the Charette

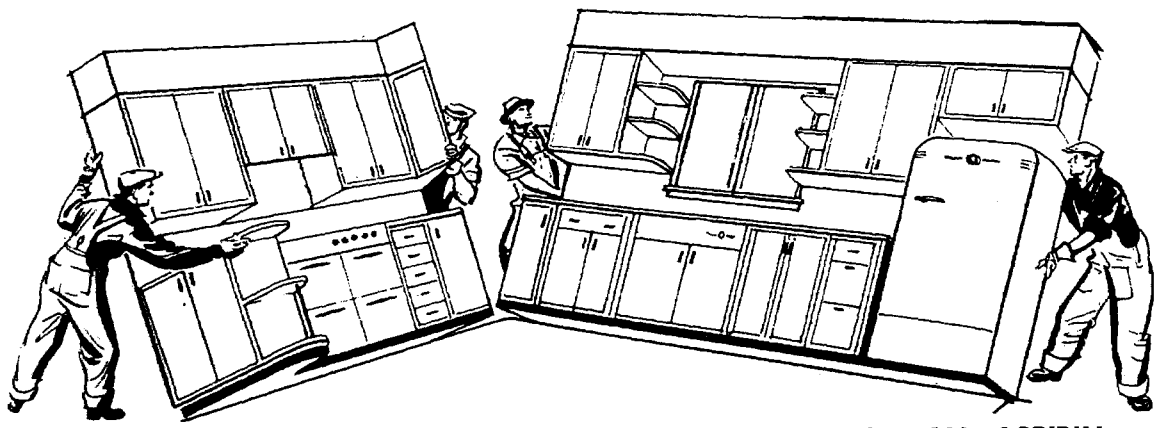
PITTSBURGH'S
JOURNAL OF ARCHITECTURE

Peterman House, Wexford, Pa.

Raymond Viner Hall, Architect

March 1949

Builders and Contractors . . .



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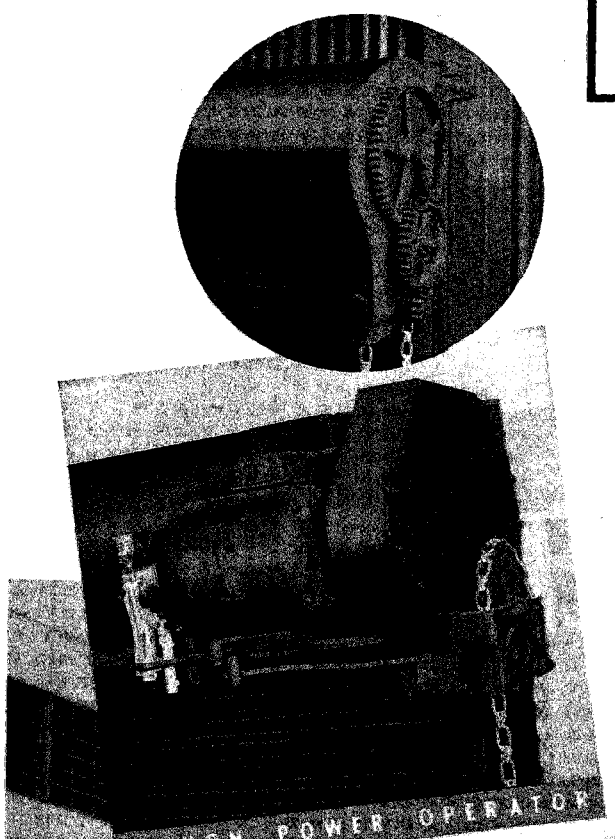

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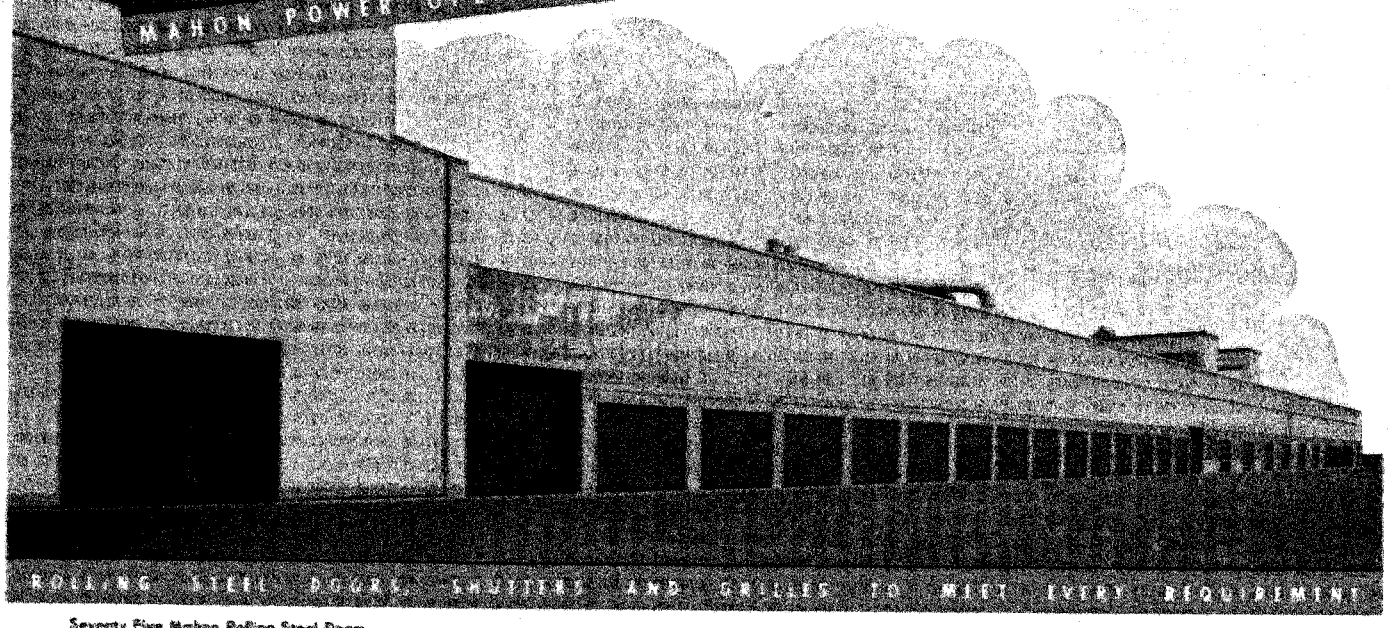


Seventy Five Mahon Rolling Steel Doors are installed in the new building illustrated above, which was built by Spence Bros., Gen. Contrs. Saginaw, Mich., for a large midwestern Foundry Company.

MAHON

LETTERS

Editor:

I have just seen my first copy of *Charette* and am much impressed with your magazine. We in Chicago aspire to a printed magazine with half-tones but we shall probably reach that end slowly.

L. Morgan Yost
Editor
Chicago Bulletin, A.I.A.
Kenilworth, Illinois

* * *

Editor:

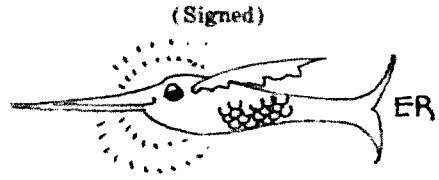
Charette is in swell shape. Nice job.

John A. Grove, Jr.
Director
Pittsburgh Architectural Club

* * *

dear editor
goodie goodie goodie now charette tells me we architects are going to conceive spatially on the wing i suppose its wonderful this age of relatively nuclear fission and ionispherical mensuration something exposive and stimulating will emerge from each electrical impulse of our being the thing that nonplusses me most at this time with my de trop perception and comprehension of scale is which root concept is the synthesis of scale how will the root affect me how much and where which of my cerebral convolutions will be changed in pattern and reoriented for entry into the elysian fields of the new architecture please tell me how to prepare myself for entrance into the new sanctum scantorum i am already familiar with one eighth one fourth and other scales i am in love with them upon occasion i even dally with three in scale which i like too perhaps professional concepts of spatial requirements would best be served if measured in mega cycles or gausses or columns of mercury brother they are scale will it be necessary for me to evaluate scale perpendicularly laterally or rectilinearly visually emotionally or subconsciously shall i licquor up before or after the possibilities of scale are infinite i look forward to the great new word scale conceptions or should i say i hope to be able to envision the cataclysmic rearrangements in the future of scale with a clear eye

(Signed)



Protest

No matter how good U. S. Steel's Gunnison prefabricated homes are, all self-respecting architects should resent the Gunnison catalogue. Written in highly romantic prose around the sales appeal that "Man's Greatest Gift to Woman is a Gunnison Home" (unsupported by Dr. Kinsey, incidentally), the catalogue peddles a line of pure ornament which it calls "Architectural Treatment," consisting of window boxes, entrance hoods, iron rails, shutters, placques and pilasters. Such solid "extras" as garage, fireplace, front porch and basement are not included in the "treatment," much less the house itself. What fripperies has architecture come to?

Design Unlimited

Curious as to why Charles Slater calls his architectural office "Design Unlimited," we upped and asked the boss himself about it. Seems that the wider the scope, the better Slater likes work. Not content with straight architecture, in which field he is now at work on a mission, an infirmary, a shopping center, a Sunday school and a cocktail lounge, Slater has a Products Design Department. Swan's Easter Egg Dye packages came out of this division and the factory is currently at work on a revolutionary dog stand (to restrain canines for doctoring or primping) as well as a wolf whistle (sophisticated car horn for sailor-type wolves). In still another office enterprise, Slater maintains a six-county franchise for Playboy automobiles. This he refers to as a "business design problem." Little wonder that the Slater slogan is: Anything for Anybody Anyplace at Anytime.

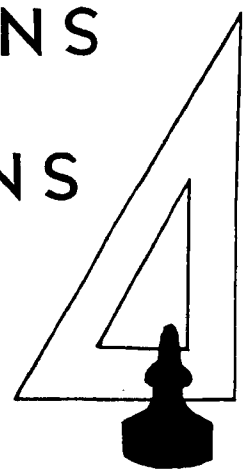
Bees Is Folks

The Aluminum Company of America recently announced that in France prefabricated aluminum honeycombs are being used to relieve French bees from the task of producing wax. This gives the bees more time to spend with the flowers.

Hardly had the significance of this development been calculated when came news that an aluminum roof in a bee house lowers temperatures 15 degrees, making it quite unnecessary for the bees to circulate air by wingpower, their traditional method of air-conditioning their own environment.

