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**Michigan  
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# Monthly Bulletin

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## Contents

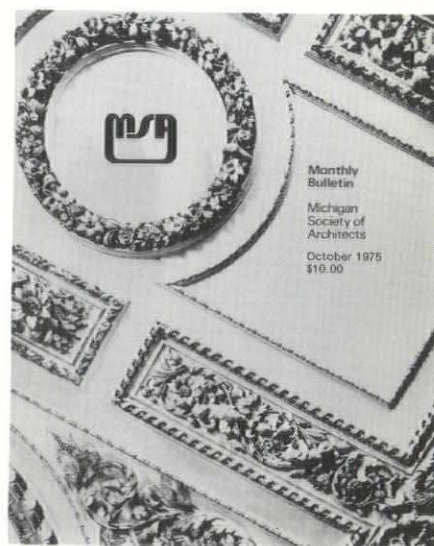
- 3-6 A Half Century  
In Stone
- 7-9 MSA Firm Membership
- 11-15 Dealing Effectively  
with the Corporate Client
- 16 out-to-out\*
- 16 Calendar
- Advertisers Index

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Ceiling of Dining Room,  
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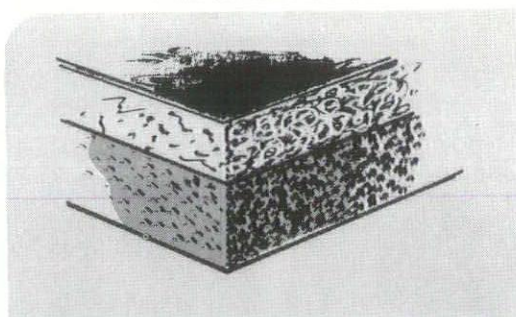
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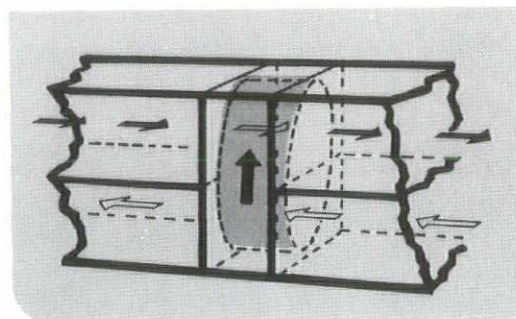
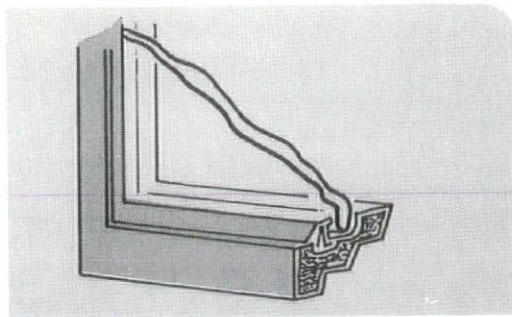
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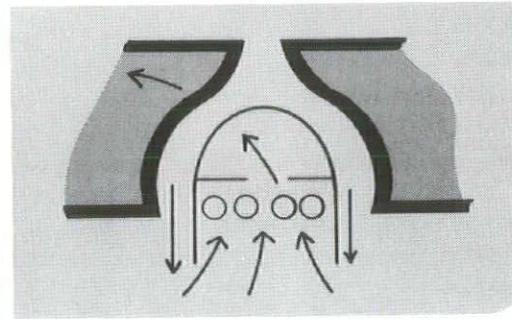
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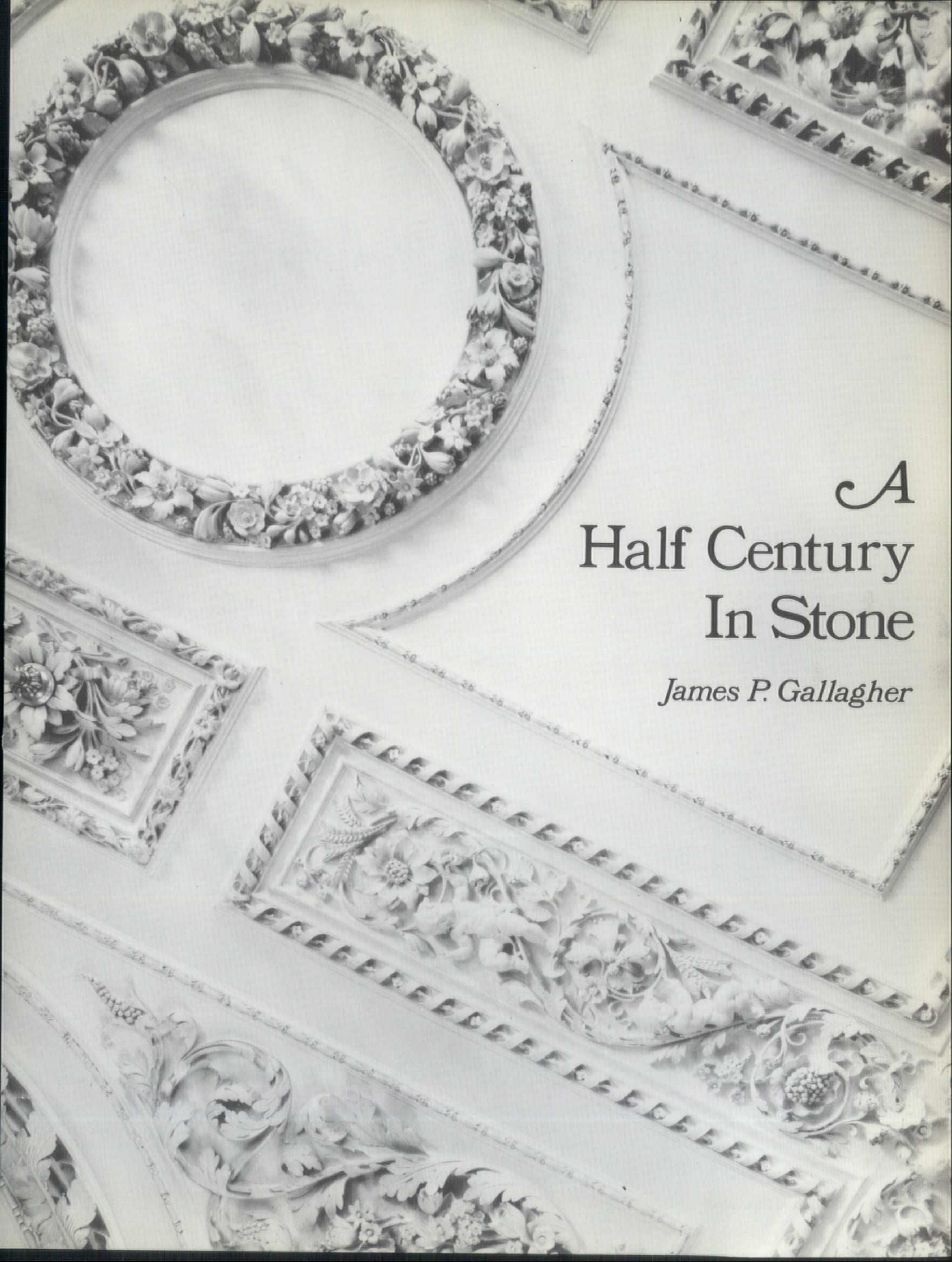
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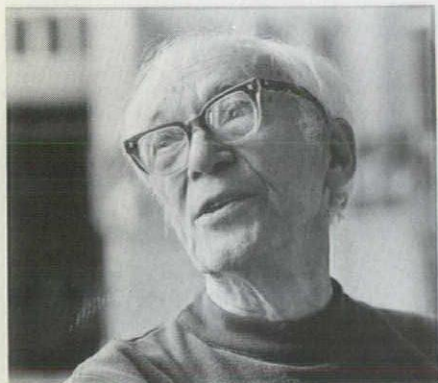
The background of the cover is a black and white photograph of various ornate stone carvings. In the upper left, there is a large circular medallion with a wide, intricate border of flowers and leaves. To its right and below are several rectangular and triangular moldings, some with repeating patterns and others with detailed floral or foliate designs. The carvings are set against a light-colored, possibly plastered, background.

