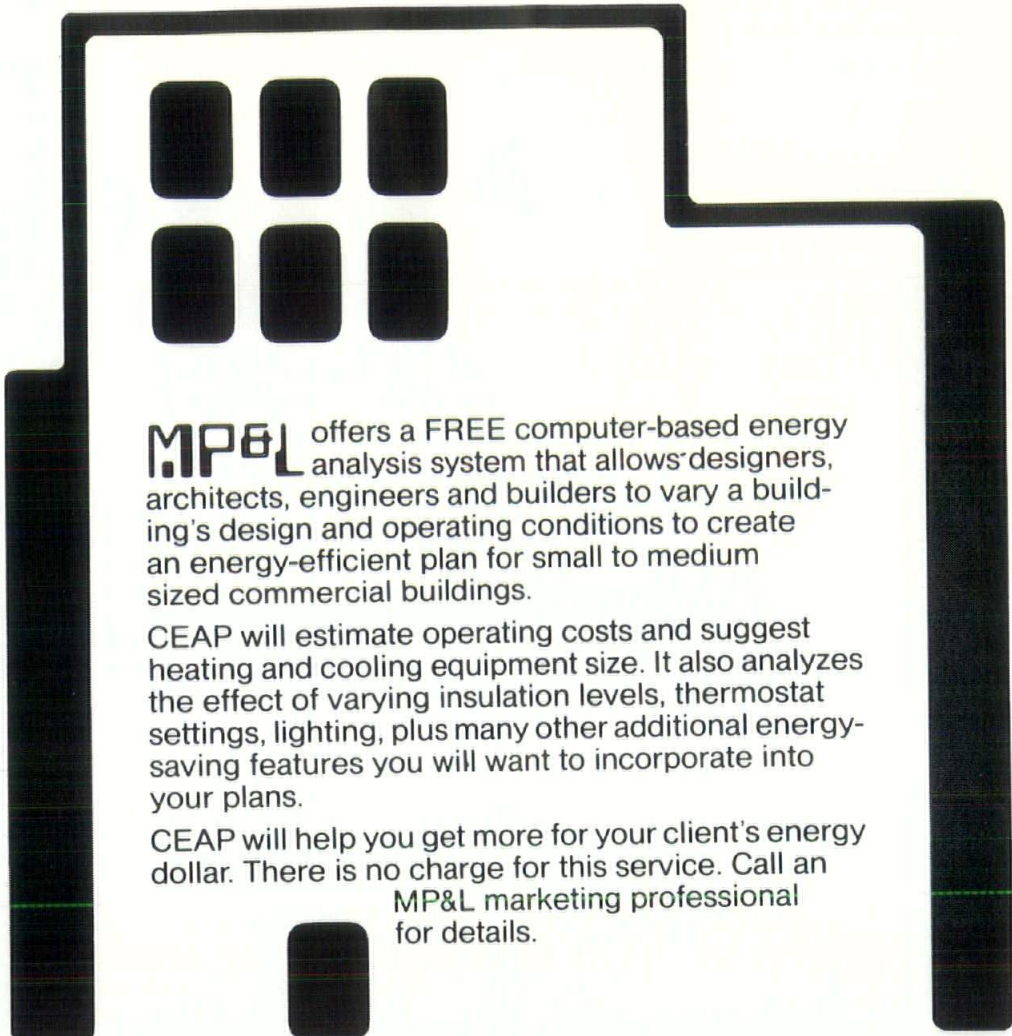




Contractors Round Table



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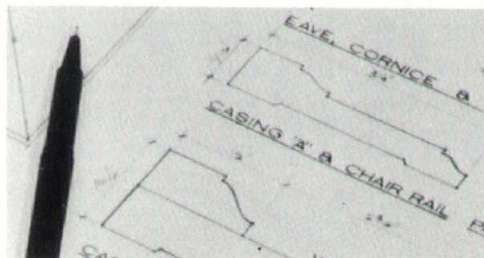
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Robert Ivy pays tribute to
Paul Roberson.

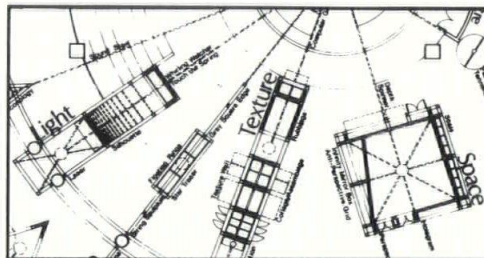
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David Sachs reports on
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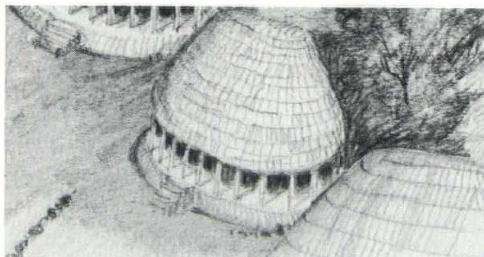
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New Projects.



