

## GEORGIA CHAPTER FALL 2005 NEWSLETTER

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## MONTHLY MEETINGS

Third Monday of the month,  
6:30 PM, location  
announced via email and  
on the website.

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This newsletter appears bi-annually as  
an update for those interested in the  
activities of DOCOMOMO US,  
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Chapter.

## THOUGHTS ON THE CULTURAL IMPACT OF KATRINA *PEOPLE AND THINGS* [MODERN]

ROBERT M. CRAIG

*The past is never dead. It's not even  
past.*

William Faulkner, *Requiem for a Nun*,  
Act I, scene iii

*I have always depended on the kind-  
ness of strangers*

Blanche DuBois, in *A Streetcar Named  
Desire*

*How can we live without our lives? How  
will we know it's us without our past?*

John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*

In a classic scene in *The Grapes of Wrath*, author John Steinbeck describes the uprooting of lives and the heart wrenching decisions of dust-bowl victims forced to abandon their homes and to leave behind the material souvenirs of their lives. Crowded into ragged vehicles which will transport them westward, desperately trying to decide what, among their belongings, they have room to carry with them, the men prepare a bon fire to burn the artifacts of their past lives, (perceived as personifications of past bitterness), while the women lament, "How can we live without our lives? How will we know it's us without our past?"

In tragic times of displacement, whether brought about by natural or man-made disaster, our values realign to move "from sense to soul" from "things" to family, from material possessions and accumulated belongings to what really counts in life.

Nevertheless, beyond the people, are things: we are professionally interested in the fate of architecture, art, documents collections, historic records, and cultural institutions. During this extraordinary hurricane season, we wonder what was the impact of Katrina and Rita on the region's physical resources, and, especially for readers of this newsletter, on modern buildings. With the loss of human life (and pets!)



Katrina aftermath: houses transformed to debris, Gulf Port, MS. Photo: Christopher Kyle Craig.

and with the displacement of citizens from their homes brought about by the storms, one hesitates to talk about lost or damaged buildings or destroyed cultural artefacts. Nonetheless, as an architectural historian whose career has focused on the study of buildings, on art, and on the culture of the past, I find compelling, at times such as these, Steinbeck's representation of Okies displaced from those "places," as well as from the "objects" of their lives.

After Katrina came ashore, I found myself searching for news regarding the survival of historic landmark architecture, of pottery workshops and art collections along the Gulf Coast, of museums, and libraries, and archival records of centuries of New Orleans history. Like colleagues in Docomomo, I include among my concerns modern buildings, as well as historic structures in the region. In a series of damage reports on the impact of the hurricane (prepared for VAF, SAH, NCSA, SESA, and SECAC), my more exhaustive inquiry was initially focused on 18th and 19th century raised cottages, Creole plantation houses, Cajun culture, and historic neighborhoods, but some information also emerged concerning more modern buildings. I provide here a small excerpt reporting on *continued on page 6*

## EDITOR'S NOTE

During the past month, Hurricane Katrina's devastation of the Gulf Coast consumed the nation. For many preservationists, initial fears concerning historic resources were quickly eclipsed by news of the human tragedy that emerged following the storm's land-fall. Now, as efforts move more towards recovery, attention is again focusing on the status and future of the region's significant built environment. In this issue, Rob Craig provides a poignant elegy to the lost structures and landscapes.

Numerous organizations are rallying to provide assistance. For updates, visit the National Trust for Historic Preservation's website at [www.nationaltrust.org](http://www.nationaltrust.org).

Meanwhile, Georgia currently suffers from storms of a more philistine nature. The continued demolition of Modern Movement buildings [pgs 8-10] reveals that many developers and property holders are unaware or uninterested in the value of the resources and their historic significance. Success in future advocacy will depend on the continued documentation of Modern Movement buildings, sites, and landscapes, and the continued voice of the growing community of preservationists, architects, designers, historians, enthusiasts, and others.

