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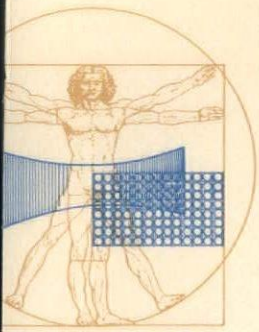
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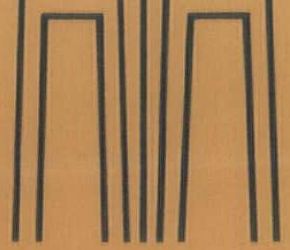


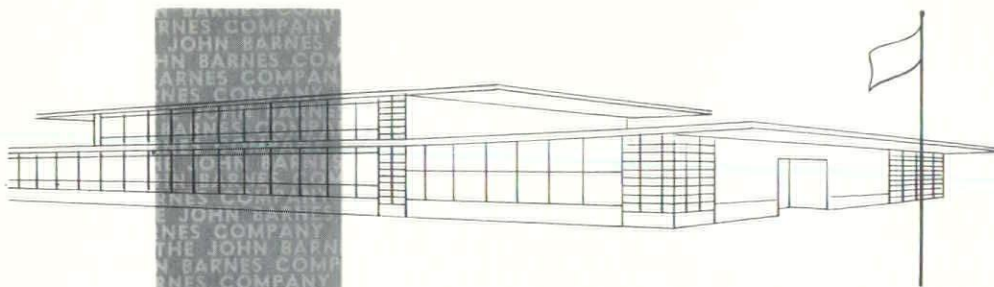
CONVENTION ISSUE

NEW MEXICO ARCHITECT

OCTOBER 1959

VOL.1 NO.6





## An Invitation

DURING THE WESTERN MOUNTAIN REGIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE A.I.A. WE HAVE ARRANGED AN EXHIBIT OF RATHER UNUSUAL INTEREST.

WE HAVE TAKEN THE LARGE ROOM JUST TO THE EAST OF THE LOBBY ENTRANCE OF THE WESTERN SKIES TO DISPLAY MANY NEWLY DEVELOPED ITEMS OF INTEREST AND IMPORTANCE TO ARCHITECTS

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# NEW MEXICO ARCHITECT

October, 1959

Vol. 1, No. 6

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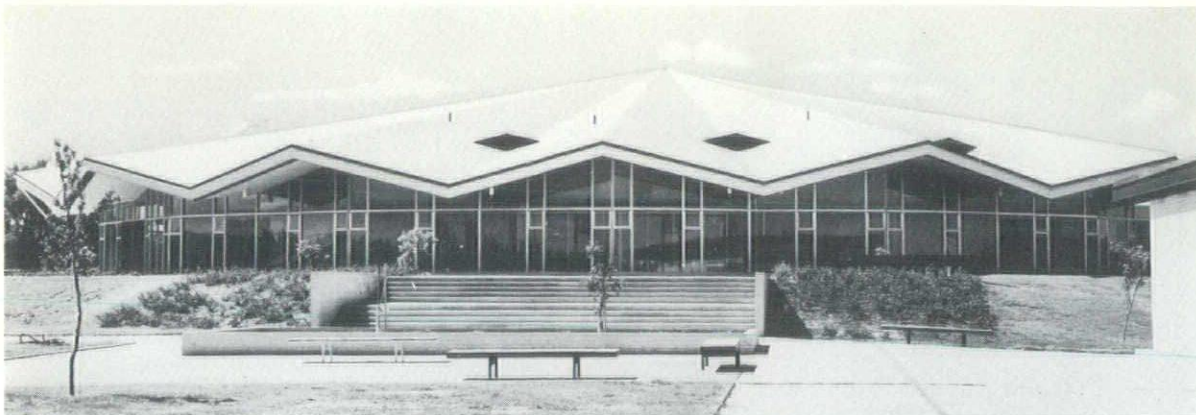
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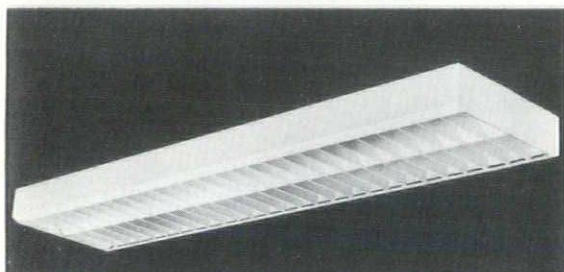
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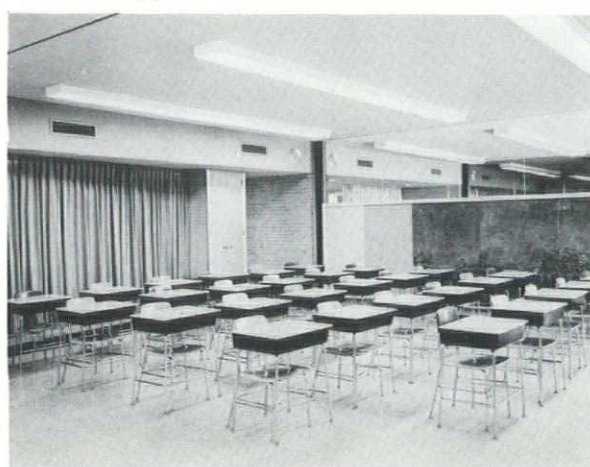
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## A Welcome From Your Regional Director

Greetings and a hearty welcome to all members of the Western Mountain Region whose presence here is an indication, not only of your desire to avail yourselves of the many privileges and benefits you can obtain, but demonstrates that the Architects of the West are just as interested in furthering the high standards of their profession as those in any other part of the country. Many of you will return home blessed with the warm glow of friendship and inspired to further attainments in your personal practice.

*Frederic H. Porter*



## A Message From the General Conference Chairman

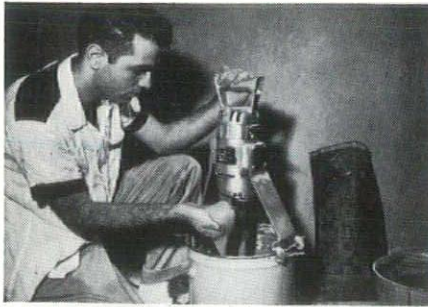
The approaching Eighth Annual Regional Conference, the theme being Science in Architecture, is not only timely but should be quite stimulating to the architect who will design for the future.

William Burk, chairman of the program committee, has done a tremendous job in the selection of our speakers, each being a specialist in his own right capable of presenting exciting revelations on our world of tomorrow as related to architecture. Elsewhere in these pages you will find the complete program.

The social calender is complete and will round out what we are sure will be a very enjoyable three days. See you at the conference.

*Jim Hilberty*

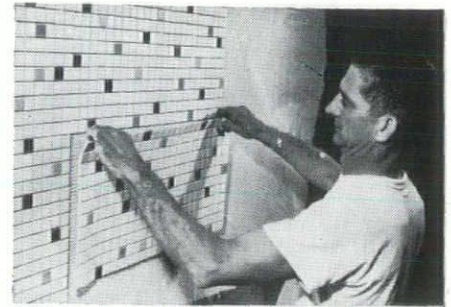
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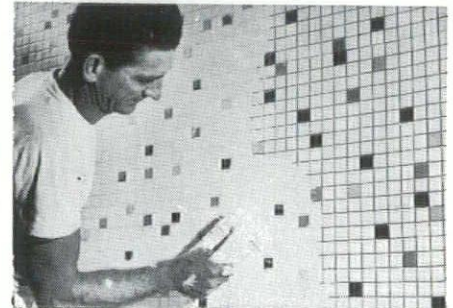
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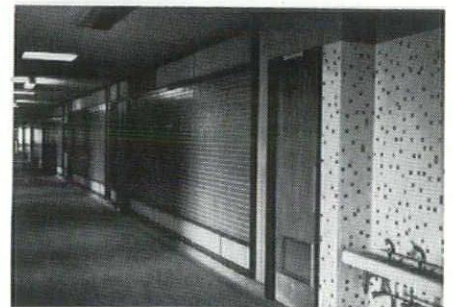
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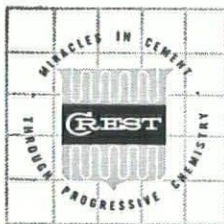


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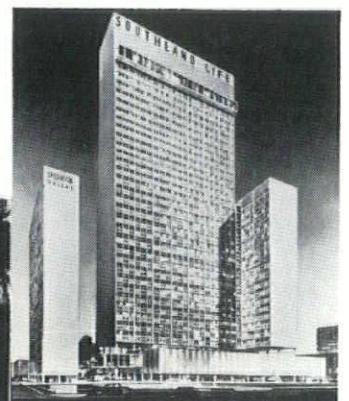


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## A Message From Your President

I am most happy to add our welcome to that of our Regional Director, Mr. Frederic H. Porter of Cheyenne, Wyoming, directing it to all of you who plan to attend the 1959 Annual Conference of the Western Mountain Region of the American Institute of Architects.

