

UH Architecture Building To Be Dedicated



Atrium, University of Houston College of Architecture Building, John Burgee Architects with Philip Johnson and Morris•Aubry, architects (Photo by Paul Hester)

The University of Houston's College of Architecture will celebrate 40 years of architectural education with an academic festival, scheduled for 3-9 February 1986, to be kicked off by the dedication of its new-old building (John Burgee Architects with Philip Johnson and Morris•Aubry Architects). With move-in scheduled for the Christmas-New Year's break and spring classes to begin in the Johnson building, anticipation of the events is rising, with planning lagging somewhat behind.

Beyond compilation of the final punch list, prededication activities include a major student social event and the opening of a gallery exhibition documenting the history of the College of Architecture. Dedication is scheduled for 3 February, with a week of lectures, symposiums, and social events to follow. A special announcement of Dedication Week events will be sent to all interested individuals. To have one's name placed on the mailing list, telephone the College of Architecture at 713/749-1187.

Peter Wood

UH Texas Studio Investigates American Villages

Peter J. Zweig, director of the Texas Studio, and 10 graduate students from UH will collaborate with Charles W. Moore, O'Neil Ford Professor of Architecture at The University of Texas at Austin, and 10 students from the graduate school at UT Austin on a study of the architecture of villages.

The studio will investigate the phenomena of the American village, assemble a documentary exhibition in April 1986, and design projects that capture the identity and place of the American village. To further the educational process, the program will offer a field trip to Mexico, as well as the five regions of Texas. Visiting critics will include J.B. Jackson; Michael Graves, FAIA; William Mitchell, professor of the computer program at UCLA; Peter Schneider, dean of architecture at Louisiana Tech University; and Kent Bloomer, author, architect, and professor at Yale University. Lectures will be open to the public. For more information, call the College of Architecture, University of Houston, 713/749-1187.



Charles W. Moore and Peter J. Zweig in a front-porch seminar with UT and UH students at Winedale (Photo by Dietmar Froehlich)

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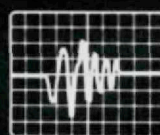
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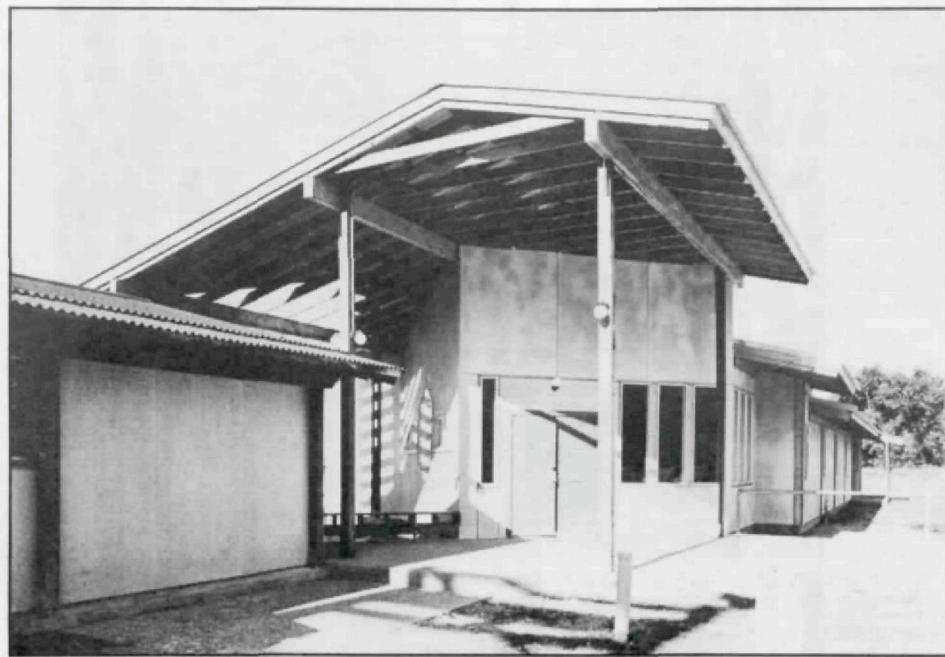
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Bordersville Building Completed