*Jon Buono  
Vice-President  
Georgia Chapter  
DOCOMOMO-US*

*Please send comments, corrections, or contributions to [newsletter@docomomoga.org](mailto:newsletter@docomomoga.org).*



## CAMPAIGN TO SAVE JACKSONVILLE LIBRARY

RONDA STEINKE-MCDONALD

Downtown Jacksonville, Florida will potentially lose a significant building from its post-war history. The site of the Haydon Burns Library, designed by local architect Taylor Hardwick in the early 1960s, was recently offered for disposal by the Jacksonville Economic Development Commission.

Unfortunately, the city's Request for Proposals (RFP) established no criteria for retaining the highly viable structure for adaptive reuse. Despite this omission, two of the three groups answering the RFP devised plans that creatively reused the existing library. One proposed housing a local chocolate factory and retail center; the other included a retail base with housing units above. In July, however, the city awarded development to the high-bidder Atkins Group who proposed razing the library to construct a condominium complex with retail space and a movie theatre.

Hardwick established an architectural practice in Jacksonville after graduating from the University of Pennsylvania. During his 50-year career in Jacksonville he has stayed true to his ideal of creating a unique body of work that did not copy the style of any other architect. Along with his partner W. Mayberry Lee, of Hardwick & Lee Architects, Hardwick created numerous commercial and residential edifices throughout the North Florida area.

It is understandable that the artistic and historical community that champion this building believed, or at

Postcard image of Haydon Burns Library, courtesy of author

least strongly hoped, that one of the two proposals retaining the building would be chosen. "Naive" is the word Emily Lisska, the executive director of the Jacksonville Historical Society, used when explaining that, for people who readily cherish the historical, it is hard to comprehend that others may not. Despite critics' claims that protest is coming too late, Lisska's organization has been on record for two years as opposing the demolition of the library.

Currently, preservationists have found a friend in Councilwoman Suzanne Jenkins who wants to obtain local landmark status for the library, though she isn't personally a fan of the design. Obtaining this status will be complicated because the library is a few years shy of the standard fifty-year mark to qualify without special approval from the city council. Those lobbying to spare the library are also working against the prevailing aesthetics of those outside the artistic community.

Attempts at preservation have often been at odds with the powerful Northeast Florida building industry, which reasons all new building is good for the economy. Critics of the Haydon Burns Library demolition note the inferior quality of recent construction within the city and hope to avoid an unfortunate sacrifice in this trend.

The brilliant glass mosaic tiles and glazed brick that adorn the Library's jaunty facade account for a portion of its high visibility in the community. The concrete fins that run from top to bottom do the rest. For *continued next page*

# AIA COMMITTEE PROMOTES PRESERVATION, ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION

DEBORAH REHN, AIA

The Historic Resources Committee Knowledge Community (HRC) of the American Institute of Architects has been working on an initiative to ensure that basic knowledge and principles of historic preservation are included in every professional architect's education. The fact that they are not may be a surprise to those of us who are non-architects, and who care a lot about assuring the preservation of our modern built heritage.

Fostering a holistic stewardship of the varied built expressions of our culture, and an appreciation of the value of all the elements of our cultural heritage were two cornerstones in the goals of this effort, as outlined by **Jack Pyburn**, AIA of OJP Architect, Inc. in Atlanta, Georgia at a recent presentation before the AIA Atlanta HRC. Mr. Pyburn has been a leader in the effort, coordinating national and international conferences with interested practitioners, educators and students to explore the issues and to determine the current status of preservation education in the professional architecture curriculum. Last year's successful conference in Washington, DC will be followed by another in September 2005 in Bath, England.

With a full slate of topics in architectural history from the first architects of the pyramids, to current 21st century cyber-architects and everything in between, (including our beloved modern works), the specifics of preservation technology, principles, laws and practices have made it only into a minority of architecture school curriculums. Making room for preservation is one more item competing for inclusion *continued next page*



many locals this building is an icon of the 60's, though there are others who view it as an irksome example of extreme design that they would rather avoid. Regardless of one's palate, it is a decidedly unique expression of architecture in Jacksonville.