It is my feeling, as well as the feeling of the entire Conference Committee, that the Conference as planned, and as reflected in the program that appears elsewhere in this issue, will be one that we will long remember. Our Publicity Chairman has enlarged considerably on my remarks of last month, concerning our speakers by displaying their photos, with additional comments, as well as other anticipated highlights of the Conference.

Another phase of the Conference, and to which no mention has been made, will be the official welcome to the Western Mountain Region of the two Chapters in the State of Nevada. It will be my privilege to present to the members of the Western Mountain Region, Mr. Edward B. Hendricks, President of the Las Vegas Chapter, A.I.A. and Mr. Howard H. Brandis, President of the Reno Chapter, A.I.A. They, the presidents, will, I am sure, present members of their Chapters who are in attendance.

*Tommie Brittle*

# 8th Western Mountain Regional Conference, AIA

Western Skies Hotel — Albuquerque, New Mexico

October 8, 9, 10 — 1959

## Wednesday, October 7th

- 12 Noon Registration.  
Place—Lobby. (Desk will be open until 8 p.m.)  
Ladies' Reception and Activities Room will remain open through Conference.

## Thursday, October 8th

- 9:00 a.m. Registration. Desk to be open until 5 p.m.
- 10:00 a.m. Opening Session—Invocation.  
Presiding — W. Miles Brittelle, New Mexico Chapter President.  
Welcome Address — Governor John Burroughs.  
Keynote Address—Dr. Clayton S. White.  
Introduction of Visitors and Dignitaries.  
Committee Appointments—Bunk Porter.  
Resolutions Committees & Standing Committees.  
Exhibits will be open from 9 a.m. October 8 through October 11.
- 12 Noon Luncheon—Pool side.  
Speaker & Panel Discussion—Mr. C. H. Topping, Senior Architectural & Civil Consultant, Design Division, E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Co., Inc.  
Presiding: Mr. Brad Kidder.
- 2:00 p.m. Chapter officials meeting — Miles Brittelle presiding. Science In Architecture Seminar.  
Committee Appointments.  
Resolutions — Standing Committees.
- 6:30 p.m. Cocktail Party — Western Skies Hotel.  
Host: New Mexico Concrete Products Association.  
Entertainment: Indian Dancers.
- 8:00 p.m. Dinner, informal.  
Skit—Student Chapter AIA—University of New Mexico.  
Speaker—Herman Von Spoomo, Ph.D., LL.D., D.S., M.S., ARA.  
Presiding—Mr. John J. Heimerich.

## Friday, October 9th

- 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Registration Continues.  
Committee Meetings.
- 11:00 a.m. Ladies' Luncheon and Trip to Old Town Plaza.
- 11:30 a.m. Men's Luncheon.  
Presiding: Mr. Max Flatow.  
Speaker: Herbert H. Swinburne, AIA, Architect.
- 1:15 p.m. Conducted Tour to Sandia Base, and Ideal Portland Cement Plant.
- 6:00 p.m. Cocktail Party — Four Hills Country Club.  
Host: New Mexico Chapter A.I.A.
- 7-9 p.m. Buffet Dinner, Informal — Four Hills Country Club.

## Saturday, October 10th

- 9:00 a.m. Registration Desk open until Noon.
- 10:00 a.m. Business Meeting.  
Presiding: Fred "Bunk" Porter, Regional Director.  
Report of Committees.  
Address: Mr. Edmund R. Purves, Executive Director, American Institute of Architects, Washington, D. C.
- 12 Noon Presidents' Luncheon honoring Presidents, past and present.  
Presiding: New Mexico Chapter AIA President.  
Awards.
- 2:20 p.m. Afternoon open.
- 6:30 p.m. Cocktail Party. Host — Producers' Council.
- 8:00 p.m. Annual Conference Banquet — Western Skies Hotel.  
Presiding: Mr. Wm. E. Burk, Jr.  
Speaker: Dr. E. J. Workman, President, New Mexico Institute of Mining & Technology, Socorro, N. Mex.
- 9:30 p.m. Dancing until 1:00 a.m.

# Conference Speakers

John Burroughs, Governor of the  
State of New Mexico

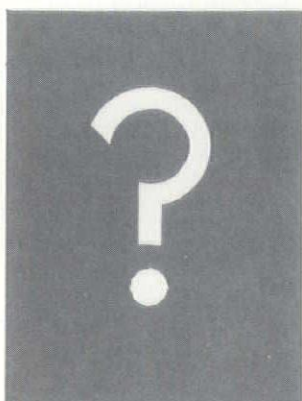


Dr. Clayton S. White, director of  
research for Lovelace Foundation and  
foremost in the country in the radio  
biology field as it pertains to  
nuclear weapons environments.



Dr. Herbert H. Swinburne of the  
architectural firm of Nolen and Swinburne  
of Philadelphia. On the Reseach  
Committee of the AIA and winner  
of the Bronze Medal from the  
Philadelphia Chapter, and  
Press Hall Citation.

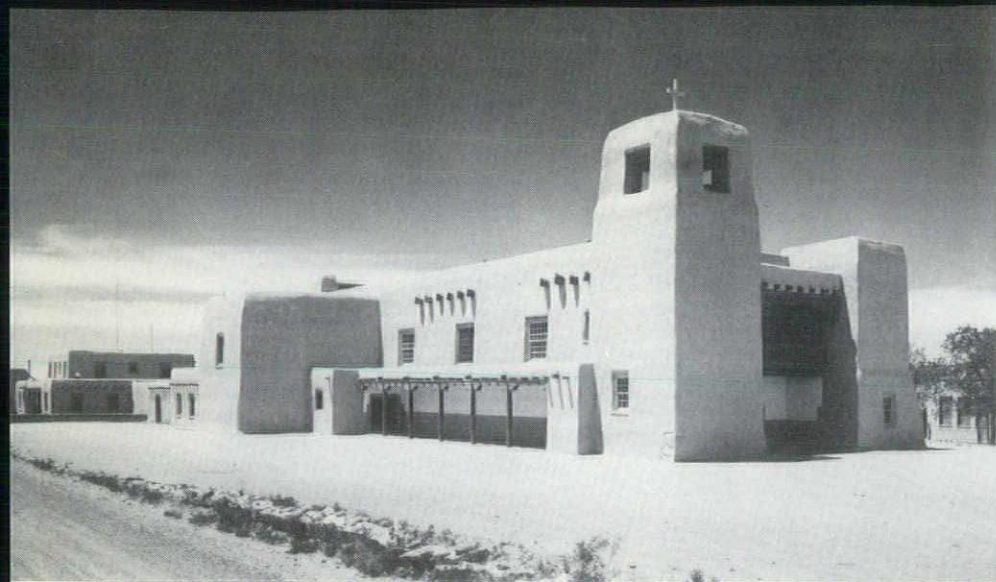
Dr. E. J. Workman, President  
of the New Mexico Institute of  
Mining and Technology at Socorro.  
Co-inventor of the proximity fuse of  
World War II, and prominent in the  
fields of meteorology and military research.