# A Half Century In Stone

*James P. Gallagher*



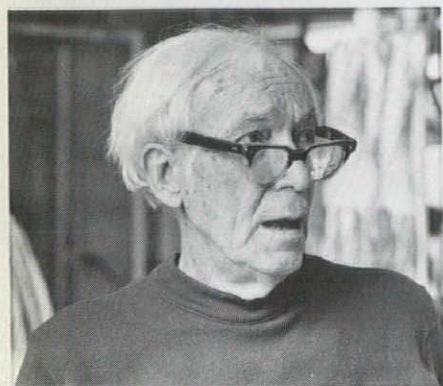
*It seems almost as though I have always worked with Joe Parducci on some project and if I hadn't retired three years ago would probably still be doing so. Joe is without doubt the greatest architectural modeler I have ever known or even heard about. Architectural models (in the sense of ornamentation, not scale building models) require a special ability and years of experience and understanding of what is required by the man who will copy it in stone or granite, and the men in the foundry or metal shop who will reproduce it in bronze and aluminum.*



*Joe always knew almost instinctively how much shrinkage to allow and particularly how much projection to have to cast the proper shadows and catch the highlights best. He also knew how to cut corners so he did not have to do complete models or show a complete full size detail (this was to save time and money for the client).*

*Our greatest contact with Joe was in the field of community mausoleums and we designed those in many cities from Washington D.C. to Omaha and from Chicago to Florida. The greatest concentration of this type of work with Joe was in Chicago for the Catholic cemeteries (one building, The Queen of Heaven group cost over \$13 million and provided 30,000 crypts). In addition the owner, the Catholic Church, wanted to tell a story throughout the building and here Joe was most helpful.*

*Until you have been exposed to it, it is difficult to realize the amount of symbolism in religion and the almost innumerable ways to depict, life, death,*



## A Half Century In Stone

Corrado Joseph Parducci has put his stamp on most of the major buildings of Detroit in the form of stone, bronze, marble, terra cotta and every possible media in the art of sculpture. For more than a half-century, he has made the models for the ornamentation of churches, homes, banks, office buildings, and mausoleums, working with the outstanding designers of the architectural profession.

Since the firms he worked for were as well-known nationally as locally, (Smith, Hinchman & Grylls, Albert Kahn, Diehl & Diehl, Donaldson & Meier, George D. Mason, and dozens of others), you can find examples of his work in most of the major cities this side of the Rockies.

Joe Parducci came to the U.S. from Pisa as a boy of four, and spent the next year and a half in an orphanage because his father was working too hard to get the money to send for his mother and family to take proper care of him.

When the family rejoined them, young Joe had to have an interpreter, because he didn't know a word of Italian.

He grew up in lower Manhattan on MacDougal Street, near a narrow alley that housed many of the city's sculptors. He was apprenticed to the studio of Anthony DiLorenzo, who was doing much work for both SH&G and Albert Kahn. This volume grew to the point

where Parducci was sent to Detroit in 1924 to manage a branch of the DiLorenzo studio, but 10 months later, he went out on his own.

By 1927, he had his own studio at Tenth and Abbott, where he bought the land from the legendary Irish landlords and entrepreneurs, the Dinan Brothers. By 1948, he had outgrown the facility and built a new studio at 141 Sibley, still the site of his work.

Every day, Joe Parducci leaves his Grosse Pointe home and comes to his workshop, sometimes working on commissioned work, sometimes equally involved in creating ceramic pieces for his own enjoyment, other times immersed in books on art or any other subject that interests him. He has never considered retirement, even when the diminishing demand for building ornamentation reduced his entire work force to one man, himself.

During the years when Detroit millionaires were building their mansions, Parducci's work was incorporated into such homes as the Fisher Brothers, Edsel Ford, Alvin Macauley, James Couzens, and Leo Mendellsohn. What many people consider his masterpiece is the molded plaster ceiling in the dining room of Meadowbrook Hall, the home of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred G. Wilson (Matilda Dodge). The ceiling was carved and



*Grand Rapids Trust Company Building. Architect: Smith, Hinchman & Grylls.*





*Guardian Trust Building in Detroit and portion of Buhl Building (foreground). Architect: Smith, Hinchman & Grylls.*

molded in a series of sections, then hung in place and the smooth plaster surfaces finished off.

With the exception of plaster casting, Parducci does not execute the work itself, but turns his models and molds over for carving or casting in the final material. This results in the gradual accumulation of tons and tons of study models at various scales. When he moved to his present studio in 1948, Parducci had to pay \$600 to have the accumulated junk hauled away. And today, every horizontal surface in the studio has a collection of objets 'd art gathering dust.

Parducci's work as a painter is confined to his own home, where a painted tapestry is the centerpiece of his living room. But it is the handpainted

walls of the room, an endless repetition of a complex pattern that gives a first impression of wallpaper, that prove the depth of his commitment. He spent 3,200 hours in handpainting the pattern on the 800 square feet of walls, much of it in the dead of night when the family was asleep.

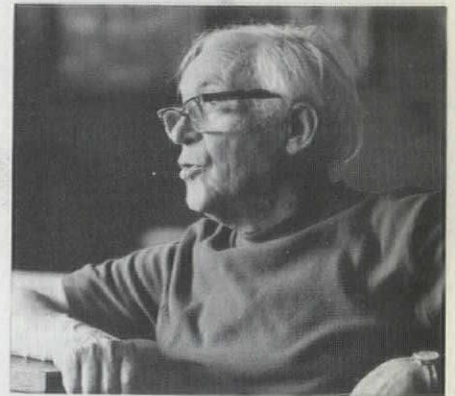
He is philosophical, and not in the least bitter, about the changes in art taste that have made abstraction almost completely dominant over realism, and about the changes in architectural design that has eliminated most applied decoration. He feels that all design is in a constant state of change and that perhaps fifty years from now, people will see more value in styles that are discarded today.

Religion remains one of the last

virtues, saints, activities, human relations of all kinds. Joe not only had a wonderful library for reference but in his own experience and eager imagination had the perfect answer for any problem. His explanation was always clear and direct and made it easy to explain to the owner (a little of this glory of course rubbed off on the architect and made him more knowledgeable and important to the owner).

Another of Joe's fine traits was his easygoing disposition and willingness to change to suit your own ideas. He worked with you, it wasn't a simple giving in to your ideas as much as taking your thought and working it around to make the design better at the same time keeping his own touch in the design.

This to me is what makes an architectural modeler different from a sculptor per se—a sculptor would become offended at the intrusion of another idea and have difficulty working out a solution. This takes nothing away from the work of a sculptor nor belittles the modeler by saying he is not a sculptor. Joe had a wonderful, special sense of scale and the way to make ornamentation on a building do the job the architect wanted and to me that was a skill very few could equal.

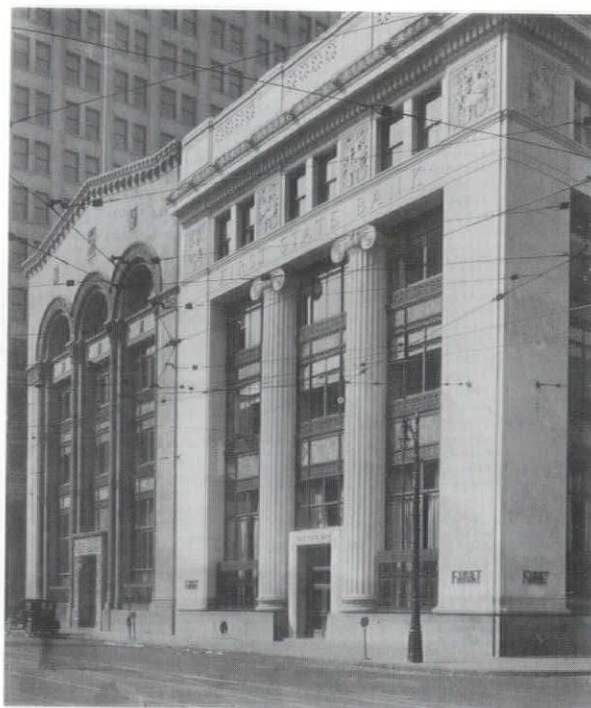


The list of his achievements is much too long to enumerate but he is an institution in Detroit that will never be equaled. He taught me many things about architecture in scale, effect and practical approach as he taught so many other architects. And he is quick and efficient in his work, honest and reliable as a person and altogether an awfully nice guy.