The building's grand scale is defined by a 26-foot ceiling height on the first floor and 14-foot on the others. The three floors and mezzanine constitute 122,000 square feet of enclosed space that features abundant natural lighting, while the basement houses a 200-seat auditorium with a stage and projection booth.

The reinforced-concrete structure, engineered to withstand the heavy loads of a library, is unique among existing downtown buildings. Additionally, Hardwick's flexible design anticipated the addition of a future fourth floor by stubbing the columns through the existing roof, as well as both elevators.

Hardwick's commitment to the building's versatility prompted him to join the venture to rehabilitate the library as a mixed-use, retail, office, and entertainment venue.

Unfortunately, most of Hardwick's significant work has been demolished, or altered beyond recognition, before the public gained an appreciation of the mid-20th century period of design. In recognition of his significant lifetime contribution to his profession and the built environment, Hardwick received the Henry John Klutho Award from the Jacksonville Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1999. The Haydon Burns Library is perhaps the most significant of Hardwick's designs, due in part to its very public use by several generations of Jacksonville citizens, but also for the inclusion of design elements for which the architect is so well known.



At top, view of interior and staircase (Alex George). Middle, view of exterior fins (Ronda McDonald). Bottom, detail of glazed brick wall (Ronda McDonald).

For more information or to express your support, visit <http://www.taylorhardwick.com/>

*Ronda Steinke-McDonald is the Director for the New Leaf School for Change in Neptune Beach, Florida.*

in a program that is already a challenge. In addition to architectural history, usual subjects include: building systems technology, design skills, drawing and computer skills, building codes, and sustainable design, along with electives for urban design, business, construction, or social issues.

For further information on the international conference: visit [http://www.aia.org/ev\\_hrc\\_sep05\\_icomos](http://www.aia.org/ev_hrc_sep05_icomos).

For details on the professional architecture curriculum and the current initiative in the United States see: [http://www.naab.org/usr\\_doc/aiahrc.pdf](http://www.naab.org/usr_doc/aiahrc.pdf) aia.

*Deborah Rehn is an Historical Architect with the National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office.*

## SAVE THE CONSTITUTION CAMPAIGN UPDATE

TOM LITTLE, AIA

As of early September, nearly 800 individuals have signed an online petition requesting the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) reconsider plans for a proposed Multi Modal Passenger Terminal (MMPT) - plans developed without any consideration given for adaptive use of the historic Atlanta Constitution Building. Many individuals have written to local, state, and national representatives requesting reevaluation of MMPT plans, and other organizations and individuals have donated time and offered advice.

Since last December, the Chapter has corresponded with the City of Atlanta, the GDOT, the Federal Transit Administration, and other state and local agencies requesting reconsideration of MMPT plans. It is clear that these governmental agencies believe their administrative duties regarding authorization for demolition of the Constitution Building are complete, even

Bringing national recognition to the campaign, the online version of the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Preservation magazine included an article in June: "Atlanta May Lose One of its Last Art Moderne Buildings."

As understood by the Chapter, construction of the currently funded Phase One MMPT proposal requires demolition of the Atlanta Constitution Building (now owned by the City of Atlanta). This design does not include commercial intercity bus or AMTRAK facilities - future phases including these features remain unfunded at this point. We do know the proposed Phase One design is not urban in scale or design, includes no commercial or residential component, and as a result will stand largely empty each day and night after rush-hour.

In mid-September 2005, the State Transportation Board voted to finalize negotiations for implementation of the Lovejoy to Atlanta section of a planned network of commuter rail. This will be the only rail line served by the Phase One MMPT design. Since the Lovejoy line and the MMPT are so closely related, it is likely the Board's vote will encourage the City of Atlanta to make an immediate decision concerning the building. A City Council proposal allowing the Mayor's execution of a quitclaim deed transferring the property to the GDOT was proposed in 2003, and has remained with the Transportation Committee since.