Dr. Herman Von Spoomo,  
outstanding scientist who  
may go into orbit any minute.

Mr. C. H. Topping, Architectural  
and Civil Consultant, Design Division,  
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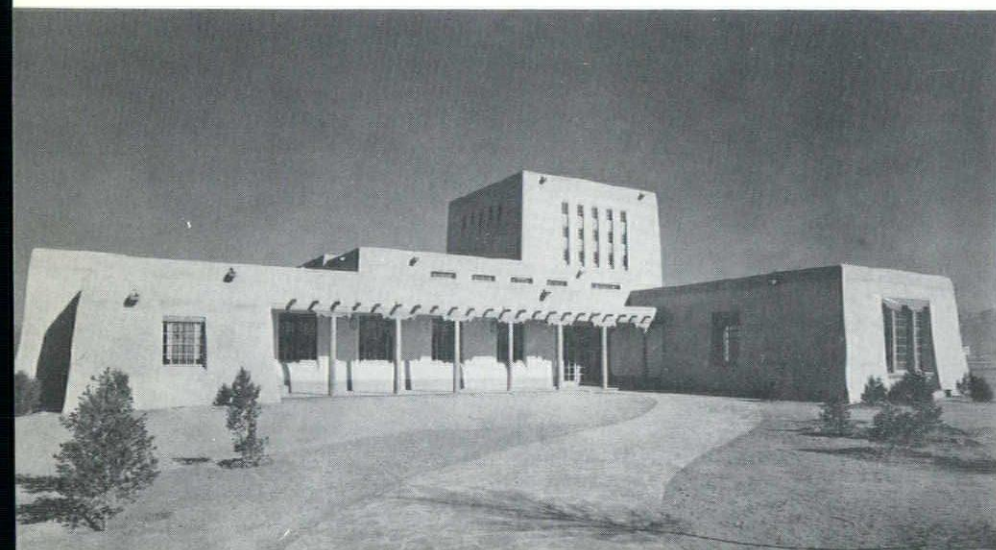
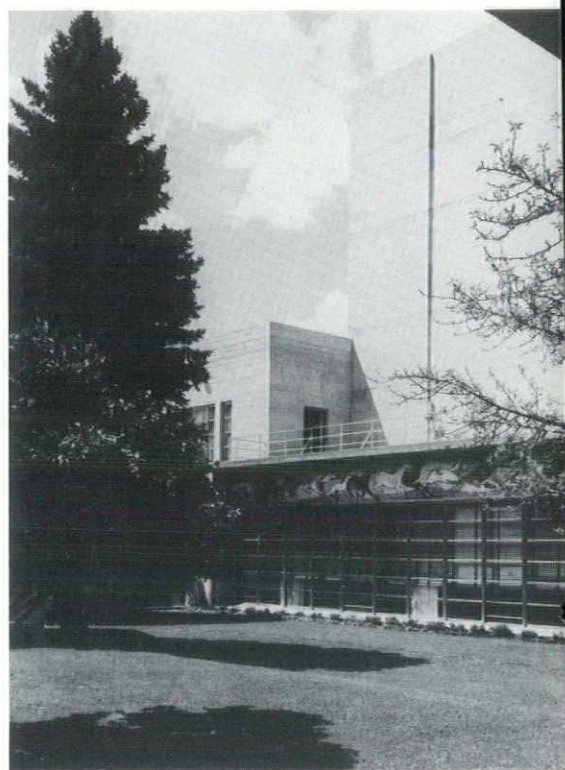




Cristo Rey Church  
Santa Fe, New Mexico

## Profile: Meem

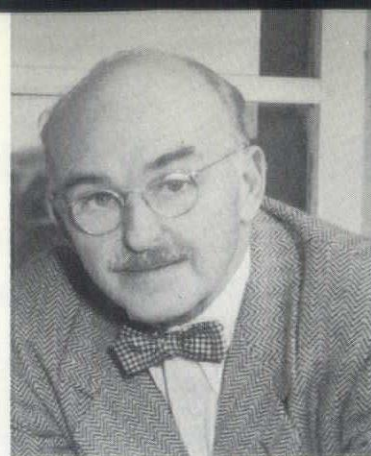
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# Profile of an Architect:

## John Gaw Meem



Mr. John Gaw Meem, F.A.I.A., was born in 1894 in the State of Rio Grande do Sul in Southern Brazil where his father was stationed as a clergyman of the Episcopal Church. In 1910, he left home to enter the Virginia Military Institute in Lexington, Virginia, a traditional school in their family, attended by four generations of John G. Meems. There Mr. Meem received a degree of bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering. For two years after graduation, he worked as a cub engineer on subways in New York City for the Underpinning and Foundation Co. until May of 1917 when as a reserve second lieutenant of infantry, he was ordered to active duty in the first world war. Because of his military training, he was not sent overseas, but was kept in the U.S. to help train officers in divisional schools and held the rank of Captain, Infantry, at the time of the Armistice.

Following his discharge, instead of returning to the practice of engineering, Mr. Meem applied to the National City Bank in New York for a position and because of his knowledge of Portuguese, was sent, after a few months of preliminary training, to their branch bank in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, as manager of their credit department.

However, in 1920, Mr. Meem developed tuberculosis, brought on by flu in the war, and

had to be returned to the U.S. The bank's physician, after examining him, said he would have to go to bed in Saranac, New York, somewhere in North Carolina, or in a place called Santa Fe, New Mexico, where he understood the climate was excellent. As he came out of his office and walked down Park Avenue, Mr. Meem saw a Santa Fe Railway ticket office where he asked for information. They gave him a fascinating booklet, showing the newly constructed art building of the Museum of New Mexico, and some pictures of Indian dances—and so on that day, he became a New Mexican.

While taking the rest cure at Sunmount Sanatorium in Santa Fe, he fell in love with the region and its architecture and also discovered a talent for architectural sketching which he had not known that he possessed. Because of this he decided to try to become an architect. Accordingly, as soon as he was able to get away, Mr. Meem took a job as apprentice with the architectural firm of Fisher and Fisher in Denver and at the same time took night courses at the Atelier in Denver (a branch of the Beaux Arts Institute of Design) under the inspiring teaching of Burnham Hoyt, a great architect.

The pace was too great and once more he  
(Continued on Page 25)



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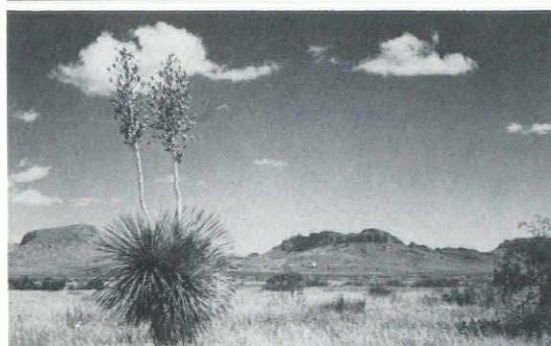