Jay Sharp, outspoken editor of ALCOA's house organ, expressed a sensible attitude toward these developments recently. "We must," he said, "call a halt somewhere. If every bee

PLANS & PANS

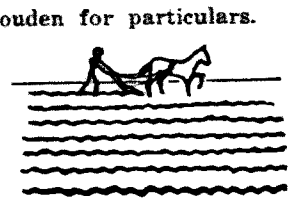


becomes a drone, where will we get our honey? What will the flowers do? And how will we explain things to our children?"

Douden, Inc.

Mr. Herbert Douden has formed a modest but promising corporation to manufacture pictures for picture windows. "We are aware," says Mr. Douden, "that even more than daylight, privacy and comfort, the proud possessors of today's picture windows want something to look out at." Strategically located in Pittsburgh and employing advanced production methods, the company, known as Photogravy, Inc., now offers all seasons in large photomurals, with a special insert for late, unseasonable winters like 1949. While the civic-conscious company prefers to service local customers with its small stock of clean, picturesque Allegheny County scenes or at least Pennsylvania landscapes, there *is* a complete line of Catskill Mountains, western canyons, deltas, mesas, and the livelier section of the boardwalk at Atlantic City.

An ingenious product, available in late March, is a corner picture (for corner picture windows) made from an angle shot of the Times Building in Times Square, complete with news. All night pictures are interchangeable with neon or moon. In day pictures, rising smoke and birds are standard equipment. Flying saucers are extra. Pictures are available in all standard picture window sizes. For non-standard, or out-sized windows, the company has gone to great expense in photographing some of the unused mural sketches done for government buildings under the old W.P.A. Write or call Mr. Douden for particulars.



Discovery

Still in demand is *Charette's* August, 1948, issue on stained glass windows. Most recent request for copies came from Gale Heslop, associate member of the Pittsburgh Architectural Club, whose ancestors for four generations have been men of distinction in the art of stained glass making. In churches from Bangkok to Podunk, Gale claims, he is the little children in "Suffer Little Children To Come Unto Me" windows, his father having used the handiest model he could find. All set to follow in the craft himself, Gale made the astonishing discovery that the windows he'd seen made all his life were *colored,* and that *he* was colorblind. Today he is an engineer with the Herman Nelson Corporation.

Here and There

How little headway modern architecture had made in 1929 is revealed in that delightfully nostalgic book, *I Remember Distinctly,* an album of American life between wars. Reprinted from *Town and Country* is a financier's Florida mansion described approvingly by the magazine as "an affectionate materialization of an architect's appreciation for details remembered from here and there in France."

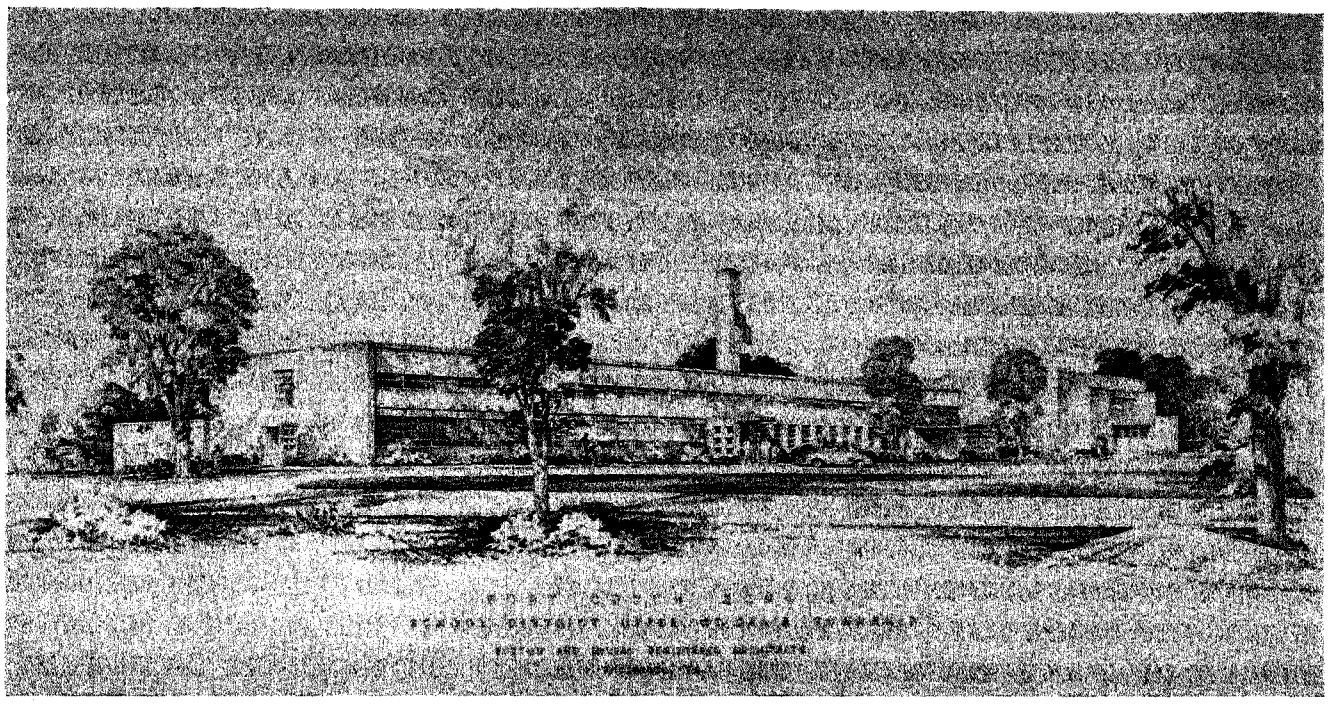
Pianos For Sale

When a man sells five pianos in one afternoon, he deserves publicity, even if it must appear in an architectural publication where, normally, such a newsbit would have about as much place as a Republican in Washington.

E. J. Michael is a crackerjack Wood Street piano salesman, a painter, a dabbler in assorted arts and enterprises and, by virtue of having designed and built three apartment houses without knowing the T-Square had been invented, a reader of *Charette.*

E. J. had never equalled his record of three pianos one Spring morning of 1909 until the other day when McKeesport Builder Cosimo Cravotta came in to buy a Chickering, accompanied by his friend, Builder Charles S. Wills (also a Chickering); his lawyer, John W. Carson (a Mason & Hammond); his real estate agent, Michael J. Lakatosh, Jr., and a scrap metals dealer and friend, J. B. Sharcot (both Chickerings).

When the sale was complete and E. J. recovered composure, there was some mention that Architect Jim Cravotta (Cosimo's brother) might like a piano, too. At this prospect E. J. promptly fainted.



Button & McLean, Architects

THE NEW LOOK IN SCHOOL ARCHITECTURE

By Robert Ambrose

Simplicity of design, ease of erection and low cost of maintenance are salient factors that influence the structure and design of most well planned buildings. In the Fort Couch School we like to think that a new high for these considerations has been attained.

The straightforward design boasts no applied ornamentation but instead treats expansive areas in a frank structural manner, skilfully using the best materials for each specific purpose. Yet all the various materials blend to form a pleasing composition, reflecting a sincere solution to a technical design problem.

Expensive labor costs on the site have been kept to a minimum and erection has been facilitated by "installing" pre-cast or pre-cut materials wherever possible.

Surfaces which receive the most wear have been treated with long-lasting and easily maintained materials. Otherwise, the structure has been either left exposed or simply finished in the most economical and expedient method.

Regarding structure, all the various sized rooms (15, 30, 37½, 45 ft.) required by the program conveniently adapt themselves logically to a nominal 15-foot module. The module is defined by steel beams spanning from the interior corridor bearing wall to exterior steel columns. These columns receive the windows without additional frames and are sheathed on the exterior by aluminum for protection from the weather, and left exposed on the interior.

Pre-cast hollow floor beams span longitudinally from steel to steel, thus eliminating the need for heavy lintels over window heads. In this manner as much of the exterior wall as possible has been left free to admit natural light. Since structural surfaces have been cut to a minimum, strong contrasts of light and dark areas and glare, disturbing factors to the room occupants, are negligible.

ORGANIZATION

SECOND FLOOR: All standard classrooms.

ENTRY FLOOR: Administration, library, home-making and special classrooms.

BASEMENT (exposed in rear): Cafeteria, kitchen, shop and maintenance rooms, gym and lockers. All easily serviced.

STRUCTURE

ROOF: Gypsum pyrofil.

EXTERIOR WALLS: Brick, aluminum spandrels which create a fresh air plenum chamber supplying unit ventilators.

BEARING WALLS: Poured concrete when they also retain the grade. Other, concrete block.

BASEMENT FLOOR: Concrete poured on ground.

FINISHES

FLOOR, CLASS ROOMS AND CORRIDORS: Asphalt tile.

BASE: Structural glazed unit cove.

WALLS: Plaster. CEILING, LOWER FLOOR: Exposed.

CEILING, SECOND FLOOR: Furred acoustical tile.

WINDOWS, CLASS ROOMS: Directional glass block above view strip.

WINDOWS, REMAINDER: Aluminum double hung.

DOORS: Flush plywood.

SKYSCRAPER FOR AN ALUMINUM COMPANY

SITE: 102 ft. frontage on Sixth Avenue extending back 182 ft. between Montour Way and William Penn Way.

ESTIMATED COST: $10,000,000.

ARCHITECTS: Harrison & Abramovitz. Associates: Altenhof & Bown, Mitchell & Ritchey.

GENERAL CONTRACTOR: George A. Fuller Company, New York and Chicago.

SUB-CONTRACTING: Pittsburgh contractors expected to bid.

USE: To house 1,000 Alcoa home office workers. Also office rental and first floor shops rental.

SIZE: 30 stories with setback at sixth story.

FLOOR SPACE: 350,000 square feet excluding elevators, corridors, stairwells, lavatories, etc.

EXTERIOR: Aluminum and glass.

WALLS: Aluminum panels secured to steel frames and backed by 4 inches of insulation. Thin wall construction will eliminate heavy conventional side walls of brick, stone, or masonry.

WALL THICKNESS: Approximately 8 in. including interior plaster. This compares with 40 in. conventional skyscraper construction.

