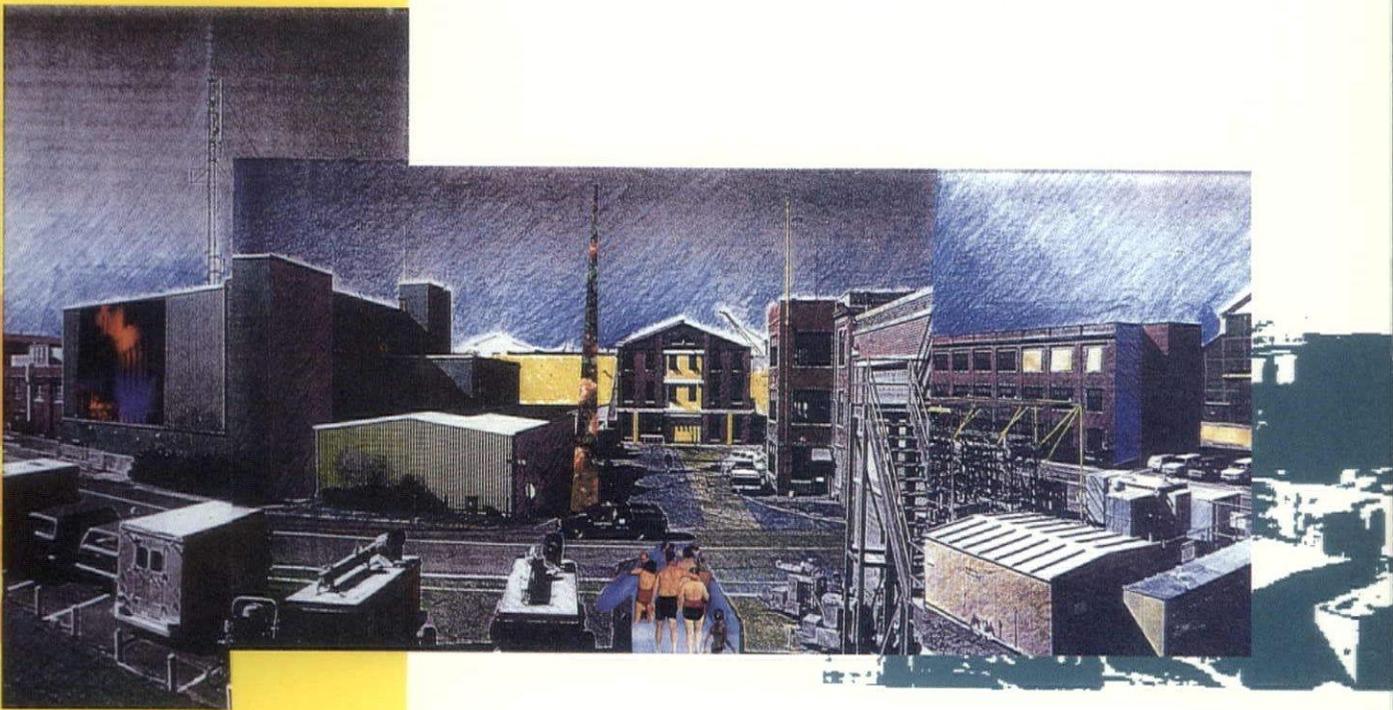


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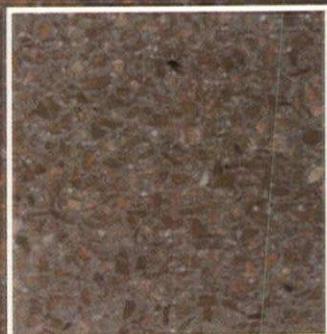


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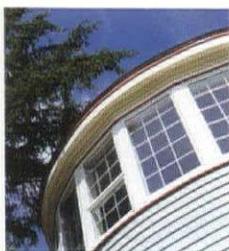


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Sleuthing Jefferson

My usual pleasure on receiving *Inform* turned to dismay on reading "Jefferson's Place-Making" (*Inform* 1995: No. 1, p. 7), a review of the exhibition "Thomas Jefferson's Academical Village: The Creation of an Architectural Masterpiece." The writer bestows well-merited praise on the show, but she unfortunately credits my colleague Richard Guy Wilson with letting the viewer "peer over Jefferson's shoulders to witness his design deliberations." That credit belongs instead to two superlative students at the University of Virginia, Patricia C. Sherwood and Joseph Michael Lasala.

The exhibition originated with the suggestion that creating a showcase for the discoveries of Lasala and Sherwood would be an appropriate way for the Bayly Art Museum at U.Va. to honor Jefferson's 250th birthday. Under the primary guidance of Wilson, the project grew into a traveling exhibition and a major publication, called *Thomas Jefferson's Academical Village*. Wilson's essay on The Lawn and James Murray Howard's essay on the Academical Village today are indispensable reading, but these two authorities took on quite different tasks from Lasala and Sherwood. It is the two beginning scholars who, for the very first time, let us see Jefferson's conception evolve, in a fashion like time-lapse photography. Thanks to Sherwood's work on the U.Va. records and Jefferson's principles in education, and to Lasala's study of Jefferson's drawings, a bright day has dawned in the scholarship on Jefferson's architectural masterpiece.

Charles E. Brownell, Assoc. Professor
Virginia Commonwealth University
Richmond

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Congratulations on your award from the American Institute of Architects! It's nice to see a magazine as well designed and edited as yours achieve national recognition. Keep up the great work!

Amy L. Doerr, Corporate Communications Manager
Henningson Durham & Richardson, Inc.
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Randolph Redux

I have just finished reading "The Champion of Affordable Housing" (*Inform* 1994: No. 4, p. 28). Having worked directly with the Randolph community for 17 years, I would like to clarify several areas with regard to its redevelopment and the role played by T.K. Somanath, who is featured in the article.

First, the redevelopment plan was developed with tremendous citizen participation. Citizens wanted as much low-income housing as possible, and their desires were echoed by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). To accommodate them, the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) designed a plan for low-income housing built of high quality. Nothing in the plan stated that it would be "concrete-and-block," as indicated in the article.

Second, HUD limited the number of subsidized units it would approve. Unable to implement the original Randolph Plan, RRHA reevaluated the entire plan. We questioned whether to continue with the suburban-style houses already being built on the edges of Randolph, or shift to an urban-style house. There was no "courageous decision" on Somanath's part to stop implementation of the original plan.

Third, once the urban-style units began to be built, they were difficult to market. In order to increase the marketability of units, RRHA eventually decided that only detached townhouses on larger lots would be constructed. After constructing about 20 of these detached townhouses, the builder informed RRHA that because of the expense of the design and poor marketability, they could not continue. Key staff worked with the builder, Richmond Homes, to develop a strategy for outlying areas of Randolph to be developed with suburban-style houses. For each of these houses that was built, two townhouses had to be constructed. This unique incentive allowed the builder to construct the townhouses that were the catalyst of redevelopment.

Today Randolph is a joy to behold. The list of people that should be recognized for their loyalty and hard work is too long to list, but it would include citizens, RRHA staff, local consultants, and developers. To give one person undue credit is a travesty.

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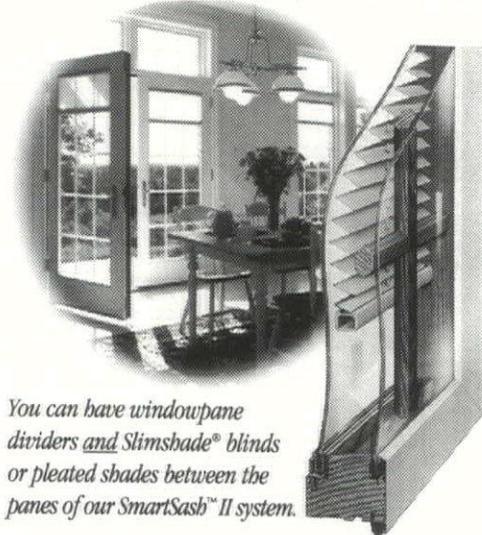
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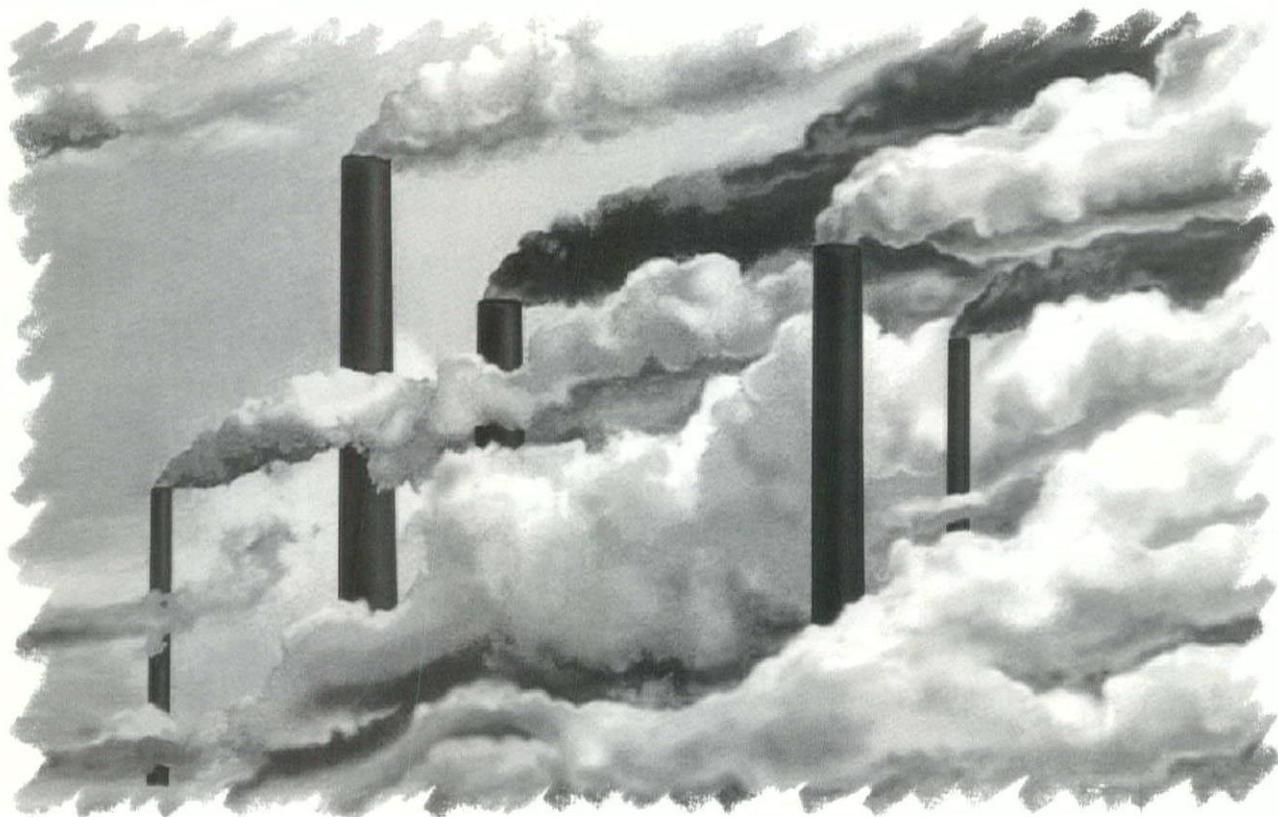


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Getting Urban Growth On Track

Projected growth in Virginia along the Washington-to-Richmond rail corridor has public and private interests looking for ways to avoid existing patterns of urban sprawl. Are transit-oriented communities the wave of the future? *By Vernon Mays*

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Haymount: A Brave Old World

In promoting his traditional-town alternative to suburban sprawl, developer John Clark also is pursuing a noble social and environmental agenda. Will Haymount rewrite the rules for land development, or prove to be just another form of hype? *By Vernon Mays*

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Town Meets Gown in Charlottesville

After focusing resources on the redevelopment of downtown Charlottesville and the restoration of historic buildings at U.Va., now the city and university are working together on the West Main Street corridor that links the two. *By Michael J. Bednar*

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Norfolk: Reworking the Existing Pieces

Initiatives ranging from affordable housing to a downtown shopping mall are part of an aggressive effort to transform Norfolk from a city with an undeservedly bad reputation into a model of successful urban redevelopment. *By Joseph Cosco*

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What Makes a Town?

Current methods of planning foster a growing ignorance of our towns and reward the least thoughtful efforts. The author argues that genuine towns are in constant struggle to find their identities and pursue their highest aspirations. *By Donna W. Dunay*

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doing the small thing well

On the cover:
Newport News Shipyards, an urban composite,
by Edwin Pease.