Malcolm R. Stirton, AIA

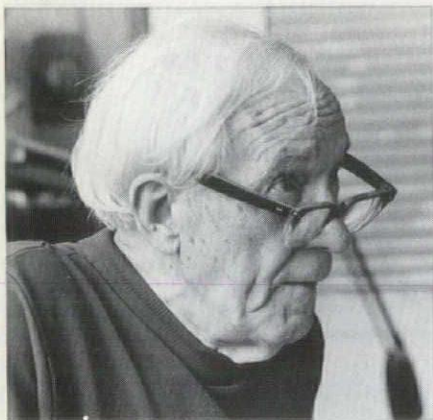
Shortly after I started the practice of Architecture in my own name, I had the pleasure of meeting "Joe" Parducci in person and viewing some examples of his work, both at his studio and at some of the local buildings.

My immediate reaction was that he was a man of exceptional skill as an artist and that he had the rare ability to



*Security Trust Company Building and First State Bank Building of Detroit. Architect: Albert Kahn.*





*interpret the Architect's intention, and that he was ready to cooperate in bringing about the proper relationship between the character of the proposed structure and the amount of ornamental sculpture that would properly enhance it.*

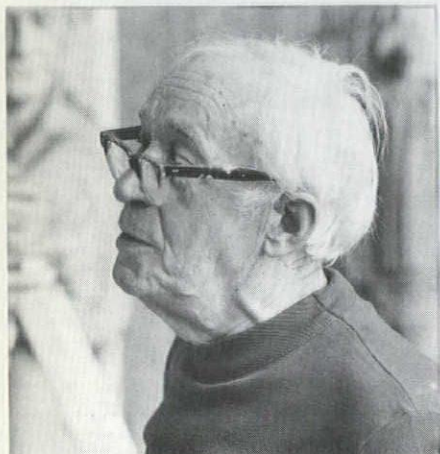
*Joe has contributed to the work of many other Architects, both locally and throughout the States, and much of his work was done before we became acquainted, but during the past half century I have looked to him for guidance in the matter of ornamental design, whether it was in stone, terra cotta, wood, metal, plastic, and even in plaster, and was always more than happy with the results.*

*In addition to the many ecclesiastical types of structures, he did a number of models for various buildings of different types including some carved statues, small ornaments and panel inserts in various materials, including wood, ornamental metal, plastics, etc.*

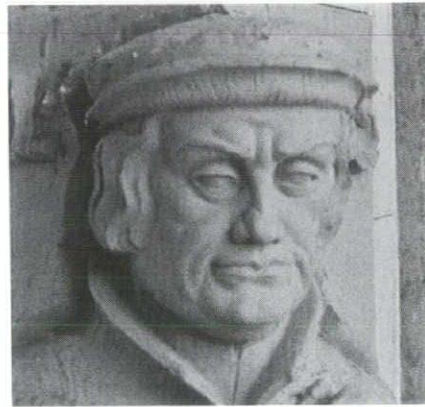
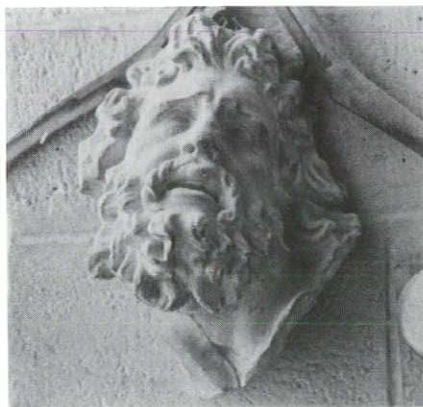
*He seemed to be as well versed in Gothic, Romanesque, the Classics, Renaissance and even Modern.*

*Hopefully Joe has many more years ahead of him to contribute his art, but I am sure that he has already done his share and I am happy to be one of the members of our profession who will long remember him for the fine work he has done and his pleasant characteristic of always being ready to cooperate with us.*

George F. Diehl



## A Half Century In Stone



sources of Parducci commissions, and he is hard at work at a 21-foot high group of figures for the St. Thomas Lutheran Church, which has been designed by architect Harold Fisher. From his study model, he moved to a quarter scale clay model, and then to a full scale clay model, from which he will make the plaster forms in which he will cast the building stone. This will be one of the relatively few jobs, where he has taken his work all the way from study model to completed work all by himself.

In recognition of his contributions to Detroit architecture, Parducci was made an Honorary Member of the Detroit Chapter in 1958. He has outlived most of the great designers whose ideas he carried out, but is still great friends with Amadeo Leone, former president of

SH&G and one-time associate of such greats as Wirt Rowland and Bill Kapp.

Another relatively obscure building type which provides him with much work is mausoleums, which even today lean to cherubs and angels and symbolism. One group of cemeteries in Chicago kept him busy for over five years with their constant expansions of their mausoleum facilities.

Still agile of hand and foot at 75, articulate and interesting, with an uncanny memory for the people and buildings he knew so well, Joe Parducci is a living part of our heritage.



*Living room of the Parducci residence.*





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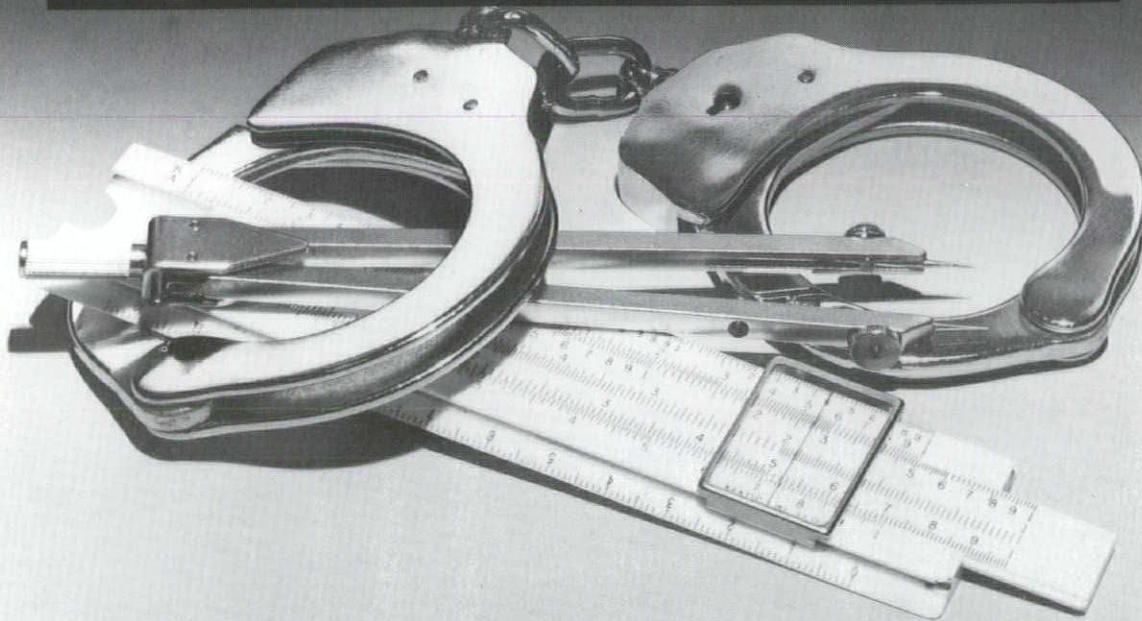


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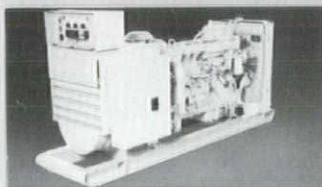
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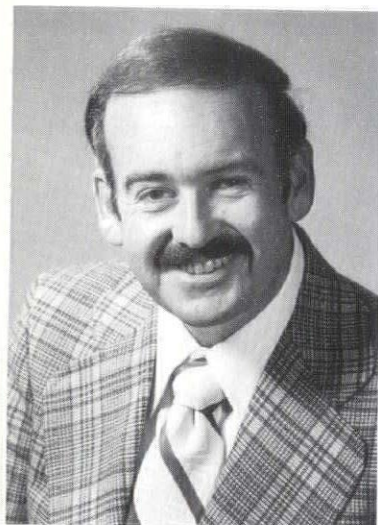




# Dealing Effectively with the Corporate Client

**Robert F. Fearon, AIA**

Manager of Design and Engineering  
Michigan Bell Telephone Company  
National Chairman, Architects in Industry Committee  
American Institute of Architects



## WHAT IS A CORPORATE ARCHITECT?

## WHAT DOES HE "EXPECT" OF THE PRACTICING ARCHITECT?

## HOW CAN YOU BEST PREPARE TO CALL ON HIM?

## HOW CAN YOU SELL HIM ON UTILIZING YOUR SERVICES?

## HOW CAN YOU MANAGE THE ACCOUNT SUCCESSFULLY?

These five questions have been raised by every practicing architect who has ever worked in the industrial sector.