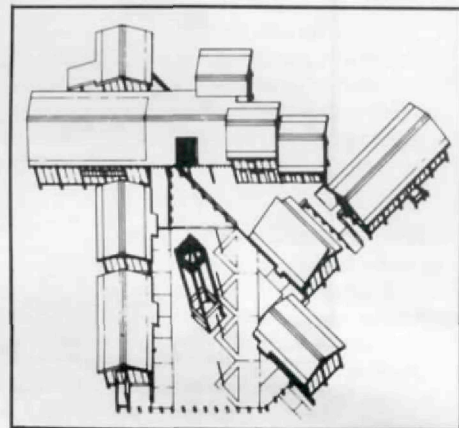
Human Resources Building, Three H Neighborhood Service Center, Bordersville, 1985, John Zemanek, architect (Photo by Paul Hester)

The tenth and final building of the Three H Neighborhood Service Center in Bordersville, an advocacy planning project begun in 1969, was completed in May of this year. The new building houses local offices for state public welfare programs, including a food-stamp certification center. Architect John Zemanek received an AIA Honor Award in 1978 for his design of the complex which was hailed as a model example of the advocacy planning process.

Bordersville, a ramshackle community of 220 families located north of Houston, was the victim of the city's annexation plan in the late '60s to assemble large tracts of land for the construction of Houston Intercontinental Airport (see *Cite*, August 1982, "New Water Mains, Mall Come to Bordersville"). The annexation boundary cut through Bordersville, annexing 180 houses and leaving 40 outside the city. "With annexation came the notices to pay city taxes," recalls Zemanek. "But when the residents asked for city utilities, they were informed that only newly annexed communities of 200 or more families were eligible."

Prompted by protests from residents, then-mayor Louie Welch enlisted the University of Houston's Graduate School of Social Work to cosponsor a program to bring representatives of the Bordersville community together with public officials and representatives of the business sector. Out of these meetings came the Committee on Coordinated Action in Neighborhood (CCAN), with Zemanek serving as chairman of a subcommittee on the physical environment and housing.

In September 1969, Zemanek took his UH architecture design students to Bordersville and they began to work with a Neighborhood Council committee to formulate a program for a community



Axonometric drawing of site plan, Three H Neighborhood Service Center

center. The program included a meeting hall, recreation hall, library, clinic, day-care center, public bath, guest rooms, manager's quarters, and shops. Plans and models were produced and presented for discussion to the community and the CCAN board, and the study committee voted to implement the project.

Initial funding of \$45,000 was secured from four private agencies in April 1970, but the project was delayed by the lengthy process of securing land and building permits. A second grant of \$196,000 came from the Economic Development Administration of the Department of Commerce, and land finally was acquired from the local school district. Zemanek, together with consulting architect Alexander McNabb, structural engineer George Cunningham, and several former students from the University of Houston's College of Architecture finalized the design and produced the contract documents. Construction began in 1974 and, except for the building completed this year, the complex was finished and ready for occupancy in 1975.

Bruce C. Webb

RDA Spring Events

The Rice Design Alliance will embark on an array of public programs for the Spring of 1986.


Architects Fireside Chats, a series of informal presentations by three Houston architectural firms of their work and working methods, is planned for early spring. Organizing the events are Danny Samuels, Richard Keating, and William F. Stern. All presentations will occur in the Jury Room in M.D. Anderson Hall on the campus of Rice University. Admission is free to RDA members with reservations; there is an admission charge for non-members. Limited seating. For information and reservations, telephone the Rice Design Alliance at 713/524-6297.

For its spring lecture series, organized by Drexel Turner and Richard Keating, the Rice Design Alliance explores "The City:


Memory and Invention." Speakers and dates to be announced. All lectures will be held at 8 PM in the Brown Auditorium of The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. To reserve tickets, telephone the RDA at 713/524-6297. Admission charged.

The Rice Design Alliance and IES Travel Group plan a tour of Charleston, South Carolina and Savannah, Georgia for late May 1986. Barrie Scardino and John Lingley are organizing the tour. For more information, telephone IES Travel Group at 713/526-5171.

Available for purchase is the first Rice Design Alliance architectural guidebook, containing three, self-guided, walking tours of the museums-Rice University-Hermann Park area. Called *Houston's Cradle of Culture and Environs*, it was prepared by the Anchorage Foundation of Texas. Photographs are by Paul Hester.