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Public Architecture

DIG UNEARTHS EVIDENCE OF PALISADE AT JAMESTOWN

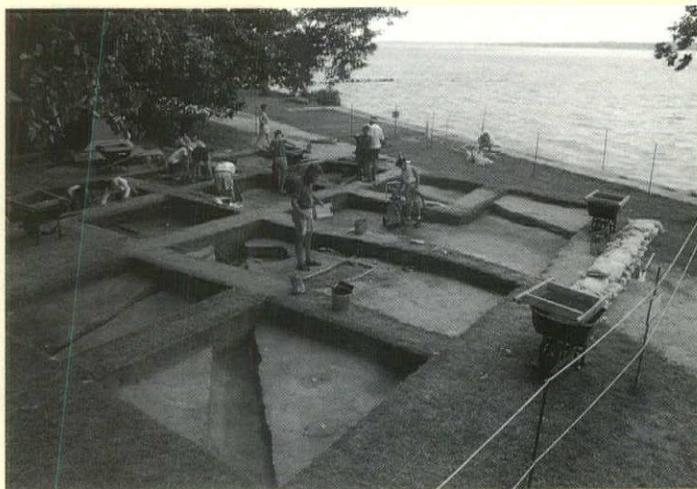


"It's been the best possible start you could imagine," says William Kelso, chief archaeologist for the Jamestown Rediscovery project, where recent investigations have uncovered in-ground imprints of logs which indisputably formed a palisade – quite possibly the fort built by Captain John Smith in 1607. If that proves true, the discovery is one of the most significant archaeological finds in North

America, says Kelso, because historians have believed for decades that the original fort site was long ago carried away by the James River.

Already the site has proved to be something of a time capsule containing rare information on early 17th century Anglo-American culture. Imprints and objects found imbedded in the soil on Jamestown Island have begun to reveal in rich detail the story of the first settlers' daily lives. Among the most exciting discoveries thus far is evidence of long-vanished post holes and stains in the soil that pinpoint the location of the split-log palisade. Kelso says he is encouraged by the fact that the palisade was made of logs split in half, for the historical record indicates that the first colonists hurriedly constructed their fort in about two weeks' time. Splitting the logs would have doubled the available material and aided speedy construction. Only one percent of the digging has been completed, Kelso says, so many more answers will come as the work progresses.

Excavations began in April of 1994, but the enormous trove of artifacts yielded so far – about 30,000 objects – has required hours of sorting and cataloging that have preoccupied the staff and slowed the digging to a crawl. This summer, however, 20 additional people attending a summer archaeology program will work steadily along the palisade line for six weeks. Kelso hopes that the



The 1994 dig targeted land between the historic church and the banks of the James (above). Finds included a token from the 1570s (above left).

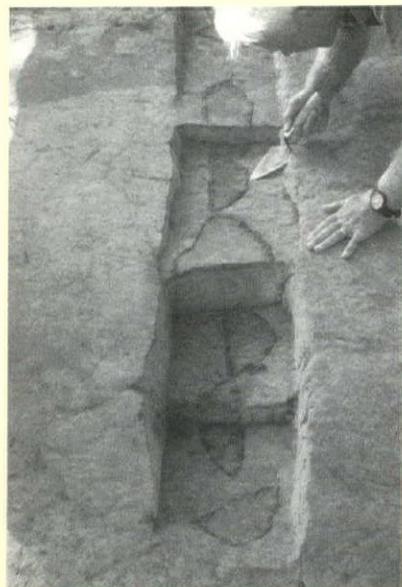
digging reveals a break in the wall – most likely the gate on the southern wall of the fort – but for now its existence remains pure speculation.

Evidence of heavy construction that would have supported a gate was uncovered, however, in a dig conducted in the 1950s – the last time, until now, that archaeologists have worked at Jamestown. That find was one of many factors that led Kelso to challenge the common assumption that the fort had washed away. Because the 22 acres on the island owned by the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities had never been thoroughly excavated, Kelso says he has long believed that *something* of significance had to remain. Though an engineer who built the island's protective seawall in the early 1900s concluded that two church foundations unearthed in 1906 belonged to structures dating to 1617 and 1639, Kelso questioned whether the colony's church had ever moved from its original 1607 site. His theory: once consecrated ground, always consecrated ground. As he began to spend more time on the island, Kelso also noticed that the island's west end takes the brunt of the river currents and is most likely to erode – not the south side, which is adjacent to the church and believed to be the location of the original fort. Working under the auspices of the APVA, he selected a starting point near the church and began to dig.

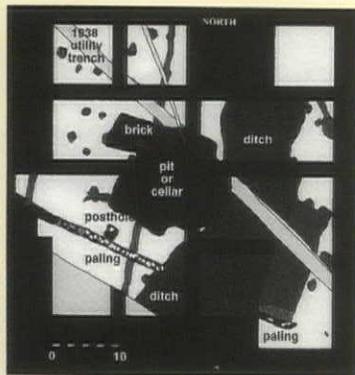
The results have been astounding. Kelso's team almost immediately uncovered a back-filled pit from which nearly 10,000 artifacts have come. The objects included seven jettons, or casting counters – coinlike objects that originated during the Middle Ages but, by the 17th century, were used as calculating tools for games. Other artifacts from the dig included Elizabethan coins, cloth seals, brass book clasps, a Bellarmine pub bottle,

brass buttons, and glass beads used for trading with the local Indians. While there is no evidence that any of the beads were made by early Jamestown craftsmen, there are signs of other glass making and attempts to make copper jewelry. "It has given me a new appreciation of the importance of the craftsmen here," Kelso says. "They were the access to the market of the Indians." In that sense, he adds, craftsmen were more important to the colony's survival than were soldiers.

The goals of the dig are more than satisfying simple curiosity, Kelso says.



Signs of decayed split timbers reveal a colonial palisade. Could it be John Smith's Fort?



Site plan shows overlapping layers of archaeological evidence.

Specifically, the excavations seek a better understanding of the extent of the first fort and other constructions, signs of the craftsmen's activities, evidence of the native Algonquian's influence on the colonists' crafts and buildings, insight into the lifestyle of the rich, poor, and non-English colonists, and the nature and growth of world trade.

Interestingly, the archaeological finds are being exhibited for Jamestown's visitors to see, rather than being squirreled away secretively. "We're an active exhibit — a dynamic exhibit that will be changed each year," says Kelso, who notes that he has established a 10-year plan for a systematic study of the APVA property. "We found ground zero. Now let's find out the total extent of this — and not skip around. We are going to know one piece of this island thoroughly."

— Vernon Mays

D.C. Collector Shares Shaker Wares

On the face of it, Ken Hakuta might seem an unlikely caretaker for an extensive collection of Shaker artifacts. The austere simplicity of Shaker craftsmanship seems timeless, while Hakuta is linked, at least publicly, to trendier attractions. Children might recognize him as the wacky Japanese-American host for "The Dr. Fad Show," aired since 1988 and now in reruns. He also made \$20 million, reported *The Washington Post*, after buying worldwide rights to a sticky octopus named the "Wacky Wallwalker."



Courtesy The Chrysler Museum

Shaker rockers of the 1840s featured woven splint seats and tapered front posts.

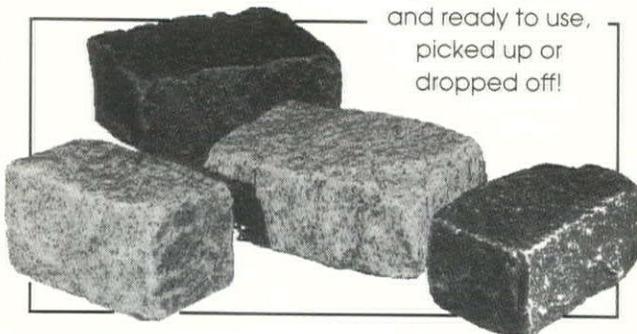
Yet after taking a midnight walk to a Shaker graveyard that became "the eeriest experience I have had in my whole life," Hakuta has made it his heartfelt mission to restore, preserve, and protect his collection of more than 2,500 items, including tables, chairs, cupboards, farm implements, woodworking tools, baskets, storage boxes, eyeglasses, and hand-woven clothing. About 100 works from the collection appeared earlier this year at Norfolk's Chrysler Museum of Art.

To Hakuta, 45, of Washington, D.C., the collection's monetary value is not as important as the drive to do something significant. He has personally borne the expense of storing, restoring, researching, and transporting the works.

His collection is unique in many ways. Most Shaker collections in America, including the Shaker museums in Old Chatham, N.Y., and the Berkshire Hills of Massachusetts, consist of works gathered from various communities. But everything in Hakuta's collection originated at one site — Mount Lebanon,

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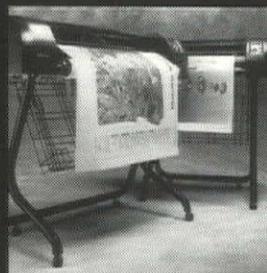
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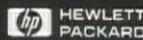
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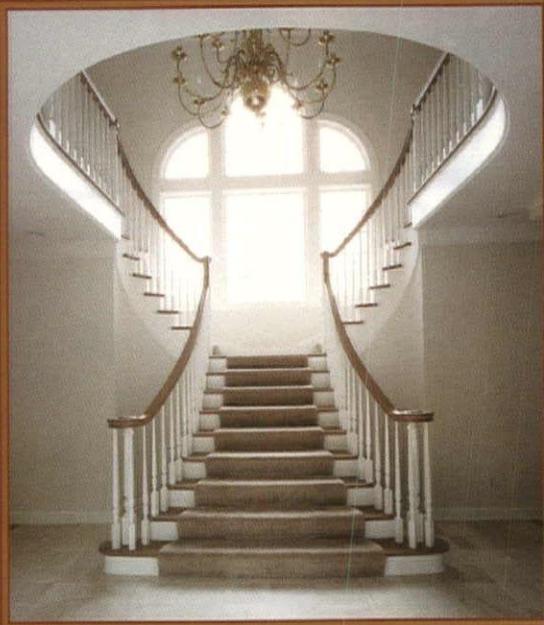
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N.Y., called New Lebanon when the Shakers founded their first American village there in 1785. "It's sort of like the Vatican for Shakers. The philosophies, the orders, the design of the furniture – everything came out of Mount Lebanon," Hakuta said.



Tall clock of cherry, pine, and rosewood.

Most Shaker collections focus on the so-called classical period from 1830-1850, but Hakuta's spans from about 1800 to 1930, a range that demonstrates how the sect evolved. Included in the exhibit, now on tour nationwide, are benches from a Mount Lebanon meeting house that was a model for the all-important houses of worship at 19 villages that sprang up from Maine to Kentucky. "That's where all the world's Shakers came to watch the Shakers shake." Which is how the sect got its name – for its distinctive dance, a whirling, leaping, and shaking manifestation of the hold the spirit evoked during services.

In 1990, Hakuta bought the Shaker-made contents of Mount Lebanon for about \$600,000 from The Darrow School, owners of the site and its contents since 1929, the *Post* reported. School leaders had invited Hakuta and his wife to buy the entire collection so the financially strapped school would not have to sell it off in pieces. The idea was that Darrow would raise money to restore the collection and create a museum for its display. But Hakuta became frustrated with the lack of progress and, when the school restricted his access to the collection, he removed it.

Hakuta cautions against confusing the Quakers or Amish with Shakers, who took vows of celibacy and lived together communally. They were pacifists who treated the sexes equally, took in orphans, and lived by the motto "Hands to work, hearts to God." Shakers embraced technology. Their inventions included the wooden clothespin, the circular saw, and the first wrinkle-free, water-resistant fabric. They even originated the idea of selling garden seeds in little paper packets. From a peak of 6,000 members, the sect has dwindled to as few as eight members, all in Poland Springs, Maine.

– Teresa Annas

The author covers art for *The Virginian-Pilot* and *The Ledger-Star* in Norfolk, where a similar article appeared earlier this year.

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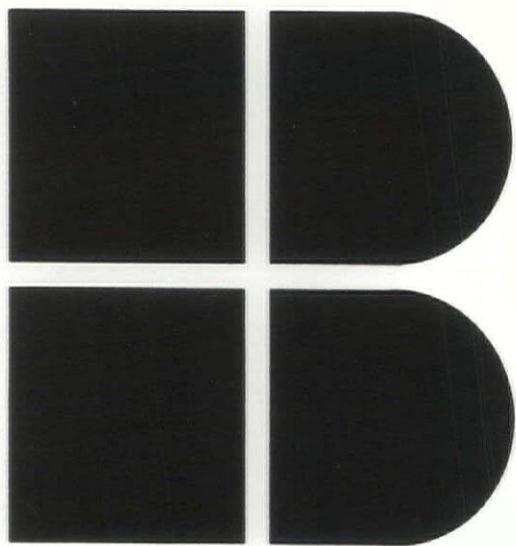
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Virginia Firms Receive

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Seven projects received accolades this year in the 18th Annual Design Seminar sponsored by the Virginia Masonry Council. The following award winners were announced at the event.

Addition to Dunay Residence celebrates use of poured concrete and concrete block.



White Hall, in Gloucester County, includes new flanking wings.



Cox Cable offices in Roanoke convey a contemporary image.

For commercial buildings, **Hayes Seay Mattern & Mattern**, of Roanoke, won for their design of the Cox Cable Roanoke Headquarters. **Beery Rio & Associates**, of Annandale, was recognized for the Army Corps of Engineers, Transatlantic Division building in Winchester.

The winner in the landscape design category was **Higgins Associates**, a Richmond landscape architecture firm, for work on the Henry Stern Quadrangle at the University of Richmond.