They are basic questions but I'm not sure they're completely answerable - particularly the last one.

I'll use those questions as a framework in covering some thoughts on how to deal effectively with the corporate architect.

First, let's try to identify that sometimes unknown professional - "The corporate architect".

While many who carry this title are registered architects, some who carry this title are not architects at all.

If you're lucky, the person has had some architectural training, or at least has an engineering background. But don't be at all surprised is the "corporate architect" is a marketing or business major whose greatest involvement in the building process is having finished an attic - or a basement for a recreation room. In fact, many large corporations purposely school their future managers in many areas of the business so having a non-technical person in this slot is not totally unique.

With only this much insight into the corporate "architect", you should be a little nervous about the answers to the last four questions that were posed.

Following is a clue to that answer.

All of the corporate architects and owners that I have come into contact with, whatever their professional or technical background, are very concerned with the bottom line of the financial statement. Consequently, everything that you do or say is directly or indirectly converted into its effect on the capitol dollars needed to provide the facility under study, as well as the total operating expenses that will be required every year to maintain the facility you design.

This may make you a little apprehensive in dealing with the corporate architect - as well you should be. But remember, he's only doing his job.

Some of the other "attributes" of this individual you'll notice at the initial encounter is that he probably very busy ... hard to get an appointment with ... may be late in keeping his appointment ... will probably be interrupted at least once during your meeting with him ... will occasionally not seem to be listening to everything you have to say ... will be anxious to end the discussion ... dislikes going to lunch ... probably will never write you a letter regarding the interview and, more likely than not, you'll never hear from him again or be considered for a job.

Discouraged yet?

Why does the corporate architect generally react in this manner? Doesn't he appreciate the value he and his company will receive by employing the services of a fully trained and experienced professional to help him with his building program?

The answer to these two questions could fill a book.

Let's explore just a few of the more pertinent reasons why corporate architects react as they do which, in turn, will set the stage for developing some answers to the last four of the five major questions that were presented.

Corporate architects are usually located apart from the mainstream of the everyday corporate decision making. This is because their function is generally regarded as a necessary evil in the pursuit of profit.

Their main purpose is seen as analyzing the requirements presented by the operating, or money making departments, and providing them with neces-

sary and adequate facilities to do their job, which is to make a buck for the company and its investors.

In a few companies the corporate architect reports directly to the president or the operating vice-president, but in most the function is a part of corporate services, purchasing or engineering.

Because of this quasi second-class corporate citizenship, the corporate architect is usually short staffed and under tremendous pressure to provide the required facilities in record time at minimum cost. Of course, the operating people almost always insist on changes throughout the design and construction process which add to his pressure, and that of any architect associated with him.

But his seeming impoliteness will probably vanish if you're fortunate enough to catch him on a less hectic day or land a commission. Just remember, he's human and pressures get to him just as they get to you.

Depending upon for whom the facilities are being provided, the approval process can arduous and frustrating. In a large corporation, you'll find many individuals and groups of individuals who liberally comment on ways to do the job better, including exterior and interior design. Bedroom green, pink and blue are strong front-runners in colors that are recommended by departmental "experts" for every office. You'll also find that the approving expert will favor the mansard roof or pseudo-grecian columns that were just great on the church addition back when he served on the building committee.

Many practicing architects have no appreciation for the inhouse difficulties the corporate architect encounters in gaining approval to proceed with a project.

Don't be completely discouraged though, most corporate architects will fight for the design efforts of the practicing architect and are successful in the majority of cases in maintaining the integrity of the total design effort.

Top management is continually appalled at the high cost per square foot to provide facilities to house people, equipment and vehicles. In many instances a post job analysis of what the architect actually designed, as apart from what was initially proposed, justified this concern. This analysis is also an integral part of the corporate architects responsibility.

But let's deal with that first interview-if you get that far.

Why, during the interview, doesn't the corporate architect listen to you as you explain the virtues of employing your firm?

Because he's probably heard a similar sales pitch on the average of once a week for as long as he has been on his job. Believe me, after you've had your first twenty to thirty interviews, there is nothing you haven't heard before.

Every architect can design the New York Trade Center in two months, have it fast-tracked to completion in six months, do it without any changes in the contract documents and it will only cost ten dollars per square foot. I have failed to mention that this particular architect has been in business by himself for three weeks having just left a major firm who had previously done work for the corporation. He also made his contact with the corporation by writing a letter to the president and it filtered down to the corporate architect.

In the latter regard, the practicing architect does himself a disservice if he does not first learn the corporate structure of the company he is selling. He must work within that structure to get and maintain his client.

A knowledgeable corporate architect, even if he's not a professional himself, has usually been around long enough to separate fact from fiction, and he disdains architects making promises that cannot possibly be met or using the side door in seeing him for that first interview.

Is it any wonder then that most architects calling on a corporate client for the first time never hear from him again?

So much for the negative aspects of trying to get a commission from a corporate client, and for insight into what makes a corporate architect tick. Let's turn now to some of the positive steps you can take in approaching, selling and keeping the industrial client.

Once you decide to discuss your firm's capability with the potential industrial client, start doing your homework on the firm, the type of facilities it builds and who in the organization is directly responsible for employing the architect. I say do *your* homework because it's unlikely your competitors will tell you what you need to know.

Next, call or write the person in charge and set up an appointment. Let him know you're available at any time he is, and if he's busy now, you'll be glad to call back in a few weeks. Don't try to give



# Dealing Effectively with the Corporate Client

him your "sales pitch" over the telephone. This just creates an impression that you're trying to high pressure him. Use the soft sell but indicate your desire to spend a few minutes discussing your firm's capabilities.

Be sure to follow up with a brief personal note confirming any pending appointment or your desire to present your firm's capabilities.

On the day of your appointment, or better yet, the day before, have your secretary call his office and leave a confirming message that you will be there at the appointed hour and who, if anyone, will be with you. This will jog his memory on your coming and allow him to make any special conference arrangements, or arrange for coffee. Some owners will actually buy you a cup of coffee. But don't feel slighted if they don't. Some industrial firms frown on the traditional coffee break, and others you call on won't even think to ask.

Be prompt for the appointment. In fact, be a few minutes early. The person you're calling upon will probably have other appointments and meetings that day and if he can start yours early he'll be able to finish sooner and get on with his other work. If this sounds as if he's trying to get you in and out as quickly as possible, you're absolutely right. Remember, he's been through a hundred such interviews and he's looking forward to it about as much as going to the dentist. It's a part of his corporate responsibility but he has many pressing obligations.

While you should be prompt, don't be surprised if you have to wait. Like a doctor, the corporate architect must attend to many crises, and he may be in the midst of answering (for the tenth time) why a certain operating department can't have something that is against company policy. Or his boss may have asked for an immediate reply to a hot question from top management. Don't despair, the odds are 100 to 1 that he's not purposely ignoring you just to show you he's in the driver's seat.

First impressions mean a lot in this meeting. In fact, if you don't "score" in this initial encounter the odds are that you'll never be asked to do any work for this client. To clarify the term "score", I mean leave a favorable impression, not receive a commission.

The corporate architect will be especially interested in the background and capabilities of the principals of your firm, but will be even more interested in the capabilities of the individuals who would function as the account executive and project manager. All of these people should be present for this interview. A word of caution here. Everyone who comes should be there for a specific purpose and appropriately participate in

the discussion. Don't load the meeting unnecessarily.

The reason the corporate architect will weigh the individuals participating in this interview so heavily, rather than the sketches, etc., that you'll probably present, is that he knows from past experience the performance of the firm is directly related to how the account is managed. Your corporate awareness and concerns will be rapidly assessed and, believe me, lack of ability or phoniness comes through quite clearly. Be "yourself" in the interview but be sure you're prepared to speak the owner's language - or don't bother trying to get his business.