STORE FRONTS: Aluminum

ELEVATOR CABS: Aluminum

MOLDINGS: Aluminum

CORNICES: Aluminum

TRIM: Aluminum

DOORS: Aluminum

BUS BAR: Aluminum

HARDWARE: Aluminum

WAINSCOTING: Aluminum

FLASHING: Aluminum

COPING: Aluminum

DRAINAGE: Aluminum

WINDOWS: Aluminum

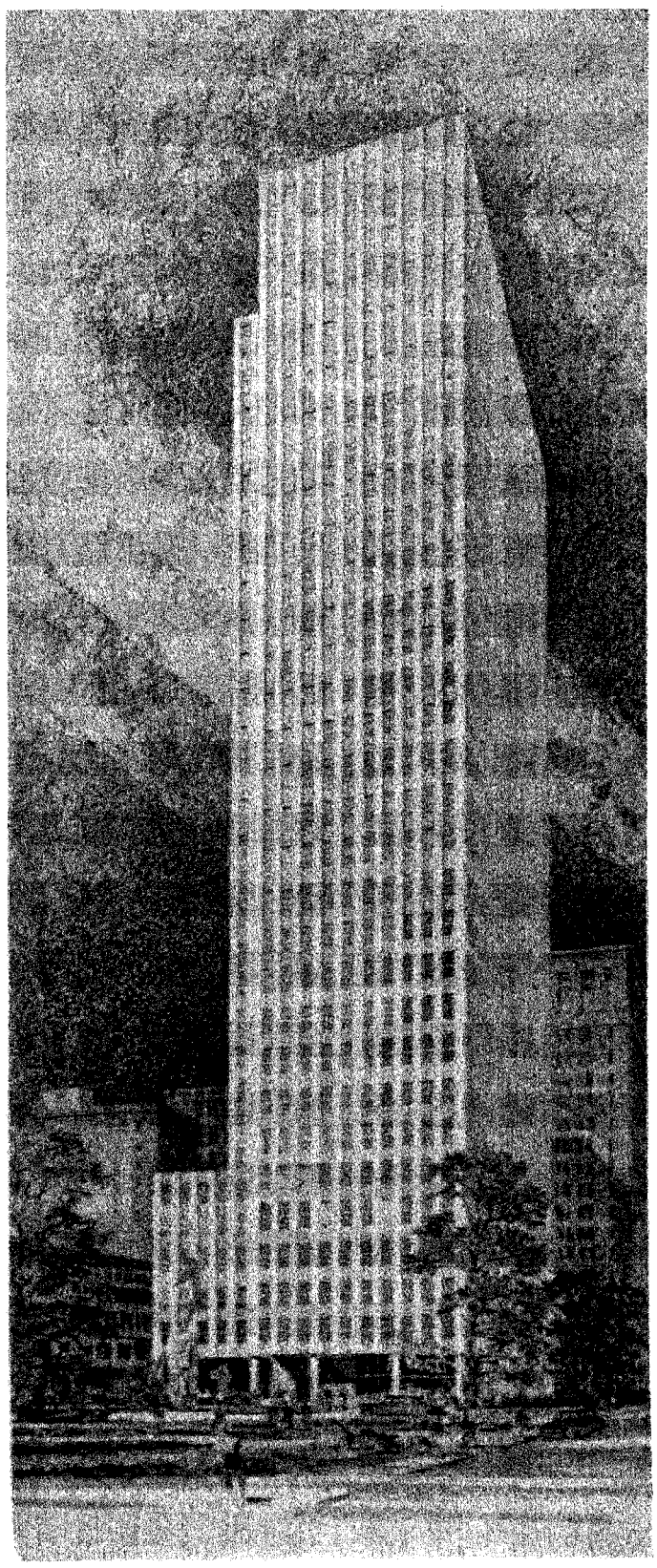
ACOUSTICAL CEILINGS: Aluminum

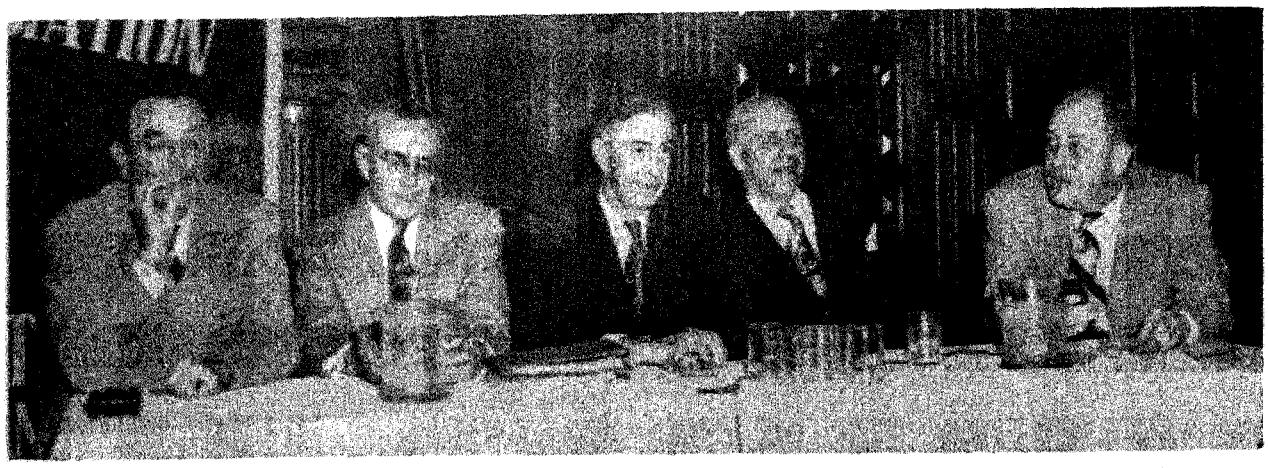
REVOLVING DOORS: Aluminum

INSULATION: Aluminum foil utilized as vapor barrier and reflecting material.

TENTATIVE DETAILS: Light switches in floors. Movable partitions. No central lighting fixtures. Pneumatic tube mail delivery system. Observation tower on top floor overlooking city of Pittsburgh.

DECORATIVE ELEMENT: Colored murals projected on lobby walls.





JAMES J. GALLAGHER RALPH REUTTI FORREST D. STOUT OAKLEY W. HESELBARTH GEORGE BORN

ECONOMY HOUSING BY 1949?

Maximum quantity of quality-built economy housing is the big objective of the 1949 Economy Housing Program as set forth last month in Pittsburgh at an all-day conference attended by hundreds of government housing officials, architects, builders, contractors, and the usual alert phalanx of building supply salesmen.

How real economies in planning, in construction, in financing and in maintenance may be achieved in order to produce dwelling units that people can afford to buy were the down-to-earth subjects on which the conference teed off.

Appealing to all segments of the building industry for more cooperation was Earl Hollinshead, vice chairman of Pittsburgh's Economy Housing Committee. Sounding his perennial plea for more, better, and cheaper houses was Oakley Heselbarth, local FHA director. Land planning for economical building development was ably discussed by FHA's James Gallagher and George Born.

Presenting the builders' problems was able Frank Cornes, president of the Home Builders Association, who made eloquent appeal for more cooperation between municipalities and builders, called for less red tape and some overdue streamlining of relations between politicians and builders. Both W. H. Burnie and Harry Foster, directors respectively of city and county planning bodies, repeated the requirements of local planning laws.

Possible economies both in design and construction of low cost homes was the subject of a helpful speech by Ralph Reutti, chief construction examiner of FHA. By charts, diagrams and actual examples of economy housing already built in other parts of the U. S. A., Reutti challenged local builders to attempt similar developments.

Construction standards of the Veterans Administration were set forth by R. T. Mackintosh, chief appraiser of that body, while Pittsburgh's new building code was praised as the green light to cheaper and better construction by jolly G. M. Boileu, superintendent of the Bureau of Planning Inspection.

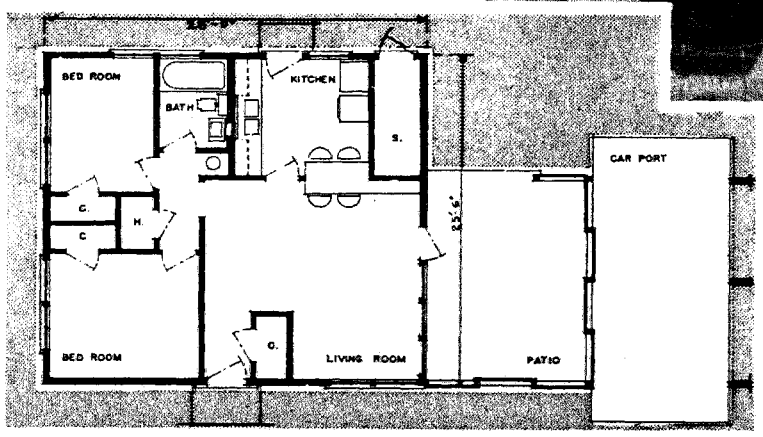
Following a luncheon at which dignitaries of various associations represented were introduced to other dignitaries present, the afternoon session opened with encouraging prognostications by both building supply men and building trades representatives assuring the conference that 1949 will find ample building materials and sufficient labor available.

By mid-afternoon the meeting was turned over to the all-important men of finance whose loan, mortgage and insurance policies make building possible. E. C. Campana, loan guaranty officer of the Veterans' Administration, cited impressive figures to prove that in economy housing only do builders have a ready market in veterans' home needs. George Parker, president of the Federal Home Loan Bank, bragged extravagantly of the financial resources of savings and loan associations, but failed in later open discussion to state how much actual home financing the organization is presently accepting. Charles Davies of RFC and R. J. Hopkins of the state bankers association, discussed respectively the secondary mortgage market and commercial bank financing for economy housing.

ONE ANSWER

For the speculative builder who is beginning to realize that conventional box-like houses with small double hung windows, shutters, false chimneys and a bay window will not sell as readily as a contemporary home, this house—one of 700 now built and 3,000 planned in Southern Arizona—proves that distinctive homes can be achieved below normal developers' costs.

Designed for liveability and advantageous use of property, the house's approval by FHA has set many builders to contemplating a complete change of policy in speculative operations.



Paul Williams and A. Quincy Jones, Jr., Architects

Del E. Webb Construction Co., Builder

Completed September 1948; sales price, $5,975; 500 single-family, 200 two-family units in project.

Location, Property, and Structure

PROPERTY—2.8 miles to business center; shopping center to be built adjacent to development; ½ mile to grade school; 1½ miles to high school.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION—Available.

STREET IMPROVEMENTS—Black-top over gravel-base road.

UTILITIES—Community water and sewer system; public gas and electricity.

PRODUCTION METHOD—Precutting and assembly on site. Mass production.

SITE—Typical lot, 60 x 125 feet.