For institutional construction, **Hanbury Evans Newill Viattas & Co.**, of Norfolk, was honored both for the firm's design of the Lettie Pate Whitehead Evans Residence at the College of William & Mary and the Wampler Hall Dormitory at James Madison University.

For residential design, **Dunay Associates**, of Blacksburg, won for a house addition featuring children's bedrooms and a playroom. **Rancorn Wildman Krause Brezinski**, of Newport News, received an award for their expansion of historic White Hall.

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DATE LINES

■ "Classical Orders of Architecture: Renderings in the Beaux Arts Style." An exhibit of 15 large-scale watercolors by Herbert W. Johe detailing the Greek and Roman classical orders. At the Barret House, Richmond, through August 25. 804-644-3041.

■ "The White House Collection of American Crafts." Representing major craft artists and a variety of media, the objects displayed are usually integrated into White House room settings. At the National Museum of American Art through September 4. 202-357-2700.

■ "The Williamsburg Competitions." Registrations are being accepted through October 2 for a two-part design competition for a new town plan and courthouse for James City County. Winners will share \$154,000 in prizes and will receive design commissions to develop their proposals. For information, contact Professional Advisors, The Williamsburg Competitions, James City Co., P.O. Box 8784, Williamsburg, VA 23187-8784.

■ "Ticket to Paradise." Photographer John Margolies' images record and examine the extravagant American movie palaces built between 1910 and 1950. At the National Building Museum, Washington, D.C., through September 10. 202-272-2448.

■ "Frank Lloyd Wright: Architect for America." An exhibit of models, drawings, furniture, and photographs explores Wright's theories of "organic architecture." Sept. 8 through Oct. 7 at the Longwood College Cultural Arts Center, Farmville. 703-628-4000. Exhibit moves to Roanoke in November.

■ "Secrets of the Dark Chamber." The largest exhibit of American daguerreotypes features 152 outstanding and rarely seen examples of early daguerreotypy, unique among photographic techniques for its sharpness and detail. At the National Museum of American Art through October 22. 202-357-2700.

■ "Mirrors and Memories: Architecture as Place and Witness." Photographer Lowell Anson Kenyon uses building details to evoke the intent of the builders and adjustments made by users. At the Barret House from Sept. 1 - Nov. 6. 804-644-3041.

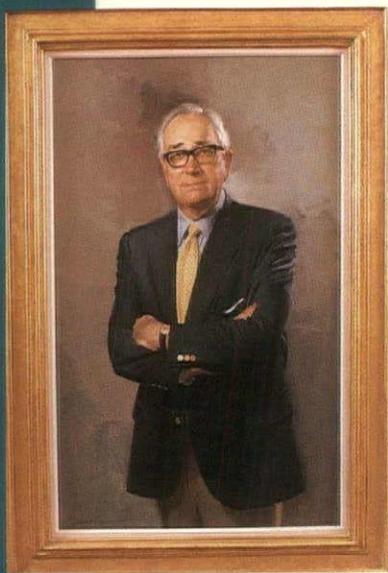
■ "Alexander Smith Cochran: Baltimore Architect, Modernist Pioneer." Explores the 1950s and 1960s Modernist work of the Baltimore native, who shaped the city's architectural taste for over 40 years with designs for residences and public housing. Through Sept. 24 at the Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore. 410-685-3750.



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Lawrence Lewis, Jr.

A Legacy of Giving

By Rob Walker

Lawrence Lewis, Jr. was born to wealth. And by choice or fate – or some measure of each – he spent most of his life in places where architecture and the history it embodies are valued assets. So it is no surprise that those who have spoken of Lewis since his death on April 3 at age 76 have done so in terms of his contributions to historic preservation.

Lewis was born in Wilmington, N.C. He grew up in St. Augustine, Florida. He studied at the University of Virginia and lived his adult life in Richmond. Friends say each of these places contributed to Lewis's lifelong interest in preservation and certainly each place benefited from his vision and generosity.

Lewis was an heir to the fortune of Henry Morrison Flagler, cofounder of Standard Oil Company with John D. Rockefeller and a pioneer in railroad ventures, the most significant of which opened Florida to widespread development and made Flagler very rich. Lewis acknowledged his wealth and the responsibility that came with it. "Having money gave me an opportunity to do things that other people can't," he once said.



Lewis's crowning achievement in historic preservation was converting St. Augustine's Ponce de Leon Hotel (above) into a liberal arts college.

He used his resources to do good. And for his benevolence, Lewis was honored during his lifetime with resolutions of thanks from the states of Virginia, Florida, and North Carolina. He received the National Trust for Historic Preservation's National Preservation Honor Award. And shortly before his death, he was made an honorary member of the American Institute of Architects – high praise for someone who is not an architect.

Lewis was described at various times as a world traveler, a bon vivant, a philanthropist, and a key player among Richmond's conservative Main Street power brokers. He had his hands on Virginia's political structure as an active supporter of Republican governors from Linwood Holton to George Allen, and his connections to national Republican leaders dated to the Eisenhower era.

But his most lasting impact was on the man-made environment, to which he channeled an estimated \$40 million in personal contributions and gifts from the Flagler Foundation,

which he chaired. And Lewis gave more than money. Rochester, N.Y., architect and U.Va. alumnus William Chapin was national AIA president in 1994 when Lewis received the nomination for honorary membership as "an enlightened steward of America's design heritage." The AIA's recognition, Chapin says, represented a deep appreciation for an accumulation of things which reflected Lewis's generous spirit. "He was not just wealthy and in a position to give money, which he did. But he also gave of himself," says Chapin.

Lewis's work "in behalf of architectural restoration here is legendary," wrote U.Va. President John T. Casteen III in a letter supporting Lewis's nomination for Honorary AIA. Lewis's interest in historic preservation was a natural outgrowth of a life spent in places where history and architecture are closely intertwined, says J. Murray Howard, U.Va. curator and architect of the Academical Village.

Lewis attended Virginia's architecture school unaware that he was soon

to inherit the Flagler buildings in St. Augustine. But when the complex – including the grand 19th century masterpiece Ponce de Leon Hotel – came into his possession, “he almost immediately fell heir to some need for an appreciation for historic preservation whether he liked it or not,” Chapin says. “Fortunately, he demonstrated a natural inclination toward both philanthropy and architecture.”

Lewis maintained a home in St. Augustine and served as director of the St. Augustine Restoration Corp., the leading force in the study and restoration of that city’s Hispanic colonial section, parts of which date back to the 16th century. The centerpiece of his work there was the Ponce de Leon. Once a gem in the Flagler hotel chain, the Spanish Renaissance structure, designed by renowned New York architects Carrere and Hastings, had become a monstrous white elephant and there were calls for its razing.

But Lewis saw great value in the towers, terra cotta arches, fountains, and Tiffany stained glass. He studied the building’s reuse with an eye toward another passion: education. And he provided funds to convert the building into the central hall of Flagler College, a private liberal arts college with an enrollment today of about 1,200. William L. Proctor, the college’s president for 24 years, says Lewis brought to that project an unusual blend of sensibilities. He knew about architecture, he was “blessed with a feel for what a college ought to be like,” and he had the financial means to accomplish his goals.

In Wilmington, the city of his birth, Lewis was “a part of the place’s life for a long time,” says Leslie N. Boney, Jr., a local architect and longtime Lewis friend. His work there included the restoration of his grandmother’s mansion, the Wise House, which Lewis and his sister donated to the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. It is now a focal point in the city’s historic Mansion District. Lewis also helped finance the restoration of Wilmington’s Bellamy Mansion, believed to be one of the last antebellum mansions built in the South.

Lewis invigorated the Virginia Historical Society during his tenure on its board of directors from 1974 to 1987, says Charles Bryan, the society’s president. It was Lewis who insisted that members rotate off the board, Bryan says. “That opened us up to new people and new ideas.” Lewis also pressed the society to focus more attention on fundraising and membership development. “We’d fallen behind comparable institutions in that area,” Bryan says, but under Lewis’s direction, the society undertook a needs assessment. “That paved the way for the tremendous expansion we’ve experienced over the last few years,” he says. A \$12 million campaign was begun in 1989 and Lewis was its “first great donor.” That was typical of Lewis. He saw a need, looked for specific ways to deal with it, and used his wealth to make the project a reality, says Bryan.

In 1994, friends of Lewis endowed the Lawrence Lewis, Jr. Professorship in Architecture at U.Va. “We thought there ought to be a chair to recognize all that he’s done,” said Fred G. Pollard, the Richmond lawyer and longtime Lewis friend who led the drive for the \$350,000 endowment. “That was the easiest money I ever raised. That should tell you what people thought of him.”

Rob Walker is a Richmond freelance writer.

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Getting Urban Growth

Projected growth along the Washington-to-Richmond rail corridor has public and private interests looking for ways to avoid existing patterns of suburban sprawl. Are transit-oriented communities the wave of the future?

Photos: Prakash Patel



16

By Vernon Mays

Contrary to the notion that suburban sprawl has won the battle over land use policies in Northern Virginia, the small town ideal of tree-lined streets and neighbors meeting at the corner market is alive and well in the minds of many Virginia architects, planners, and developers. Prompted by the advent of new commuter rail stops between Washington, D.C., and Fredericksburg, they picture compact communities built around a train station that residents can reach comfortably by foot. They picture towns where civic landmarks such as churches and schools are dotted among the houses, rather than set apart on distant lots. And they picture communities where people from all stations of life exist side-by-side in a mixture of housing types ranging from modest garage apartments to expansive town houses.

That is the vision for Brooke Station, a hypothetical community in Stafford County proposed by the Community Design Group, a faculty team from the University of Virginia and Virginia Commonwealth University. The study, which outlined how a new town of 4,000 people could develop around the existing Virginia Railway Express station at the crossroads of Routes 608 and 629, illustrates in real-world terms the power and pragmatism of land-use design based on the proximity of mass transit.

Brooke Station is a place where “a range of people may enjoy more benefits at less cost,” the report maintains. Through compact development, the town would reduce internal infrastructure costs for roads and water and sewer lines while preserving more of the

surrounding countryside. Many forms of transportation – including buses, cars, and bicycles – would be woven into a plan that puts a high priority on pedestrian movement. And it all would be conveniently organized around a village center that provides a place for small commercial enterprises and creates a natural gathering place for residents.

The ideas fundamental to Brooke Station’s design are sympathetic to tenets of transit-oriented development being promoted nationally by writers and architects such as the University of California’s Peter Calthorpe. His 1993 book, *The Next American Metropolis*, is an important text in the professional libraries of urban planners. In it, Calthorpe argues for new methods of town design that respond to concerns such as ecology, affordability, diversity, and technology. “We need to start creating neighborhoods rather than subdivisions; urban quarters rather than isolated projects; and diverse communities rather than segregated master plans,” he argues. “Quite simply, we need towns rather than suburbs.”

Calthorpe and others like him advocate the making of towns that organize growth on a regional level to be compact and supportive of mass transit. Such towns create pedestrian-friendly street networks which benefit from the location of shops, offices, houses, jobs, parks, and civic uses within walking distance of transit stops. They make public spaces the focus of building orientation and neighborhood activity. And they preserve sensitive wildlife habitats, streams, and high-quality open spaces.

On Track



Many of these principles were central to Brooke Station's design. But Stafford County, an initial sponsor of the Brooke Station study, gave the final proposal a cool reception. Key county supervisors labeled the plan impractical and the planning department has not recommended the needed extension of basic utilities such as water and sewer to the Brooke area, says Bill Shelly, director of planning for Stafford County. "My basic feeling is some of the highway improvements for the interstate system may have a greater influence on future development than will the rail line," Shelly says. Consequently, land development along the highways through Stafford remains a much higher priority than development along the rail lines.

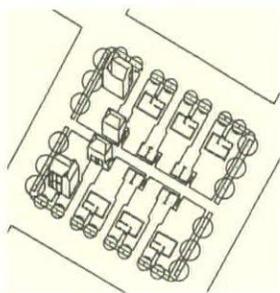
Leo Bevon, director of the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, takes a much different view. Bevon actively promotes the concept of new high-density "villages" sprouting up at each of the commuter rail stops. The perpetuation of suburban sprawl is simply not affordable, he says, because of the long-term costs of road and infrastructure maintenance that come with it. Other negative effects of current land-use practices include continued dependence on foreign oil and ever-increasing air pollution. "It's healthier for us to have a balanced transportation system, rather than be so dependent on the car."

Bevon's department channeled grant money to the Brooke Station project and also sponsored a 1994 study that focused on the broader potential for land development along the entire rail

corridor between Washington and Richmond. Both studies were selected by nationally-renowned juries for recognition in the Virginia Society AIA's design awards program. Designated by the federal government as one of only six potential high-speed rail routes in the nation, the Washington-Richmond corridor is vitally important. And because the study included two major circulation routes – the rail line and Interstate 95 – its recommendations highlighted opportunities to preserve and strengthen existing cities and towns while proposing ideal locations for new ones.