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DART Chooses Subways

In a bold move, the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) board adopted subway plans for downtown Dallas and the North Central Expressway corridor on 27 August 1985. This action committed DART to the construction of three subways totaling five miles in length in downtown Dallas and an additional three miles of subway north from downtown under the North Central Expressway to Mockingbird Lane. This decision was just the latest in a series which the DART board has made in moving forward with plans to build about 150 miles of rail transit in Dallas by the year 2010.

DART was created by voters in Dallas and 13 suburban communities on 13 August 1983. At that time, voters approved an \$8.75 billion plan to build a model mass-transit system in Dallas and a 1 percent sales tax to fund transit-authority operations and improvements. Since initiating operations in January 1984, DART has moved to rapidly expand bus operations in Dallas and the surrounding areas and also has begun work on implementing the rail plan.

The plan passed by the voters provided for the construction of light-rail transit in 12 major suburban corridors. Light rail was chosen as the most flexible and the most cost-effective transit mode (a choice confirmed by an independent study funded by the Dallas City Council). Light rail, the transit technology which receives its power from an overhead source, can be applied in a variety of configurations. In September 1984, after reviewing transit technology options, the DART board selected the "pre-metro" mode of light rail. Generally, the pre-metro approach to light rail emphasizes high-speed, high-performance operations. Grade crossings are usually minimized with this approach and the preferred track alignments are usually separated from vehicular traffic.

DART continued progress on the rail plan in February 1985, by selecting the joint venture of Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade & Douglas and DeLeuw, Cather & Company (PBDC) as the general engineering consultants for the project. This engineering joint venture then began design work on the rail system.

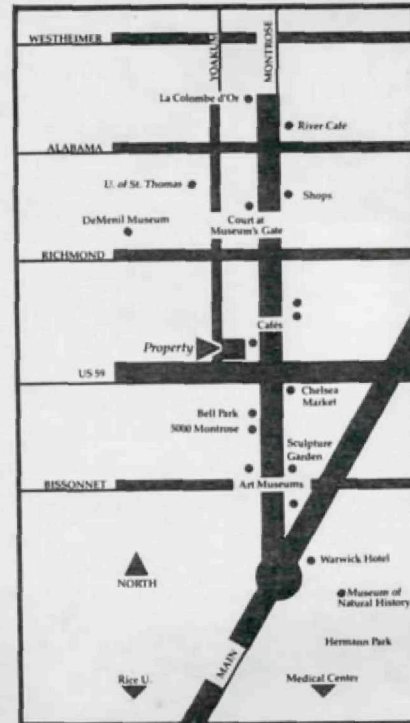
A major issue left unresolved in the original DART service plan was the system plan in downtown Dallas. As approved, the service plan provided for rail in the 12 major suburban corridors joining to approach downtown Dallas from six different directions. The interconnections of these six lines and the station locations in downtown Dallas are issues which had been under study for the last year. A second unresolved problem was the configuration of the rail project in the congested North Central corridor where both DART rail plans and State Highway Department expressway-widening plans could not be easily accommodated. A range of alternatives for this corridor had been under study for over eight months. The DART board action in late August resolves both these issues and the adoption of the two subway plans means that DART can move ahead with the development of the system. The current schedule calls for 69 miles of rail in place by 1995. The first line, still not selected, is to open by 1988 or 1989.

The implications of the DART board action are clear. Most important, the DART board in selecting the subway plan has shown its willingness to bear higher initial capital costs if this will produce a better quality transit system for the long term. The selected plan will offer convenient, rapid service and will not threaten the environmental quality of the inner-city areas. The selected plan will allow the light-rail system to run right to population and employment centers in downtown Dallas and along the North Central Expressway, but any negative environmental impacts will be minimized.