Every architect probably spends considerable time trying to figure out what completed projects would be appropriate to show the corporate architect as evidence of ability to handle his work successfully. I don't envy the practicing architect this task. What may turn me on would turn off another owner. Certainly you should show evidence of your ability to handle projects similar to the projects your homework indicates the owner is likely to build. Be prepared to furnish specifics, including the names of individuals the corporate architect could contact. In other words, customize your "sales pitch" to your potential client. A slide or film presentation doesn't attract much attention unless it's geared specifically to the client. To do this for each interview could be very expensive.

And remember, the corporate architect more than likely has some expertise in building this type of facility. Be prepared for specific questions on costs, material, time to construct, etc. If you don't have the expertise you indicate you have, he'll know it within a few minutes and you can rest assured you won't hear from him again.

On the other hand, if you show you know your business, it's an almost sure method of getting consideration from the corporate architect at some future date for a project when new firms are under review to join the list of qualified architects doing work for his corporation.

If you don't have a comparable project to show your skill to the corporate architect, indicate to him your firm's overall ability and be honest about your limitations. An owner would rather employ the services of an architect to do a relatively simple project he knows the firm can handle successfully than to be led astray and have the project flop. You have to remember that the corporate architect's reputation is on the line along with yours. And corporate architects have a long memory for misrepresentation.

The material presented can use any format you're successful with just so it

tells your story. But you shouldn't take the entire interview to just have the corporate architect look through a publication of your work. My personal preference (and again each owner is different) is for the architect to have some special material along the lines we discussed available for close scrutiny and discussion.

Good graphics are important in getting the message across and evidencing your architectural style and capability. A general publication, if one is available, can be left after the interview if the corporate architect wants to review it further, circulate it or put it in a file for future reference.

Don't despair if you don't have an exotic five color publication. Some of the best I've seen are quite simple but contain the basics about the firm's management capability and a good cross-section of the work it has handled. Good graphics and readability are more important than pictures.

And remember, if it's going to be a current document, it had better be inexpensive to update or you'll always be making excuses for it being out-of-date or you'll have information crossed out, or added longhand. The excuses and the marked up copy create a very poor impression of your own management capability - and success.

A large corporation likes to deal with an established firm whose success is established. This doesn't mean the young firm just getting started won't be considered. But let's be practical. The industrial client is faced with deadlines and demands that, at times, are unreal. While the young firm may be perfectly capable of handling a project successfully, the corporate architect can't take a chance at failure. He would rather you get your experience first.

Another factor that can work against your firm is not having total in-house engineering capability. While some projects can be handled successfully with the architect employing the services of other professionals to complete the project, the track record indicates that the projects that are *totally coordinated* within a single firm are generally more successful, especially larger projects. Most corporate architects recognize the proper wedding of independent architectural and engineering firms can, and do, produce excellent results. The problem is proving to an owner that this will happen in his case.

The corporate architect has probably allotted you a half hour for your interview so gear yourself to saying what needs to be said that time span. He will let you know if this is too long or if he wants the discussion last longer. Be flexible in your presentation and give him what he wants.

When time is up, do what comes

naturally. Just thank him for his time ... try to summarize briefly ... indicate your desire to do work for him at some time in the future ... indicate you'll touch base with him in the future if the firm does a specific type of project that the corporate architect has expressed an interest in or if the management of the firm changes ... take your leave and, as soon as possible, follow up with a letter thanking the corporate architect for his time. This would also be a good time to answer any questions he asked that required a response. But keep it short. After that, as the cliché goes, all you can do it pray.

Or, rather that's all you can do immediately.

Periodically (every six months to a year) if you haven't heard from the corporate architect, drop him a brief letter expressing your continued interest. If nothing comes of these follow-ups within two years, you can drop your effort for awhile and then start all over again.

Once in a while there is a change in the corporate architect within a corporation and the new one may not know your firm at all. It's discouraging if you've established a contact, but encouraging if you've been ignored for a year or more. Just be patient. If the corporate architect feels you're qualified and could handle his work, you still may find yourself in a waiting line.

That's right, a waiting line.

Even if the company you're hoping to obtain a commission from is a large one and a major builder, it is only going to build so many facilities each year.

And how best can that corporation treat the architectural firm who has previously handled a project successfully?

By giving them another opportunity to do a good job.

Professional ethics keeps you from advertising that you are good - the best in the business. The only way you can really advertise is by doing a good job every time you have the opportunity to do a good job.

Professional ethics keeps you from advertising that you are good - the best in the business. The only way you can really advertise is by doing a good job every time you have the opportunity to perform.

It stands to reason then, that your customer, the industrial client in this case, can only reward you by giving you another opportunity to do another good job.

This being the case, and considering the limited number of facilities a corporation builds in a given year, if the architectural firms that the corporation has been using are doing a good job, they should be given additional opportunities.



This means that no matter how qualified a new firm might be, and even if the corporate architect thinks you're capable, you have to get in line behind other qualified firms waiting for that first opportunity to prove yourself.

When does that opportunity come?

It comes when one of those qualified firms starts to take the owners work for granted and doesn't produce well coordinated contract documents, fails to respond promptly to inquiries, etc. We'll speak more to this point later.

If you are successful in landing a commission, do what you said you could do - and more. This is your chance to prove your firms capability. If the project goes well, there will be more opportunities in the future. If not, goodbye.

How then do you deal effectively with the corporate architect and manage the account successfully?

The simple answer is that a successful architect - client relationship is just like a successful marriage - nothing is ever taken for granted.

Be prepared to deliver everything you said you were capable of doing - and then some.

The fee is an important item for you to settle, but the owner will probably approach this in an indifferent manner. He pretty much has his mind made up what the fee should be since he has seen many of the same type of projects. This could be both a help as well as a hindrance.

I say a help because he's not going to "beat around the bush" with you in arriving at an equitable fee for work similar to that he has done before. If your proposal is complete and in line, it will be approved immediately. If it is out of line, you will be told immediately. There will be almost no room for negotiation with the owner on a project that is typical to others that he has completed.

And this is as it should be because it is based on the assumption that the owner has treated previous architects fairly. Certainly you may discuss your differing opinions with him, or you can turn down the commission. Unfortunately for the architect, he is in a very vulnerable position when it comes to establishing a fee. I'm confident, however, that the great majority of corporate architects or owners are interested in seeing to it that you receive adequate and equitable compensation for your work. If they don't, then in my opinion if you produce a less than satisfactory set of contract documents they shouldn't be surprised.

Understand your contract, know what is expected of you, know what responsibilities the owner undertakes and live up to the terms and conditions of your agreement - and I mean 100%.

Also establish lines of authority within the owners organization. Use these paths to obtain necessary approvals and, if necessary, to resolve conflicts in technical opinions. Remember, the corporate architect wants your best professional advice. If a member of his staff is a roadblock in your giving him your best judgment, you have a responsibility to advise him informally as well as by putting it in writing. Your reputation is at stake and, in these days of increasing professional liability awareness by owners, lack of action or proper notification

by you could be costly.

Don't carry a chip on your shoulder or send a sensitive representative to coordinate the work with the owner's staff. They've worked with too many architects and they won't mince words if you're not performing up to their standards.

If you think your instructors in school were demanding, or your boss, you "ain't seen nothing yet". The owners statement that he wants something tomorrow usually means he wanted it yesterday. He realizes that his demands are tough on you and your staff, but he's faced with demands on him which must be passed to your shoulders. When you went into this business you should have been told that missed dinners, early mornings and long weekends go with the territory.

When you meet with the corporate architect to discuss your first project, if he agrees, bring your design team with you to hear the requirements first hand and to ask pertinent questions. Question the corporate architect on the functions to be performed so you can understand more clearly the task at hand. If you've ever played those communications games where you relay a story, after it's passed to the third or fourth person it's difficult to recognize the original script. In fact, to help everyone understand the type of facility to be designed, ask the corporate architect to see a similar facility so you can better understand his requirements. And by all means appoint one of your group to take good notes. Transcribe them immediately and send a copy to the owner for his record. It will give him the opportunity to review the discussion and advise you if there is any misunderstanding.

One thing you should never forget is the old saying: "Put it in writing." And I mean put *everything* in writing. Records of telephone communications, field or office meetings to resolve minor issues, discussions at lunch, etc. All too often these "minor" discussions lead to major confusion and hard feelings. It's harder to resolve misunderstandings after you've converted them to bricks and mortar. You shouldn't be timid about asking the owner to put specific requests in writing to you, but be careful here. Some owners, especially his staff, have an aversion to paperwork and will ask you to confirm all of the discussions, even when they initiate the change. While it may seem unnecessary to mention, if you want to get along, you had better go along with their request.