The Chapter encourages all concerned citizens to call or write their city council representative and the Mayor's office. They should let them know the importance of preservation of Atlanta's 20th century heritage. Although expanded transportation options are important to a vital downtown, they should not require loss of the historic Atlanta Constitution Building. As a condition of the property transfer, the City Council and Mayor should require GDOT assemble a team of designers and Atlanta-based developers to seriously consider the possibility of adaptive use of the building, before allowing any work on the site.

In addition, anyone who has not signed the online petition requesting the GDOT consider alternatives to demolition should sign the petition immediately, and ask others who share their concerns to do the same.

Regardless of the final outcome of the campaign, it is clear that the campaign has been successful in bringing preservation of mid-20th century sites to the attention of the Atlanta government, press, and public - not a small task.

For more information about the Atlanta Constitution Building and the campaign to save it, visit the chapter website [www.docomomoga.org](http://www.docomomoga.org).



View of Constitution Building in 1948, Special Collections Department, Pullen Library, Georgia State University.

though the decision for demolition is based on minimal historic research conducted in 1994 and 1995 - and never revisited even though MMPT plans were significantly revised in 2000 and 2001.

The local press helped bring the building's plight to the public. In May the Atlanta Journal Constitution published a column authored by Chapter officers Jon Buono and Thomas Little, followed in early June by an AJC editorial and Central Atlanta Progress OP-ED calling for demolition of the building. The local newspaper Creative Loafing published a summary of the issues in May.

## A CITY TOO BUSY TO REMEMBER

ROBERT M. CRAIG

*Note: The following editorial was originally submitted for publication in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution.*

The City of Atlanta may have a new motto: "A City Too Busy to Remember." The Art Moderne-styled Atlanta Constitution Building is slated for the "forgotten" column.

Former mayor Andrew Young predicted that our city's character will be measured in glass walls and steel. I am reminded that mirror glass is narcissistic. As an architectural historian, I frequently conclude that an architect's best work is an architecture respectful of context. Atlanta, however, the "too busy" city of the New South, is hell-bent to develop itself on the razed debris of its past, displacing just about anything that smacks of any historic age, for the sake of a Youngling [Jungian?] character. The wrecking ball, that instrument of the collective unconscious, doesn't say much for our respect for our fathers.



View of Constitution Building entrance and Julian Harris mural at Forsyth Street, Special Collections Department, Pullen Library, Georgia State University.

Atlanta's oft-quoted preservation successes are duly applauded: "Save the Fox," "Stop the Road," and the "Hunk of Junk" campaign. But, my goodness! Look what the citizens of Atlanta had to do, to knock some sense into the powers-that-be, in order to preserve these landmark buildings and internationally acclaimed landscape parks of Druid Hills! New arrivals to the city may not know how very close Atlanta came to losing the mature masterpiece of landscapist Frederick Law Olmsted. In that "stop the road" battle, by the way, the odds were three powerful leaders against tens of thousands of plain folk like you and me: the threesome in the black hats were a former President, the Mayor of Atlanta, and the State Commissioner of Transportation. The multitude in the

white hats were the citizens of Atlanta, and we sometimes dare not go to sleep for fear of what those in power will do.

So here we are again, fighting city hall. What is the bottom line in the effort to Save the Constitution Building downtown? You've read the arguments:

a) vagrants, bugs, rodents, and lack of maintenance over the past few years means demolition is the only option. Oh, come now!

b) the multi-modal terminal design presupposes demolition. In any design scheme, the lazy way out is to use the eraser before the architect uses the pencil. Atlanta is too soft on developers of the "anything pre-existing is expendable" school of thought. Hail the virgin site! Architects work for clients, and if the client does not establish an "option 2 program," one specifically requiring a design to incorporate a preserved building on site, then there is no second option. When only one card is played, whose to know what the city may miss as a better choice?