Jeffrey Karl Ochsner

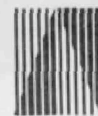


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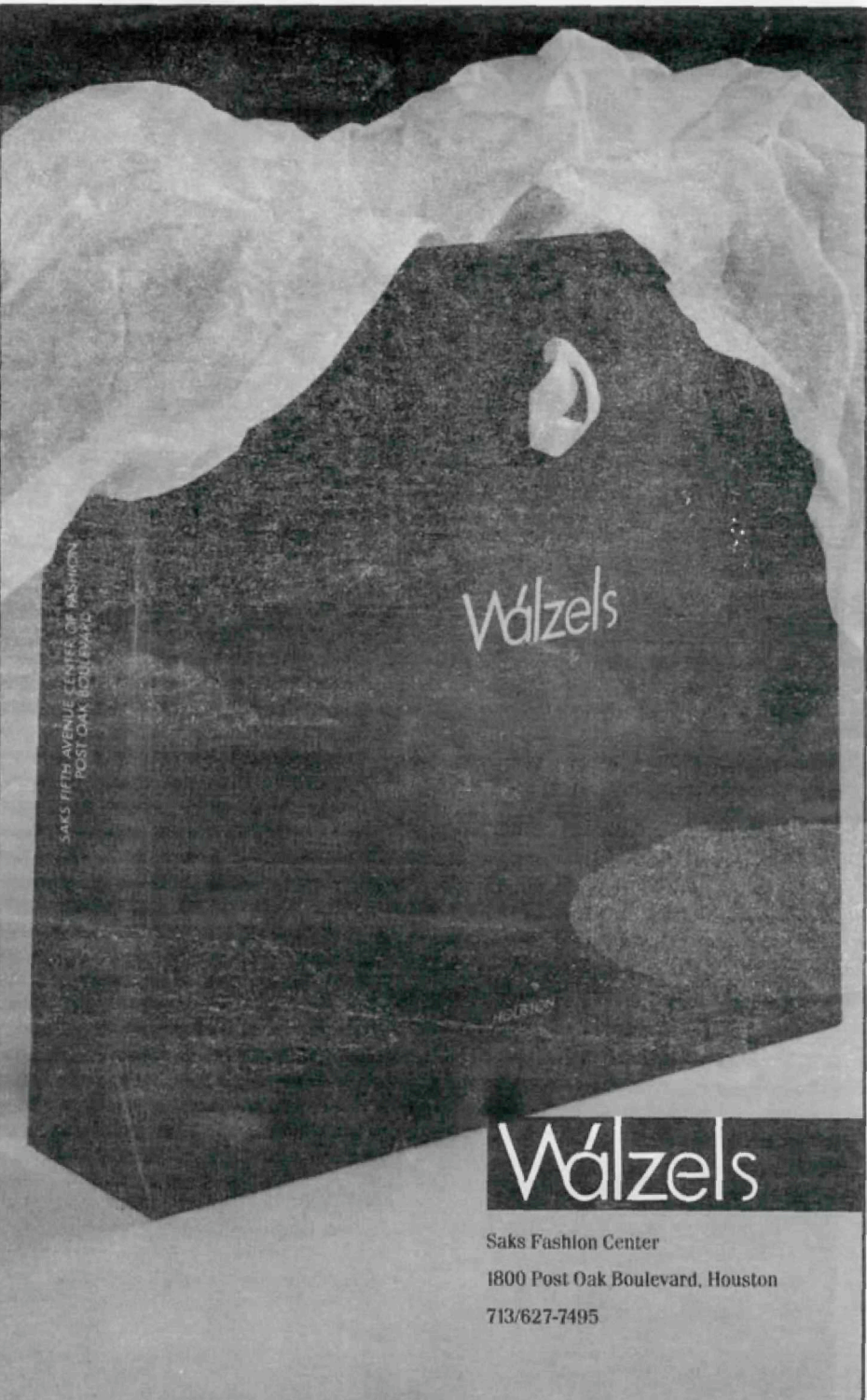
RESTORING TEXAS

Raiford Stripling's Life and Architecture
Michael McCullar
Foreword by Frank D. Welch

Decades before it became fashionable to restore historic buildings, Raiford Stripling was applying his architectural and sleuthing skills to the Greek Revival structures of San Augustine, the French Legation in Austin, Ashton Villa in Galveston, Independence Hall at Washington-on-the-Brazos, and the Spanish Presidio La Bahia in Goliad. This warm, personal memoir of the feisty yet virtually reclusive Stripling heralds the state's sesquicentennial with a beautifully illustrated record of one man's salvaging of Texas architecture. 8 3/8 x 10 7/8. 196 pp. 24 color, 62 b&w photos. \$29.95