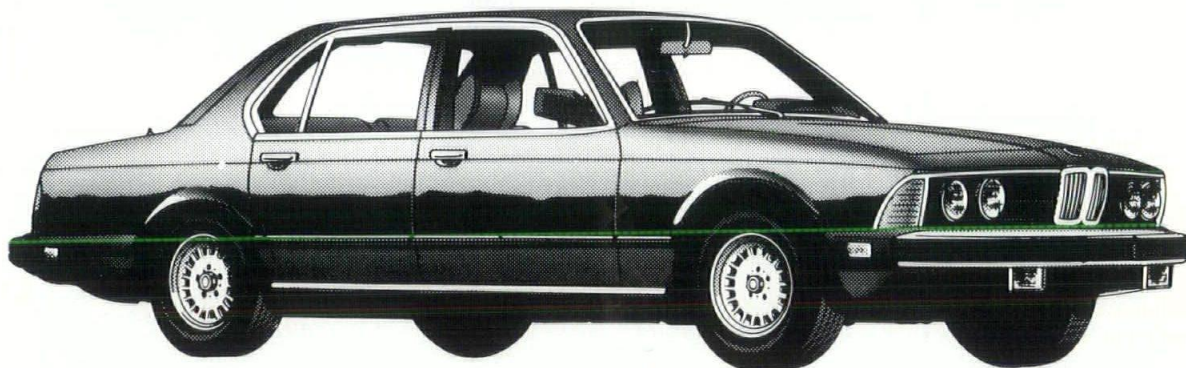
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"Talofa!" (Greetings):
A report from Samoa.



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Editorial

In Memoriam:

Our community lost a good architect when Paul Roberson passed away earlier this year following a long siege of illness.



Paul achieved a great deal in a brief life, from Presidency of the Mississippi Chapter to architect of important buildings.

I knew him at the Greenville office of Virden and Roberson, where photographs of several Roberson designed, award winning projects hung in a row. He was a no-nonsense, non-doctrinaire modernist whose work included the chapel at Mississippi Valley State and the Federal Building in Jackson. Several members of his class at Auburn have said, "He was the best designer in the class."

As a teacher, he looked over my shoulder and those of other young architects with constant positive advice. Paul could handle structural calculations and figure his own loads as he philosophized about the "why's" of building's being.

As a writer and editor, he managed this magazine for years and consistently produced good copy on worthwhile topics. He loved the **Mississippi Architect** and spent his limited energy and days toward its furtherance before he passed the mantle on to me.

Paul was a gentle, funny man who loved his profession, his home, and his friends. At a time when loud voices and fashion occupy the press's attention, remember Paul — a good architect who worked quietly and well and left us unspoken, eloquent gifts of remembrance.

Robert Trigg

F.A.I.A. Inductee

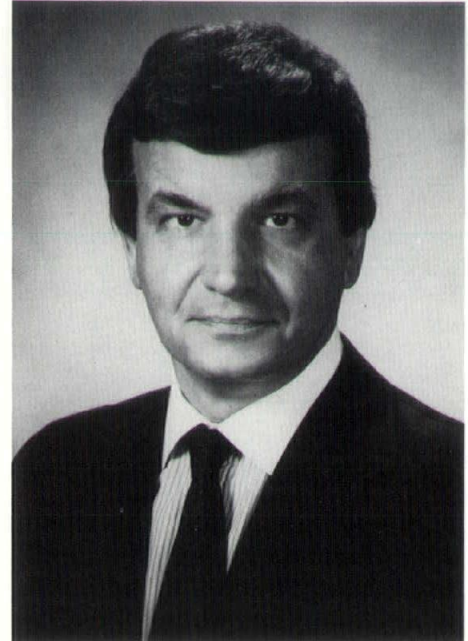
David M. Trigiani, FAIA has been advanced to the College of Fellows of The American Institute of Architects. Fellowship is a lifetime honor bestowed for notable contributions to the profession of architecture. There was a formal investiture of the 1985 Fellows on Monday, June 10 at the 1985 AIA National Convention in San Francisco.

Mr. Trigiani, an officer in the local firm of Canizaro Trigiani Architects, has combined his architectural career with community service. He has served the State Chapter of the American Institute of Architects as President. He helped organize and is the first chairman of the Advisory Council for the Mississippi State University School of Architecture, where he frequently serves on design juries. Mr. Trigiani served on the AIA Regional Board of Supervisors and chaired the 25th Gulf States Regional Convention. Nationally, Mr. Trigiani has been a member of the AIA Design Committee and the 1984 Resolutions Committee. He was selected to work with the National Architectural Accrediting Board (for schools of architecture). Mr. Trigiani has served on the General Services Administration Region 4 Advisory Panel, and as instructor for the Illuminating Engineering Society. He is an Arbitrator for the American Arbitration Association.

As a designer and principal, Trigiani has been involved in design projects receiving local, state and national recognition. Since 1974 his firm has received 9 Honor Awards from the Mississippi Chapter and the Gulf States Region / AIA.

Mr. Trigiani has volunteered his time to many cultural, charitable and civic organizations. As a Board member of the Mississippi Art Association he played an active role in its transition to corporate structure and the move to the new Museum. He has served on the Museum's Council, and as vice-chairman of the Accessions/ Collections Committee. He is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Mississippi Arts Festival. He has been an active fund-raiser for numerous local charities, including

the Hinds County Kidney Foundation which he served as president.