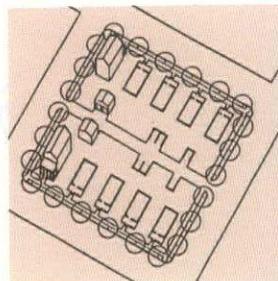
The great advantage Virginia has at this stage of its urbanization is an existing network of rail lines. So the cost of building new railroads is virtually nonexistent, says Warren Boeschenstein, a University of Virginia architecture professor and one of the primary authors of both the rail corridor study and the Brooke Station proposal. (His collaborators on both projects were Morton B. Gulak, AIA, of Virginia Commonwealth University and Gary Okerlund and Linda Winecoff, both of U.Va.) The fact that commuter rail operators need only to lease time on existing rail lines means their up-front capital investments are reduced greatly.

One of the strongest proponents for rail-based development – and one of the key players to watch – is RF&P Corporation, the former railroad-turned-real estate company which boasts more than \$690 million in assets and has a financial interest in more than 12 million square feet of built space. "There's no secret that we believe quality of life in Northern Virginia is actually going to be mea-



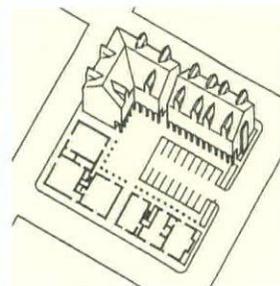
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Single Family

10 dwellings per acre
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sured in terms of access to mass transit,” says Denton U. Kent, president and CEO of the company, which has large land holdings along the Fredericksburg line of the Virginia Railway Express (VRE). Last year, RF&P successfully negotiated with Fairfax County officials to locate the county’s first VRE station in Lorton on a site surrounded by 230 acres of RF&P land. VRE developed the station and, in return, the company built the roads and parking lot. Fairfax also has designated the area as Lorton’s town center, seeking to create a definable community. Now RF&P is soliciting mixed-use residential proposals from private developers. Farther south, near the Leeland Road commuter station in Stafford County, RF&P filed for rezoning of its 445-acre Walnut Farms property to allow for residential development that would take advantage of commuter rail. In June, the county planning commission approved placing 750 dwelling units on the site.

RF&P also controls the train stations in Fredericksburg and Alexandria, both of which have been renovated with the aid of federal dollars. Even before commuter rail came to Fredericksburg in 1992, the city began revising its downtown master plan to anticipate increased ridership and development pressures, says Erik Nelson, senior planner for Fredericksburg. Now the city’s planning commission has approved guidelines which call for higher-density residential development near the train station and revised strategies for commercial development in town, such as placing buildings closer to the street and putting parking lots behind, Nelson says.

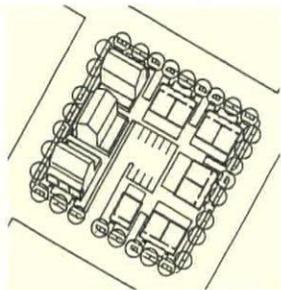
The plan also proposes a multi-modal transportation center along Lafayette Boulevard, where trains, buses, and park-and-ride shuttles would all converge. Boosted by a federal transportation grant, the city hired architect James O. McGhee, AIA, to rework the Fredericksburg station’s former waiting area for use as a shop or restaurant, create a new waiting area, and redesign the platform roof. McGhee, in turn, has bought a downtown lot nearby and secured approval for a new two-story building. He’s designing retail space for the first floor and will locate his office above. “It will be the first new building in the downtown Fredericksburg historic area since the 1930s.”

Even tiny Ashland, the picturesque home of Randolph-Macon College, is set to embark on a comprehensive transportation plan intended to integrate many modes of travel without compromising the town’s positive qualities. Amtrak trains slice right through the heart of Ashland, so “we consider the train to be a vital link in our community,” says Barbara Nelson, the town’s director of planning.

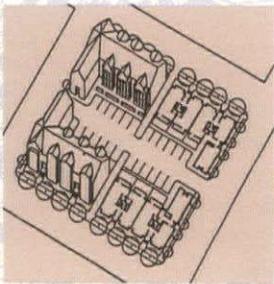
But the most publicized of these transit-oriented projects is an elephant by comparison to the mouse-sized initiatives taking shape elsewhere along the rail corridor. That is Potomac Yard – a 342-acre retired railroad yard located between Old Town Alexandria and Crystal City and owned by RF&P. Unlike the small-town visions being promoted to the south, Potomac Yard

In transit-oriented communities, who are the winners?

When successfully organized and fully developed, a network of high-density transit-oriented communities should provide improved transportation service, savings in cost and time, and a better quality of life. The winners are:



Residential Duplex
 15 dwellings per acre
 2 stories high; 1,500 square feet each; private yards; total of 15 dwellings maximum; off-street parking for 14 cars, on-street parking for 27 cars.



Residential Townhouse
 20 dwellings per acre
 2 stories high; 2,000 square feet each on average; private patios and porches; 20 dwellings total; off-street parking for 24 cars, on-street parking for 30 cars.

will quickly take on the proportions of a new urban center. "It will be a nodal kind of development pattern that has occurred in other parts of Northern Virginia, although the scale will be lower," Kent says. The height limit is 110 feet. A total of 5,500 housing units have been approved, which should generate a population of about 10,000 residents. Kent estimates the office buildings on the site will generate an additional 27,000 people during work hours. In all, about 30 percent of the Potomac Yard project will be transit oriented. "Our scheme for the main body of the yard is to carve out about 62 acres in the center near the station." The core, he says, will take about 15 years to complete.

The multiple layering of transportation facilities is a critical element of the Potomac Yard project, and Kent believes it is what ultimately led to the project's approval. Potomac Yard's high-density commercial core is planned around a transit hub that will integrate Amtrak, Metrorail, the two VRE commuter lines, public bus service, and bicycle/pedestrian routes. Next to the site is Washington National Airport. All of this combines to produce what some real estate experts regard as the prime development site in the country. But Kent readily acknowledges that its value rests in an ability to move people to and from residence and business. "Without mass transit, we would be just another large site," he says. "But with the advent of mass transit, we can also provide the opportunity for living and working in a transit environment, which we see as a great advantage."

Transit-oriented communities are based on the ideal of compact, high-density development with a mix of housing types. Examples (above and left) show how prototypical blocks can achieve that mix. Background drawing envisions a village center at Glen Allen, near Richmond.



- Residents**, who benefit from
- opportunities to live and work in close proximity
 - reduced household costs for automobile ownership and operation
 - time savings
 - increased mobility for those with special physical needs
 - lower housing costs



- Business**, which enjoys
- a broader market base
 - lower operating costs
 - reduced parking requirements
 - reduced employee absences and lateness
 - higher employee productivity



- Government**, which gains from
- more efficient, less costly infrastructure
 - more efficient public services
 - reduced needs for new or improved roads
 - higher tax revenue



- The Community**, which benefits from
- a strong local identity
 - preservation of the surrounding landscape
 - reduced environmental impacts
 - increased public safety
 - choices for wider social interaction
 - more time to take part in community affairs

Source: Washington, D.C. / Richmond Rail Corridor Study, by the Community Design Group.



High density and integration of civic and commercial buildings with houses (left) will make a town that encourages walking. Environmental efforts include a constructed wetland (inset).

Town  Design

Haymount: A Brave Old World

By *Vernon Mays*

Bouncing along a dirt road in his four-wheel-drive pickup, John Clark hardly fits the role of visionary place-maker he may well turn out to be. Candid and unpretentious, the Washington, D.C., developer appears willing to stake his future on the success of Haymount, a planned 1,600-acre neotraditional town on the banks of the Rappahannock River.

What Clark is preaching is an alternative to the sprawl of suburbia, which he characterizes as dehumanizing and autocratic. While some may attribute the national attention being given the project to its role in the trend that has renewed traditional town planning, few have criticized the project aggressive social and environmental agenda. "I believe Haymount will be a step up the evolutionary ladder in terms of really delivering connectedness, a real definition of what the power of place ought to be," says Clark.

Resistance to the new town has sometimes been stiff. Local residents worried that an influx of 10,000 people will raise taxes by demanding more public services, and Caroline County officials were first skeptical of Clark's desire to thrust an entire town onto pristine farmland, a move that required reworking the county's comprehensive plan. An adjacent landowner even tried to stop Clark by taking him to court. But the ball rolls on.

Clark appears ever closer to turning the first spade of dirt on Haymount, which is designed on the premise that high-density development makes for better (and more environmentally responsible) living than typical suburban sprawl. Haymount is laid out in a series of neighborhoods, with 4,000 dwellings planned along narrow streets with sidewalks. A civic green, town centers, and playgrounds are mixed with houses, shops, and offices so that walking

and bike-riding become desirable alternatives to driving a car. In the national context of new town development centered on access to mass transit, Haymount's glaring weakness is its distance – eight miles – from the nearest commuter rail stop. Clark counters with a plan to shuttle residents to the station and back. And in a few years, he promises, Haymount will offer enough jobs to allow most residents to work in town.

Clark made his first public relations coup in 1989 by engaging the services of Miami architects Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, who designed the Seaside resort town in Florida. His backing by the W.C. & A.N. Miller Company, an established development firm based in Washington, D.C., only lends further credibility to the project. But what has really won support for Clark is the appearance, backed by his relentless campaigning, that Haymount will be developed in ways that depart meaningfully from standard practice. Whether or not one believes that small-town characteristics will improve its residents' quality of life, Haymount is noteworthy for its ecological agenda. Its plan includes advanced water treatment methods, including constructed wetlands and other biotechnical means. A farmers' market and organic farm will set the example for sustainable agriculture in the region. And Clark says he will hire a full-time environmental manager to coordinate recycling efforts, educate residents, and protect the natural environment and wildlife. The community's landscape codes even mandate the use of native species on both public and private land. Under current plans, Haymount would actually *gain* trees.

Last spring, the community's native species nursery was begun with 5,000 plants, including rows of white-flowering dogwood, persimmon, papaw, and a variety of oaks. If and when Clark receives the final approvals – which he anticipates by October – work will begin immediately on the wastewater treatment plant and a 30-room inn, restaurant, and spa. "As we start the inn, we're going to start building right away," says Clark, who held an open house in May for builders who wanted to know more about how to get involved. Forty showed up at the metal barn that Clark has constructed as his on-site headquarters. "There's tremendous pent-up demand for this." The restaurant will be supplied by an organic garden developed on the site. "That is sustainable architecture – so that we can grow here and consume here, rather than drag all the way from California."

While he concedes he is going to make "a ton of money" if Haymount goes according to plan, Clark easily slips into philosophical musings about the project's potential to rewrite the rules of land development. "What I want to do is evolve and go further in terms of our development as a civilization, our ability to behave in community. I think the work that [developers] Robert Simon and James Rouse did is important. But I think neither Reston nor Columbia [their respective projects] could really succeed in the way that they envisioned, because local land use patterns called for economic segregation and separation of uses. And there were compromises that were made. I'm sure that there will be a compromise or two that I have to make that I won't like, but I'm going to be a stickler about how I get there. I have been able to avoid economic segregation. I'm getting there on traffic. And I'm really careful about how people interrelate within the community."

"I've never believed I wouldn't succeed."

Editor Vernon Mays toured the Haymount site with developer John Clark and spoke with him about the ongoing challenges of the project.

Architects often criticize the traditional – some say outdated – imagery used to promote Haymount. How do you answer them?

"I believe one needs to respect the regional character. To the extent that Virginia is really driven by colonial, federal, Greek Revival, and Georgian housing, I think it's appropriate that Haymount reflect that architecture. Now does that leave the architect the opportunity to be creative with how he delivers that regional vernacular? Yes, it does. There is enough flexibility in the codes that a clever architect will find a way to build pretty damn near what he wants to."

How have environmental groups received your plans?

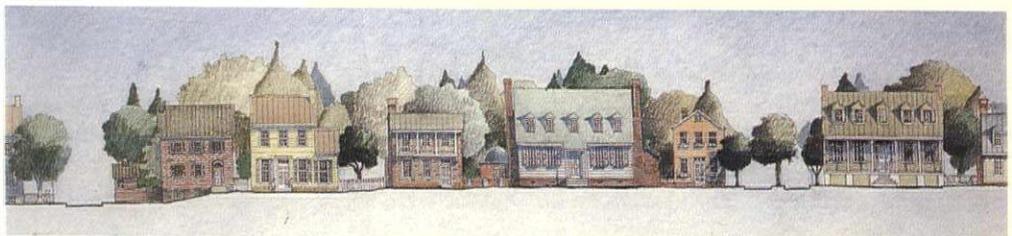
"The Chesapeake Bay Foundation called this 'the right plan in the wrong place.' Their position was that there should be no development at all on the Rappahannock River. What made this 'wrong' was they felt if we were successful in getting the comprehensive plan changed, then other development would come along and the whole Rappahannock corridor would be broken wide open and there would be sprawl. Well, the fact is that large-lot zoning – the 10-acre zoning already in place – absolutely guarantees sprawl. But now the Rappahannock is set up as a resource-sensitive area. If the woman next door decided to develop her land, she would have to do all the same studies I have done. And she can only develop half the site. All those things are in place."

How will you get builders to join your architectural fan club?

