

TEXAS ARCHITECT

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTS

TO HELP CITIES HELP THEMSELVES

ARCHITECTURE IN WEST GERMANY

AUSTIN AIR CONDITIONING PROJECT

1953-54 TA ADVERTISING AWARDS

FEBRUARY
1954

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T H E T E X A S A R C H I T E C T

VOLUME 4 FEBRUARY, 1954 NUMBER 10

Official Publication of

THE TEXAS SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTS

The Texas Regional District Organization of
The American Institute of Architects

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 13-18—School Building Architectural Exhibit, sponsored jointly by AASA-AIA, at Atlantic City, N. J.

April 7-13—Third annual Texas Architects' Week, throughout the state, ending with 211th anniversary of birthdate of Thomas Jefferson.

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TO HELP CITIES HELP THEMSELVES

President Eisenhower's advisory committee on housing, in a recent report, has recommended a system of incentives under which the greatest amount of Federal assistance would be given to cities "showing the highest level of performance in a positive overall attack on urban decay."

Under this policy, help in the form of Federal loans and grants will be available to those cities which come forward with a workable plan, not only for slum clearance and rehabilitation, but preferably for a comprehensive program which "stretches across the whole spread of urban blight from the earliest symptoms to the last stages of decay."

The committee report, actually made by a subcommittee on urban redevelopment, offers a stimulating challenge to many of our Texas cities which have either (1) blighted areas requiring demolition and rebuilding (2) areas partly down the economic scale which need rehabilitation or (3) areas showing the first signs of deterioration.

Urban revitalization is obviously a key factor in continued progress, which keeps and expands the volume of existing businesses, wage earners and payrolls, while attracting the incoming enterprises and new citizens who are the lifeblood of growth. For this reason, money and time invested in either rebuilding, rehabilitation, or the protection of an area against deterioration, comes back to the spender just as the Biblical bread cast upon the waters. And almost without exception, the return is far more than the original amount invested.

There is wisdom in a philosophy based on helping those who help themselves, and the policy set up by the President's advisory committee seems to be a sound one generally approved by those who are concerned with national housing and urban development problems. It will be interesting to see which of our Texas cities are among the first to submit a workable program that meets the standards set up by the committee. Communities that do so should win the applause of their own citizens, and of Texans in general, because they will be exhibiting initiative, leadership, and sound planning for the future.

TSA Member Heads Tour of West Germany

Arthur Fehr of Austin, TSA-AIA,
Leader of Architect Team Which Found
Prosperous Germans Rebuilding For Peace

By Arthur Fehr of Fehr & Granger, Austin, TSA-AIA

In June, 1953, the German Foreign Office invited eight American Architects to a four weeks' study tour of the Federal Republic of Germany and West Berlin. The Architects were selected through the American Institute of Architects. It was my good fortune to represent the Texas Region AIA and also to act as the leader of the team. Our group flew from New York by "Strato" Clipper to Rhein-Main Airport, Frankfurt.

A very carefully planned program was set up by the West German government and architectural and city planning groups. Bonn, Koln, Dusseldorf, Essen, Hannover, Berlin (west and east), Hamburg, Munchen, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Stuttgart, and Frankfurt, were visited with side trips to Kaiserwerth, Bochum, Marl, Ulm, Hildesheim, Duisburg and smaller communities. This tour enabled us to see conditions in the new Germany generally, and acquainted us with their developments in the field of architecture and city planning.

Reconstruction A "Near-Miracle"

The reconstruction of war-torn Germany borders on being a miracle. It could only come true with a people whose mettle could withstand the most strenuous test.

Our group was given an extraordinary welcome everywhere in Germany. The Germans were most grateful for the American aid, and with their present prosperity it appears that they can continue their rebuilding without further help from the U. S. A.

Germany has a wealth of planners, city, regional and architectural, and they in teams are producing some outstanding solutions.

