and to seal in fond remembrance the friendship and close ties which have united our peoples over the seas for more than four centuries. for properly designed buildings, it's essential to consult a professional architect . . .

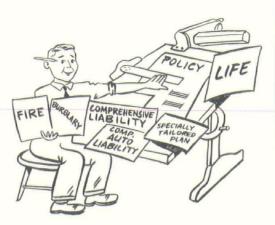
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## LETTERS

Sir

By a unanimous request of the City Council of Birmingham, Alabama, I wish to convey their sincere appreciation and gratitude for the very fine article, "Operation New Birmingham," which appeared in the March-April issue of ALA-BAMA ARCHITECT.

We in Birmingham are proud of the plans to revitalize the Central Business District and owe a debt of gratitude to the local chapter of A. I. A. for their magnificent work on the project. Therefore, we salute the Alabama Council, along with Mr. Edward J. Bondurant and Mr. Bill Williams of the Birmingham Chapter, as guest editors, for featuring Operation New Birmingham in your excellent publication.

On behalf of the City Council of Birmingham, Alabama, I sincerely thank you.

JACKSON B. BAILEY Research Assistant to the City Council

Sir

Thank you very much for the May-June issue of the ALABAMA ARCHITECT which has just been received.

This is the first issue of your magazine that I have seen and I want to congratulate you for the contents and the very attractive presentation.

If your supply of the first issue has not been exhausted, it would be greatly appreciated if you would send me a copy.

I shall look forward to receiving all other copies as they are released.

WALTER A. GRAHAM President Southern Union College Wadley, Alabama

Sir

Thanks for sending me the first issue of ALABAMA ARCHITECT. We would like to be put on the mailing list to receive your publication regularly.

JOHN H. AIKEN Publication Director C/M Magazine Concrete Masonry Industry

Sir

Congratulations on the excellent first edition of ALABAMA ARCHITECT. It is well prepared and I am sure that it will be enthusiastically received.

JAMES A. HEAD President James A. Head & Company

## HISTORIC DISTRICTS (continued from page 7)

Foundation to develop a revolving fund for restoration projects; have sponsored and carried our Mobile's Historic and Cultural Mission to Spain; have aided or sponsored directly ordinances establishing the Tree Commission, the Mobile Museum Board, Zoning Ordinances for the Historic Districts, Demolition by Default; have prepared, with the cooperation of the Mobile Housing Board, a master Illustrated Plan for the 10-block urban renewal area immediately surrounding the new auditorium; have had over 300 antique brass gas street lamps installed over both historic districts; is a co-sponsor of Mobile's "Horizon City Concept."

AND SO WHAT? What does this mean for our citizens, our merchants and downtown businessmen. Many feel that it means a healthier business community; it means a downtown market, families consuming only a few blocks from the downtown area; it means a whole new industry for Mobile from the ever-increasing tourist and convention dollar. It means those travellers don't travel non-stop down Highway 90 from New Orleans to St. Augustine; it means they stop in Mobile, and that every hour they are spending delightful, no-strings-attached tourist dollars. But it means more-it means that at least one small but significant portion of our country's rich heritage, some of its charm and beauty, will be preserved and protected as living history, a vital record and a source of inspiration to our children and to our children's children.



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# CHAPTER NEWS

# AROUND THE STATE

BIRMINGHAM CHAPTER—The July meeting was held at the Relay House July 1, 1965, at 12:15 p.m. The program was launched with a few words about the A.I.A. Convention held earlier this month in Washington, D. C. from Charles Davis, our only member who attended. Continued discussion was held on the proposed MUNICIPAL ART COMMISSION. The committee, chaired by Nelson Smith and composed of members assigned to the Asthetics, Urban Design and Collaborating Arts Committees reported on the results of their investigation of similar commissions in other cities.

BREAKFAST ON THE BOULEVARD-Held in the Exhibit Hall of the Municipal Auditorium on June 18, this impressive presentation of Birmingham's 'Battle Plan' for Operation New Birmingham indicated that the implementation of proposals is in good hands. The boulevard setting was ably handled by Fritz Woehle and the slide presentation of ONB by Bill Williams. Architects serving with business and professional leaders on committees to implement ONB include: Freeways and Expressways, Charles McCauley; Parking, Bill Chambers; Trade Mart, Jim Adams; Transportation Center, John Fuller; Postal Facility, Charles Davis; Public Safety Building, Carroll Harmon and Allen Bartlett; Public Library, Nelson Smith; Downtown Residential, Bill Williams; 20th Street, Lawrence Whitten, Chairman; Civic Activities Center, Fritz Woehle; Finance, Oscar Pardue and Fred Renneker and Priorities, Ed Bondurant.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR-Mailings will be going out soon from the Birmingham Chapter inviting all registered architects to attend a presentation by the Alabama Gas Corporation of their annual \$1,500 Architectural Competition award winners. This scholarship, for travel in a foreign country by a student between his 4th and 5th years, this year was divided by two students. This year's problem, which was seen in model form, is a new American Embassy for Mexico City. A cocktail party and a tour of the Gas Corporation's new building followed, at the Gas Corporation's building at 5:00 p.m. on July 15.