"That's easy. I'm going to take my marketing dollars and give the money to architects, rather than to public relations people. I'm going to buy schematic plans. And instead of presenting to me as the client, I'm going to have these architects present their schematic design and a model in the form of public lectures. We're going to take specific blocks of Haymount and do this along the way. And I can guarantee you that the magazines are going to publish all of that. And then to the builders, I'm going to be able to say, 'Gee whiz, fellas, I paid for the schematics. Finish the construction drawings, build the house. Use the reprints for a marketing tool.'"

Some developers might not have had the stomach for the fight needed to get Haymount built, but so far you have. Was there ever a point when you thought this is more trouble than it's worth?

"The truth of the matter is I didn't know it was going to take me seven years. I've only been able to think about this in increments of 'This is a problem I've got to deal with.' There's never been financial pressure, which is always the thing that sours you. Are my partners concerned about their investment? Sure they are. Have there been times when we felt uncomfortable about the law suits? Absolutely. But I have never, ever believed that I wouldn't succeed. I've always felt like this thing was going to happen, because there are so many places where it could have gone wrong, and it never has. Time has been a friend of this project. It has allowed me to grow and get smarter. This plan has evolved to the extent that it's gotten better."



Haymount's zoning will allow for adjacent houses of varying sizes and costs.

Town Meets Gown in Charlottesville

By Michael J. Bednar, FALA

When Thomas Jefferson designed his ordered “Academical Village” in Charlottesville, he established a legacy of quality in town design that remains with us today. Although Jefferson intended the setting for a new university, it also serves as a model for an ideal settlement. To wit: the buildings have clear relationships to each other. They create exterior spaces in the form of a public lawn and private gardens. And these are arranged in a formal grid interlaced with arcaded and exposed pedestrian walkways and roads for service access. In controlling the site, buildings, gardens, walkways, and roads, Jefferson engaged in urban design in the best sense – demonstrating a harmonious way of inhabiting the land.

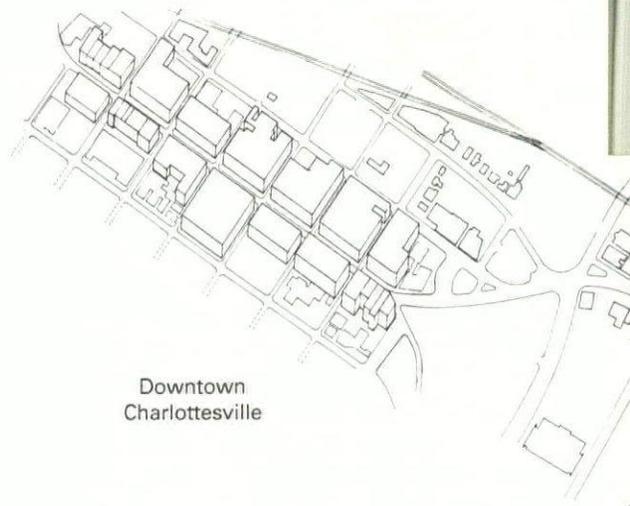
Two miles from the university site is the historic center of Charlottesville, founded in 1762. Characterized by its own formal order and having its own spatial center, the town core developed largely apart from the university – essentially forming one of two poles that are the hallmark of modern Charlottesville.

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Much attention has been paid to these two poles in virtual isolation from one another. On one hand, the university has expanded vastly since mid-century and, more recently, has embarked on a program to restore its historic buildings in a deliberate and thorough fashion. On the other hand, urban design in town took a step forward in the 1970s when noted landscape architect Lawrence Halprin was retained to develop a master plan. His solution focused on Main Street and the creation of a pedestrian mall that gave downtown a spatial focus, a coherent image, and a traffic-free zone with amenities and parking to enable it to compete with outlying shopping centers. The visual impact of the new mall was stunning; historic Main Street became like a linear park. It caused new patterns of experience and use that are still undergoing evolution more than 20 years later.

But it is West Main Street, the link between the downtown and the university, that has been the most recalcitrant element of Charlottesville’s redevelopment. Its heyday occurred at the turn of the century, when train travel created a focus of activity at the crossing of two railroads midway between downtown and the university. As train travel declined, the area converted to auto sales and service. Now the automobile-oriented businesses have relocated, leaving vacant buildings and parking lots. Some street design improvements have been completed and some historic buildings renovated, but much remains to be done.

West Main was considered at length in the city’s 1988 Urban Design Plan, developed with the aid of Carr, Lynch Associates of Cambridge, Mass. The plan identified downtown’s positive attributes, then recommended improvements. One was to encourage activity near the train station on West Main, now slated for renovation. Plans also are underway to rebuild the bridge over the tracks and develop a new mixed-use project nearby.



Downtown
Charlottesville

In 1992, there was another urban design study of West Main Street, albeit under new circumstances – the University of Virginia took an active role. Working with the West Main Street Task Force, this jointly sponsored study was directed by William Rawn Associates of Boston in collaboration with Hanbury Evans Newell Vlattas of Norfolk and Metcalf Tobey & Partners of Reston. (The study received a design citation in the 1995 P/A Awards program sponsored by *Progressive Architecture* magazine.) This corridor is surrounded by viable low-income neighborhoods, whose residents fear an incursion of new university development.

The task force and consultants worked through an open participatory process to reconcile the needs of everyone involved. The resulting plan is a model of town and gown cooperation that emerged following a history of contentiousness. It proposes the location of one or two small residential colleges, a hotel to serve the medical center, renovation of the train station and development of its site, new housing for university employees, a community education center, a recreation center, and small-scale commercial development on empty lots. The plan respects the scale of the existing street and sensitively locates new development in a way that relates to the neighborhoods while preserving existing structures and institutions. All new buildings reinforce the street edge and provide a continuity of pedestrian activity.

A new typology was invented for the residential colleges, one that balances the university’s qualities of openness with the need for privacy and security along a busy city street. This new form places students’ rooms above retail shops along the street to create “eyes on the street” 24 hours a day. It also introduces an intermediate zone which serves as a gateway to the building and a courtyard which unifies the different parts. This prescribed layering of spaces provides clear visual and pedestrian relationships between the public street and the private courtyard.

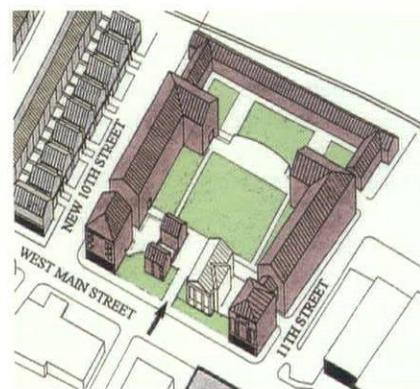
Just how this plan will be implemented remains an open question. The incremental strategy gives assurance that some elements of the plan will be built. Perhaps its most important result will be



Charlottesville's downtown mall (left) continues to evolve more than 20 years after its creation.



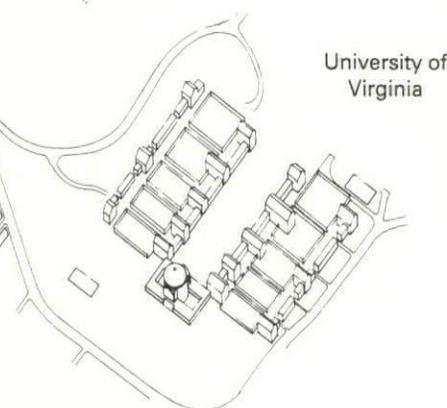
West Main Street District



Proposed residential college saves historic building and incorporates new street-level retail.



Perspective of residential college shows view into courtyard. Existing buildings along West Main appear in white.



University of Virginia

to demonstrate that the city and university can indeed cooperate in planning and urban design to their mutual benefit.

Has Charlottesville been true to Jefferson's legacy of urban design? It has in its intent, as evidenced by the evolution of the city center. The gridded form has been preserved with strong blocks of buildings defining streets. The variety of activities in fine-grained relationships has prospered with housing and offices above shops and restaurants. Downtown has the mall and two urban parks. Now the most serious weakness is the disconcerting shift of scale, with small 18th and 19th century buildings juxtaposed against larger ones from this century. The Omni Hotel, Lewis and Clark

Square (an office condominium block), and the new Water Street parking garage all tend to dwarf the city's older buildings. Still, we are motivated by the high standard of urban design set by Jefferson. If we are clear and forceful about our intentions, the overall result should be coherent. The important thing is to continue to work together at defining a public agenda. The design professions bear particular responsibility in this regard, for urban design is too important to be left to just a few people.

The author is a Charlottesville architect and a professor of architecture at the University of Virginia. He has chaired both the Charlottesville City Planning Commission and the city's Urban Design Task Force.

Norfolk: Reworking The Existing Pieces

By Joseph Cosco

In early 1952, some of the 2,930 families displaced by Norfolk's first redevelopment project moved into Diggs Park, the first public housing project built under the U.S. Housing Act of 1949. In time, however, Diggs Park went the way of many other subsidized housing projects, falling victim to disrepair, despair, and drugs. Enter again the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority. Rather than clear the slum, now called Diggs Town, Norfolk refurbished the homes, added porches and wood columns, replaced unit numbers with street addresses, and turned dirt paths between the buildings into new streets with sidewalks. Now the new physical framework is enabling people to take back control of their neighborhood.

"Now it's a traditional village with streets and front porches, not an ambiguous no-man's land," says Ray Gindroz, an architect and urban designer who helped plan the transformation. "Before, every night residents heard three or four gunshots. Now they hear one gunshot every three or four months. And gradually people are learning to take care of their yard, plant flowers."

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Gindroz is rightfully proud of the project, named one of 40 "great American spaces" by Urban Initiatives, a nonprofit foundation that works to raise awareness of urban design. Diggs Town also is nominated for a presidential design award. "It's one of the greatest successes in the country," says Gindroz, of UDA Architects in Pittsburgh. "It's gotten a lot of attention in Washington."

Diggs Town is one small, but important, piece of an aggressive effort to transform Norfolk from a city with an undeservedly bad reputation in to a model of successful redevelopment. Much has been done. Just as much is underway or in the preliminary stages. Great effort is being directed toward the city's downtown, where there have been both successes and setbacks. The city is trying to build on the successes of the last few years, which include the opening of the Marriott Hotel and Convention Center, the Harbor Park baseball stadium, and the Nauticus museum.

Two major initiatives are the Tidewater Community College Downtown Norfolk Campus and the proposed MacArthur Center shopping mall. The TCC campus, currently under construction, is expected to help rescue Granby Street, once the city's main retail center, from decades of decline and disastrous redevelopment efforts. The \$26.6 million campus, scheduled for a fall 1996 opening, will attract 5,000 to 10,000 students. A new science and technology building is being built on cleared land, while other facilities will be housed in the converted Woolworth's, Smith & Welton, and Loew's Theater buildings. The academic complex, designed by Williams, Tazewell and Associates of Norfolk, will be linked by new plazas and parking areas to other buildings in the area under a plan developed by UDA. A few blocks east, on what is now a wasteland of surface parking, the city



hopes to construct the \$270 million MacArthur Center, an upscale mall with three levels and 1.2 million square feet of retail space. Nordstrom Inc. of Seattle is committed to the project, but a second anchor, Macy's, bowed out earlier this year. The loss of Macy's was softened by the recruitment of the Taubman Co., a powerhouse Michigan-based developer that has built upscale malls in 20 cities. "I think getting them on board is better than losing Macy's," says David Rice, longtime executive director of the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority.

Rice describes the MacArthur Center as a big design challenge. "It's hard to do something that big and fit it into an area that's urban," he says. "We're trying to avoid making it a fortress and make it as much a part of the city as possible. This is an enclosed mall and we're trying to fit it into the urban fabric." He remains optimistic that the mall will open by 1997.

Rice says the mall is the critical piece that will stimulate lagging efforts to attract new home construction, residents, and night life to the city's downtown. The city has had modest success with residential construction adjacent to the attractive Freemason Historic District, but much of the land remains vacant. "Our hope is that Freemason will pick up again once the MacArthur Center gets a bid. But it's been hard to build houses there. It's hard to do high-rises and market them. We're thinking of doing more rental," he says. "I think it needs the kick that MacArthur Center is going to give it. I think we ought to fill it up and not have these voids. Any downtown has to be a 24-hour place."

Gindroz is confident that it will all come together quickly. "It's happening much faster than I thought it would," he says. "Just



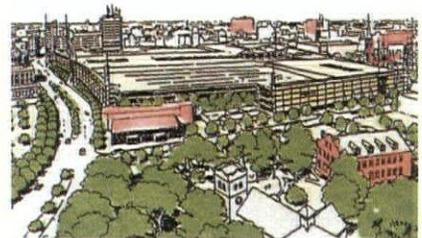
Paul Rocheleau

Redevelopment in Diggs Town included adding wide porches to the units (left) and assigning street addresses. Similar view (inset) shows an earlier dirt path that was replaced with street and sidewalks.

The Norfolk 2000 plan proposes another formal garden, as well as a reflecting pool, to create a new civic space between the Chrysler Museum and the Harrison Opera House, both of which have been refurbished in recent years and serve as anchors for the city's cultural community. These proposed public improvements are intended to encourage new development, including arts facilities, a high school for the performing arts, housing, retail shops, and offices.

