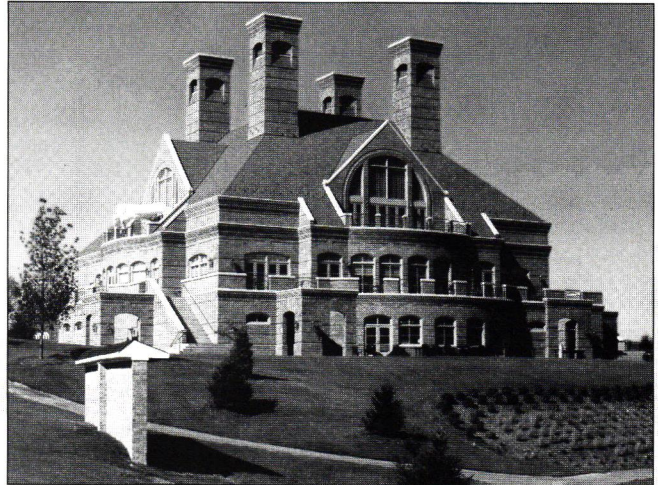


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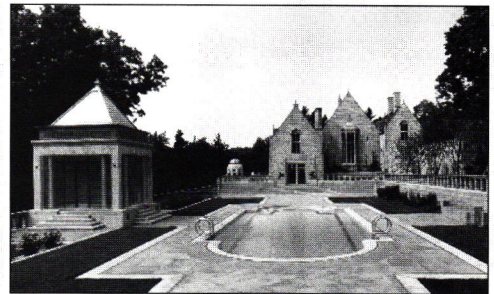


The Armenian room located on the third floor of the Cathedral of Learning at the University of Pittsburgh is the 22nd nationality room to be established at the university. The stone arched room copies the masonry techniques of church and monastery builders of the 11th century. This magnificent classroom was designed by Torkom Khrimiam who emigrated from Armenia in 1978.

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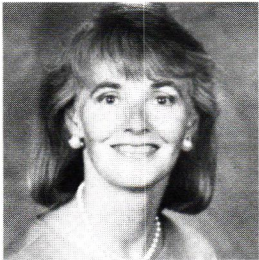
"Elm Court", a 9-acre private estate located north of Pittsburgh, involves unique additions and renovations. For example, the pool above is heated and has an ozone purification system. The deep blue water is surrounded by a granite surface edged in limestone. The pool is lined with hand made ceramic tile. On the left is a pool house sitting area. To the right is the "Fish Slide" built to hold two antique Indian carved marble panels giving the appearance of two carved fish swimming in the current of the fountain.

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G E N E R A L C O N T R A C T O R S B U I L D I N G S U C C E S S

In Search of Justice by Cheryl R. Towers



“Juvenile Court in Oakland is a nightmare, in spite of the involvement of many caring and committed individuals in the judicial system.”

Joanie is a bright little girl whom

I met a few years ago. She was bouncing around inside the foster care system among parents who neglected her and foster families who couldn't or wouldn't keep her permanently. Joanie owned a couple of changes of clothes and a few tattered toys that went with her from temporary home to temporary home. My stomach headed for my throat when I heard about her preparations to leave yet another family for the next unknown stop.

The social worker - a well meaning but harried bureaucrat with no resources and even less spare energy—blew into the house, handed the little girl a black garbage bag and told her that she had 15 minutes to pack up her “stuff” and get into the waiting car. I can only imagine in the sickest recesses of my mind what would possess us to treat anyone this way, much less a child. This poor kid wasn't going to stand a chance until someone, somewhere had the understanding and took the time to treat her like a human being instead of a little piece of human garbage, complete with her own bag. What on earth are we thinking as a society?

Fast forward to our Family Courts and you get the big picture. Thousands of Joanies and their families parade through Family Court every year, at best accidents waiting to happen. In this case, the visible culprits are the facilities: old, overcrowded, inadequate in every way. Juvenile Court in Oakland is a nightmare, in spite of the involvement of many caring and committed individuals in the judicial system. In some ways, the Sixth Floor of the City County Building where Adult Family Court is located is even worse because of the potential consequences of adult temperaments and egos flaring under the pressures of divorce and custody proceedings. Victims and victimizers herd through the halls cheek to jowl, scowling, jostling, trading insults. Not a pretty picture.

Fortunately, Allegheny County's three Commissioners are committed to upgrading the County Court facilities. Work on the County Courthouse is in the planning stages with advice from the County Historic Buildings Advisory Committee chaired by Arthur P. Ziegler, Jr. IKM is working on plans for the old Jail, slated to become the new home of Family Court, and Karen Loyson, AIA, then with UDA, beautifully guided restoration of Courtroom 321, a model for other projects.

L.D. Astorino and Associates designed the Pittsburgh Municipal Courts Building that opened in 1995. The facility is secure, spacious, airy, well lighted, and technologically current.