Your first major encounter with the owner will be the design presentation. Whether it's your first presentation, or the twentieth, it represents your firms design and engineering capability to the corporate architect and others in his organization who review the project. Most architects are concerned about this review, and they should be.

Before getting too deeply into your design effort, determine if the owner has any definite ideas or parameters on design. Is he looking for an economical building or does he want it a showcase? Does he have unique operating requirements that need to be considered in your architectural, mechanical or electrical approach to the design process? Ask questions and establish the necessary guidelines.

Who should be at the review and what should it consist of?

The principal or account executive should be present to lead and coordinate the presentation. He should make clear how the owner's requirements were met as the presentation proceeds. The designer, mechanical and electrical engineers, or others, depending upon the project, should handle their own efforts. Each should make clear how their effort dovetails with the other disciplines and the total project. The principal should summarize the discussion by reviewing projected costs as compared to the budget allocation.

This is as good a time as any to mention that whoever is the appointed account executive at the start of a project should stay with it until owner occupancy. Owners frown on the firm who pulls the account executive off his job because of something more important he needs to handle. You might get away with this once, but if you try it a second time, it will likely be the last job you'll do for that client.

Good graphics are a must to both sell your design as well as to allow the corporate architect and his staff to have a complete understanding of your design intent. As a minimum, present all four elevations and a colored pencil or ink perspective to indicate the overall impact of the project on the site. The elevations should be colored as nearly as possible to your finished material selection.

Another reason good graphics are important is that many times the corporate architect must take your presentation material and make his own presentation to upper management to obtain the necessary funding. Good graphics make the selling job a lot easier.

In addition to the architectural presentations (which should also contain a typical wall section, or other such details if you're trying to attempt something unique) you should present mechanical and electrical schematics of the systems that are being proposed. By your showing these, the owner feels more confident that what you are presenting to him will work and is more than a pretty picture that will have to be altered when the engineers start looking at the project.

If the owners requirements indicate that the building expands horizontally or vertically, be sure to give evidence that you have thought out these expansion requirements from both an architectural as well as an engineering standpoint.

Be prepared to state why certain features are designed into the project (zoning requirements, Planning Board demands to compliment the community, etc.) and what they will cost. You should also be prepared to present alternate solutions and state what they would cost. This allows the owner to make a sound decision based on fact - not guesswork.

Also be sure to state what the probable construction cost would be based on the design requirements. Be prepared to specifically respond to how the costs might be affected by suggested changes in the design parameters or a delay in the overall construction schedule. This cost information should be updated at the 50% completion state of contract documents and again just before the project goes out for bid or negotiation. The cost

projection aspect is stressed since the corporate architect is held accountable for total project costs and specifically for staying within budgeted forecasts. By advising him of probable changes in construction costs (if such is the case) you allow him to advise top management of the changing nature of the project before it's too late to effect necessary changes in the plan and still meet related service and occupancy dates.

What is said about costs on the total project also applies to any changes that come along as the job is in progress. Let the owner know what the costs will be. Above all, be realistic in pointing out to the owner that the cost to make a change once the project is under construction is usually higher than if included in the original bid documents. You could also recommend holding off and handling as a separate project after the main project is completed. Your honest evaluation will be very helpful to the corporate architect.

Get answers to any questions your staff might have at this time since, if you receive approval to proceed at the design presentation, you don't want to be hung up by a lot of questions afterwards. These afterthoughts will also tend to irritate the owner. He'll think your firm did not thoroughly look at the project before it was presented - and he probably will be right.

Throughout the presentation be prepared for criticism from the corporate architect and his staff. Remember two things mentioned earlier: he's built more of these structures than you'll probably ever design; and, if pressed for time, he's not likely to search for diplomatic words to tell your designer that certain details, or the total effort is not acceptable.

Most, if not all corporate architects, prefer a very simple design approach. They know that the fewer the trades on a project the more economical its likely to be. They also know that a complicated design solution most likely will result in higher life-cycle and maintenance costs.

Present your reasons for doing what you did or try to find out why he is objecting. But, after you've made your point and he still insists that a specific detail, etc., be revised, go along with it unless you want this to be your last job for him. He probably has good reasons for wanting the change, or he may have none and is acting purely on intuition. Whatever the case is, he's the owner and it's him you must satisfy.

Many of these difficulties can be avoided completely if the architect can begin to communicate his design direction early in the design process. If the architect feels his design direction is unique, or really different, he had better start a review process very early in the design effort. This process is particularly valid in the areas of structural, mechanical and electrical systems design. They also should be reviewed with the corporate architect's staff frequently during the design process. It is much easier for the corporate architect to come to a design presentation fully aware of what he will see because he has been kept aware of and has been made a contributor to the decisions of the design team.

It's disheartening to the corporate architect to hear or see a particular



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# Dealing Effectively with the Corporate Client

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design feature in the presentation supported adamantly by the principal rather than his listening to the corporate architect tell him why the change is necessary. Many principals feel the designer is never wrong and support him completely. They forget owners usually aren't looking for monuments that will be showcases for the general public. In fact, most projects are intended to serve very utilitarian purposes. An attractive building built at low per square foot cost that is relatively maintenance free will probably result in your being given consideration the next time a similar project is being considered.

It will be in your best interest to have the owner sign your basic presentation drawings as an indication of his approval of your work. This could also avoid future misunderstandings about what was approved. I don't know of any owner who would object to this procedure.

We have not discussed real estate matters in any detail since many owners don't require this service. However, if you are requested to provide the owner a professional opinion in this area, be sure you are thorough in analyzing all of the advantages and disadvantages of the sites under consideration. Check availability of utilities, zoning requirements, soil conditions, state or county highway requirements, easements, etc. All too often an owner gets the project as far as obtaining the permit only to find out restrictions on the site that increase the project costs considerably and delay start of construction. In other words, do a *complete* investigation when you're asked to provide this additional professional service for the corporate architect.

Meet your deadlines. All of them. Remember, the corporate architect and his staff are under considerable pressure. Missing the deadline by even half an hour could cause the corporate architect's schedule to be fouled up. A minor delay could be the turning point in what was once a good working relationship.

Be candid in your response to his inquiries. If one of your people, or yourself, gave a bum answer to a question, or made a poor professional decision, own up to it. Don't, as some principals do, continue covering up for honest mistakes. The owner will appreciate your honesty and, more than likely, he won't ask that you "eat" your mistake as he might if the problem shows up during construction.

Of course, there is a limit to the number of even honest mistakes that can be allowed before the owner is going to have doubts about your professional ability. Or, worse yet for you, he will insist that you compensate the company for your errors. There is no ironclad rule of thumb that guides a corporate architect in determining when he will ask

you to pay for your errors. Some owners will expect that you cover every mistake while others will let you get away with murder. To me, neither approach is correct. However, when added construction costs of one-half to one percent of the total project are incurred as a result of the architect's errors and omissions, it's time to go knocking on his door. Just be prepared to take your lumps if you goofed.

Generally owners will fully compensate you for your design and engineering fees if the error or omission results in added value to the owner. However, if the contractor takes advantage of the owner because of your oversight, don't be surprised if you're asked to participate in the overall cost - even if it's only to contribute your fee towards reducing the overall expense to the owner.

While you're preparing those contract documents for the owner's review, if he doesn't ask to see what you're doing before the final delivery date of the documents, arrange to visit his office to review the work you have done at least twice. A good rule of thumb would be at the fifty percent point and again about three weeks before the documents are sent out for bidding, or reviewed with a developer/contractor when negotiating a contract.

Even a knowledgeable owner will change his mind and by reviewing the drawings and specifications with him before they are completed, necessary changes can be incorporated without a great deal of difficulty. It's also a good time to point out to the owner the need to shut down air conditioning/heating systems while conversions are made, relocate toilet facilities, alter employee or customer egress temporarily, etc. He can then make the necessary plans to notify appropriate departments of the coming inconvenience and allow them to make contingency plans. In our company, we refer to a review that is made at the fifty percent point as the critical phases review. We have found that it eliminates many of the problems we used to have during the construction phase that usually produced short tempers and higher costs. The building process is difficult at best so why make it worse. A little advance planning can save the owner a lot of headaches. He'll appreciate it and this could be one reason he'll ask you back when a particularly difficult project comes along.