The greening of Norfolk would become complete under UDA's master plan for parks and boulevards. Based on the turn-of-the-century City Beautiful movement," the plan calls for parklike boulevards that embrace the city's greatest natural resource – its bay, rivers, creeks, and lakes – and link public open space with neighborhood streets. Two of the city's largest landholders, Old Dominion University and the Norfolk Naval Base, support the idea. Gindroz has suggested the Lafayette River as a demonstration project. A large percentage of the riverfront is in public ownership and virtually all the pieces are in place to make an attractive park, he says. "There's not much to do to make it work," he says. Rice is somewhat less sanguine, noting that Gindroz has made some wonderful proposals but wondering at the same time where the money will come from to finance them.

Money, as well as vocal resistance, is a problem for another major project at the other end of the city, in East Ocean View, where the redevelopment authority hopes to create an attractive traditional neighborhood of 400-600 homes on 130 rundown acres. The massive project, which would incorporate some of the same principles used in Diggs Town, is expected to cost the city about \$35 million and take five to 10 years to complete. The city and New Urbanist architect Andres Duany of Miami have been criticized in at least one national magazine for proposing to bulldoze rather than conserve the area. But Rice scoffs at the notion that there is much to preserve. "That isn't any kind of neighborhood," he says. "It's a collection of transient people."



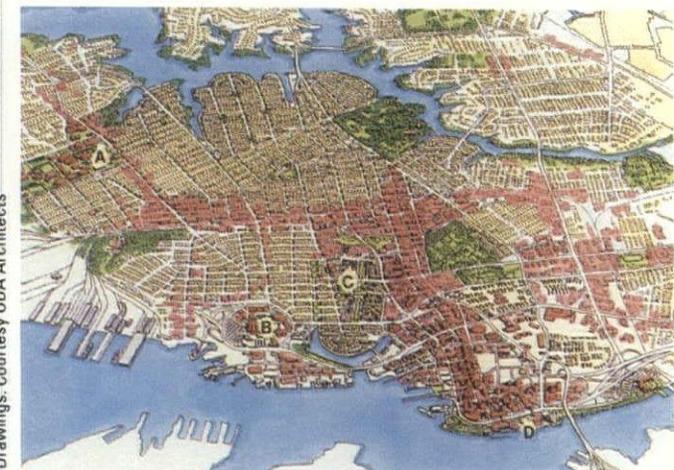
The city is promoting MacArthur Center, an upscale mall located downtown.

Rice and his assistants will be going back to the City Council with a proposal to begin phase one of the East Ocean View project. The question is, how much blight needs to be cleared before the city can attract new residents? "We're trying to find the money to make it happen" Rice says. "It's going to take more money than we have now." But the city's track record – built by what Gindroz calls an "extraordinarily creative and enlightened" redevelopment and housing authority – keeps Rice pushing. "If you look at it in the larger context, I think we've come 80 percent of the way toward rebuilding the city, and that's a tremendous story," he says. "And not only have we done it, but we've done it well. I think the thing Norfolk has done that other cities haven't done is that we've made it work."

The author is a Norfolk freelance writer and a journalism instructor at Old Dominion University.

look at what's happened in the last five years in the worst economic climate. I think in five years we'll have downtown residential."

Gindroz also has realistic hopes for another ambitious project in the Downtown Norfolk 2000 plan. Dubbed Academy Place, the preliminary concept calls for a 200-foot-wide public plaza connecting the historic Norfolk Academy building to Boush Street, at the north end of Waterside Drive. The thoroughfare would feature formal gardens enclosed by a mix of apartments, retail shops, and offices. The plan calls for putting in a trolley that would connect many of Norfolk's landmarks, as well as 16,000 parking spaces that could serve the MacArthur Center. Gindroz calls Academy Place just an idea, but one that has the city's strong endorsement.



Areas shown in green on Norfolk map are proposed parks that turn the city's many natural waterways into public assets.

Drawings: Courtesy UDA Architects

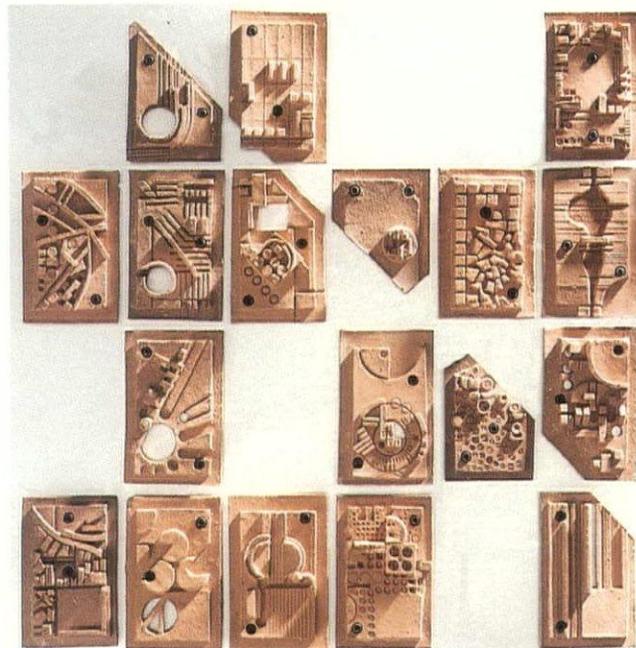
What Makes a Town?

By Donna W. Dunay, AIA

There is something lamentable in the way most children start and end each school day. The yellowness, the noise, and the cacophonous journey of the school bus are etched in the minds of many as a memento of the early years of development. As intense as this experience is, there remains a nagging doubt as to its worth and expense. It is not simply the quantifiable costs of bus transportation that are disturbing, nor is it the significant time that this travel involves. What is at issue is the waste of a resource, the children of our communities, that is exported out of neighborhoods and towns each day under the rationale of functional clarity and the false economy of consolidation. Knowing a community by the daily walk to school is an experience considered too optional, and the absence of children in the town eliminates the shared responsibility that citizenship requires of education.

Removing a school from its town context might, in itself, seem inconsequential. But when one considers that this mode of planning has become part of our common psyche and extends to all institutions, the disintegration of town form, and thus town identity, becomes a fact of modern life. The substitution of places with "facilities," and institutions with "functions" has stripped away the greater role of value and meaning that a resource such as a school can play. In a broader context, the gradual devaluation of civic institutions severs our ties to the past, thus breaking the link to tradition.

Is the content of our civic life to be explained and justified by the excitement given over to the latest mall, no matter what ghost towns are left in the wake? Current methods of planning and design foster a growing ignorance of our towns and reward instead the emptiest efforts. New shopping centers sprout like commercial fortresses under the banner of "town centers," accessible only to shopkeepers willing to pay the going rate. The cheaper commodity, offered in large quantities, obscures the hidden costs to the public in the form of services, roads, infrastructure, and other tax-supported subsidies that increase over time. The glare of the latest bargain blinds us from the realization that these single-function

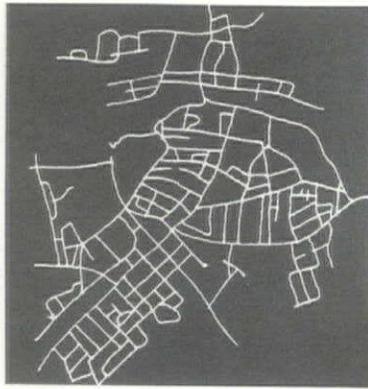


facilities are devoid of life during the 12 hours they are closed, and empty of culture during the 12 hours when they are open.

The building of public-supported components such as streets, highways, schools, and subdivisions rarely, if ever, are devised with physical tradition in mind. A genuine awareness of any settlement can only be drawn out and nurtured from the specifics of the place. The conflicts and competition of urban settings build relationships, and thus meanings, over time. For example, the large portal of the movie theater or the arched opening of a Neoclassical bank, set against the staccato repetition of small shops, is a memorable condition found on many Main Streets. The juxtaposition of scales becomes part of a collective remembrance of the street as a space of occurrence. This canvas allows daily activity to be formed into commonly held cultural experience. But consider that most buildings today require area for parking that is double or triple the area of the structure. This single requirement pre-determines that buildings be placed on a parcel of boundless acreage, away from interaction with neighbors and town.

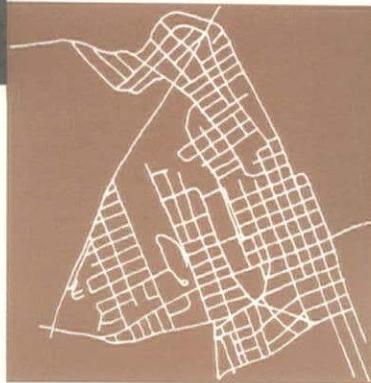
As architects, we find ourselves in the dubious position of being absolved from the public responsibilities of intentions and value judgments. Being cut out of the action, "the art of" is no longer our domain. We have fooled ourselves into believing that anything we build is the culmination of our culture, an achievement by mere fact. However, the act of building as art must originate as a part of a continuum, and the role of the architect is to infuse materials with life and significance and make society aware of the consequences. Without this conviction, material reality fades along with our form-making capabilities, as questions of meaning in the physical world are blanketed by simplistic views. Nonetheless, there is a curiosity in the fact that some aspects of towns are swept away, yet others show a certain tenacity – this is where a study of critical and trivial townscapes can begin.

Abstract depictions of cities and towns, when expressed as simple line drawings, are boundless organisms, each torn by the extend-

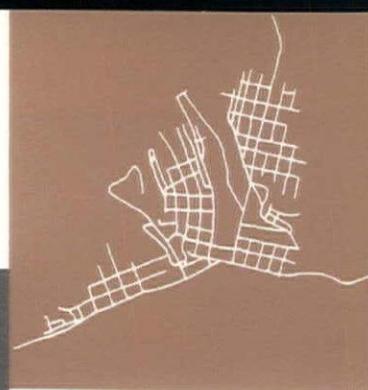


Christiansburg

Fredericksburg



Lynchburg



Clifton Forge

ing stretch of expansion and redefined with subsequent additions. At the same time, there exists the secure presumption that each town is a jurisdiction with ordinances that maintain order and law. Beyond law, this legal definition fails to provide a secure orientation by its avoidance of the material world. Even with only one of these towns pictured in mind, it is difficult to reconstruct the plan from memory without personal knowledge of the town. No organizing principal is present.

In colonial times, an organization of lines and areas used to mark streets and blocks produced a significantly different result. As Sylvia Doughty Fries mentions in *The Urban Idea in Colonial America*, cities and towns were conceived as instruments of a historic process of spiritual regeneration or with other aspirations, distinctly moral in tone. It is quite probable that the form of many early New England towns was derived principally from the Bible. Cities depicted in 17th century Bibles, for example, show many common aspects. Most were square; the 12 tribes of Israel were accommodated by some means relating to the square; the city proper was located in the center of concentric squares; and the towns were organized about two primary cross axes. For the colonial town, the completeness of the figure was a necessity.

A concept of planning arising from providential design was generally suggested by the use of William Paley's *Natural Theology*, an 1802 text that was a mainstay in the Harvard curriculum for more than 50 years. In it Paley wrote, "There cannot be design without a designer; contrivance without a contriver; order without choice; arrangement, without anything capable of arranging; subserviency and relation to a purpose, without that which could intend a purpose..." This kind of thinking should be examined. Today, our limited understanding of function as the focus of design could benefit from knowledge of Paley's and Fries's beliefs when we consider: What makes a town?

Four projects are suggested here to transform the way towns are addressed. The term "project" is used because it implies a work

to aspire to. These projects would require intense involvement; they are not quick-fix solutions. And they suggest a kind of engagement that requires constant attention and hard work.

1. Offer the means to support a completeness of life and carry events that give identity to this end (such as schools and education, cemeteries and funerals). The question should be answered: What has made this town the way it is? We know we have a town when we see it as a stage for life events. The town cemetery exists because it is an essential part of life and, therefore, is not evaluated by its feasibility in financial terms.

In most towns, the commercial "strip" is far more animated than Main Street. The number and kinds of businesses constantly turning over and rebuilding turn attention to the strip. In most cases, it is not an orderly place. Abandoned buildings sit next to overgrown weedy sites and sparkling new fast food franchises backed up with Madison Avenue advertising. Yet, of the two, Main Street is the institution where citizens meet eye-to-eye, not passing in the car. This contact is the grounding that is necessary to create a town consciousness. All of our senses are called on to participate. We must stop and look, listen and hear, touch and smell, and if we are very fortunate, taste. This orchestration of the senses draws our attention. The trips necessary to leave town during any given day thins the mix and saps the vitality.

2. Accommodate the monumental at both the large and small scales. The reality of materials has not been exhausted. By examining the use of materials in a community, beliefs are subtly presented through a readable scale of values. What are the materials and method of construction? Are all things made in the same way? The means of making becomes a part of the total detail and contributes to the quality of the construction. The cut of a word in stone is phenomenal, as the care with which a bench placed and leveled along a walkway should be. That is why the monumental should be visible at the small scale as well as at the large, even though we often think of great size when we hear someone say "monumental."