c) the building is ugly and not worth saving. "Worth" is measured by money, of course. How much are your children worth? Ah, if "value" includes something beyond dollars, then how are we to assess the merits of this particular building? If you want to know if a musical composition is significant, then ask trained musicians. If you want to know which historic buildings rise to the top as noteworthy exemplars of their era then ask several architectural historians [and maybe even architects in hopes you find an architect willing to risk a future commission].

d) Contemporary design is always better than a 60-year old derelict of a building. This, of course, is the old "cult of progress" point of view. Well, beauty is in the eye of the too often near-sighted beholder. The 1900s disparaged "Victorian," the 1920s disparaged "Art Nouveau," 1940's disparaged anything pre-Modern; the 1950s disparaged Art Deco; the 1960s built buildings which even they called "Brutal" and '60s architects and planners treated the city as a loci for "urban removal" and civil defense "bunker" architecture; and finally, the 1970s disparaged Modern itself calling instead for "post modern" and a return to history. In Atlanta that sparked the establishment of the Atlanta Preservation Center and the Atlanta Urban Design Commission. Today, the "New Urbanism" is all about context, respect, sensitive design, and tradition.

e) No time left; "the train has already left the station." Ask an architect what the word charrette means. A little over a century and a half ago, Joseph Paxton submitted an idea for the "Crystal Palace," the first world's

*Katrina continued from page 1*

buildings whose status will interest Docomomo members.

With regard to the Gulf Port and Biloxi beach fronts, my "research" took me to my own son, Christopher, and his personal experience and impressions as part



Above, Treasure Bay Casino Resort in ruin, Biloxi, MS (Christopher Kyle Craig). Below, Piazza d'Italia, New Orleans, 1978, Charles Moore (Robert M. Craig).

of the relief effort. Christopher is a member of a North Carolina "Special Operations Response Team" which was staged in the Mississippi Valley two days before Katrina came ashore, and was soon moved to the Gulf Coast. Based on first hand observations along the beach at Biloxi and Gulf Port, Christopher described 3-6 blocks deep of a virtual "war zone" in Gulf Port, Mississippi, property lots now only sand, and city block after block of piles of broken lumber.

The town of Biloxi, before the storm, was a surreal juxtaposition of modern popular culture and historic buildings. The gambling casinos, those kitsch

embodiments of popular culture with their Disneyesque stage prop superficiality, lined the ocean front creating [atop barges] a shoreline of 20th c. pop architecture which intruded visually on both the historic context of traditional neighborhoods as well as the environmental naturalism of the beach and coastal "edge." Biloxi, like Myrtle Beach or even Las Vegas, had become its own main street of modern cmu motels and advertisements, mostly, in Biloxi, punctuated by floating barges housing frame superstructures for gambling. Wrapped in paper-thin imagery, with skins of flimsy architectural dress, the coastal city had become a trumpet fanfare of neon and artificial applique ----stylish modern resort architecture, not Modern-styled resort design. How different from Erich Mendelsohn's De La Warr Seaside Pavilion at Bexhill-on-Sea, in England! But what Charles Jencks once called the carnivalesque branch of Postmodernism, had become in Biloxi its own uninhibited beach-front commercial display, uptown honky tonk without the redeeming context of a Coney Island or boardwalk. Katrina blasted ashore and swept right through these blackjack sheds tearing away the lower half of the Treasure Bay Casino Resort, for example, and peeling off other layers of its architectural costuming, leaving a shipwrecked ruin on an empty beach.

Architect Frank Gehry was within a year of completion of his addition to the Ohr-O'Keefe Museum of Art in Biloxi, when a dislodged casino barge bashed against his buildings crushing it. The Pleasant Reed House [a museum of African-American history and on the site of the Ohr Museum] was destroyed except for the chimney. By the way, despite devastation all around, the rest of the museum's contents and collection is safe, including the Ohr pots that have been moved to the Mobile Museum of Art.

When Charles Jencks wrote about the academic legitimization of the vernacular and demode, he referenced "Disney seminars by Charles Moore-110 credit hours of Camp, Kitsch, and Schlock at Yale University"-and one is reminded, therefore, that one of Moore's master works is in New Orleans. The Piazza d'Italia (1978) (where Maybeck's Palace of Fine Arts meets Star Wars, Italian Mannerism, and Giorgio de Chirico) is located in the Central Business District just off Canal Street, and thus experienced only minimal flooding.