Mr. Trigiani is an active member of St. Richard Church, where he has been Vice President of the Parish Council. He has worked with the Catholic Diocese through the Diocesan Pastoral Council. A graduate of the University of Notre Dame, he has been President of the State Chapter of the Notre Dame Alumni Association and a member of the Notre Dame Alumni Senate.

He is married to the former Jean Canizaro. They have two children — Elaine, a sophomore at the University of Notre Dame and David, a second year student at St. Joseph's High School.



Contractors Round Table

by David Sachs, AIA

Background

Each year the President of the Mississippi Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) is asked to speak before other professional construction associations. The 1984 President, Robert Canizaro, AIA saw separate invitations to speak before the Association of General Contractors (AGC), The American Subcontractors Association (ASA), and the Association of Builders and Contractors (ABC) as an opportunity to enhance cooperation among the parties involved in the construction process. Believing that a more open dialogue between the groups would lead to more effective relations throughout the building industry, he used the meetings to listen to the concerns of the membership of these sometimes adversarial groups. He asked these groups to tell him "what they would like to tell architects in the state." Small groups were asked to develop and prioritize a list of concerns which they thought architects ought to hear. These concerns formed the basis for a "round table" discussion between the representatives of these groups. William (Billy) Ware, Jr. of Mid-State Construction Company represented the AGC, M.C. (Red) Vaughn of Vaughn Construction Company represented the ASA, Jim Nickles of Nickles & Wells Construction Company represented the ABC and Robert V.M. (Bob) Harrison, FAIA, represented the AIA. This discussion took place on March 18, 1985 at the Mississippi Research and Development Center before Robert Harrison's professional practice class of the Mississippi State School of Architecture — a fifth year group.

Following an introduction by Professor Dan Bennett, the group attacked the previously outlined topics.

Problems discussed by group members ranged from the general to the particular: many of the first discussions centered on specific problems of the mechanics of the construction process — specially in

the relationships between contractors and subcontractors. Later questions discussed by the group included the architect's role in the construction process — what is he doing to facilitate construction, how can he improve his role in the process, including the role of the architect's contract documents (plans and specifications).

Subcontractors

Typical of subcontractors' concerns was an issue raised by M.C. Vaughn of Vaughn and Vaughn Construction Company. Mr. Vaughn ("Red") expressed the concern for himself and for others in his industry that retained percentages, when held too long, can seriously affect a subcontractor's profit — "he may lose all profit if the retainage is held too long," he stated. Furthermore, he added that owners in many instances have beneficial use of finished work before the completion of the whole job (he cited the example of a parking lot which is completed well in advance of the rest of building construction and is used by the owner). All too frequently, he stated, the subcontractor who built that parking lot or who moved the earth to allow that lot to be built, is not paid 100% of his fee until the rest of the building is completed, perhaps two years later.

While several members understood the dilemma posed by Vaughn, the members of the group felt that this was an issue that could best be answered by a firm understanding between the general contractor and the sub, and that the architect had little to offer to the situation, other than to perhaps break certain portions of the work out from the substantial completion certificate, at which time they would be payable in full.

Contract Documents

Architects do have control over the contract documents, and in that critical area, the contractors at the discussion had one simple plea — that architects make every effort to make plans and specifications clear and thorough. One individual cited the case where one simple declarative sentence in an inch thick book of specifications made a \$100,000 difference in his bid. There was no corresponding notation on the plans, and missing that one sentence could have cost him a great deal of time and expense.

Canizaro responded that architectural students are spending time learning that plans and specifications are complimentary, and that each is important in describing the overall project. He said that he feels that the current crop of students "will be better" in this area.

Written Records

Communication (buzz word of the decade) was discussed by the roundtable next, and all agreed that a key here was to write every material change to the project down. Verbal authorizations and opinions come and go so quickly in the heat of a job that the only way to sort out the fray and make sense of events at a later date is to have a written record. No disagreement here.

Construction Time

On the issue of time limits for construction of a particular job, discussion centered on incentives or penalties as the best ways to achieve the goal. Liquidated damages seemed to be the best means of achieving timely completion, with the stipulation that architects check construction time frames with contractors prior to setting limits for reasonableness. One participant suggested that a bonus incentive for

early completion be used in conjunction with liquidated damages.

Listing Subs

There was universal agreement that subcontractors should be listed on bid forms as a method of protecting subcontractors from having their prices "shopped" by general contractors. When Canizaro asked, "How would this benefit the owner?" one contractor responded that the owner would be better served since he would be assured that the subcontractors performing his work had not been beat down in price shopping following the award of contract. No compromises would have been made in the bid, so no corners would need to be cut in the finished product. While there was discussion on the "why's" and "wherefore's" (how many subs to list on the bid documents, how to handle alternates), the group recognized the issue as real, and felt that it could be improved by listing of subcontractors.