Just down the road, Richard Glance, AIA oversaw the restoration of the Washington, PA County Courthouse twenty years ago, and is now working there again to upgrade electrical capacity without destroying the building's historic character. Glance is also responsible for improvements to the Huntingdon County Courthouse.

We laud architects for their part in solving these difficult problems and encourage all of our elected officials to recognize the importance of maintaining important historical properties as well as the need to create new ones.

Finally, please note that the July/August issue of *Columns* will feature a residential portfolio and is designed to be used as a marketing piece by firms that submitted examples of their work. Consequently, some regular features contained in *Columns* will not appear in that issue. Submittals will appear in the September issue.

Enjoy the equinox as you slip into a summer mode.

P.S. A mighty “mea culpa” for past glaring grammatical errors and thanks to all of you members of the Lexicographic Irregulars who wrote to point them out!

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A look at some of the issues driving the design of modern courthouses.

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On the cover: Washington County Courthouse designed by F. J. Osterling, 1898. Renovations designed by Richard Glance, AIA.

AIA Pittsburgh serves 12 Western Pennsylvania counties as the local component of the American Institute of Architects and AIA Pennsylvania. The objective of AIA Pittsburgh is to improve, for society, the quality of the built environment by further raising the standards of architectural education, training and practice; fostering design excellence; and promoting the value of architectural services to the public. AIA membership is open to all registered architects, architectural interns, and a limited number of professionals in supporting fields.

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The Winds of Change by Anne Swager

Upon graduation from college, I headed off

to the venerable Greenbrier Hotel for a six week hiatus before starting my banking career in Pittsburgh. Since my boyfriend at the time was one of several assistant managers, my trip was largely free. Even so, my father was anything but pleased about my vacation choice, although it certainly appealed to me. Begrudgingly, Dad told me I'd better enjoy it because soon summer would be just another season in which I would work instead of seek the grand adventure that he knew I had come to expect.



Working together, we have a terrific opportunity to shine the spotlight on Pittsburgh's architectural gems and highlight our architectural community.

Last night, I realized for the umpteenth time that he was right. Most of my time is pretty well committed through the Fourth of July and I'll be working really hard. I had a moment's pang realizing I wouldn't have tan legs again this year (but then I really wasn't anxious to show the world my spider veins), and the tomatoes would probably get planted late once more. If I manage to get an awning ordered, it will be mid-July before it goes up and I still haven't solved the problem of empty, yawning flower beds.

My schedule, busy as it is, reflects a time of change at the AIA and exciting growth in the Pittsburgh architectural community. Both AIA Pennsylvania and AIA Pittsburgh are experiencing significant staff changes. At the end of June, after 20 years of dedicated service, Lela Shultz is retiring from AIA Pennsylvania. I will miss Lela's "handle" on the latest legislative bills, her knowledge of the key players in Harrisburg, and her stories. She knows all the history including where the bodies are buried, and has been an invaluable source for what you really need to know when operating in legislative circles.

Similarly as of June 1, long time AIA Pittsburgh employee Susan Traub is moving on to greener pastures and larger responsibilities. Many of you are familiar with Susan through her work on the placement service. If so, I am sure you will miss her dedication, quick wit and genuine desire to help. She's been the best editor I have ever had. Cleaning up many of my written grammatical gaffs, she's

also helped me keep my perspective (and temper) when the going felt particularly rough. I am lucky to be able to count on our continuing friendship as I wish Susan the success she deserves.

As hard as these changes will be, we are moving on in very positive ways. The Legislative Committee has planned their first legislative breakfast for Tuesday, June 23. In partnership with ASLA, seventeen state senators and legislators have been invited to come meet their architect constituents and hear about the issues we consider to be important. Since the proposed Home Rule charter for Allegheny County passed, we will also be unveiling our proposed statute for the companion administrative code which will call for qualifications based selection for architectural work. Once complete, we will push for the adoption of this model statute in other municipalities and school districts in our area.

John Martine, AIA and I continue our work with the architectural tourism committee. John has a number of wonderful and cost effective suggestions for fixing up the Courthouse for visitors. By the end of summer, we hope to have a report for the foundation community on the viability of architectural tourism in Pittsburgh. Another planning group that will meet throughout the summer has been formed to consider additional events and exhibits to complement the Heinz Architectural Center's Kaufmann-Wright exhibit planned for the spring and summer of 1999. Working together, we have a terrific opportunity to shine the spotlight on Pittsburgh's architectural gems and highlight our architectural community.

While summer chores and work related tasks are hardly the stuff of grand adventures, I'm enjoying the ride. With a strong economy and the growing recognition of architects as problem solvers, it feels as if the sky is the limit. I won't be straying too far from home this summer, and certainly not to the Greenbrier, but you can probably catch me with my hands in the air, screaming with glee at the top of the Thunderbolt at least once this season. See you at Kennywood!