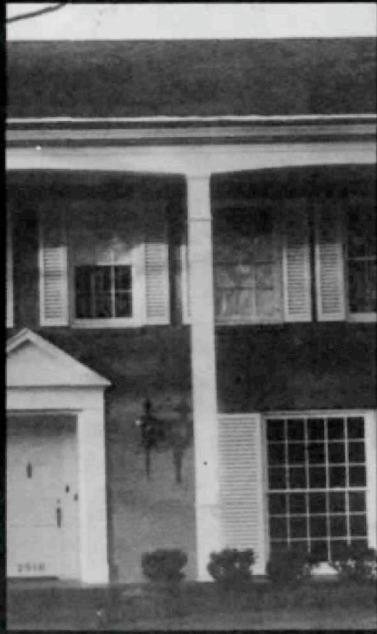


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TANGLEWOOD



Chocolate Bayou Theater Gets New Playhouse



Model of Chocolate Bayou Theater, William T. Cannady and Associates, architects (Photo by Paul Hester)

The Chocolate Bayou Theater Company of Houston will move before the end of 1985 into a new, purpose-built theater designed for it by William T. Cannady and Associates. Located at the corner of Bremond Avenue and Bagby Street in the South End, the Chocolate Bayou Theater is a 14,000-square-foot building containing two performance spaces: a

249-seat proscenium theater and a 149-seat "black box" theater. To keep costs low (the budget is \$420,000), warehouse construction is being employed. The exterior will be surfaced in corrugated metal. Corrugated fiberglass will be used for vaulted skylights above the public promenade.

RDA Sponsors Mayoral Debate

Editor's note: The following article was written prior to the mayoral election.

As part of its continuing series of symposiums on civic issues in Houston, the Rice Design Alliance on 15 October 1985 sponsored a debate between the two principal mayoral candidates, Mayor Kathryn J. Whitmire and former mayor Louie Welch. The format of the debate included questions from a panel who focused on the candidates' concepts and proposals for the built environment of Houston.

The symposium was introduced by Andrew John Rudnick, executive vice-president of the Houston Economic Development Council, and was moderated by O. Jack Mitchell, dean of the School of Architecture at Rice. Each candidate opened with a six-minute introductory statement. Louie Welch focused on three primary areas which he judged important to the quality of Houston's environment: jobs; mobility; and community integrity, including the quality and security of Houston neighborhoods. Welch argued that the Whitmire administration was failing in all three areas. Kathy Whitmire's opening remarks pointed to her view that Houston is doing better and that her administration had been responsible for preserving the city's good "business climate," improving its infrastructure, and offering a positive quality of life.

The first panelist, Daniel K. Hedges, former U.S. attorney, now with Porter and Clements, asked about planning and location of new public buildings, inquiring especially whether long-term potential benefits to the public were taken into account and whether contributions from developers were required when these developers benefit from city-financed improvements. Whitmire cited planning for the George R. Brown Convention Center, for Houston Intercontinental Airport, and for the system of police command centers as evidence of her administration's commitment to planning for the long term. Welch argued for building excess capacity in the city's infrastructure to support growth for 20, 30, or even 50 years. Both candidates stated that requiring developer contributions should be required from developers who benefit from city-sponsored improvements.

The second panelist, Truett Latimer, former director of the Texas Historical Commission, now a development and preservation consultant with the City Partnership, focused on downtown Houston and asked whether Houston should consider an ordinance requiring retail and/or restaurants in the ground floors of new buildings to support a better street life. Similar ordinances have been enacted in New York, San Francisco, Seattle, and other cities. Welch adamantly opposed such an ordinance arguing that a building owner is the best judge of what uses to include at ground level. He

apparently was unaware of the research by William H. Whyte and others on downtown street life showing the clear need for such ground-level uses. Whitmire said she might be willing to consider such an ordinance, but noted that Houston should not blindly copy other cities.

The third panelist, civic activist Macey Reasoner, asked how the candidates would involve citizens, not just development interests, in the planning of the city. Mayor Whitmire claimed that the planning process for the five-year capital improvements program that she initiated had involved the citizens. She also stated that the single-member council districts had led to much more citizen involvement. Welch recalled a series of "town meetings" which he conducted when he was mayor as evidence of his ability to involve citizens in decision making.