Addenda

Contractors present agreed that they wished that there were some sort of cutoff deadline for addenda items when bidding a job. Too often, they felt, the architect waited until the last date to issue substantive changes in the work, and that getting the work down the chain of subcontractors and back up again was sometimes very difficult. Canizaro agreed, but stated that the architect relies heavily on feedback from the contractors in order to issue clarifications to the documents, and that these questions or clarifications frequently do not come to the architect's attention until the last minute, when the contractor is putting together his final prices.

Specifications

How well specifications communicate came up next, and the phrase "or equal" was taken to task for lack of clarity and help. The contractors felt that if the architect could list three manufacturers, with addresses, then contractors would have a better idea of exactly what type of quality products architects

expected. If an architect is not able to find three comparable manufacturers of a particular product, then he should list two manufacturers, and so forth. The whole point is to adequately describe what is desired for the client.

Bid Time

How long should contractors have plans and specs in hand before bid date? The answers ranged from two days (for the smallest job) to three weeks. Billy Ware described how he thought a three week bid period could benefit from a pre-bid conference:

"...it might help the addendum issue. . . It might prompt people to go ahead and ask their questions for clarification and hopefully get more things in one addendum that can be (adequately) circulated. And it also gives everybody an opportunity to deal with the same cards."

"I think the whole process is three weeks. What I would like to see is have two weeks, then the pre-bid conference and then go ahead and take the bids at the appointed time."

Equal Treatment

The contractors complained that architects are not enforcing specifications on all parties equally — that in some cases, they are allowing substitutions when they shouldn't, and the overall quality of the project is slipping. One contractor felt that architects are inconsistent in what they expect from different contractors. Inferior contractors who cut corners and ask for substitutions and deviations from the scope of the work are sometimes treated less stringently than better contractors. Discussion then moved naturally to "who is a qualified bidder?", with the architect stating how difficult it is to determine which contractors should and which should not be invited to bid private work.

Most people agreed that ten days was adequate time for shop drawing turn around time in the architect's office. Seven days is common for the contractor's review.

Plan Fees

Contractors voiced unanimous agreement that deposits for plans should be 100% refundable since costs had escalated and such costs were limiting participations in the bid process by reputable contractors.

One suggestion that emerged from the meeting was that the general contractor should include reproduction costs in his bid, since the costs would be passed on to the owners.

Profit Margins

Contractors seemed in agreement that competition and cut-throat bidding was reducing profitability to a minimum, and it was forcing certain changes in the leeway a contractor had to make changes on the job. While all recognized that changes in the work were common and necessary, regardless of whose fault — architect's, owner's, or contractor's — and that contractors could not make innumerable small changes in the scope of work in progress without losing all profit or actually suffering a net loss.

Alternates

Bill Ware commented on the extreme number of alternates that contractors were seeing on bid forms today, and asked if the number of alternates couldn't be limited to a specified minimum — perhaps five. He stated that not only did it cloud the issue of who actually is low bidder in a given situation, but that it encouraged mistakes. He cited the following example:

"...job came out. . . about six months ago, had three separate base bids and five alternates under each one. One building. They virtually had a shopping basket. . ."

As the group broke up, they discussed the possibility of meeting quarterly, either with the same participants or with other representatives of the construction industry, to sort out questions and issues, and to maintain the lines of communication that had been opened by the AIA and the various contractors' organization.