CONSTRUCTION—Conventional, no basement.

FOUNDATION—Masonry wall.

CHIMNEY—None.

EXTERIOR WALLS—Wood frame; vertical siding, redwood.

ROOF—Built-up roof, white granite finish.

INTERIOR WALLS AND CEILINGS—Gypsum board on studs and rafters; dry wall finish; bathroom cement plaster, painted.

FLOORS—Concrete; asphalt tile in kitchen and bath.

WINDOWS—Steel casements; screens.

INSULATION—Exterior walls reflective insulation; roof 2-inch cotton bats.

PLUMBING—Copper piping; enameled iron fixtures; 20-gallon automatic heater.

HEATING—Forced warm air with provision for cooling by duct system.

ELECTRIC—2-wire system; 25 outlets.

OTHER EQUIPMENT—Venetian blinds. No range or refrigerator included.

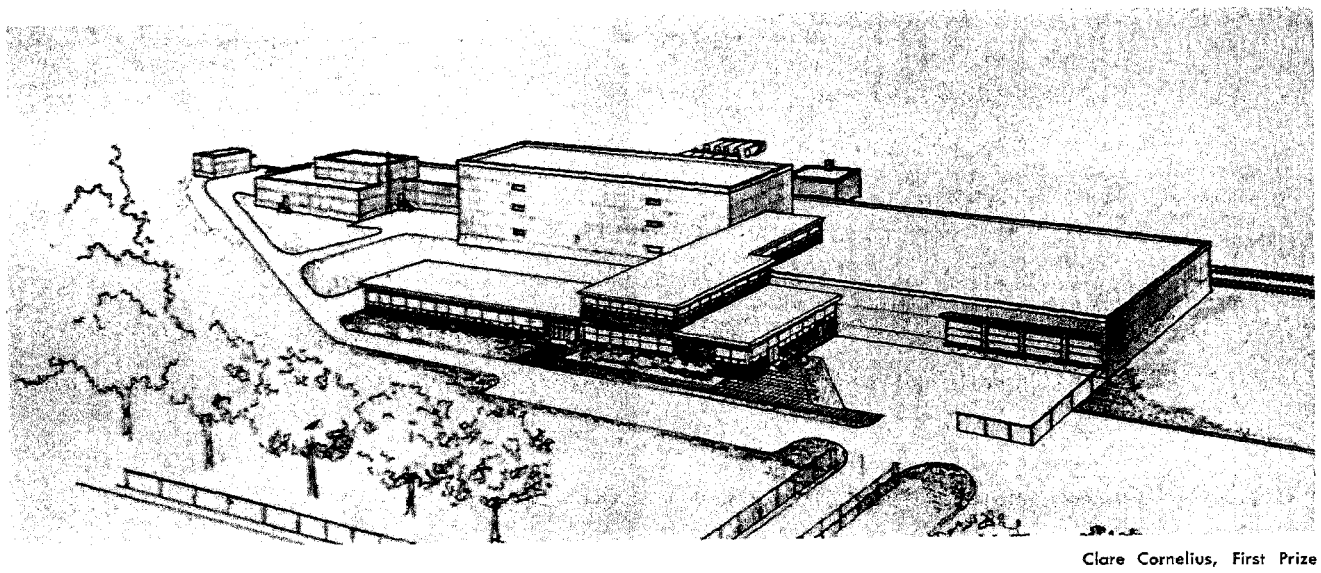
GENERAL STORAGE—Storage room.

Financing

MORTGAGE—$5,400; insured under Title VI, section 603.

MONTHLY CARRYING CHARGES:

Payment to mortgage principle and interest	$32.72
Mortgage insurance premium	2.14
Hazard insurance and taxes	8.64
Total monthly payment	$43.50



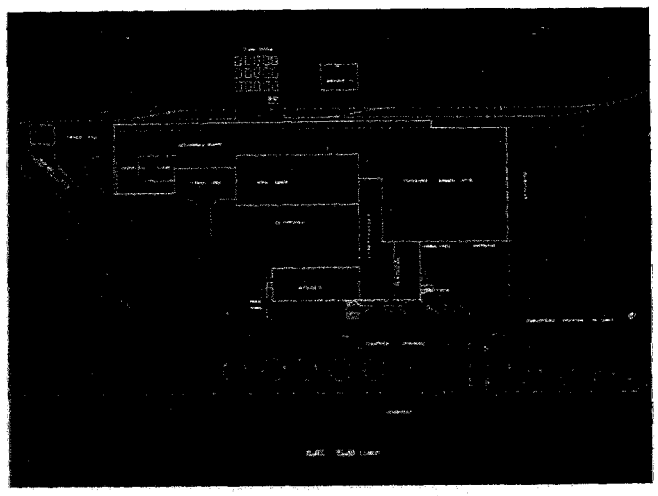
Clare Cornelius, First Prize

PRIZE-WINNING PAINT FACTORIES

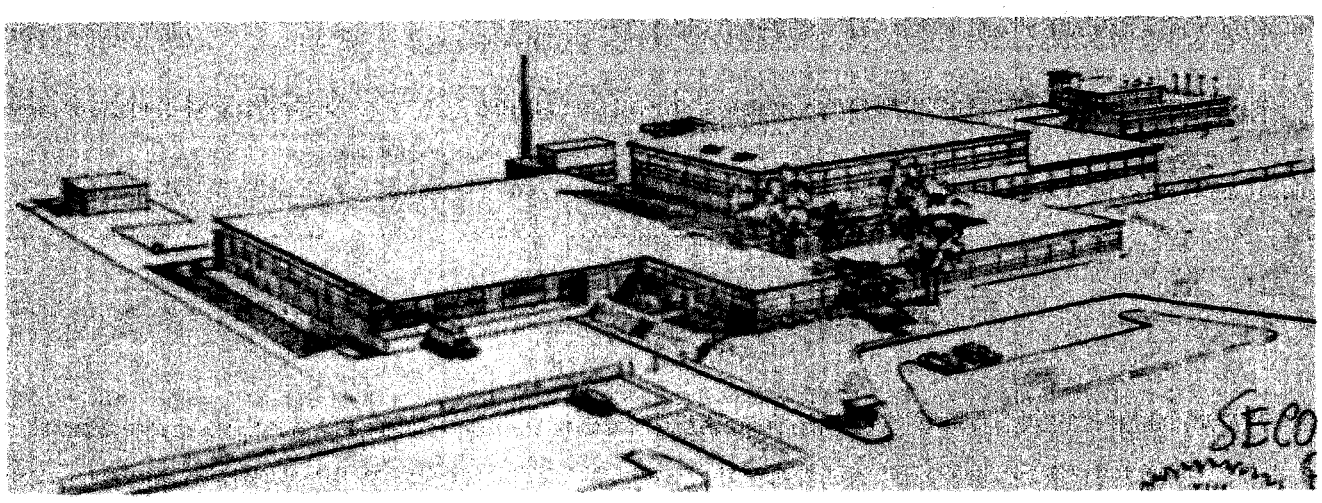
The design of a small paint factory, suitable for a Pittsburgh site and exemplifying a functional approach toward industrial building, was the problem posed in Rust Engineering Company's annual Architectural Awards project for students of the Department of Architecture at Carnegie Institute of Technology. Prizes were awarded last month.

Two winning students, both veterans and both Pittsburghers, were Clare Cornelius, first prize, and James Bonomo, second. Both designs are of factories capable of producing 35,000 gallons of pigmented paint per week.

All original research and drawings for the competition were completed within an eight-week period, during which time Mario Celli, chief architect for Rust Engineering, acted as visiting critic for students working on the problem.



James Bonomo, Second Prize



KEYSTONE OF NEW PITTSBURGH BUILDING CODE

By
Harvey A. Schwab

This is No. 2 in a series of articles interpreting Pittsburgh's new Building Code., written by the authors of the Code.

The writing of a Building Code is a highly coordinated effort on the part of many people, all working in individual compartments toward a common goal. It is not unusual in such a cooperative effort and long drawn out process, for an obvious idea to be at first overlooked. Such was the case in the matter of Occupancy.

In existing codes this all important subject is scattered throughout the many subdivisions as a sort of unexpressed factor affecting various rules and regulations without being the major criterion in determining risk and danger involved in the use of structures. No consideration was given the measure of risk involved in Mixed Occupancy, nor of the potential danger of the change in character of occupancy of an existing building even though no major alterations were involved.

Since, legally, building codes can only be valid in the case of new construction or where a major alteration is undertaken, Occupancy Permits appeared to be the only solution to this problem. These are not retroactive in any sense, but they do require compliance with reasonable standards of safety consistent with the change in occupancy.

After considerable thought, the Subcommittee on Occupancy, with mixed feelings of boldness and temerity, proposed that Occupancy be made the keystone of the entire new code. They then submitted an outline of all types of occupancies under five major and two minor headings, together with tentative definitions of each, and two tables covering allowable height, constructed type and "occupancy separation" limitations.

It became evident immediately that if this were adopted as a policy of procedure, most of the considerable work that had been done would have to be rewritten, or at least rearranged, which in turn might delay considerably the completion of the code for submission to City Council. A somewhat stormy session of the General Committee took place, which approved in principle the idea, subject to approval of Mayor Lawrence. This approval was promptly forthcoming.

Real work then began on the "new approach" which was not really a new approach at all, but one which had at first been overlooked. Very soon it was evident that it would be impractical to minutely define all possible occupancies. This forced definitions into broad and general terms, made sufficiently clear by example as to the intent to make possible interpretations by the Board of Standards and Appeals.

In the interest of brevity and convenience most of the restrictions were condensed into Tables 5-A and 5-B, which covered separations required between Mixed Occupancies and the height and structural types allowable for each type of occupancy.

These definitions and tables were evolved only after numerous conferences with the General Committee. Revisions and re-revisions were many before the entire group were entirely satisfied. Being pioneering work, the task could hardly have been done otherwise, since there was no precedent to guide the committee, and only experience and common logic could be of any use. The basic work was finally completed, however, and the other sub-committees set about reorganizing what they had already done. Fortunately there were very few conflicts and exceptions, and explanatory notes were reduced to a minimum. During this process, Tables 5-A and 5-B were tested by every reasonable and foreseeable condition.