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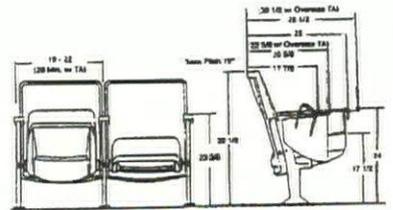
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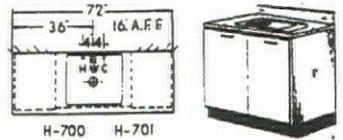
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3. Identify and value a form. Graphic techniques that suggest visions have become so simplified that often only one depiction – a plan or perspective – is used to represent a new building to the public. Rarely, if ever, are drawings used to illuminate relationships other than those specified in the building requirements. But early maps and sketches of American towns show that new buildings and preexisting features of the land often were shown together so that those features would become equal partners in the town formation. In the past, the whole was understood to contain a larger vision. By employing the classic viewing device of foreground, middle ground, and background, the drawing of the land as a formation of parts was an experiential frame of reference for the town layout. Abstract topographic means of development used today are not sufficiently balanced in the domain of experience.

4. Embrace the spirit of the times by way of something other than the easy image of the day and resist simplistic rules and contrivances. We tend to believe that the existence of planning departments takes care of all the planning issues that need to be addressed, when in fact planning departments have devolved into agencies that merely check for adherence to municipal ordinances. In a climate of liability and legalities, they have become reactive – as opposed to actively advancing a view of how we might live better. Vision statements far too frequently have no hope of survival. Style as a choice satisfies the impatient quest for immediate answers. And the ultimate goal is shifted toward making a place that looks like a town, rather than one that is a town.

The many new developments that are being built and labeled neotraditional are a gift to our time – not because they are good, but because they alert us to other possibilities. The supposed coherency they represent is far too tidy and closed to offer a new urbanism. Yet the discussion of them, now in the public forum, has helped raise the question: “What makes a town?”

While the goal of new developments so often is to reach a state of completion, a genuine town never arrives at such a state. A town that doggedly pursues its project, its aspirations, is genuine at every moment in the pursuit.

Donna W. Dunay is a professor of architecture at Virginia Tech.

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The Secret Lives of Buildings

How Buildings Learn: What Happens After They're Built.

By Stewart Brand. 243 pp. Illustrated. New York: Viking. \$30.00 cloth.

By Mark Alden Branch

Visit the office of an architecture firm, and you are as likely as not to find an appealingly messy, open-plan space, perhaps in an old warehouse or industrial building. Architects commonly occupy such space because it is comfortable, affordable, and flexible. Stewart Brand argues that architects should – but don't – do as well for their clients.

In *How Buildings Learn*, Brand, editor of *The Whole Earth Catalog* and a self-described inventor-designer, provides one of those outsider's critiques that could very well shake up the views of architects, clients, and all of us who use buildings. Brand's thesis is that change – in ownership, in use, in appearance – is a natural part of a building's life. Turning dictums by Louis Sullivan and Sir Winston Churchill inside out, he says, "First we shape our buildings, then they shape us, then we shape them again – ad infinitum. Function reforms form, perpetually."

Brand argues that architects design buildings that respond too specifically to a given program, rendering them obsolete when change inevitably occurs. The book is an exploration of such change. Using historic photos, Brand creates compelling series that show the often ingenious adaptations in response to changes in function, obsolescence, or real estate pressures.

MIT's Building 20 (right) is exemplary of how a plain container can accommodate a wide range of uses.



Surprisingly, the study of how buildings change is not a common part of the architectural world. Usually, such change is viewed by architects, historians, and even preservationists with nothing more than sadness or determination to "restore" the building to the architect's original intentions. Brand argues that by understanding the nature of accommodation in buildings, architects can design to make such adaptation easier.

With that thought in mind, Brand faults architects for ignoring their buildings once they are finished, thus missing the opportunity to learn from how they are used. "Oh, you never go back," one architect told Brand. "It's too discouraging."

If architects are the book's villains, its most compelling hero is a building, a huge 50-year-old wood-frame structure at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology known only as Building 20. Built by the Navy during World War II and slated for demolition ever since, Building 20 is ugly, ordinary, and beloved by the researchers who have used it over the years. Brand writes admiringly of the way the building has nurtured creativity over the years, jump-starting new technology companies such as Digital Equipment Corporation and cutting-edge researchers such as linguist Noam Chomsky. The reason for the humble building's popularity is summed up by a former user: "If you want to bore a hole in the floor to get a little extra vertical space, you do it. You don't ask. It's the best experimental building ever built."

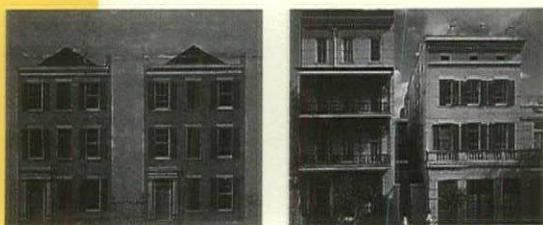
Building 20 epitomizes what Brand thinks buildings should be: solid in structure but flexible everywhere else, with mechanical systems easily acces-

sible and walls easily movable. He argues for a conservative approach to design, using vernacular forms and materials. (California architect Christopher Alexander, who has endorsed a similar approach in such books as *A Pattern Language*, is one of the "good" architects Brand cites.) Brand suggests putting more money into structure and less into finish, just like the industrial buildings that always seem to find new lives.

On the other hand, Brand spends one chapter admiring buildings whose adaptations have come more slowly and purposefully – he calls them "high-road" buildings, as distinguished from those that take a "low road" to adaptation, like Building 20. The success stories among high-road buildings seem to be those that remained in private hands during their working lives. (Public buildings, by contrast, too often suffer at the hands of the bureaucracies that own them.) His positive examples include English estates, small libraries, and Virginia's trio of Presidential country homes: Mount Vernon, Monticello, and Montpelier.

Unlike low-road buildings that are "successively gutted and begun anew," says Brand, high-road buildings like Mount Vernon reached the state in which they are currently preserved through years of addition, renovation, and refinement based on the experience of living there. Mount Vernon, for instance, evolved from a one-and-a-half-story cottage to its present grandeur over a 25-year period. First came the addition of another story, then the symmetrically arranged dependencies, two wings, and the famous piazza, which Brand calls "one of the nicest places in

(continued on page 35)



The same two residences in New Orleans shown in 1857 (left) and adapted in 1993.



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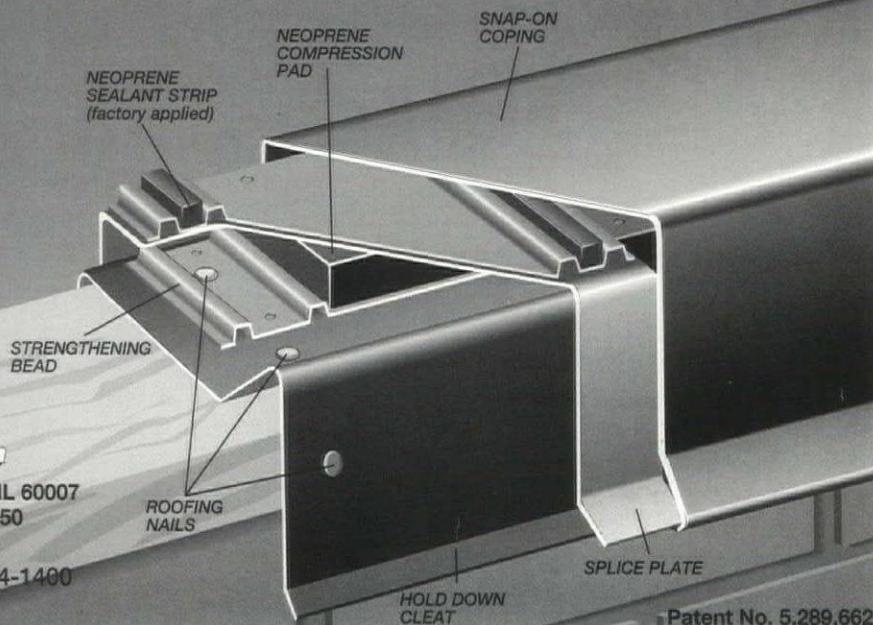
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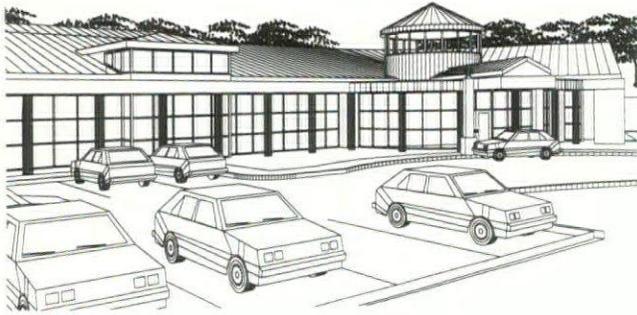
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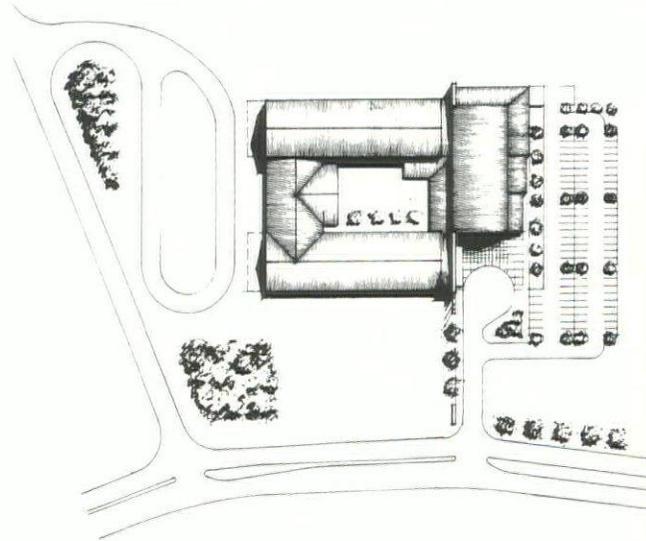
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Architect: Daggett & Grigg, Charlottesville
Project: Forest Lakes Medical Center

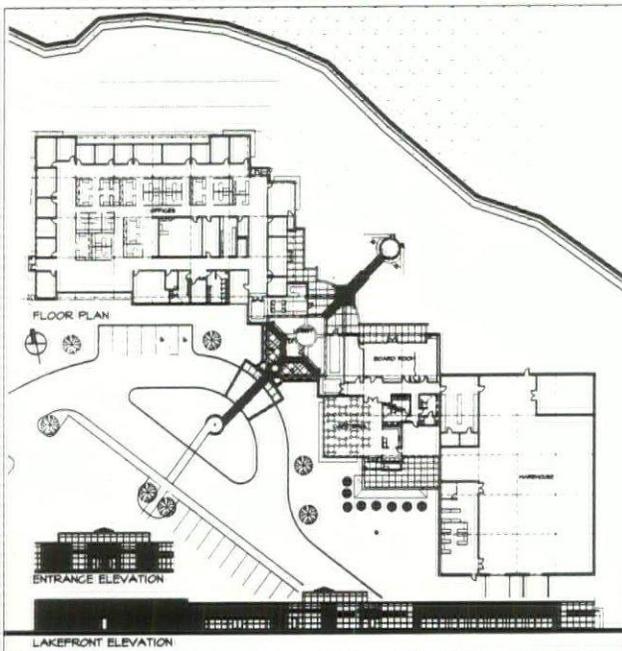
This 12,000-square-foot project, designed for the University of Virginia Health Services Foundation, will house a group practice serving the growth area north of Charlottesville. The building is proposed to be partially earth sheltered and passive solar with a geothermal heat pump system. 804-971-8848.



Architect: Bond Comet Westmoreland + Hiner, Richmond
Project: Atlee Elementary School

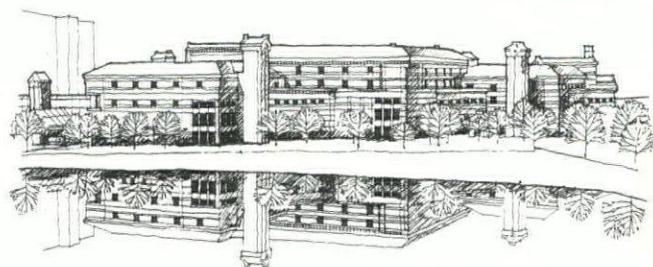
This new 79,000-square-foot elementary school will accommodate 750 students and expand for 900. The design includes a media center and art room with courtyard access, two music rooms, and a multipurpose gymnasium with some second-floor classrooms for fourth- and fifth-graders. 804-788-4774.

32



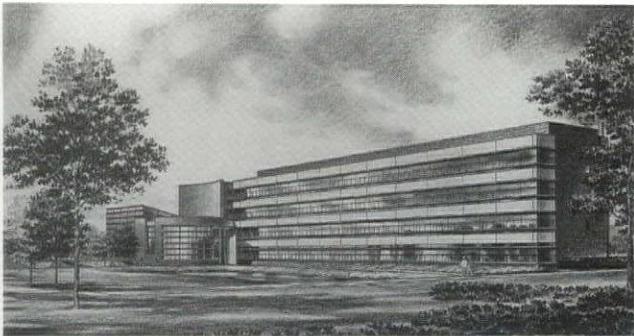
Architect: HBA Architecture & Interior Design, Virginia Beach
Project: Al-Anon World Services Center

The first building in Corporate Landing Industrial Park, this office for Al-Anon World Services combines 12,000 square feet of warehouse space with 21,250 square feet of office and support areas. Expanses of glass offer views of a lake which runs along the northeast side of the building. 804-490-9048.