Also, be sure to allow adequate time before the job is scheduled to go out for bidding to let the owner review the documents. Reasonable schedules should be established early in the project.

Besides the corporate architect and his staff (who will want to review the documents in detail) the facilities or operating people are given an oppor-

tunity to offer comments as are others who have a specific interest in the project. Trying to rush these documents through the owner because you didn't properly schedule the production in your own shop, or the owner made minor revisions while the documents were being prepared, show your lack of management capability and, if repeated frequently enough, could be the reason an owner drops you even if you're an otherwise competent architect. The main reason is that the corporate architect has to schedule his staff as you do and being late for a review upsets his plans for his staff to do other work.

Also, more and more owners are doing a review of the documents from a life-cycle costing or value engineering analysis standpoint in addition to the work in this area that should be done as a routine effort by the architect. Since this is approached as a team effort, proper scheduling of the necessary personnel within the owner's organization takes time. The entire owner's review period is often necessary to do a good job.

And be sure to react to each of the owner's comments on the plans and specifications. All too frequently the owner finds that certain comments or questions raised by his staff were either completely ignored or missed. It would be to the architects advantage that the suggestions made on the documents were itemized and a positive response made to the corporate architect on each item. The marked-up check set should also be returned to the corporate architect for his record and cross reference to the itemized list you have provided him on the action you have taken. There can be no misunderstanding on either his part or yours if you follow this procedure.

If enough items are uncovered during this review that required a major change in the contract documents, don't hesitate to request an extension of the time when the documents will be required to go out for bids - but don't be surprised if the request is denied. The owner usually has a very tight schedule and, despite all of the wishful thinking in the world, you don't make up time lost during the design phase during the construction phase.

Everything we have just said indicates the owner can take all the time he wants, make any changes he wants and you still have to meet the original deadline for completion of the contract documents.

Right?

Well that certainly is what is implied. And, if it's humanly possible, you should try to please the corporate owner since your next opportunity to do another good job is based on how well you produce job after job after job. However, a reasonable and knowledgeable owner will not expect the impossible from you. The important thing is for you to get in touch with the

corporate architect when changes coming from his staff are getting out of hand and affecting the production schedule. This will give him a chance to review what is happening and either call a halt to further changes, or extend the schedule. You'll come out a winner in either case. You're a sure loser if you wait until the last minute to tell him you can't make the schedule.

Assuming you are able to get the project out for bids, are you out of the woods?

Not really.

Come to the bid opening with a spread sheet prepared to list the various alternates, etc., so that when all bids have been opened you are in a position to give the owner a preliminary judgment on the relationship of the various bids and the probable successful contractor.

Be prepared to promptly contact the necessary contractors or manufacturers to clear up any misunderstanding in the proposal.

Unless the proposal is unusually complicated, you shouldn't take longer than 48 hours to have your recommendations back in the owner's hands for a final decision and the preparation of a contract if he, rather than you, is handling this matter.

And now we come to that phase of the total building process where I have seen the architect who has cleared the other hurdles fall on his face. If you haven't guessed what it is already, it's the construction phase.

I have yet to meet an architect who hasn't told me that he or his staff is fully capable and experienced in total field supervision and/or assisting the owner's representatives in dealing effectively with the contractor.

It has been my experience, however, that most architects are not totally qualified to assist the owner in supervising the construction effort. It would be providing the owner an honest evaluation and service if the services of a properly trained engineer (or specially trained architect) were recommended to the owner. I know there are qualified architects who do a great job in the field supervision. But if you are one, you're definitely in the minority.

What can you do then to assist the corporate architect during the construction phase?

Sit down with the corporate architect and thoroughly discuss the services you can offer him and find out if he will be providing any field supervision with his own staff. These discussions should be held at the time the basic contract is prepared. Once the guidelines are established be sure to follow up promptly in your areas of contracted responsibility.

While we won't cover all areas where an architect can provide the owner a service, let's cover a few that seem to



cause the most trouble.

When the shop drawings start arriving, be sure they're given more than a quick glance before you note them "approved." Far too often the approved items can't be built, or don't fit in the field and the total construction interval is adversely affected. Be sure a qualified architect or engineer takes the time to review the drawings in terms of the design intent and either approves the drawing or makes the necessary notations that will result in correct and appropriate action being taken. Also, follow up with the contractor to be sure you are sent corrected shop drawings when needed. Don't leave it to chance that the correction has been made.

Processing of shop drawings should also be done promptly because a delay here can affect the total schedule and produce an unhappy owner. If it's the contractor who is dragging his feet, advise the corporate architect so he can put some pressure on the contractor. Again, you'll be the hero and not the bum if you initiate the needed action promptly.

Changes during the construction phase of any project are not uncommon even though corporate architects cringe anytime a member of their staff indicate it will be necessary to issue such a document.

You can give a major assist to the corporate architect in advising him promptly on what the impact on such a change will be in dollars and time. If possible, this advice should come before

you spend too much time on the design or engineering effort.

Assuming "all systems are go," produce the bulletin documents as rapidly as possible. You have to remember that the contractor, his subcontractors and the suppliers are already planning to do something other than what you know will happen and the sooner you can produce the contract revision documents, the better chance the owner has of not having to pay an exorbitant amount to make the change.

Once issued, the architect should follow up closely and frequently with the contractor to see that he gets in the quotation. A good guideline to remember is that the total bidding process on even the most complex projects rarely takes over 30 days, so there is a considerable credibility gap when an architect or contractor says it takes longer than 30 days to quote any revision. What is necessary to keep the bulletin moving is that the architect hold meetings, etc., to resolve problems promptly and not let questionable quotation items drag or get hung up in a letter writing contest between himself and the contractor.

Again, if the contractor becomes uncooperative, ask the corporate architect to intervene. If you have been the hardnose, he'll let you know. But he can also put some pressure on the contractor and his subs, especially if repeat business is anticipated.

Don't sit on construction related questions for longer than 24 hours. In the design process, including preparation of

documents, there is latitude to ponder the wonders of architecture. In the construction process, time is money and excess time in decision making can cost the owner money as well as result in construction features not intended by the architect becoming monuments to his slowness in responding to questions.

If a contractor seeks compensation for a delay in a project caused by slow bulletin handling or slow responses to legitimate questions, the costs to the owner may be passed along to you - and you won't have a leg to stand on.

The time worn but still good advice is: "Don't put off until tomorrow what can be done today."

While there are other areas during the construction phase where the architect provides a service (selection of exterior materials, color schedules, etc.) the comments made about the specifically mentioned points can be applied to the other areas as well.

Do you as an architect just walk away from a project after the last invoice has been paid?

Not if you're smart and want another opportunity to do another job.

Ask the corporate architect if you can have your design/engineering team review the building with the operations people and his staff after it has been in operation for about two years. The purpose of this review is so you can learn from any mistakes that were made. You will then be in a position to better assist him in the future on a similar project. He'll appreciate your interest in provid-

ing him a better service.

We had covered a lot of territory in discussing what makes the corporate architect tick, how to land a commission and to manage the account successfully. But even if you follow this advice to the letter, you'd find times that you'll be totally frustrated. All I can suggest is that you reach into your back pocket for that extra patience every architect needs when dealing with the corporate client.



STATEMENT OF CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION			
1. TITLE OF PROJECT			
2. NAME OF ARCHITECT		3. DATE OF PRINTING	
4. NAME OF CONTRACTOR		5. DATE OF CIRCULATION	
6. NAME OF SUBCONTRACTOR			
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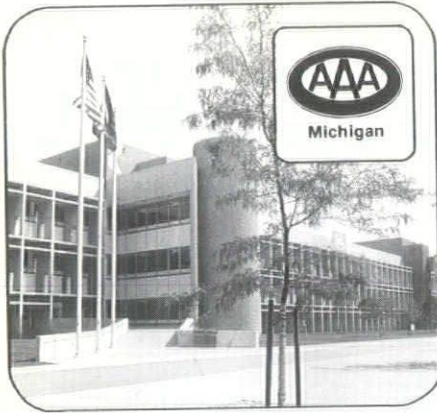
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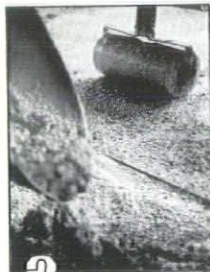


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# out-to-out\*

by Joe Neussendorfer



Federal agency design/construction projects have been mainstay for many local architectural-engineering firms during the current period of economic doldrums in the construction industry.