"Modern" for orthodox Docomomo devotees, no doubt refers to the "white" architecture of High Modern, and it was not my intention to write about only this "other" modern. And while we think of New Orleans as more 19th century vernacular than "modern," we have also seen televised images of windows blown out of the Hyatt Hotel on the edge of the French Quarter, parts of the roof peeled off the

Superdome, and the modern engineering of bridges appearing like collapsed domino slabs as I-10 crosses the bayou or Lake Pontchartrain. The Treasure Bay Casino Resort, Charles Moore, and Frank Gehry may be strange bedfellows, but they shared

the stretch of water of the bay glittering with countless gems beyond the ransom of kings." When Katrina hit Ocean Springs, the Louis Sullivan House was "vaporized," according to its owner, and Louis's "paradise, the poem of spring, Louis' other self" [as he



Above left, Louis Sullivan Cottage, Ocean Springs, MS, 1890, Frank Lloyd Wright [Adler and Sullivan]; above right, James Charnley Cottage, Ocean Springs, MS, 1890, Frank Lloyd Wright [Adler and Sullivan]; below, Gryder House interior, Ocean Springs, MS, 1960, Bruce Goff, interior. All photos by Robert M. Craig.

the Gulf Coast and they were all in the path of Katrina.

wrote in *An Autobiography of an Idea*] was simply gone.

A bit to the east stands Ocean Springs, Mississippi, where Bruce Goff, in 1960, built the William Conneil Gryder House for a chain store shoe salesman. Having already quoted Charles Jencks, I cannot resist reminding readers of his description of Goff as the "Michaelangelo of kitsch." Again, hardly orthodox Modern, but the Gryder House is a notable architectural site in the Gulf Coast region, and it appears to have come through OK. The house was not sited beach front and is located on slightly higher ground. Nevertheless, the winds must have whistled around the curved walls and roof of the Gryder House which still sits like a preying mantis surveying its private water garden-Goff at his post-Wrightian geometric best, Modern at its most unorthodox. Reports from a colleague in Mobile inform me that the house lost its high stove-pipe chimney, which rose like a flag pole over its sweeping roof, but the Gryder House appears relatively intact.

Next door, the James Charnley House was severely damaged, with both house and guest house knocked off their piers; a tree fell on the guest house roof. This cypress shingle-clad house was something of a sister house to the more famous James Charnley House in Chicago: Wright designed the brick "palazzo" Chicago residence for Charnley the following year (1891), now the headquarters of the Society of Architectural Historians (SAH). Some say the Charnley vacation cottage may be salvageable, but at considerable expense; the Sullivan House is simply and completely gone. [Post-Katrina images may be viewed at <http://www.mississippiheritage.com/HurricaneKatrina> "Hurricane Katrina's Impact on Historic Structures in Mississippi."]



The same cannot be said about work by Goff's friend and paragon, Frank Lloyd Wright. Wright came to the Gulf Coast 70 years before Goff's Gryder House and built there two houses of 1890 during the period Wright worked for Adler and Sullivan. The Ocean Springs vacation cottages, one for Louis Sullivan himself, and the second next door for James Charnley, are about as "early Wright" as you can get-he had begun his architectural career only three years earlier. Sullivan fell in love with the Gulf Coast and the beauty of the natural landscape, and a 1905 *Architectural Record* description of the veranda of the Sullivan bungalow speaks of "great clusters of white wisteria hanging from the roof" and the view "across

Merely three years ago, accompanied by a Gulf Coast area scholar Phil Oszuscik (a colleague from the University of South Alabama), I visited both houses, and, for many years at Georgia Tech, I have included them in lectures on Frank Lloyd Wright. They are among Katrina's major nineteenth-century architectural losses, and were some of the earliest designs of America's most famous modern architect.