Architect: Henningson, Durham & Richardson, Alexandria
Project: Acute Care Facility, Portsmouth Naval Medical Center

Construction is underway on this five-story, one million-square-foot building. Located in a historic district, the 363-bed building will include emergency, inpatient, and outpatient departments, and will be connected to an existing medical building via enclosed walkways. 703-683-3400.



Architect: Rancorn Wildman Krause Brezinski, Newport News
Project: Oceanography and Physical Sciences Building, ODU

The building is part of a plan to create a Science Quadrangle on the spatially fragmented Old Dominion University campus. Planned with Perkins & Will of Chicago, it addresses goals such as optimizing efficiency, allowing for lab flexibility, and encouraging interaction among disciplines. 804-873-6606.



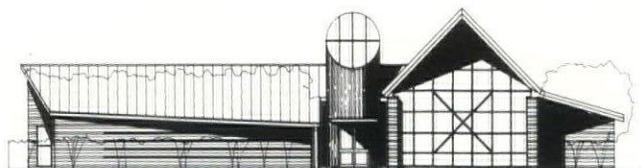
Architect: Mitchell/Matthews & Associates, Charlottesville
Project: Jefferson Quarry Office Building

This 40,000-square-foot building, located a half-mile from the Rotunda of the University of Virginia, will provide Charlottesville with much sought-after Class A office space. The distinguished and understated brick facade encloses a highly efficient and flexible interior. 804-979-7550.



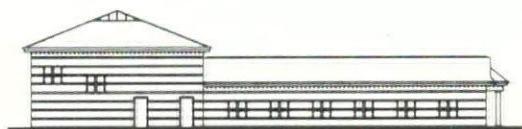
Architect: CMSS Architects, Virginia Beach
Project: Bachelor Enlisted Quarters, Norfolk Naval Base

Military housing is being redefined to meet the Navy's goal of quality quarters for its recruits. This barracks facility accommodates more than 246 two-man suites and activity rooms in a five-story building. The exterior design reflects the historical context of its immediate surroundings. 804-497-5060.



Architects: Odell Associates, Inc., Richmond
 and Mills Oliver & Webb, Inc., Blacksburg
Project: New River Valley Airport Terminal

Made of simple forms with rusticated masonry and standing-seam metal roofs, this 4,500-square-foot facility recalls the surrounding rural setting of Pulaski County. 804-644-5941 (Odell) or 703-552-2157 (Mills Oliver & Webb).



Architect: Chou & Associates, Virginia Beach
Project: Community Center, NSGA Northwest

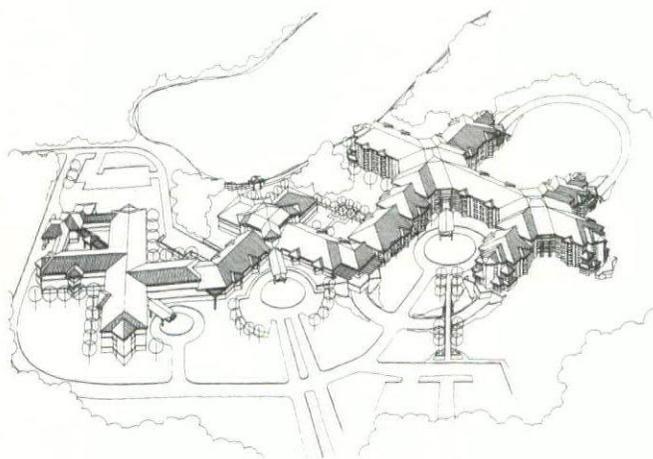
This 778-square-meter community center in Chesapeake provides a multipurpose support facility which includes a housing office and self-serve store for residents in surrounding military housing. The design emphasizes a residential style and provides for future expansion. 804-499-3667.



Architect: Williams Tazewell & Associates, Norfolk
Project: Child Study Center Addition, Old Dominion University

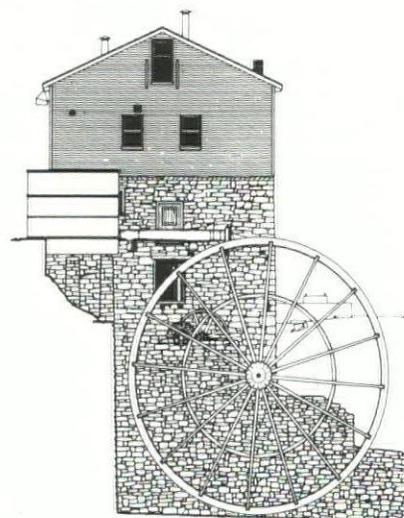
The 20,000-square-foot addition includes handicapped and traditional classrooms for infant, toddler, and kindergarten levels; indoor play areas; remediation and pediatric labs; faculty and administration offices; and audiology, therapy, clinical, consultation, and parent development rooms. 804-623-6621.

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Architect: Sherertz Franklin Crawford Shaffner, Roanoke
Project: Trailblazer Village

Trailblazer Village, an \$18.2 million continuing-care retirement community in Midland, Michigan, will include 122 independent living units, 40 assisted living units, 32 nursing beds, and a community center on a 40-acre site. Construction is set to begin in the fall of 1996. 703-344-6664.



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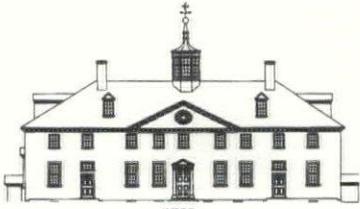
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1758



1774



1799



"High-road" buildings such as Mount Vernon evolved slowly to their present grandeur.

(continued from page 30)

America to just sit." Illustrating his thesis, Brand asks, "Would Washington have known how to make the piazza so amenable if he hadn't lived in the house for 14 years first?"

Whether or not you agree with Brand's prescriptions, his diagnosis is insightful and exciting. It helps us see that buildings that have been altered through the years are not necessarily violated works of art, but simply entities struggling to survive. And, like many polemicists, Brand can get carried away and is sometimes imprecise or just plain wrong. It is nonsense to suggest, as Brand does, that Frank Lloyd Wright's reputation "should rot" because of his infamous leaky roofs. In bashing what he calls "magazine architecture," Brand neglects the value of innovation and experiment, which were some of Wright's greatest contributions.

But not every architect can or should hope to match Wright's influence. Unfortunately, the profession's definition of success too often centers on experiments and unusual forms, leading architects to forget dependable, time-tested solutions. This book, given the audience it deserves, might help turn things around.

Mark Alden Branch, a frequent contributor to Inform, is also a correspondent for Progressive Architecture.

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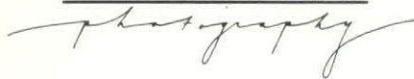
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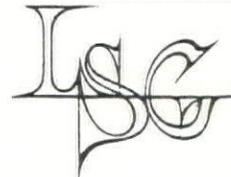
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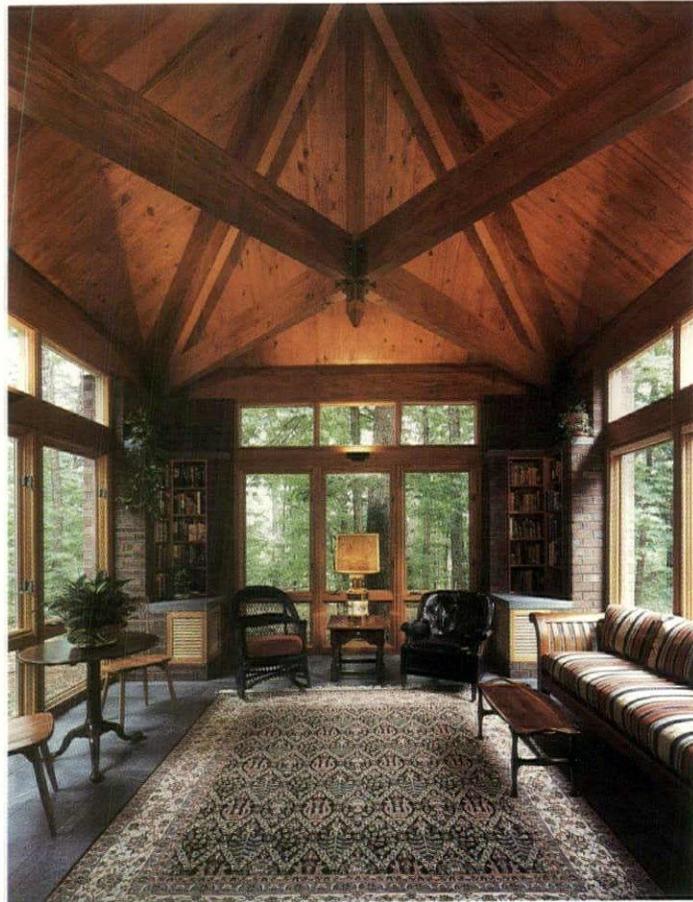
Taking Notice

Funny how building projects tend to evolve. When Dr. Todd H. Bullard approached his son about designing a small addition to his house near Charlottesville, he wanted a screened porch where he could sit and enjoy the yard. But the architect son, also named Todd, prodded dad for ideas on how the space might be used. It seemed the house was overrun with books, the dining room crowded with an oversized desk. Dr. Bullard badly needed a study. Why, the architect reasoned, couldn't the new room be both?

Well, it could. The result is a new 400-square-foot pavilion that "has become the room in which my father lives – and my mother spends a lot of time there as well," says Todd W. Bullard, a principal of VMDO Architects in Charlottesville. Bullard first envisioned the addition as an object standing apart from the house. Throughout the design process, he continued to think of it as "an assemblage of elemental pieces, solids and voids." When pressed to consider his influences, Bullard allows that – subliminally at least – there is a hint of Frank Lloyd Wright here. Indeed, the purity of the pavilion's form and the simplicity of the brick piers are sympathetic to the spirit of Wright's Unitarian Church in Oak Park, Illinois. Bullard put the piers to good use, too. Their bases function as storage cabinets on which lamps or a TV can be placed. Their midsections are carved away and lined with oak bookshelves. And at the top, they form the bearing surfaces for the roof structure – a two-directional king-post truss underpinning a hip roof.

Bullard says his father, a retired college president, is also an avid gardener. So he was keen on keeping the addition near the house to preserve existing trees. Early drawings placed the study parallel to the back of house, but the slender connecting piece looked awkward. "It seemed too tight, but to push the house out in the yard would have endangered some trees. Rotating the room slightly allowed us to widen the opening toward the patio without getting too close to the trees. And I liked the idea that it allowed the building to be set apart from the house." – *Vernon Mays*

The Freestanding Study

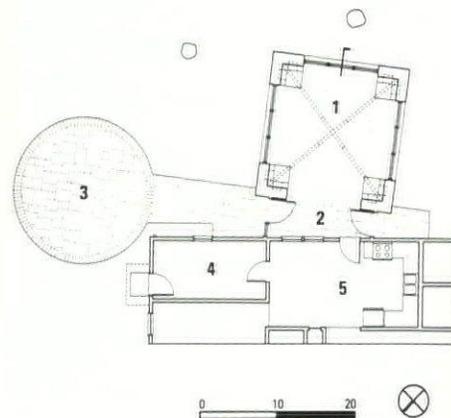


Photos: Beaurline Photography

By supporting the roof at the corners, Bullard allowed the walls to be open expanses of glass.



Locally quarried soapstone was used for the study's floor and a new patio and walkway built at the same time as the addition.



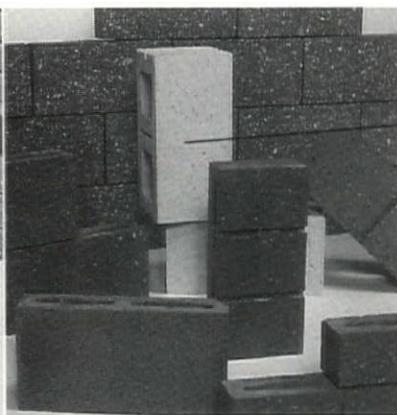
- 1 Study
- 2 Enclosed Connector
- 3 Patio
- 4 Laundry Room (Existing)
- 5 Kitchen (Existing)

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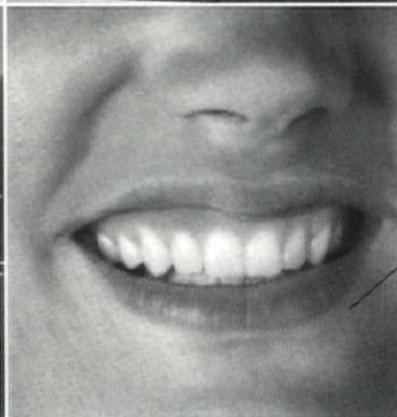
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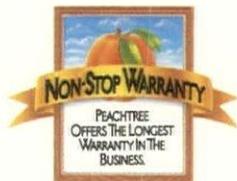


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