Photo Murals For Decorative Wall Purposes

dick kent  
photography

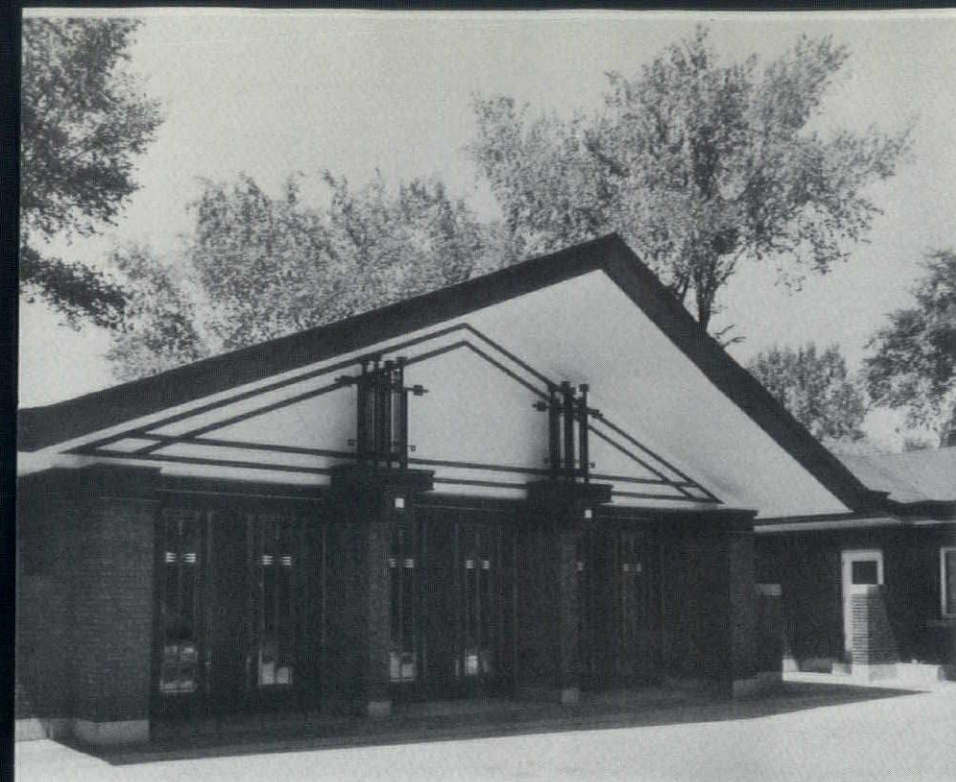
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ALpine 5-4540

## Purcell and Elmslie, Pioneers in Architecture

Among several interesting projects now being conducted in architectural history here in the Southwest is a study by David Gebhard, Director of the Roswell Museum and Art Center, of the early 20th century progressive firm of William Gray Purcell and George Grant Elmslie. This architectural firm was organized in 1909 and continued in existence through 1922. Its headquarters were in Minneapolis, but it maintained other offices in Chicago, Philadelphia and in Portland, Oregon. Before Elmslie entered the firm he had acquired a wide background as the chief designer of Louis Sullivan from 1894 to 1909. He is now credited with the design of a number of Sullivan's late buildings including the well-known bank at Owatonna, Minnesota, which was built during 1907 and 1908. Purcell, too, was a product of the liberal, progressive forces of the American Midwest, and was especially affected by the architecture of the "Chicago School" of the 1880's and 90's. He had worked briefly in the office of Sullivan and was a close friend and colleague of the major European and American progressive architects of the period. Although the work of the firm was limited in quantity, they helped to set the stage for the eventual victory of contemporary architecture by their rejection of blatant and empty eclecticism of their period. Their experiments in open planning, in the use of new mechanical equipment, in the design of ornament, and in planning of furniture represented a radical break with the past, and in many ways anticipated the major trends of present day design.

An exhibition of their pioneer work is now on display through September in the Paul Horgan Gallery of the Roswell Museum and Art Center. This exhibition was originally organized for the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, in 1953, and subsequently it traveled throughout the East and Midwest. Later this year, and in 1960, the exhibit will be on display in various cities on the West Coast. The first of these showings will be in October at the School of Architecture of the University of California at Berkeley. In addition to the exhibition Dr. Gebhard has completed for publication a detailed study of Purcell and Elmslie and their contribution to 20th century American architecture. Arrangements are being made to publish this study through the University of Minnesota Press in 1960.

"When we mean to build we first survey the plot, then draw the model; and when we see the figure of the house then must we rate the cost of the erection." William Shakespeare II - II Henry IV



Service Building for  
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## Honorary Associate Membership to Dr. David Gebhard

An Honorary Associate membership in the New Mexico Chapter of the AIA will be bestowed on Dr. David Gebhard at the Eighth Regional Conference in Albuquerque.

Dr. Gebhard's contribution to the New Mexico chapter consists largely of his work in organizing the New Mexico Traveling Architectural Exhibit. It is on the basis of this work that the award will be made.

In connection with the Traveling Exhibit, Dr. Gebhard was responsible for the actual construction and arrangement of the panels and illuminated color slides which constitute the exhibit. He was also largely responsible for the photographing of the various buildings and for directing the manner in which the exhibit was and is to be displayed all over the State of New Mexico. The exhibit is already drawing attention from other areas of the United States. Requests for the photographs of the buildings have been received for placement in other publications.

Dr. David Gebhard is an architect, having received his Bachelor of Architecture Degree from the University of Minnesota. His education is further enhanced by a Ph.D. in Art History from the University of Minnesota, majoring in Architectural History. Dr. Gebhard's doctor's dissertation is in the form of a document on the architectural works of Purcell and Elmslie and is currently to be published as a book by the University of Minnesota Press.

While studying for his Ph.D., Dr. Gebhard was associated with the Walker Art Gallery in Minneapolis. Subsequent to that period, he instructed Architectural History and other Art History courses at the University of New Mexico over a two year period and was in charge of the University of New Mexico Art Gallery. Dr. Gebhard is Director of the Roswell Museum and Art Center, a position he has held for the past four years.

# Welcome to Albuquerque, Architects

Visit Our Hospitality Room  
at The Western Skies

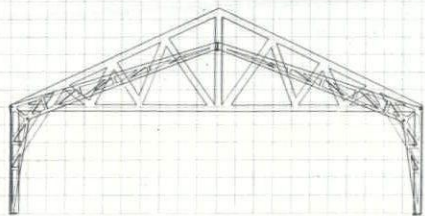
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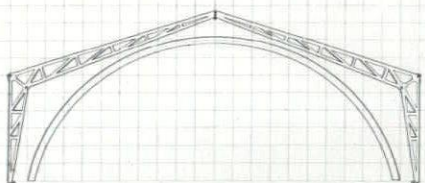
2800 Second St. SW, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Ira B. Miller, District Manager

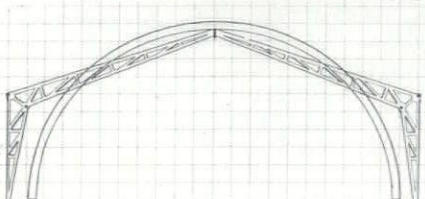
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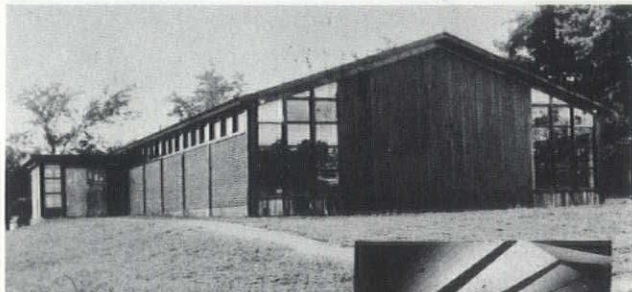
Conventional Tie Truss Compared with Steel Span