A.I.A.—PRODUCER'S COUNCIL—A joint committee to coordinate the activities of our organization and the Producer's Council has been formed. Representing the Chapter is Oscar Pardue, chairman; Sumpter Smith and Marion Smith. Hunter Price, chairman, Cary Bryson and John Yauger represent our winter time hosts and disseminators of information of interest to our profession.

THE NORTH ALABAMA CHAPTER held its regular monthly meeting on July 14, 1965, at 7:00 p.m. in the Dogwood Room of the Russel Erskine Hotel, Huntsville, Alabama. A film entitled "200 Years of Concrete Construction in the United States" was presented by Mr. Bob Toler of the Portland Cement Association. The film covered all building types concerning concrete construction, including everything from early residential concrete buildings to modern day concrete and steel frame skyscrapers and multiplestory buildings, in the United States. This program was not only to be educational in that it was a continuation of one's history education but proved to be one of the most outstanding programs of the year.

**CREDITS** ON MOBILE HISTORIC PRESERVATION

(pages 5-9)

MOBILE FEDERAL SAVINGS . DIETZ, PRINCE AND FISCHRUPP—ARCHITECTS

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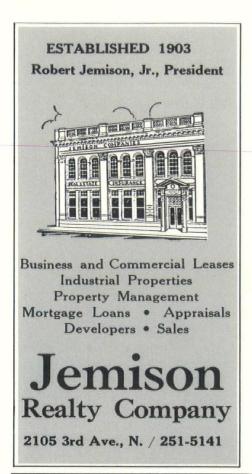
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Dean W. A. Speer, left, School of Architecture, Auburn University, congratulates Edward P. Taylor of Montgomery upon receiving the Alabama Council of the American Institute of Architects Scholarship for the best design in a competition problem awarded annually to a third-year student of architecture. Taylor's design was a continuing education center for Auburn University.

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Centennial Memorial Building, Richmond, Virginia. Architects: Walter Dorwin Teague Associates, New York City; consulting engineers: Fred S. Dubin Associates, Hartford, Conn.; contractor: Worley Brothers, Inc., Richmond. Dome is 111 feet in diameter, costs \$2.00 per sq. ft. erected in place, including 2-inch timber decking.

## Frederick Ausfeld Was Charter Member of Alabama Chapter AIA



FREDERICK AUSFELD

Frederick Ausfeld was born in Austria, Sept. 8, 1859, and died in Montgomery, Ala., March 15, 1930. He was educated in Austria, Germany and France.

He came to Montgomery to practice his profession in the year 1896, and remained in Montgomery until his death.

Ausfeld designed numerous buildings throughout the State. Among those in Montgomery were the Bell Building, Shepherd Building, Jefferson Davis Hotel and Sidney Lanier High School.

In Pensacola, Fla., where he had a Branch Office for a number of years, he designed the City Hall and the Blunt Building, which were the first reinforced concrete structures in the South.

Ausfeld was among several Architects in Alabama in the establishing of an A. I. A. Chapter in the State, holding the office of First Vice President.

## 50th Anniversary of Alabama Chapter AIA Will Be 1966

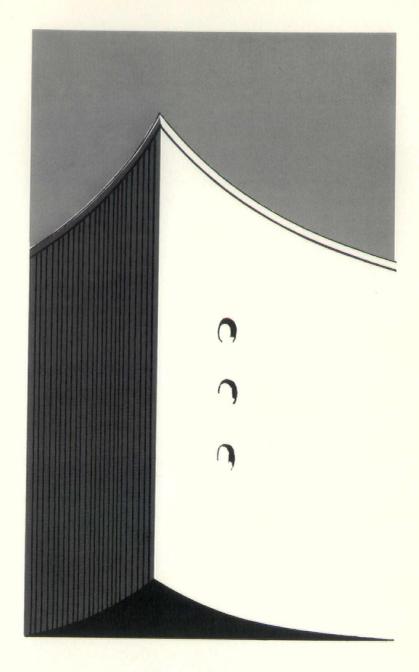
The Alabama Chapter of the American Institute of Architects was founded July 6, 1916, at Birmingham, Alabama. The Charter was granted at National Headquarters, The Octagon, Washington, D. C., on November 16, 1916. Plans are already underway to celebrate the 50th Anniversary in Birmingham next year, in conjunction with the Annual Meeting.

## Information Needed On Charter Members

Moreland G. Smith, FAIA, is spearheading an effort to obtain photos and biographies on Charter members, as well as all early members and officers. Relatives or associates are requested to send any information or photos to him at P. O. Box 267 in Montgomery.

Charter members were: Frederick Ausfeld, Frederic Child Biggin, Hugh Martin, John A. Miller, Bem Price, George B. Rogers, William T. Warren, John A. Wetzel, Harry B. Wheelock,

and D. O. Whilldin.



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