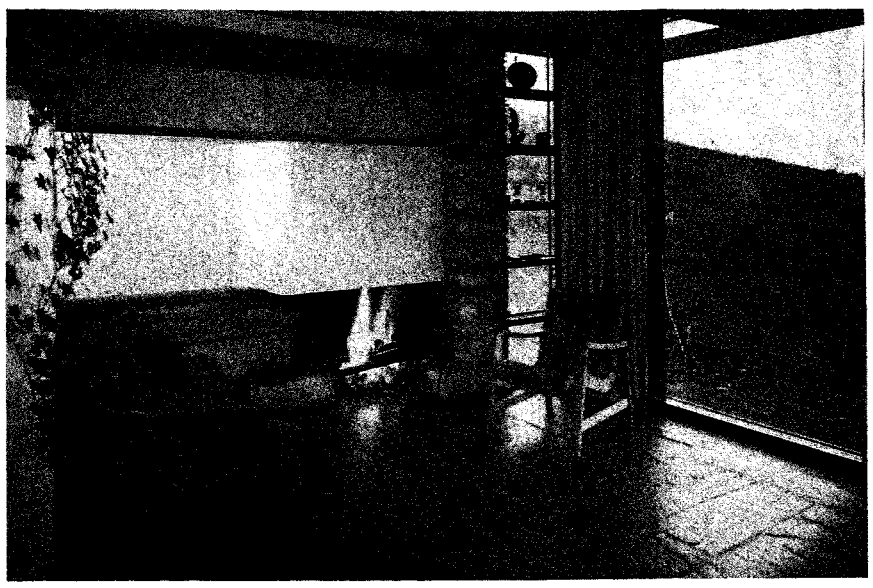
Meanwhile, the detailed definitions and requirements of each occupancy group were again reviewed, with very special attention given to the "C" and "D" groups. Several meetings were devoted to the line of demarcation between the dwellings and group habitation, one in particular being given up to discussion of just what is an apartment hotel, a seemingly trivial point, but actually not so trivial when the implications were fully assessed.

Coming to the "D" occupancies, the committee felt that its own experience was insufficient, so a series of meetings with Mellon Institute officials was arranged. This resulted in the subdivision of this group into four sub-classifications: Extra Hazardous, Hazardous, Light Hazard and Non-Hazardous, and the establishment of the policy that, for Extra Hazardous occupancy, no rules could be set up with any possibility that they would be valid in six months, since modern industrial technology is advancing with extraordinary rapidity.

The only practicable course to follow was to refer all such occupancies to the Board of Standards and Appeals, which would then consider each case on its own merits with the aid of the most competent and expert technical assistance available. Actually the Committee was amazed at the unsuspected but extremely serious hazards involved in some quite ordinary industrial processes.

About this time, an informal group including Messrs. Boileau and O'Toole of the Department of Building Inspection, Assistant City Solicitor Schifano, the General Committee and chairmen of some of the sub-committees began meeting to review, reconcile and prove out the new approach and to hear deputations representing interested groups such as the Iron and Steel Institute, Lumber Institute, Steel Joist Institute, fabricators of light construction, elevator and escalator manufacturers, department stores, etc. In these informal hearings, disputed points were reviewed in detail, and such amendments as were reasonable and logical were incorporated into the draft. In no case, however, was any undue pressure brought on the committee. As this work progressed, the Committee, consistently optimistic that the new occupancy approach might simplify rather than complicate the Code, were very agreeably surprised when simplification beyond their expectations occurred.

The net result was that the Code became a simple and compact statement of principles and definitions adequate to insure safety to person, life and property while at the same time providing through the Board of Standards and Appeals the requisite flexibility of a code which almost automatically adapts itself to changing conditions and new construction materials and methods.



WHIPSOCKETS OF ARCHITECTURE

Raymond Viner Hall, architect of Port Allegany, Pennsylvania, and radiant heating consultant, was guest speaker at the Pittsburgh Architectural Club's February meeting. This article and others to follow are a distillation of Mr. Hall's philosophy of architecture.

Why talk about modern organic architecture at all? Were not buildings always modern and organic in relation to their time? By no means. In general, the important historical building was a political device used by church or state as a symbol of authority. This explains why so little residential architecture of merit existed in the past. But because America is a great experiment in a way of life based on the dignity, integrity, and freedom of the individual, therein lies the sense of discussing an organic architecture.

When automobiles were first designed, you will remember that a whipsocket was often retained on the dashboard. No horse, no whip, but the whipsocket was considered necessary to make the carriage *look* right. Today we have eliminated the whipsocket on our automobiles but there are many distressing equivalents of the whipsocket in our architecture.

The window shutter, for instance, once had the practical value of closing a glassless opening and later, of protection against thieves. Today, with countless scientific methods of modulating light and ventilation, the blind still hangs on, a useless, costly relic.

Windows were once determined by the maximum size possible to make by hand, roughly a foot square. Fortunately this size was large enough to permit a man to shoot his enemy at a comparatively safe distance. When larger openings necessitated more glass, a method of joining the glass was devised. But today glass is manufactured in a continuous sheet and final size is determined only by the workmen's ability to handle it without breakage. Defenders of the whipsocket, however, still cut glass up into small eight by twelve sheets, fool around with wood strips and putty, ending up with a foolish imitation that obstructs vision and is hard to wash.

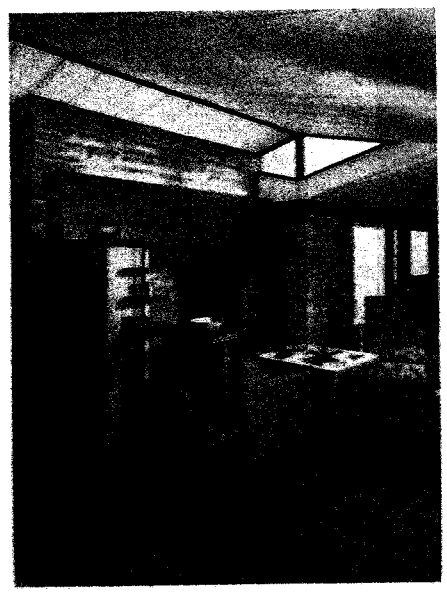
Ages ago man discovered that a lean-to covered with overlapping reeds, branches, or straw would shelter him from rain. Gradually these primitive materials gave way to small sheets of wood, stone, tile or metal applied to a sloping roof surface and properly lapped to shed snow and water. In warm climates the slopes were moderate. In cold climates quite steep. During all the centuries of this development and long before, the asphalt lakes of Trinidad were quietly surging beneath a tropical sun. Combined with several layers of saturated felt, asphalt welds the whole into one continuous sheet large enough to cover any surface without a break. Coal tar pitch, discovered later, does the same thing. Now roofs may be either sloping or flat as the case may require. In many instances the flat roof may be used as a deck or terrace, and is generally a little more economical and trouble-free than the sloping one. But in either event, small pieces of overlapping material no longer constitute a rational method of shelter.

If some magic wand of time and space could waft us to the land of ancient Greece, we would see the simple construction principle of placing a horizontal beam on two supports being applied with such a high degree of poetry from the human heart that the results have stood throughout history as man's crowning achievement in that particular form of building.

Westward, where later was established the unholy Roman Empire, it was observed that the round arched wall opening, and its companions, the barrel arched roof and round dome, could safely extend over greater distances between supports than could the flat beam of their Grecian neighbors. And although practical builders insisted on using these beautiful forms, people of acquired artistic taste were so ashamed of this radical departure from accepted architectural appearance that for three centuries they covered walls, inside and out, with fake columns, cornices, entablatures and pediments. These people were great believers in whipsockets.

After a few centuries, however, the master builders (architects of those days) who were interested in the inherent beauty of honest construction, gradually won out, developing the arch forms into the glorious method of building known as Gothic. They used

(*Continued on Page* 21)



Interiors by Raymond Viner Hall

CHARETTE VIGNETTE

Pittsburgh's uppercrust architects met recently in solemn assembly to bestow a certificate of honorary associateship upon an engineer named Fritz Kubitz. To understand the full significance of this act, it is necessary to imagine the CIO citing Sewell Avery for good conduct, the radio industry honoring the developer of television, or Gimbels advertising Macy's. In fact, nothing quite so astonishing has happened in architectural circles since the American Institute of Architects decided to recognize the already internationally recognized work of Frank Lloyd Wright.

In accepting the certificate telling how he has "signally collaborated with and contributed to the profession of architecture by his achievements in structural engineering and by his kindly advice and instruction," Kubitz was no blushing rose or shrinking violet. He got up, threw away his carefully prepared speech, and told the architects that he should have had the dang scroll years ago, said he intended to use the title of architect now to get his full percentage instead of the puny engineer's fee he used to be content with, and expressed his opinion of architects in general by using the specific example of five well-known local architects who collaborated years ago on his home which, he contends, bulges in the spring, cracks in the summer, heaves in the winter, and makes funny noises all year 'round.

This impudent harangue sent the architects off into laughing convulsions which threatened to break up the 58th annual AIA dinner. One thing the certificate failed to mention. By such hijinks, Kubitz has kept local architecture in good humor for almost 20 years.

A small and physically insignificant man, Kubitz is now over 60. Like Clark Gable, his ears are unusually prominent, but here the resemblance ends. Almost from the day in 1915, when he arrived in Pittsburgh, a German immigrant, speaking broken English, he has been the outstanding engineer in the city. Crippled by arthritis and a variety of other complications, he takes some 20 pills a day, swearing with each mouthful that he never felt better in his life. Currently associated with one of the busiest offices in the city (William York Cocken's), Kubitz carefully maintains an independence that allows him to continue his work as engineer for innumerable large Pittsburgh companies. Few are the local architectural offices that have failed to call upon him at one time or another when confronted with exceptional engineering problems. He has a reputation for being infallible on any structural question whatever. A registered Republican, Fritz spends as much time as he can, three days a week, at the request of the Democrats, in the City-County Building, expediting the issuance of building permits, which he riffs through faster than a machine.

While all the fancy words like integrity, conscientiousness, essential goodness, kindliness and generosity of spirit describe Fritz, they are awkwardly used in tribute to so simple a man. His character can be probed only on the flimsiest examples. Years ago, his friends say, when he was retained to install new elevators in the Oliver building, his fee was based on ten percent of the cost of new steel to be used. In working out the design problem, Fritz applied his usual mathematical skill as well as his native thrift to utilizing most of the old steel in the new design. As a result, his actual work on the job

Photo by J. E. Hergenroeder
FRITZ KUBITZ

finally added up to 40 cents an hour. He saw nothing unusual in this.