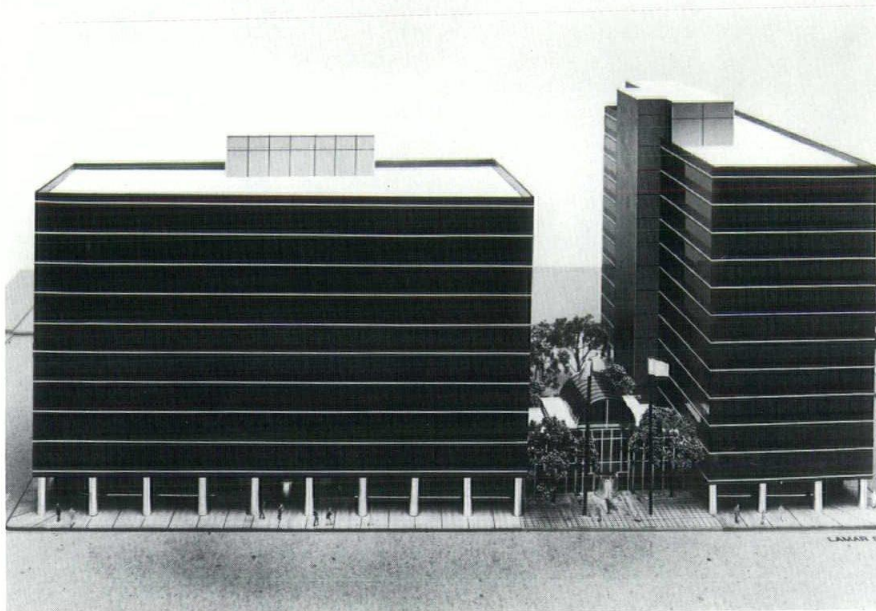
New Projects

A children's exhibit
within the Mississippi

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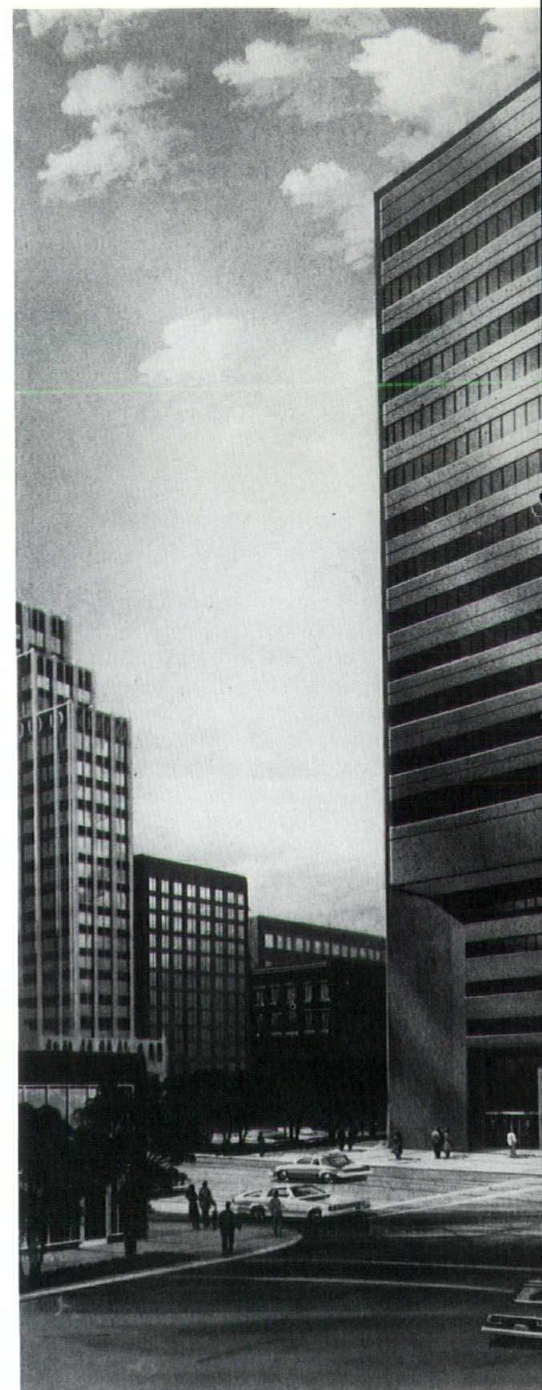


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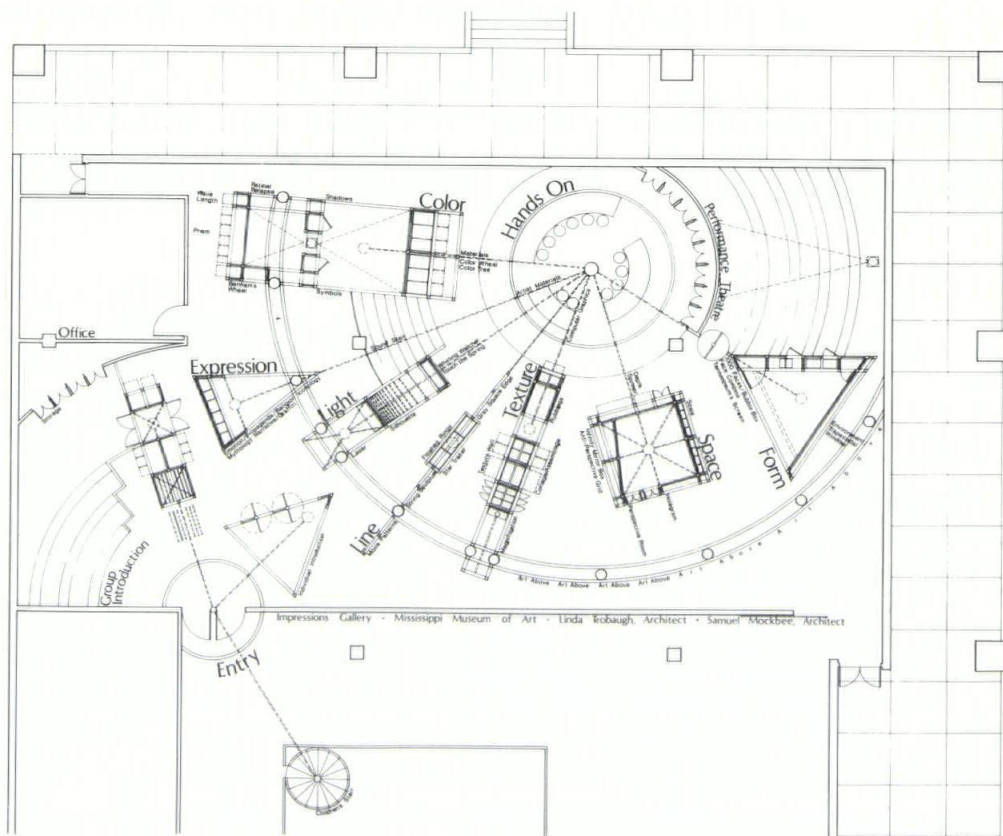
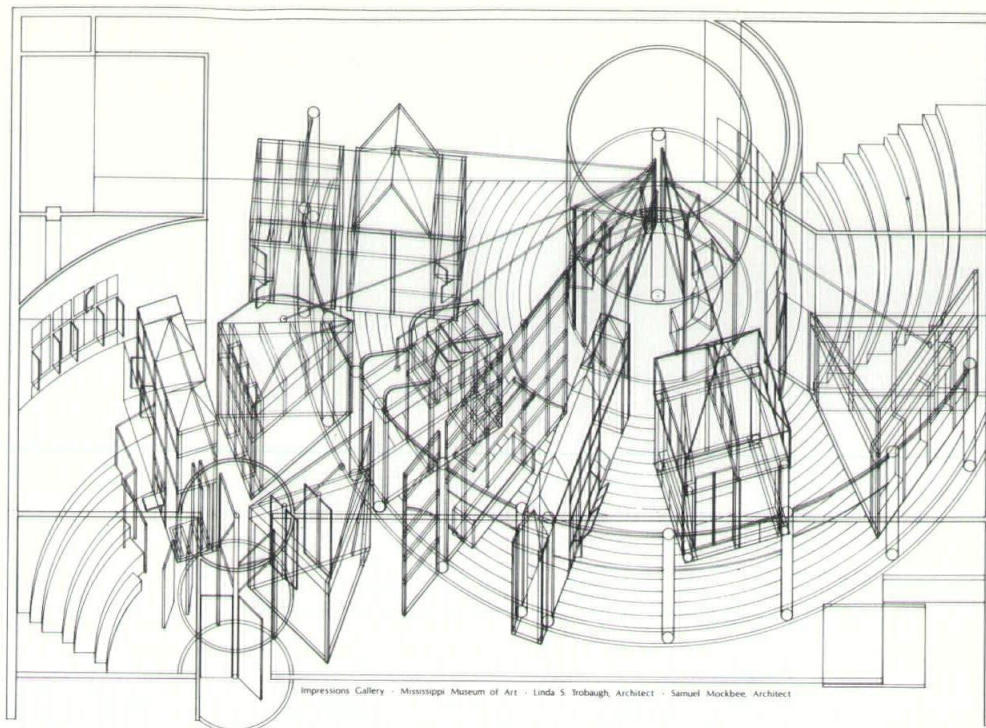
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Some More From Samoa