Low Arch Compared with Steel Span



Balloon Arch Compared with Steel Span



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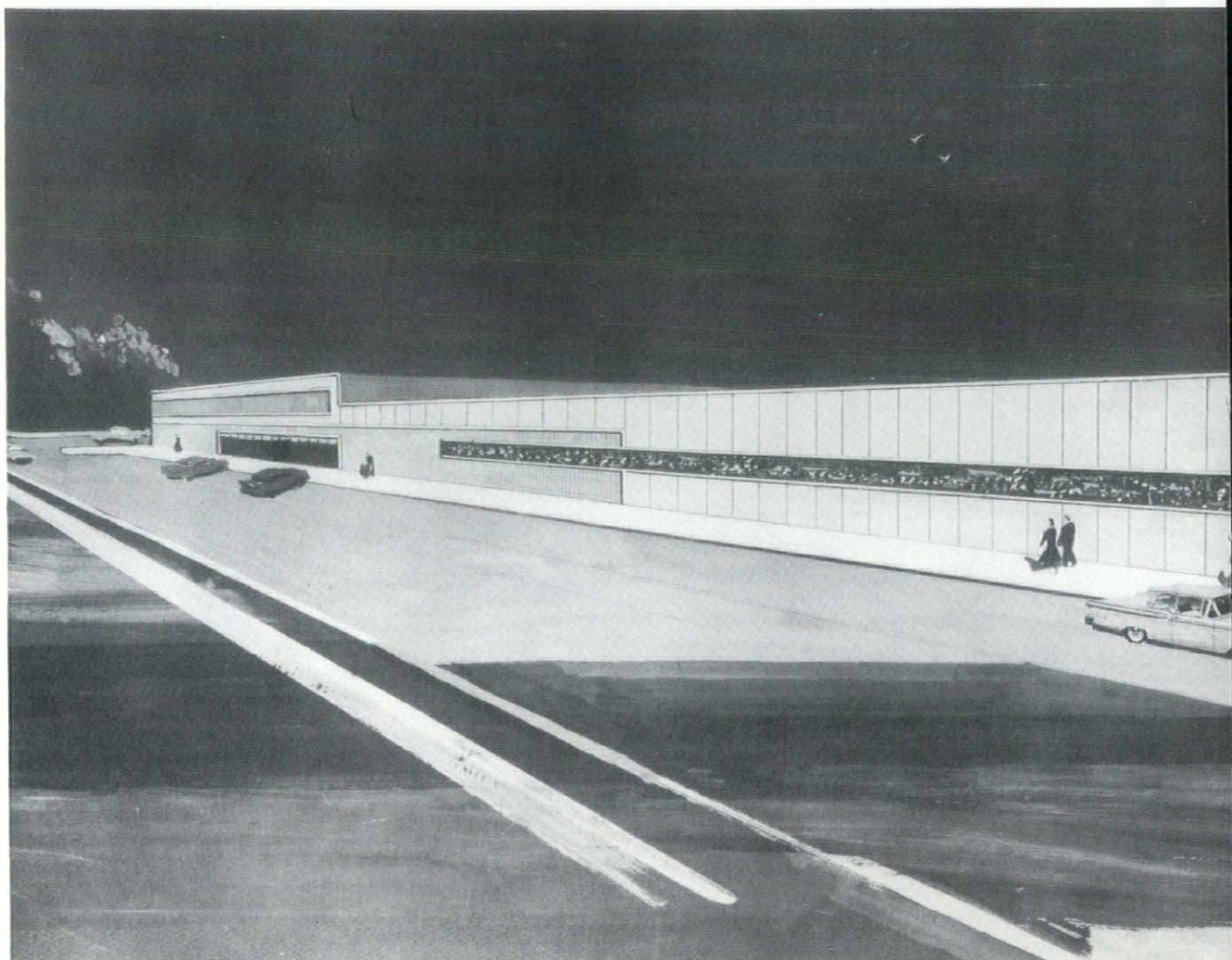
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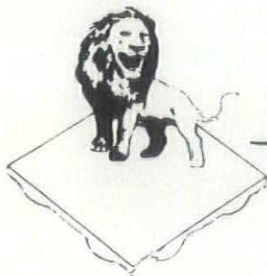
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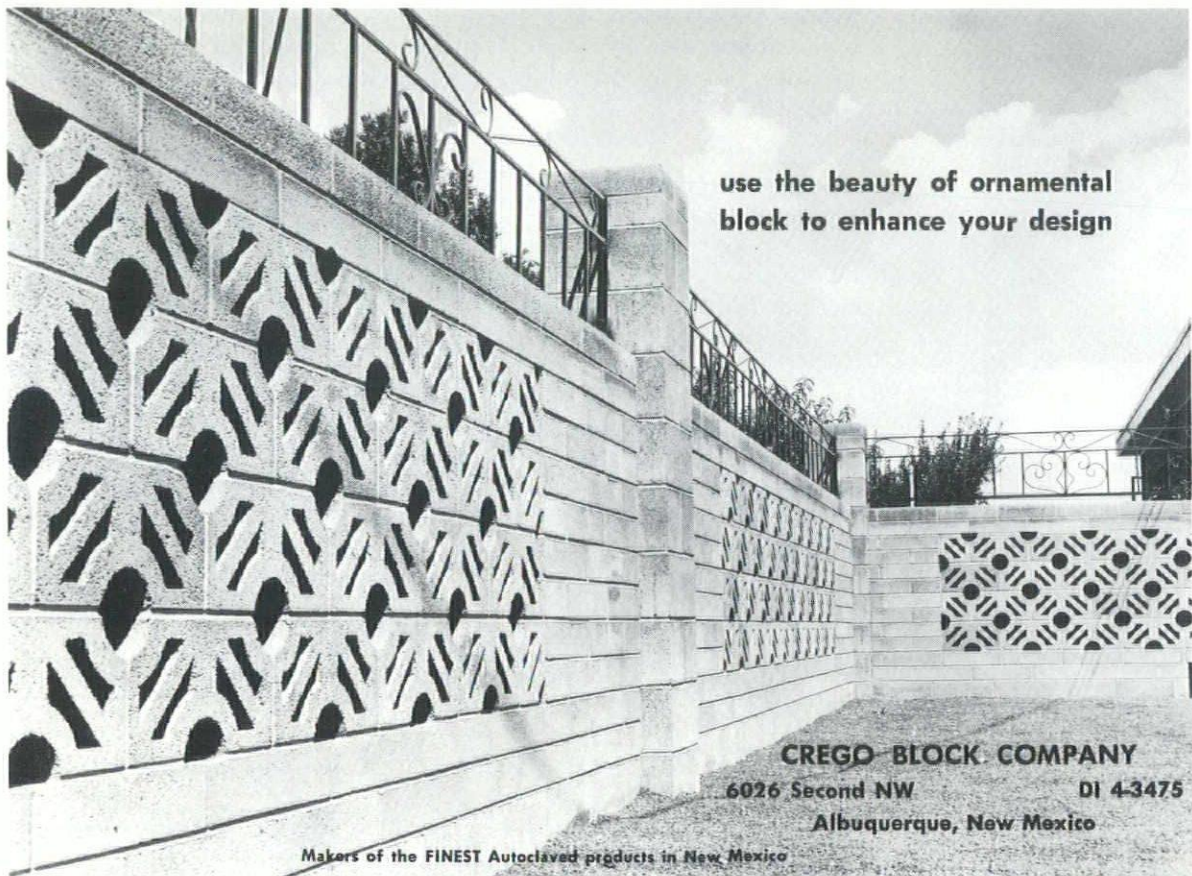
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# Report from the University: Misused Technology – A Danger

By Don P. Schlegel  
Assoc. Prof. of Architecture  
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In this period when so many great technological developments occur, it becomes difficult for the architect (let alone the student) to keep abreast of the multitude of new materials and construction techniques. This new knowledge, which assists architects in creating exciting architectural images in some cases instead of being a means to an end becomes the end in itself. Far too often the student in his naive approach, lacks a comprehensive understanding of the material and form he is using thereby prostituting it beyond its functional application.

The danger today lies, not in our new-found technology, but its misuse by the incompetent, under the false premise that he is being original. With this attitude, new forms and materials are forced into the solution

which are not a natural outgrowth of the problem.

If this attitude continues it will lead us to a new Beaux Arts instead of copying classical orders. It will be the hyperbolic parabolas of Candela, the concrete gunnite forms of Le Corbusier's Ronchamp, or the discontinuous compression systems of Fuller. Eclecticism with a new vocabulary.