For decades Fritz has played Aristotle to all young draftsmen in town. Holding virtually open house the year round, his home was a place where the young men parked their wives and children then sat at Fritz's knee to learn what they needed of engineering. In cramming for registration, in meeting the stresses and strains of their early design work, they found in him not only a great teacher but an infinitely patient and helpful friend. Growing up with several "generations" of architects, Fritz has been godfather to most of the successful architects in Pittsburgh today.

During a time in his life when he was sales engineer for a local steel company, Fritz broke all records in sales quotas. To his sound knowledge of engineering, his general helpfulness and his enthusiasm, he attributes none of this success. "I believe it was my funny way of talking," he says. "I made everybody laugh."

Deeply religious, Fritz is a staunch member of the very orthodox Beverly Heights United Presbyterian Church. Laughing off his faithfulness as a church-goer, he claims he attends services in the building (which he engineered) simply to prove that he trusts his own calculations. No civic do-gooder, or professional committeeman, Fritz has interested himself in only one uplifting activity. An ardent member of the Gideon Society, he has placed countless Bibles within easy reach of the unregenerate.

The simple life has great appeal for Fritz. His favorite office location has always been in his hat. This enables him to work when he feels like it, he claims. The fact that he feels like working all the time is someting else again. Since his equipment consists solely in his genius for transforming trigonometry, calculus and solid geometry into three impressive dimensions, his overhead (except for the hat) has always been negligible.

(Continued on Next Page)

VIGNETTE (*Continued*)

No traveller, Fritz has designed dairy plants in Siberia, rubber plants in three countries, a hospital in India, buildings in New York, Cleveland, Los Angeles, a bakery (the world's largest) in Moscow. Yet he has never seen a one of these structures.

Gardening is his only hobby. On a small plot of ground he is always able to grow enough food for several families. He enjoys giving it all away. His reading is moderate and far from selective. Preferring non-fiction of *Reader's Digest* quality, he claims never to have read a novel. In 1930 he bought a volume of Charlie Chan stories which he treasures highly because he has never finished it.

Born in Bremen, Germany, Fritz was one of six children of a customs inspection official. His father, noting the son's quick way with figures, had chosen teaching for his profession. But with no love of discipline himself and little inclination to foist it upon others, Fritz rebelled and hit upon engineering as an out. Forced to learn the brick laying trade to prove his abiding interest in construction, Fritz struggled through the laying of some million or more bricks before he was permitted to matriculate and finally graduate from an engineering college. He found work quickly—on the design of a reinforced concrete bridge.

Following a year in the army, Fritz joined the Prussian railroads to become division chief engineer. No sooner was he launched on this promising career than his mother, a devout Huguenot of strong spiritual leanings, had a vision in which the Lord suggested that the Kubitzes leave Germany. Fritz was called home quickly for a family conference regarding specific instructions. While Mrs. Kubitz believed South America to be the general direction indicated by the high command, Fritz convinced her that America, founded as it was on the principle of religious freedom, must surely occupy a favorable position in the eyes of God. Promptly he set sail.

Landing in Baltimore in 1912 with ten cents in his pocket, Kubitz fell into the traditional immigrant errors of swallowing chewing gum and drinking from fingerbowls. But throughout his long struggle with the English language and American customs, Kubitz has laughed the loudest at his own faux pas.

One story he seldom tells concerns his shyness when he first came to this country. Earning only $3 a week in his first job, he had to pay his

room, board and trolley fare out of the amount. Boarding the trolley on his first work day, he asked, in his gutteral English, for a transfer. When the conductor barked a strident "What!?!" Fritz was so frightened that he continued to pay four full fares a day rather than ask again for a transfer. This went on until he explained his predicament to his boss who promptly got him a passbook.

A talent for friendship is one of Fritz's greatest assets. He came to Pittsburgh because the man who sent for him was an engineer whose designs Fritz had once checked and found unsound. In gratitude, Louis Lind promised Fritz a job and kept his promise.

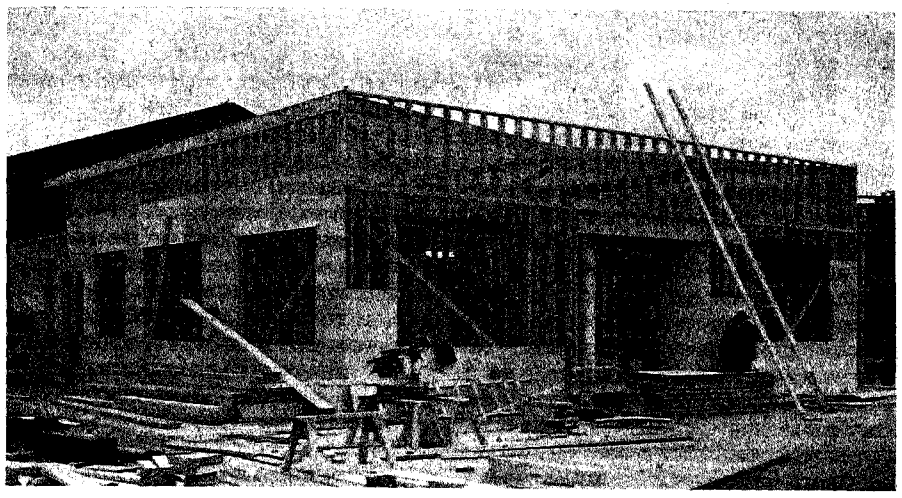
At the insistence of an official of Carnegie Institute of Technology, Kubitz once taught three years at the school. Proud of this accomplishment in his new world he did not, however, write his mother about it. His reason is interesting. Knowing how German colleges are staffed only with extremely erudite, generally elderly professors with impressive degrees, he was afraid his mother might have a low opinion of American schools if she thought her gay son Fritz were permitted to teach in them.

Married in 1915 to Baltimorian Irene Hirschmann, a graduate architect, Fritz says they have never been able to agree on the slide rule. Mrs. Kubitz insists it's a "must" for any capable engineer and Fritz continues to use his head instead. The Kubitzes have no children other than the hundreds of younger people they have taken under their protective wing down through the years.

Shortly after coming to Pittsburgh, Fritz designed a reinforced concrete arch bridge based upon principles he had learned in school in Germany. When he was sued for $50 by a man claiming to have the patent on such a structure, Fritz abandoned bridge designs as too precarious legally. He has never touched a bridge since.

Always happy at his work, Fritz apparently cares little for success and the trappings usually associated with it. Living modestly in Brightwood, he accepts the accolades and honors that come his way with little surprise. He seems to be proud of only one incident. On a train to Oswego once he struck up a conversation with a stranger. After a few introductory exchanges and several typical Kubitz jokes, the man's face broke into recognition. "Oh, you must be Pittsburgh's laughing engineer that I've heard about." Fritz liked that.

—Tally McKee



By
C. A. Luce

USES FOR LOW GRADE LUMBER

When Henry Ford switched from metal to plastic in a knob for his gear shift, he was asked whether the plastic knob was as good. "No," replied Ford, "but it will outlast the car." Lumber producers have recently discovered that most lumber outlasts the buildings it goes into. This development and its affect on building costs today was one of the themes of the 42nd annual meeting of the Western Pennsylvania Lumber Dealers Association held in Pittsburgh last month. It is further discussed below.

A change as fundamental as the adoption of grading rules or the introduction of power machinery is taking place in the lumber industry today. For the first time in American history, we can no longer take lumber for granted. Up to now lumber has at all times been a cheap building material. It has maintained its competitive position because of its surplus. It has been used extravagantly.

Today, with conservation of our forest resources a national issue and with economy in building the pressing need of the hour, it is imperative that lumber be used properly. And so we are becoming scientific about lumber.

Enlisting the aid of engineers, lumber grading experts, builders and building inspectors, we have dug into the building records of scores of houses, both old and new. Some startling findings have come to the fore. Houses 50 and 100 years old have been razed and the lumber carefully sorted and piled for re-use. Only one conclusion could be drawn from this: the lumber was better than it needed to be to give full and satisfactory service for the life of the structure.

A full study of present day home construction reveals that there are many places where low grade lumber can render completely adequate service. This means economy for the lumber user. Curiously enough, it places the lumber industry in the position of promoting a loss item, for there is no manufacturing profit in low grade lumber.

Today roughly 25 per cent of all lumber produced is of lower grades. The increased value of lumber has been accompanied by a wider spread in the price relationship of various grades. No. 3 Douglas fir, for instance, has recently sold at $20 to $40 per thousand feet less than No. 1, whereas the prewar spread was only $3 to $7.

There was little incentive to use low grade lumber when the economy it made possible was relatively unimportant. With today's prices, however, proper utilization of the lower grades will not only result in substantial savings in all construction but is, in addition, a prime conservation measure.

No. 3 Douglas fir lumber may properly be used in many places. As an example in house construction, No. 3 boards adequately serve as sheating and sub-flooring, while No. 3 dimension may be used in one-story dwellings for studs, plates, fire stops and bracing.

Low grade lumber contains the same fine insulating qualities inherent in all grades of wood. In the above uses it provides more strength than is normally required. Nor is its use for these purposes by any means experimental. Properly employed, it has given excellent service for many years.