Talofa!

A report from your south seas correspondent, Joe Weilenman, FAIA

This is written from the lanai facing Pago harbor and Rainmaker mountain beyond. The mountain is appropriately named. It is to windward of the harbor and causes the moisture laden trades to rise abruptly, cool, condense and pour more than two hundred inches of rain per year into the harbor area.

I should, however start with a bit more general geographic information. Should you happen to know anything about Samoa, you are truly a scholar of geography. A popular "T" shirt sold here states it well: "Where the hell is Pago Pago?" That was my basic response when asked if I would be interested in a contract with the American Samoa Government.

Those of you who know me well realize that a lack of knowledge up-to-date information or a complete understanding of the facts has never really held me back. After all, where is the best place to acquire those but through an experience on site?

Before I left Mississippi, Frank Carlton, District Attorney and long time friend and council called in a stage panic, "Weilenman, thank goodness you haven't left yet. I just looked up Samoa and it's in a deep crack in the Pacific Ocean with a staple through it." That, incidentally, is where you will most likely find Samoa in your atlas, i.e. in the crease between two pages and depending upon the book binding it may have a staple through it.

A more precise method for you sailors and other enlightened persons is to look at about fourteen degrees south and one hundred and seventy-one degrees west. Samoa may be identified by Pago Pago which is the village farthest into Pago harbors.

There are two Samoas. Western Samoa is an independent island nation. It was formerly under German and later New Zealand central. It consists of a half dozen or so islands



Traditional fales in traditional village.

the largest of which is Savaii. That is the name thought to be the same polynesian name for heaven as Hawaii. The next largest is Upolu. This island has the capital city of Apia, world famous Aggie Grey's Hotel and the home and grave of "Tusitala" or "teller of tales," as the Samoians named Robert Louis Stevenson. Aggie Grey is the person from whom a much rowdier "Bloody Mary of South Pacific" was created.

The other Samoa is American Samoa. This seven island group has been a United States territory since 1900. Incidentally, the unexplained literal translation of Samoa is as follows: Sa means sacred and Moa means chicken. There are numerous cultural gaps such as this which have resulted from an absense of written history.

The principal island is Tutuila with nearby Aunuu island. About fifty miles to the east is the Manua group

consisting of Ofu, Olosega and Tau. Farther out is Rose atoll and Swai island. All are of volcanic origin and except for the atolls, are extremely lush mountainous formations rising abruptly from the sea.

The mountains are steep, rugged and covered with a profusion of plant life too numerous to mention here. Suffice it to say that the islands are verdant with exotic flowering trees adding the color. The poinsettias and bougainvillea are full size trees. The fragrance of plumeria is everywhere and the giant banyans defy all the laws of botanical structure.

The weather is fairly constant with only slight changes for winter and the rainy season. The temperature stays around eighty degrees and the humidity around ninety-five percent. There are frequent showers except during the rainy season when they are more frequent.