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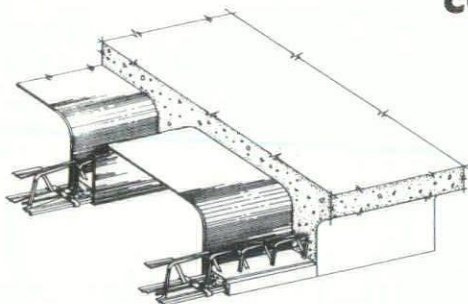
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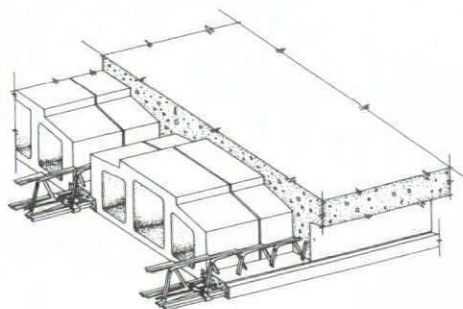
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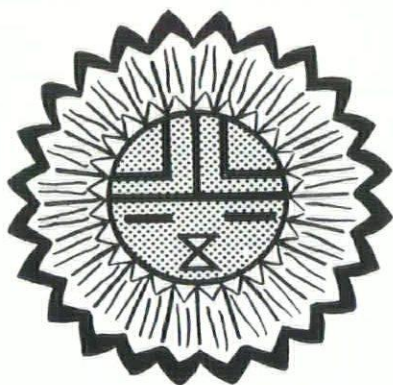


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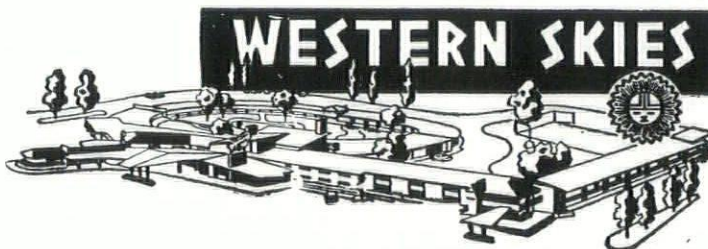
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# Who Will Plan Your Town? A Report

By Max Flatow

Representing the New Mexico Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, Robert W. Fairburn attended the Governor's Conference on Urban Planning held in Santa Fe on September 3rd and 4th. His notes intended for a report to the Chapter were given to me for finalizing due to Mr. Fairburn's departure from the city. The summation as such can be best described in one word, "sad."

Perhaps the best possible approach to keeping you informed on what is happening in this field is to review the progress made to date by these so called "planners" who will plan your community and mine.

When the Governor signed into law the enabling legislation that qualifies New Mexico to participate in Federal Aid for slum clearance and planning, he created a State Planning Office which is now in operation in Santa Fe and whose duty it will be to monitor the planning work in the state. Mr. Don M. Hopkins under the State Finance Office in Santa Fe has been appointed Director of this State Planning Office, and he has a list of firms and individuals who have notified his office that they are planners and qualified with supposedly eight years of experience in planning work. Statement of qualifications to this office will be accepted and placed on this roster. Those who receive a commission to do planning work for a community in the State will have to submit some kind of proof to that office of stated qualifications. Under this arrangement many out of state firms and many individuals here in the state are now on the state list of planners. As of this date there are no architects on the list.

The list carries the names of firms who send salesmen to any state immediately upon pas-

sage of enabling legislation and sell patterned plans on stock foremats. These firms place plans in a surprisingly large number of villages throughout the United States; your town may have bought one. From each of these towns they collect a fee ranging from \$10.00 to \$20,000.00, and up. It is a beautiful job of printing, a compilation of statistics chiefly obtained from the Census Bureau and records of the Chamber of Commerce. These plans are decorated with a few maps printed in red, blues, and greens and presented to a joint meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, the City Fathers and the Kiwanis Club. These nicely done little books are collecting dust on desks in the city offices in hundreds of central and midwest towns.

At the meeting in Santa Fe, salesmen from these planning concerns met with well-meaning and outstanding citizens from your communities for the purpose of delivering their sales pitch. The people from our communities who attended this conference did so with the sincere belief that they could and would get sound advice on how to improve their town. Whose duty is it to protect them from these fast "cure all" schemes? Who will take the time and the energy to detail for them the true nature of planning? You, the architect, who belong to the only profession with training in this field, stayed at home.

Can our towns be planned by people who cannot design houses, plan parks or schools? Will people be allowed to plan cities who do not know the principles of good design and who are not qualified to design the elements of the city? Why not give this subject serious thought.

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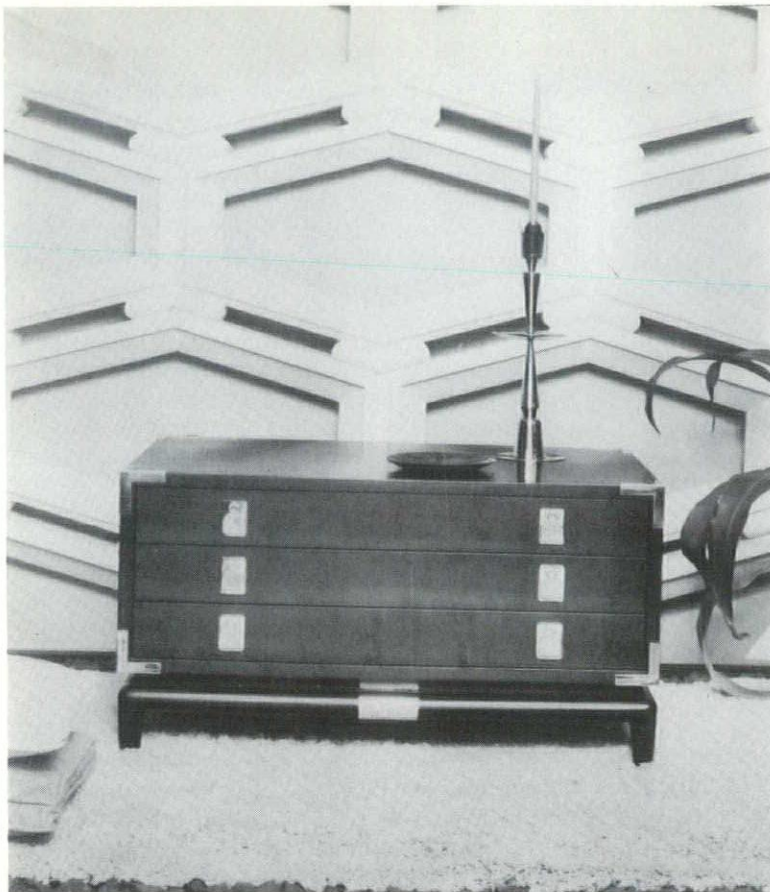
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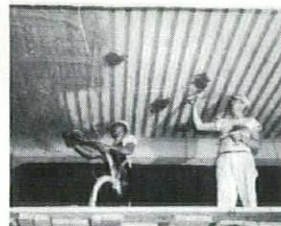
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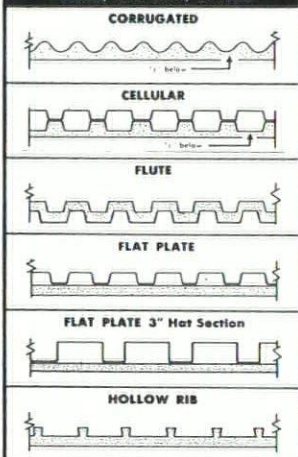


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## Urban Weidner Opens Office

A familiar figure on the ever expanding architectural scene in New Mexico is Urban C. Weidner Jr., who has recently announced the organization of his own firm, Urban Weidner, Architect. His new office is located in the Herkenhoff Building on Luisa Street in Santa Fe.

Urban intends to concentrate his architectural efforts in the northern part of New Mexico where there is a need for his general architectural practice.

Arriving in Santa Fe six years ago from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Urban was employed by the firm of Clark and Register. He remained with them until the recent opening of his own practice.

Urban's formal architectural education was obtained at Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburgh.