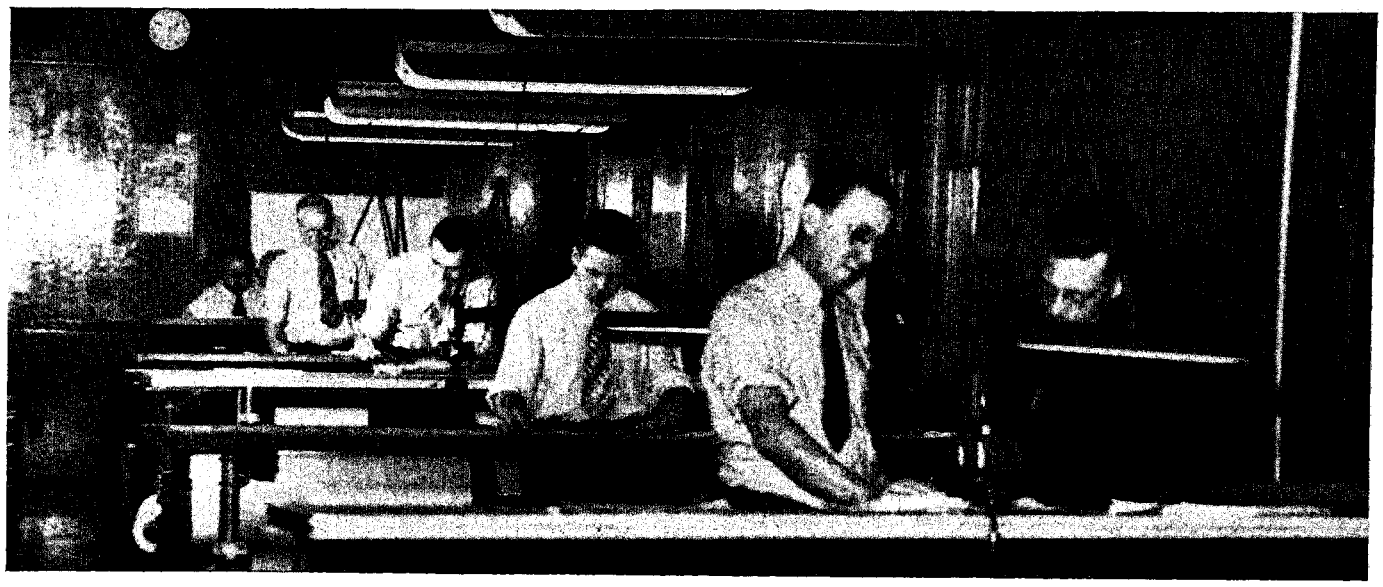
Nearly all low cost housing can use a large percentage of low grade lumber. By the substitution of No. 3 for No. 1, where the former can be used, in most of these houses the cost of the lumber in the house will not be 216 percent of prewar as suggested by Bureau of Labor Statistics figures, but will probably be about 100 percent, which is certainly not out of line with increases in other materials.

In lumber merchandising we have come to the point of specifying the cheapest lumber which will do an adequate job. We are backing such specifications with far more study and research than has ever previously been applied to the uses of lumber on a broad basis.

This trend toward greater utilization of our forest is conservation of the highest order. Not only does it extend our present stands of mature timber, but it also leaves the forest lands in better condition for the new harvest and reduces fire hazard by the removal of much inflammable material.

One of the important things to remember about lumber for construction purposes, is that we should never use a better grade than is demanded for strength and durability.

Architects, contractors and industrial lumber users should know that the use of the lowest grade of lumber which will do a thoroughly efficient job means economy.



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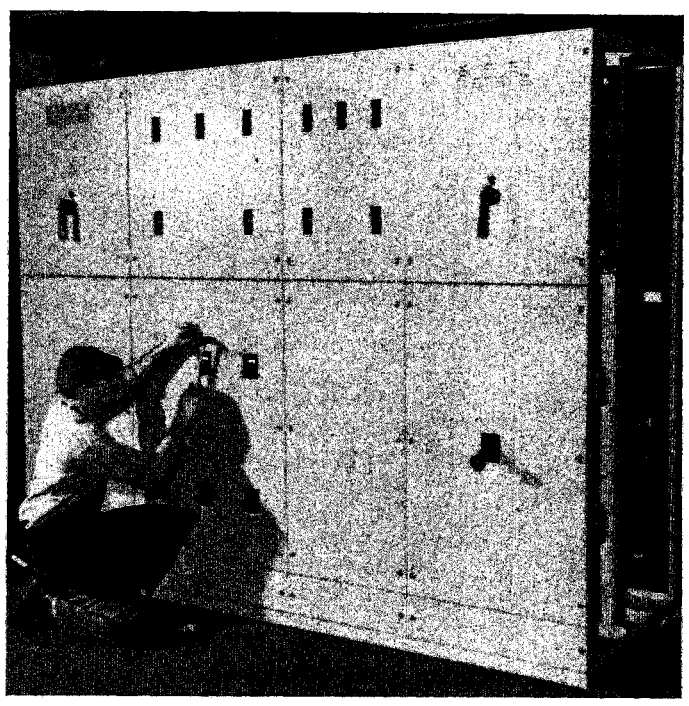

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CARNEGIE

The Professional Practice course given to fifth year students in Architecture has been expanded this year into a six-unit course under the direction of Professor Raymond A. Fisher. Work has been divided generally into three kinds of activities. During the first of the year the class studied the A.I.A. Handbook and allied documents, with each student responsible for reviewing a specific portion. A second activity involves visits to work under construction. Several of these have been made and and still others are planned for the spring. During the current months Professor Fisher and the class are hosts to a group of visiting professionals lecturing on special aspects of the practice of architecture. Mr. John D. S. Truxall, attorney, spoke to the group on the subject, "General Conditions of the Contract and Contract Forms." Mr. Raymond M. Marlier, R.A., discussed "The Architect as a Co-ordinator and Professional Duties on Public Works Projects." Mr. John N. Franklin, R.A., has spoken on "The Architect Solicits Business" and "Professional Duties on a Private Industrial Building Project." The students are finding these lectures tremendously stimulating and full of sound and practical information.

In past years similar programs have always been successful, with the architects and other professionals serving generously and cooperatively.

●

The Museum of Modern Art and the Architectural Record have announced that Clifford Foreman, student in the sub-senior class, has been awarded an Honorable Mention and prize in the Hidden Talent Competition, recently judged in New York. Foreman, along with other students of his class, entered the competition as a school project. Another Honorable Mention was won by Edward Fearney, Architecture '39, now an instructor in Architecture at the University of Florida.

●

Mr. Joseph H. Abel of Berla and Abel, Architects, Washington, D. C., was the guest of the Department of Architecture last week, while visiting here as a lecturer for the fourth year group who are currently engaged in the design of a reinforced concrete apartment house. Mr. Abel is recognized as an authoritiy in this special field and, with Fred N. Severud, has written a book on "Apartment House Planning and Construction." John

TECH

Pekruhn, the teacher in charge of the class, arranged for Mr. Abel's visit.

●

The "esquisse-esquisse" has reappeared in the design curriculum at Carnegie Tech. With certain modifications this kind of exercise, which proved so valuable as a training discipline, is being afforded the students as a means of testing their strength and discovering their weaknesses. Following each eight-week major problem, an eight-hour problem is given covering the same concepts of content and process presented during the major problem. Examination and review of the sketches allow students and teachers to discover whether or not concepts have been understood and whether the principles derived from them are being used.

●

The senior class has commenced theses studies this month. It is the third class to enter upon this final sixteen-week requirement of the undergraduate training program. Under the requirement, each candidate for the degree of Bachelor of Architecture must prepare during his last semester in school the program for and the solution of a building or group of buildings of his own choosing. This year's theses are as follows, under the direction of B. Kenneth Johnstone: Thomas Madden, "Educational Facilities for Cerebral Palsied Children"; Asher Etkes, "A Hotel"; Edward Johnson, "A Railroad Station." Under the direction of Robert Schmertz: John Kelly, "A Catholic Summer Study Center"; William Eckles, "A Library for Grove City College"; Thomas Glasgow, "A Small Newspaper Plant." Under the direction of John Pekruhn: Nessly Porter, "A School Survey for East Liverpool"; Louis Valentour, "A Farm Group"; Ralph Sill, "A Country Club." Under the direction of Carl Ernst: Mason Aldrich, "A Library for Carnegie Tech"; Clifford Stokes, "Replanning of the South Hills Junction Facilities of the Pittsburgh Railways"; Emery Thurston, "A Training School of Elizabethtown, Pa." Under the direction of Hans Vetter: John Hackler, "A Residential Community"; Corinne DeChicchis, "An Academy of Fine Arts," Louis Klein, "A Shopping Center"; Donald O'Neal, "A Presbyterian Church"; Harold Frederick, "A Pottery"; L. A. McIntire, "An Opera House"; Charles Perlman, "A Super Market"; George Yurchison, "A Glass Factory."

Levinson Appointed

Levinson Steel Sales Company, 33 Pride Street, is now offering a new approach to the problems of housing industry and commerce, according to A. P. Levinson, General Sales Manager.

In announcing that Levinson Steel Sales Company has been appointed district sales representative for Steelcraft Standardized Metal Buildings, Mr. Levinson pointed out that the use of such versatile buildings would be particularly applicable to any region of diversified industry such as the tri-state area.

The Steelcraft building has a structural frame fabricated of standard heavy rolled structural shapes with ribbed aluminum panels comprising the roof and walls. Several combinations of window and door arrangements are available, and the buildings are available in various standard widths which can be combined to provide as much space as necessary. Additions to length can also be made as desired.

Levinson Steel Sales Company is also tri-state distributor for the "Alumi-Drome," an all-aluminum type utility building. The addition of the Steelcraft line assures this area of a complete line of utility buildings for farm, commercial and industrial users.

WHIPSOCKETS *(Continued)*

stone as no one dared use it before or since. Supports became thinner and thinner, higher and higher, producing lofty cathedrals of amazing openness, lightness and delicate grace.

But popular taste, with its background of medieval ignorance, soon made of historical forms another protracted architectural debauchery. After seven centuries our country is the undisputed leading reveler at this party. A Greek temple becomes a science laboratory in Pittsburgh. An Italian palazzo is the Pennsylvania Station in New York. The Roman Pantheon as modified by Michaelangelo's dome on St. Peter's goes to roost on the Capitol building in Washington. It is ironical enough that a form used as a symbol of authority over an enslaved and benighted people should find a place in our country at all. But to place a vulgar sheet-iron imitation, painted to look like stone, atop the Capitol building of a free people is a vicious lie.

It has been said that were Julius Caesar to come to life today in the city of Washington, he would feel perfectly at home, surrounded by pilasters that support nothing, countless stone beams supported by hidden steel above and a heterogeneous mess of claptrap served up to popular taste, all detached from ancient noble forms.

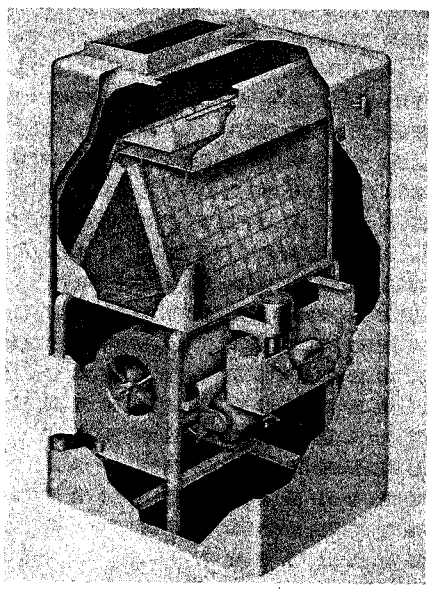
These buildings are in general used for offices. The so-called architects designed adequate floor areas of concrete on a steel frame. To them this was such a shameful procedure that they hastened to hide it beyond heavy stone walls, all carved up in a very pretty fashion indeed, but grudgingly punched with small holes and slit. The smaller the holes the better, except for a big one to pass through—usually made for a man about sixty feet tall.