The panelists' questions were followed by five questions taken from the audience. These focused on planning for a west-side airport; enhancing the physical attractiveness of the city; land-use controls and the possibility of zoning; public art; and flooding. In their few points of agreement, both candidates praised the downtown skyline and the collection of public art in the city as being major assets, and both candidates said it was too late to consider zoning. Kathy Whitmire cited the recent series of city ordinances controlling certain types of businesses as an example of land-use control without zoning. Louie Welch argued for protecting neighborhoods by enforcing deed restrictions and the city's building codes.

In their concluding remarks, the candidates appeared to concentrate on their differences. Whitmire cited what she called "misstatements" in her opponent's presentation and then said that her administration had a superior record for turning plans into reality - for actually getting projects built. Welch argued that the critical issue was the lack of jobs for Houstonians and that the Whitmire administration had not really done anything to turn the economy around.

Although each candidate cited positions and achievements, neither appeared to offer a clear, broadly-based vision for the future of Houston. Neither candidate seemed to see his or her achievements as part of a broader strategic approach for the built environment of the city as a whole. Perhaps the city needs to develop a broad "Goals for Houston" process (such as similar processes which produced the Target 90 Plan in San Antonio and a similar plan in Dallas) before a broadly-based consensus for a comprehensive strategy for Houston's built environment can emerge. Perhaps after the beginning of the new term, the mayor will consider initiating such a process to bring the city together as we head into the 21st century.

Jeffrey Karl Ochsner

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Crocheron Compound Restoration



University of Houston graduate student Juba Piblaskari at work on restoration of a log building in the Crocheron Compound (Photo by V. Nia Dorian-Bechnel)

The Crocheron Compound is a community of 19th-century Texas structures that have been restored and adapted for 20th-century man. Located on a 30-acre site in Bastrop, Texas on the Colorado River at the old San Antonio Road juncture, it is an ambitious restoration project conceived and financed by Gerald R. Wagner. Wagner, in conjunction with Clay Terrell, president of Restoration People, endeavored to incorporate within the project features that are sensitive to the community, the interaction of the compound to the street, and the making of architecture as objects of art. The project is intended to function as an artist colony, but also will serve as a laboratory wherein students can study early Texas architecture.

The completed site will consist of 20 structures. Seven buildings already have been moved there and restored, including the Crocheron House, the Wolf-Wilhelm House, the Mathis-Skalitsky House, the Jones-Powell House, the Fowler House, the Wilson Log House, and the Venghaus Log House. Each structure is sited as it was originally.

Last summer several University of Houston students participated in the development of the site. Their hands-on involvement included development of the master plan, preparation of registration documents for the state and national registers, participation in the chinking of log cabins and the cutting of stones for a fireplace - all while residing on the compound in a restored 19th-century structure.

Work at the Crocheron Compound consists of modifications to and restoration of the structures. This approach differs from traditional

restoration in that buildings are not only restored historically to a particular period but also are altered or modified by the installation of modern conveniences. This emerging perspective undoubtedly will foster healthy exchanges between those who advocate renovation with modifications and those who are inclined toward the more traditional approach to restoration.

Traditionalists believe that a building should be preserved on its original site, restored to a specific point in history, and serve as an example of some historic event, person, place, or architectural genre. Those who advocate restoration with modifications believe that the habitation of a building is the preeminent consideration in restoration and that habitation may take many forms: house-house, castle-museum, brewery-art gallery. The critical issue is the presence of human beings, which maintains the balance of the house, fosters the spiritual union between architecture/land/man and, most importantly, returns the architecture to its intended use: shelter. It is this perspective which guides development of the Crocheron Compound.

Because of the inclusion of modern conveniences in the restored structures, the project provides a laboratory wherein the effects of comingling modern technology and traditional restoration techniques can be implemented, observed, and analyzed. The debate over which approach is more appropriate is certain to result in a better understanding of the manner in which restoration and preservation should be pursued and the goals and objectives that such projects should seek to accomplish.

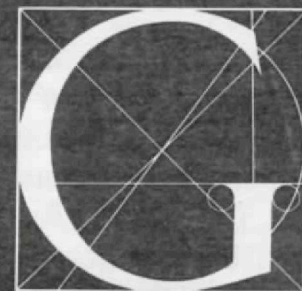
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