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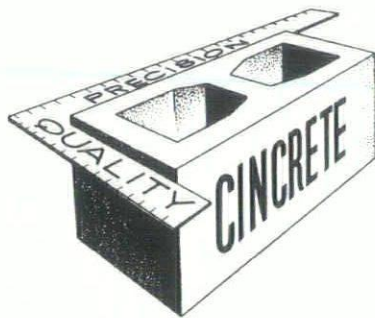
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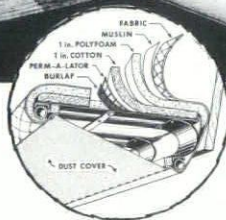
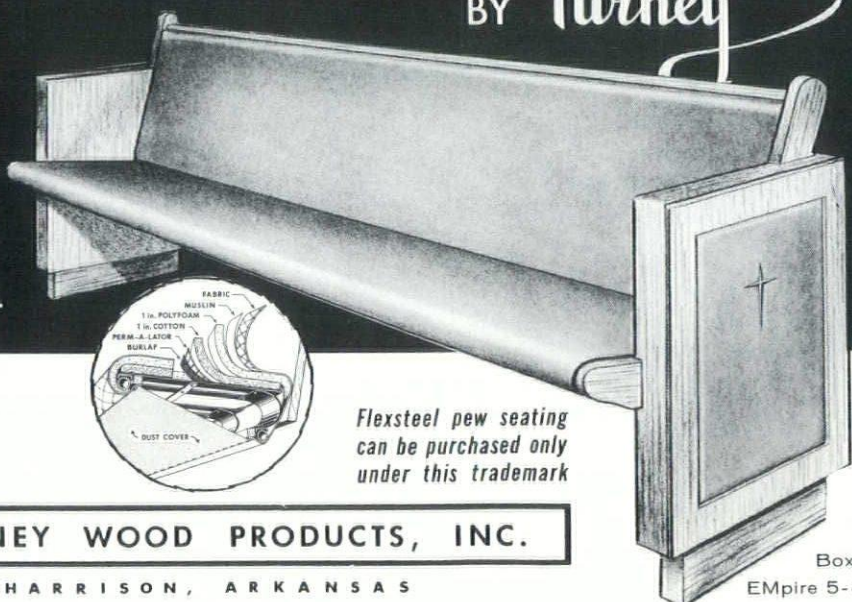
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## Profile: John Gaw Meem

(Continued from Page 11)

came down with tb and was taken back to Sunmount in Santa Fe. This time his recovery was quicker and he soon found himself sitting up in bed, with a draughting board across his knees, doing the first small jobs in what has turned out to be a long architectural career.

The formal beginning of his practice was on February 22, 1924, when Cassius McCormick, a young accountant and fellow patient at Sunmount, joined forces with him to establish the firm of Meem and McCormick. This was a formative period. As architect for the Society for Preservation and Restoration of New Mexico Mission Churches, Mr. Meem became intimately acquainted with regional architecture, especially as developed by the Franciscans in New Mexico. The period culminated with his first big commission, the greatly enlarged LaFonda Hotel in Santa Fe, for the A.T. & S.F.R.R.

This was followed by what he calls a flowering or creative period which lasted from 1930 until World War II. During this time he designed a number of buildings, among them the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center which won the Silver Medal of the Fifth Pan-American Congress in Montevideo and for which he was awarded an honorary Master of Arts degree by Colorado College. This building also brought Mr. Meem his architect-wife Faith (formerly Faith McCormick) who came to work for him as a draftsman while it was being designed. Other buildings in this period were the Laboratory of Anthropology for John D. Rockefeller, Jr., which Mr. Meem won in an invited National Competition; the Sandia School for Girls in Albuquerque, now taken over by the A.E.C. He also was architect for Los Alamos Ranch School, taken over by the A.E.C.; Cristo Rey Church in Santa

(Continued on Page 27)

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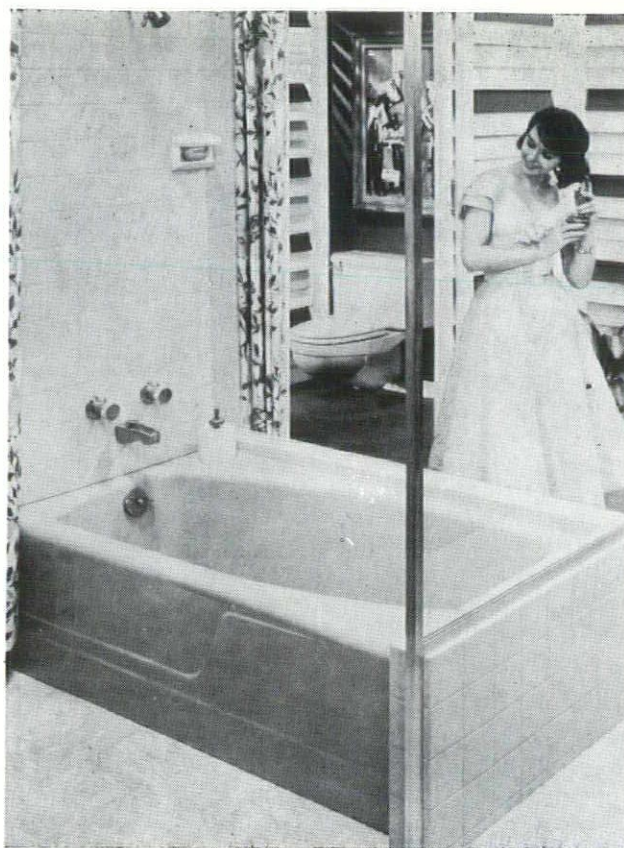
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## Profile: John Gaw Meem

(Continued from Page 25)

Fe, notable for its historic reredos, and many public buildings and private residences, including LaQuinta in Albuquerque. In 1933, he started the Administration Building on the Campus of the University of New Mexico, which led to twenty-five years as the sole architect and Campus Planner for the University. The firm is still doing buildings for the University, but no longer as sole architects. Among the prewar buildings, in addition to the Administration building, were the Student Union and the Library.

During the war, Hugo Zehner became a partner. The office expanded greatly to the point where at one time they had over thirty draftsmen. Their principal project was an Air Force Academy at Roswell which was drawn up, but never built because of restrictions on permanent construction. It was eventually built in Colorado Springs, but not by his firm.

After the War, Edward O. Holien joined forces with Mr. Meem and they entered into a period of growth and fruition and which is still continuing with William R. Buckley as an added partner. Their University program was greatly expanded to include such buildings as Chemistry, Biology, Physics, Engineering and Geology, Mitchell Hall, Mesa Vista Dormitory, Hokona, Johnson Gym and now the new Student Union. During this same period, they did Bataan Hospital in Albuquerque, and St. Vincent Hospital in Santa Fe; St. John's Episcopal Cathedral in Albuquerque and the Museum of International Folk Art in Santa Fe, to high light only a few.

Among Mr. Meem's extra-curricular activities: In 1947, he helped found the New Mexico Chapter of the A.I.A. and became its first president, later, Director in 1949-50, and since

(Continued on Page 29)

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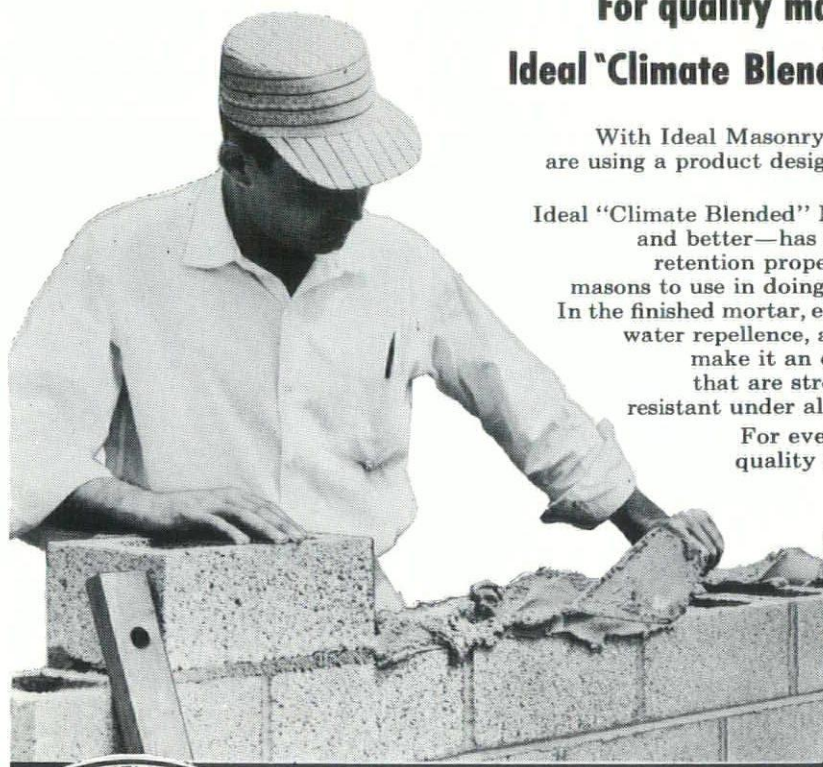
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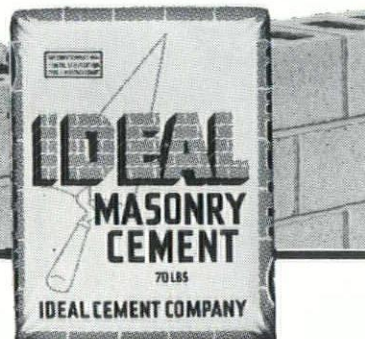
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## Profile: John Gaw Meem