These peculiar imitations of temples built to pagan gods are worn merely by adding some 50 per cent to the rational cost of construction. You are paying for it. To admit that we have made no more progress in 2,000 years than this is rather severe indictment.

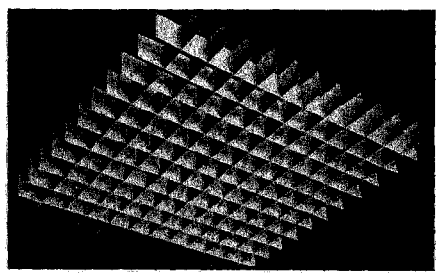
A wholesale, negative indictment of the heritage we have received from the past is neither our intention nor our moral right. Criticism may be negative only to the extent that man has failed to use intelligently the ideas and tools available to him then, or now.

The point is, when the external expressions of our principle of construction are reduced to a mere decoration to hide some other form, the result is both an insult to the intelligence and a deplorable economic waste.

PRODUCTS PARADE



A new self-contained air-treating unit for the home that cleans, freshens and controls relative humidity is known as **"TEG" Conditioner.** Said to produce a killing action on certain airborne bacteria, the new unit is reportedly beneficial to hayfever and asthma sufferers. On a sturdy base, enclosed in a French gray baked enamel jacket, the unit is used primarily with warm air heat but may also be installed with both steam and water systems. Manufacturers: **National Air Conditioning, Inc.,** Johnstown, Pa.



Weighing less than 10 pounds, this **Alumnigrid** section for louvered ceilings offers advantages in illumination, decoration, installation and maintenance according to the manufacturer. Diffusing and reflecting light downward, the grid is silvery gray, satin-finished. Sections may be removed, dipped in water for cleaning. Suspended from overhead without altering existing elements, grids are easily removed for maintenance work on pipes, sprinklers, electrical systems. Manufacturers: **Kawneer Company,** Niles, Michigan.

Designed to harmonize with modern washers, dryers, and ironers is this new laundry "tray," successor to the old-fashioned tub. Constructed of aluminum sand castings, finished in white plasticoat enamel, the tray's special features include a handy shelf, cast-in washboard, soap dishes. Forty-four inches long, 25 inches wide, 14 inches deep, the trays are built in two compartments, weighing 57 pounds each. Manufacturers: Mor-Flo Heater Corp., 2176 East 76th St., Cleveland 3, Ohio.

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TALLY McKEE
Editor

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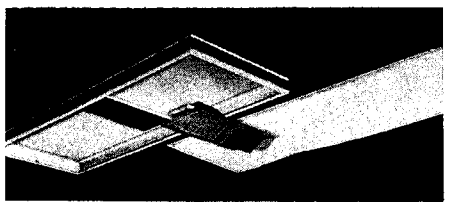
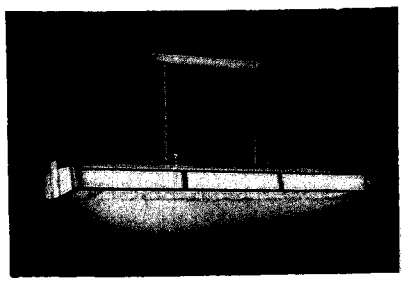


Well adapted to the lower ceilings of modern architecture are **Multi-Vent** panels, for low velocity air diffusion and draft-free, uniform heating, ventilating and air conditioning. A simple assembly of control plate and frame, adjustable pressure displacement valve, and perforated distribution plate installed flush with ceiling, air supply is received from duct work above. Manufacturers: **Multi-Vent Division** of the **Pyle-National Co.**, 1334 N. Kostner Ave., Chicago 51, Illinois.



A fluorescent luminaire for single mounting, the **Sentinel** is a 4 foot unit using four 40-Watt lamps and matching in design the continuously mounted Grenadier II and IV. With all metal parts finished in metallic satin, light distribution pattern is controlled by topplate reflectors allowing 8 per cent light upward. Manufacturers: **F. W. Wakefield Brass Co.**, Vermilion, Ohio.

Cut in silhouette from one piece of heavy galvanized iron are individualized home markers made by the well-known **Cape Cod Weathervanes** people. Hanging from a wrought iron bracket, the signs range in sizes from 14" x 18" to 18" x 24". **John Bernier** of 408 Hawthorn Street, New Bedford, Mass., handles all custom inquiries for signs and also for the weathervanes for which the Cape Cod Weathervane Company is famous.

Minutes, January Meeting

Have you looked in on the Club Rooms lately? If not, you haven't seen the new chairs and tables, you haven't tried out the new rope ladder and, what's worse, you've been missing some of the best meetings and programs in Club history.

The January meeting was held with 40 members and guests present. A pre-meeting social hour and dinner provided welcome relief from the toils of the day.

Once called to order, the meeting heard the minutes and treasurer's report and accepted same as read.

Norm Frey gave a scintillating report on the Yuletide parties and Hugh Neilson read his masterpiece in the prose style of Ella Wheeler Wilcox on the Children's Christmas Party. Bill Schlenke called attention to the new furniture and to some repair work which he claims to be arranging.

John Grove announced a new Refresher Course (began February 9) with classes to be held every Wednesday for 18 weeks. President Ringel reported progress in the arts and on the library. A sketch of the proposed club alterations to provide library space was exhibited.

Minutes of executive committee meetings were read, revealing that such matters as rental of the club, delinquent dues, Life Memberships, and payment of expense money to instructors in the Refresher Course had been duly discussed and passed upon in executive committee sessions.

President Ringel called for the reading of newly approved membership applications and seven new members were introduced: J. Karl Williams, Raymond A. Fisher, Jr., G. W. Lacock (active); Philip J. Davidson, John A. Witter (associate); George Lees, George Hura (student).

Under "new business" came Bob Cochrane's announcement that the Pittsburgh Building Code is now printed and available; Bill Manning's revelation that Bob Schmertz's music in record form in a limited edition is now ready and may be purchased through Rody Patterson. The Club will underwrite the Schmertz record project to the extent of $50 and a Schmertz album will be added to the Club's present record collection.

Fred Fargotstein seized this opportunity to complain that too many of the Club's records have been "borrowed" and it was agreed that the Library and Arts Committee will become custodians of the collection.

Bob Metcalf introduced John Knox Shear, Carnegie Tech professor, as guest speaker for the evening. Showing a collection of slides of architectural subjects now being collected by Tech, Shear said that contributions to the collection are coming from all parts of the country, both as negatives and actual slides.

All slides are in color to reveal the importance of color as well as form in today's architecture. It is hoped that the collection of old and new subjects will continue to grow until one day it will constitute a graphic history of architecture.

Slides shown were of Frank Lloyd Wright's Johnson Wax factory, Taliesin, Fallingwater and Guest House at Bear Run, and residence of Alvin Dow; the Terrace Plaza Hotel in Cincinnati; the Thompson House in Ligonier, New Kensington Housing Project; newly completed Classroom and Student Activities Building at the University of Miami, and the Fowler Residence in Sewickley Heights, done by John Pekruhn and Shear. Shear's spontaneous remarks made the program a very enjoyable one.

Hugh Neilson, *Secretary*

A WINDOW IS A WINDOW IS A WINDOW

It is the architect's responsibility to inquire into the design of every element that goes into a house. Let's, as for instance, examine the ordinary window, that wonderful invention that allows us to see right through a wall. Unfortunately, though we want to look out, it is difficult to keep others from looking in at times. This can be embarrassing. So we put up shades which we keep at half mast.

Of course we might have made the window that much smaller in the first place, but that would cut down the amount of ventilation, which is another function of a window. The ventilation makes the shade flap in the breeze anyway, so we open the window from the bottom if it is that kind of a window, but that is not very effective because it throws the draft directly on us—and besides the hot air we wish to exhaust is at the top of the room.

In the daytime, of course, we keep the window closed unless it faces away from the sun. We don't keep it closed because we want to, but because the sun would make the room too hot and would fade the rugs and upholstery. So we close the drapes, which were invented to dress a window, and to nullify its original purpose.

Now when the drapes are pulled shut, it would do little good to open the window because the zephyrs couldn't get in and a stiff wind would blow the drapes, knocking the Talismans in their vase off the drum table, which has been placed in front of the window not to hinder enjoyment of the window, but for the fatalistic reason that the window couldn't be enjoyed anyway.

The window is further obliterated by an accessory known as a screen which keeps bugs out and father busy. It spoils the appearance of the window from the outside and of the landscape from the inside—and father's temper.

One window, furthermore, is not sufficient for one opening, if indeed it may be called an opening. In the wintertime another window is placed in the same opening. This, too, spoils the appearance from the outside as well as father's good nature. Yet this is the type of window used in houses built today—even by architects.

We could examine many other elements of today's houses and arrive at the same conclusion of muddled habit. It is time then to analyze the functions of a house and to design for true comfort and usefulness.

—L. Morgan Yost

AH, YESTERDAY...

. . . a certain Pittsburgh bank was criticized architecturally for its "crass commercial design in hard-boiled granite, creating the usual touch-me-not atmosphere that clings to all institutions dedicated to the sacred cause of keeping money safe from the masses who might misuse it."

✣ ✣

. . . "There is no question that Labor Unions are here to stay in some form or another," said *Charette*, "But if they are to operate efficiency, they must devise some system whereby merit among the journeymen will be recognized and rewarded in a substantial manner."

✣ ✣

. . . the minutes of an AIA meeting revealed that members were served "a potpourri of alkali, lion's marrow, hyena serum, glee gas, polarized conjugality and hoarse (sic) meat with a thirty percent high blood pressure all served upon a platter of iconoclastic toshery."

✣ ✣

. . . architects were urged not to miss the April meeting as there was scheduled an address by E. B. Lee on 'The Passing of the Horse Shoe and Its Influence on Architecture."

✣ ✣

. . . a well-researched, highly documented analysis and evaluation of the motion picture industry was a lengthy *Charette* feature. No mention of architecture.

✣ ✣

. . . plan, simplicity of composition, proportion, relation of voids and solids, scale, silhouette, truth and power were declared the only essentials of good architecture.

✣ ✣

. . . an outraged architect complained that "99 out of every 100 edifices in Pittsburgh were not contributing to man's mental health, power or pleasure."

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