Blending of Old and New

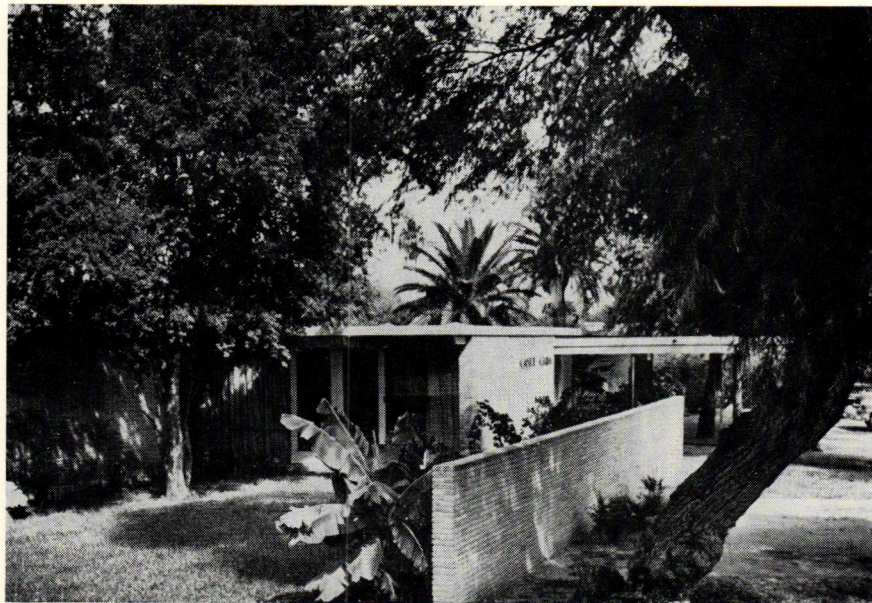
The opening up of congested blocks by giving the living spaces more light, air, and green areas is usually very well handled. The density of land use is near the ideal as set by our standards. In city after city visited, it was impressive to see how each group of planners solve their problem by making the very most of its past and bringing out a freshness in the new to keep a solid tie with historical background.

Building techniques are not too varied from American methods except where we think in diverting every possible task to the machine, the German with a great amount of available labor has not turned as much to mechanization. Then too, tradition often controls design.

Streets Limited to Foot Traffic

What impressed me most? The Germans' desire to build well. The Germans' ability to save and to fight waste. In Berlin where building materials were very scarce, the piles of debris being changed into sports arenas, parks, and swimming pools astonished me. In Hannover and in Stuttgart the closing of narrow streets to everything but foot traffic and as a result producing an excellent downtown shopping center amazed me. In Bochum the consolidation of railroad facilities into one very fine union station in a new location with good circulation proved ex-

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Casey Clinic at San Benito

The Casey Clinic at San Benito, designed for Dr. James D. Casey by Cocke, Bowman & York, TSA-AIA of Harlingen, won an award of merit for the Rio Grande Valley architectural firm in the "Texas Architecture—1953" competition.

1953-54 TEXAS ARCHITECT ADVERTISING AWARDS SET

The Publication Board of the TEXAS ARCHITECT, in recognition of the increasingly excellent layout, art work, photography and typography seen in advertisements prepared for this magazine, has inaugurated the annual TEXAS ARCHITECT advertising awards.

Under a plan being announced February 15, a competition is to be held each quarter, beginning October 1, 1953, to determine the most attractive advertisement in terms of overall appearance which has been published in TA for the past three months. A suitable award will then be made by the Publication Board to both the advertiser and the advertising agency which prepared the prize-winning entry.

Grand Award At Convention

Between September 30, 1954, and the annual convention of the TSA, scheduled for Fort Worth next November 3-5, all four quarterly winners are to be rejudged as 1953-54 finalists. One advertisement will then be selected as the grand award winner, and a plaque will be awarded the winning advertiser and agency during the convention.

Judges are to include well-known advertising officials from over the state, and representatives of the TSA. The first quarterly awards in the new competition, based upon advertisements appearing in TA during the last three months of 1953, will be announced in March.