The people are polynesian as are

the Tahitians and Hawaiians. They typically have brown skin, black somewhat wavy or curly hair and extremely well developed physiques. The men frequently have tattoos of a traditional design which starts above the knees and stops above the waist.

Their culture goes back about three thousand years and is somewhat intact although it is colliding with the infusion of new ways from the rest of the world.

This is a brief and certainly less than comprehensive description but rather than risk getting too laborious on esthetic details, I'll let this do for now.

My work as manager of the A/E division of the department of public works has been primarily organizational and administrative so far with only occasional opportunities for design. The staff, comprised of Samoans, a Filipino and a Hawaiian, has varying amounts of technical training and a high skill level for drawing. There is a lack of knowledge of design process as we know it and a lack of broad experience with building types and techniques.

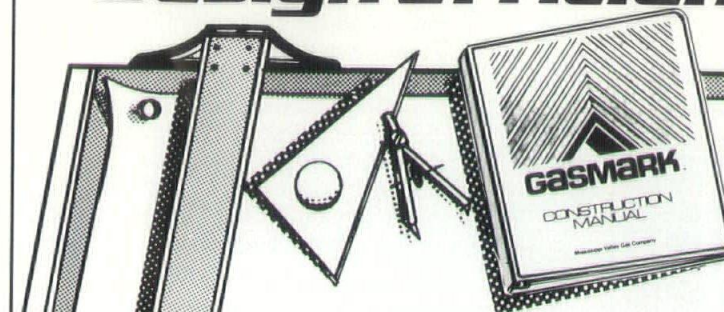
It's an interesting mixed cultural working environment where ideas are discussed in English but always a slight translation gap. Nothing can be taken for granted. The people that work with me are hospitable to the strange ways of the "palagi" from Mississippi. An office party would be impossible to describe.

Our projects are on Tutuila and on Olosega, Ofu and Tau so there is some inter-island travel involved in the work.

Inter-island travel is another subject which is worthy of some mention. There are two ways to go. One is by a World War II L.C.U. that looks like an enlarged version of the "African Queen." The other is by plane; I always thought the holes in the instrument panel should be filled up with instruments. There was another twelve passenger twin engine plane but it crashed into the roof of the terminal shack at Tau.

One of the projects is a small vocational technical building at the Tau island high school. My first trip over was a mixture of excitement and fear. I had been warned about the air strip perched on a ledge on the mountain side. Coming down the mountain to a small clearing in the bush and stopping just short of plunging off to the sea at the end certainly lived up to the thrill that had

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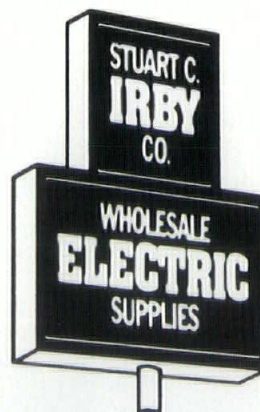
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been promised.

The visit to the job site went well and left time to see the village before leaving the next day.

Tau village is strung out along the beach about one half mile and is forested with tall coconuts, plumeria, and other plants. The old church is abandoned to decay because of a seismic crack which occurred about fifteen years ago. It is a magnificent basilica whose size clearly rejects the religious fervor the missionaries engendered. It also

shows the ingenuity of the lay designers/builders in translating Western Architecture into local materials, skills and native art forms. Farther down the beach path was the construction site of a high chief's "fale." Fale means house but in this case it's a chiefly meeting house. This one was special because, except for concrete columns, it was a traditionally built fale. The chief's fale is more for ceremonial functions than for shelter or dwelling. The house is a bit

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misleading because one tends to think of walls, doors, windows and such. The Samoan fale has no walls — only posts. The only enclosure is made by pandanus mats attached to the perimeter beams. These are lowered in a roll shade fashion for weather protection during storms and sometimes in winter when the temperature occasionally plummets to sixty degrees. Privacy is not part of the Samoan life style.

The fale design and construction are peculiar to Samoa and had remained unchanged for centuries until recent years. It consists of a lava stone base, center supporting posts with collar beams, ridge, rafters, purlins, perimeter (plate) beams, perimeter posts, thatch rafters and thatching. All of these components are beautifully tied together with sennit (an extraordinarily strong twine made from coconut husks). This is the same material the ancient navigators used for sail rigging and for holding the parts of their ocean canoes together. In the fale miles of sennit are used for structural and decorative lashing and wrapping.

The traditional shapes are round and oval. The round fales are laid out in an exact circle and the oval ones are made by connecting two semicircular ends with a straight mid-section. The structure of both is basically similar to an umbrella. Center posts support the rafters supporting the curved roof surfaces and the perimeter posts are left out by the fale builders to be added along with the thatching by the chief's aiga.

The perimeter posts also have a ceremonial function. They serve to indicate the ranked seating positions of the chiefs and honored guests and to act as backrests for each. This alone has created an unusual conversational style. The perimeter beams and curved end purlins are made of short segments of breadfruit limbs. These pieces are selected for their natural curve, adzed into interlocking connections and bound with sennit to a perfect form.