(Continued from Page 27)

then on many committees; at present he is acting as Preservation Officer for the Chapter. Nationally, he was a member of the National Advisory Board of the Historic American Buildings Survey from 1934-1958. In 1950, he was made a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects; in 1942, he was elected an Associate member of the National Academy of Design, and in 1953, a Fellow of the School of American Research. He helped draft the first architectural registration law for New Mexico and served on the first board of examiners, as secretary, 1931-1937.

In 1945-51, he was Chairman of the Santa Fe City Planning Commission, and is still taking an active interest in the preservation of Santa Fe's unique character by being President of the Old Santa Fe Association. The Santa Fe Boys Club has for long been a major interest. He was President of the Club in 1944, and a board member for several years thereafter. One of his present major activities is in connection with the Trustees of the International Folk Art Foundation of which he is Chairman. He is a member of the Episcopal Church for which he has a deep affection.

Mr. Meem as outlined above, has enjoyed a fairly busy career. He stated that he is forever indebted to the State of New Mexico, which not only gave him back his health, but presented him with the opportunities for service and happiness.

No doubt that is one reason he takes such pleasure in trying to recall the history and landscape in the regional architecture of New Mexico; not as imitations of the past, but as symbols of a rich heritage which spiritually enhance our solution to modern problems.

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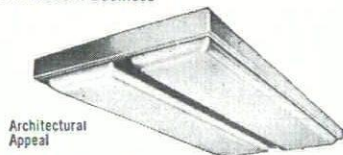


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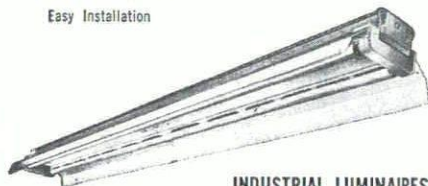
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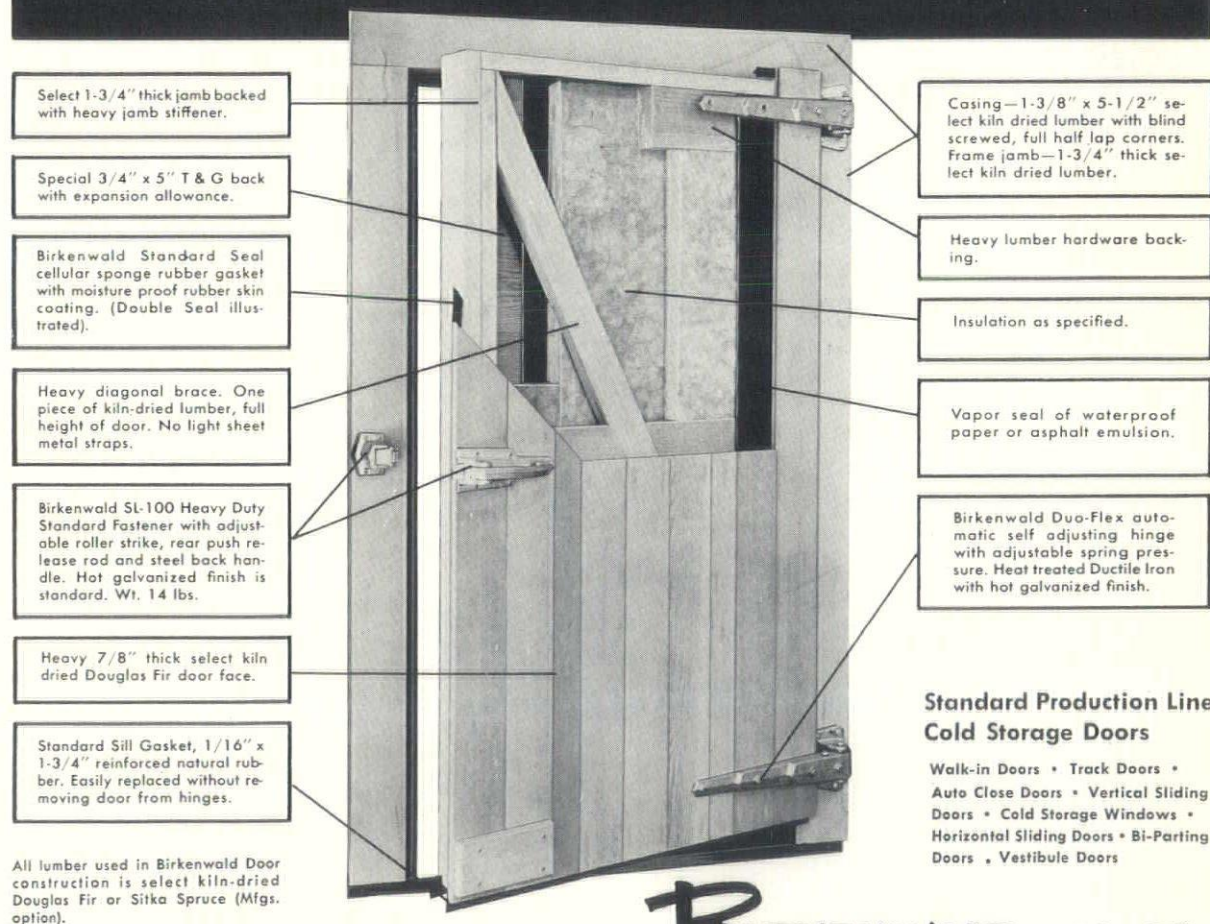
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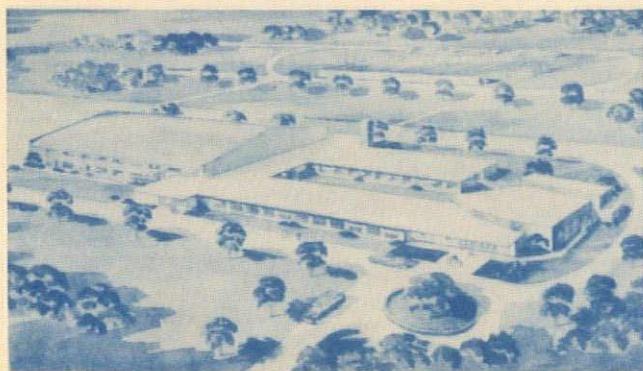
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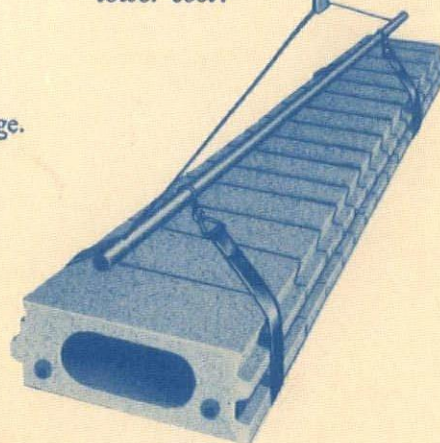
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