Because of this situation, Michigan firms are burning the proverbial midnight oil, researching and analyzing the ways and means to secure available public projects.

I'm pleased to report that industry leaders are well aware of the increasing economic importance of federal agency projects to architectural and engineering firms, and, and have dedicated themselves to an on-going effort to provide to latest information on the subject.

The Committee of Federal Procurement of A/E services (COFPAES), comprised of The American Institute of Architects, The American Consulting Engineers Council, The American Road Builders Association (Planning and Design Division), The American Society of Civil Engineers, and The National Society of Professional Engineers will conduct the fourth annual "National A/E Federal Programs Conference" in San Francisco, January 29-30, 1976.

During the Conference, key federal agency officials and members of Congress will meet with and brief architects

and engineers on such topics as the implementation of the new federal Standard Forms 254 and 255 (federal government questionnaires that must be filled out by individual firms in order to be considered for federal architect-engineer contracts), future federal agency construction budgets, energy conservation, the issues of competitive bidding, and opportunities in the overseas market.

Participating in the briefings will be officials from approximately 20 federal agencies, including the General Service Administration, the Departments of Defense, Housing and Urban Development and Transportation, the Environmental Protection Agency and others.

The Conference will provide a rare opportunity for Michigan architectural-engineering firms to learn all about current federal work and contract requirements in one short Conference.

Advance registration forms for the Conference will be mailed out to members of the sponsoring organizations. For additional information contact Marshall E. Purnell, co-director of federal agency liaison, The American Institute of Architects, 1735 New York Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. Tel. (202) 785-7384.



## Calendar

### November 5-6

Housing Lab '75, Washington, D.C.  
Conference on housing opportunities in State Housing Finance Agencies.

### November 17-18

Housing Lab '75, Chicago, Illinois.

### November 18

Detroit Chapter AIA Annual Meeting and Election.

### November 24-25

Housing Lab '75, Denver, Colorado.

### December 5

Detroit Chapter Annual Awards Banquet at the University Club of Detroit.

## Advertisers Index

Beldon Brick Company	.....CII
Consumers Power Company	.....2
Detroit Roofing Inspection Service	.....15
Detroit Terrazzo Contractors' Association	.....16
Michigan Asphalt Paving Association	.....CIV
Michigan Tractor & Machinery Company	.....10
Plumbing & Heating Industry of Detroit	.....CIII
Roofing Industry Promotion Fund	.....15





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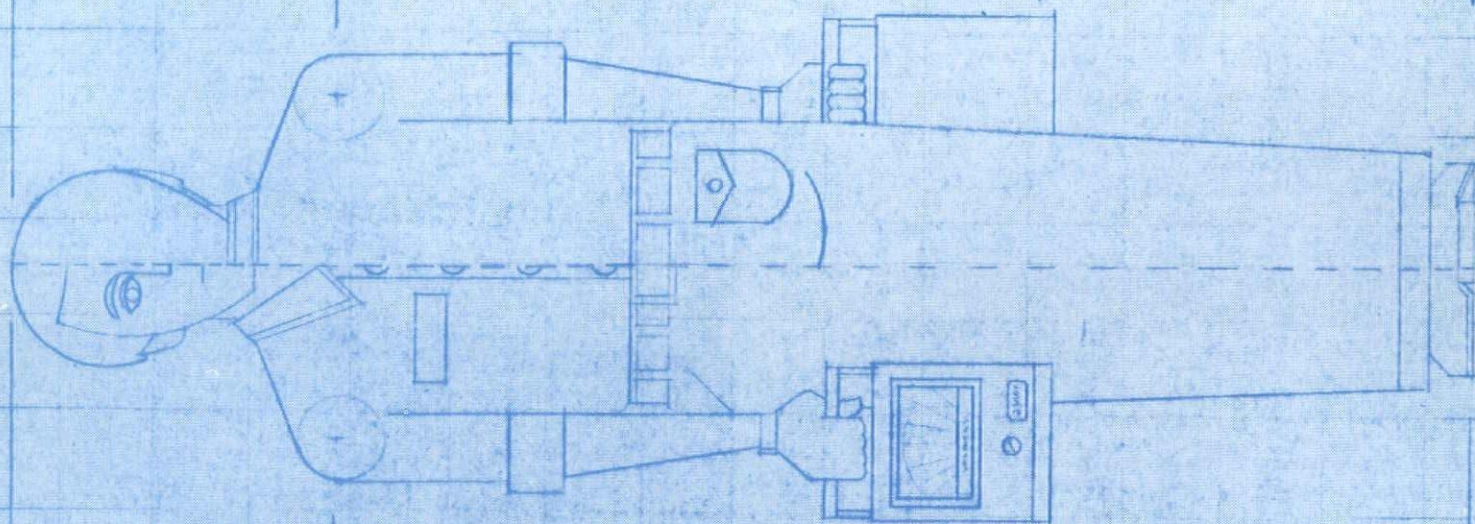
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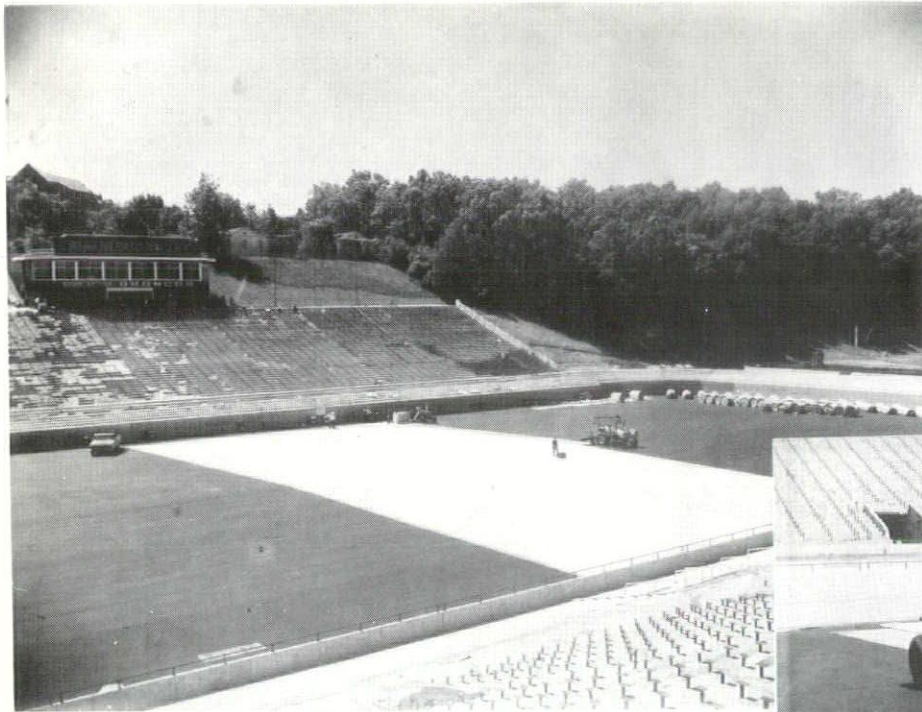


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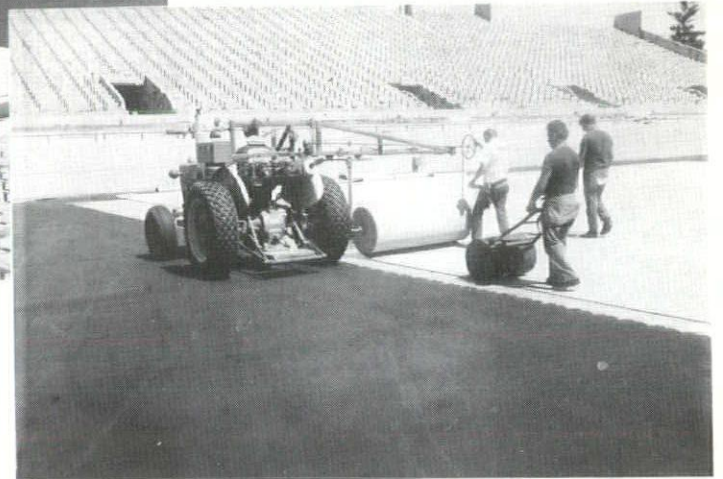




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