The discovery of this building under construction was special because the building techniques and ceremony associated with constructing proper fales are disappearing.

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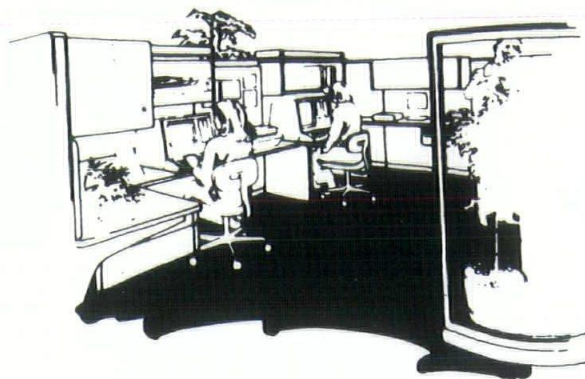
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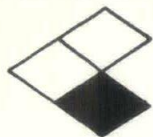


fine mats, pisupo, money and other goods for a building to meet the owner's criteria. The other type contract is similar but costs more of all of the above and it "allows" the owner to inspect and criticize the work. Too much criticism, however, will cause a termination of work which no other fale builders will resume — ever! Also the owner has to abide by other unspoken rules regarding safety of scaffolding, rate of work and similar considerations. There was one instance on Tutuila where the chief pushed the builders beyond the limits of safety thereby resulting in the accidental death of one of the workers. The chief traveled to Western Samoa to formally apologize to the family of the deceased man. He carried the customary fine mats, bags of pisupo, mackerel, pigs and tapa cloth. The apology was considered for several days but finally rejected and the chief was killed. Civil authorities do not interfere too much in "faa Samoa" — "the Samoan Way."

The fale being built in Tau was under the direction of Logoai Kilione Aina, one of the diminishing number of traditional "master builders." He and his men lived on the site and worked under thatch and canvas shelters where they shaped and assembled all the separate members. Plans are never drawn. All forms and measurements are simply sketched and staked on the ground. Somehow through the skills of the builders it results in an amazingly precise building with a beautiful exposed roof structure. The completion is celebrated with roast pigs, tars, chickens, breadfruit, palusami, pisupo, speeches, fines mats and the traditional Kava ceremony. The toast is "Manuia" or "good luck to those in this house."

A few weeks after I returned to Tutuila the salt corroded control cable parted and the plane crashed at Tau. Logoai Kilione Aina was on the plane.

Change on an island is more observable because it is an extremely finite environment. Into a culture that never experienced the technological advances of the bronze age the twentieth century has issued many "mixed blessings." For every "new" way there's an erosion of the "old" way. It makes the loss of one master builder especially regrettable. Tofa!

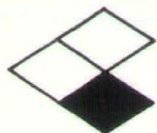


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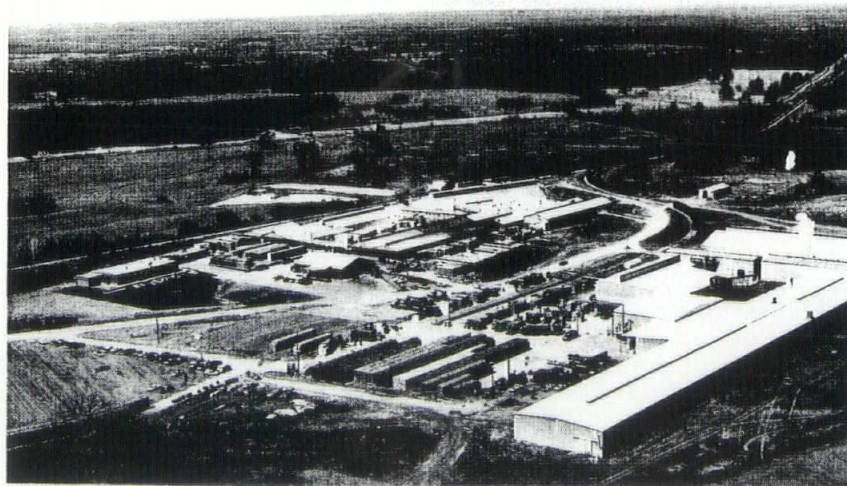
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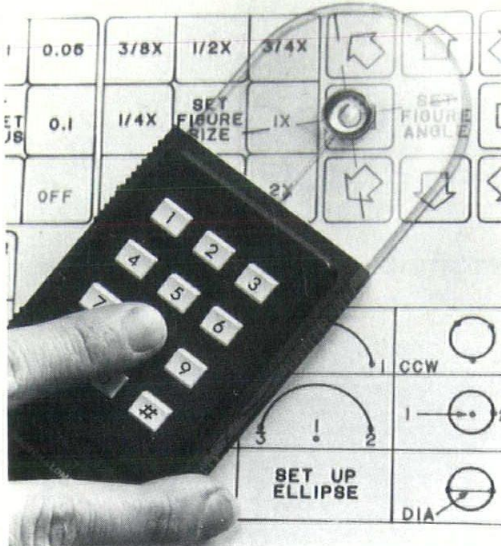
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