*Robert Craig is Professor of Architectural History at Georgia Tech's College of Architecture and serves on the Board of Advisors for the Georgia Chapter, DOCOMOMO-US. Craig is the author of the recent title, Bernard Maybeck at Principia College: The Art and Craft of Building, by Gibbs Smith Publishers.*

## IN THE NEWS

### ***State of California Confirms Salk Institute Eligibility for National Register***

The State of California Historic Resources Commission voted on August 5 to designate the Salk Institute for Biological Studies to the National Register of Historic Places. The Salk Institute property, designed in 1963 by master architect Louis I. Kahn, is noted for its outstanding modernist design, integration of building and setting and spellbinding courtyard view to the Pacific Ocean.

The Commission designated the entire 26.34 acre legal parcel because the property remains an integral composition retaining sufficient integrity to convey its history.

"We are so pleased that the Commission recognized that the entire 26-acre Salk Institute property, including landscape elements of Salk Coastal Canyon, deserves listing on the National Register of historic places. The outpouring of letters of support from all over the world shows how important one of San Diego's outstanding cultural monuments is to the country," stated Kathryn Burton, Spokesperson, Friends of Salk Coastal Canyon.

The parcel was placed on the City of San Diego's Historical Register in 1991 by the City's Historical Resources Board. That Board also directed City staff to prepare a nomination for the National Register. Because the City had not prepared a nomination, a Coalition of environmentalists, architects, historic preservationists, landscape architects and neighborhood stakeholders submitted an application in 2004.

"The architectural and contextual significance of the Salk Institute has been clearly recognized and rein-

*continued next page*

## NEW THREATS

### ***Downtown Still Coming Down***

JEFF MORRISON, AIA  
WITH J. BUONO & T. LITTLE

As Atlanta boosters herald a Renaissance for downtown, a red flag is inevitably raised for older sites within the district. The summer of 2005 witnessed the demolition of four notable mid-century Modern buildings, all within a few blocks of one another. All four were demolished to make way for development, after being vacant for years.

The losses include two of downtown's last remaining car dealerships. Beaudry Ford (image at top), located at Piedmont Ave. and Ellis Street evoked the New Formalism architecture popularized in the 1960s. The building's nineteen tapered and arched concrete columns came together to form a simple pavilion of structure and glass, that was later harmonized by the nearby concrete overpasses for the freeway. The Boomershine Dealership at Spring St. and Alexander St. was also a concrete-framed structure, though characterized by its alternating bays of red brick panel infill and thin mullioned strip windows.

The Eagle Building (image at bottom) at 105 Luckie St., NW has lost its 1950s exterior renovation and interior by John Portman, FAIA. Portman's design included modernized elevator lobbies and a ballroom on an upper floor. The building's exterior, as with many urban renovations from the era, masked the original facade with an opaque surface, but in this case was richly clad with vertical strips of white marble.

Also demolished was the former Greyhound Bus Depot (middle image), located at Williams St. and International Blvd. The building was likely designed by the firm of William Strudwick Arrasmith (1898 - 1965) of Louisville, Kentucky, who was contracted to design more than 65 Greyhound Bus Terminals across America in the late thirties and early forties.

The streamlined two-story concrete structure included the characteristic features of the Art Moderne style, including round windows, curved wall surfaces, stainless steel and aluminum alloy trimmings, terrazzo floors, limestone facade, and exterior surfaces of glazed tile. Over the year, the building's original appearance had been concealed beneath layers of false facades and drab paint.

If you have any information to support documentation efforts on these buildings, please contact Jeff Morrison at [jmorrison@gssih.com](mailto:jmorrison@gssih.com).



Jeff Morrison



Special Collections Department, Pullen Library, Georgia State University.



Tom Little

-forced by its eligibility for placement on the National Register. The people of San Diego should be proud of and be complimented for their foresight, when in 1960 they voted to grant Dr. Jonas Salk the land on which to build his world renowned scientific research facility," said Professor Jeffrey Shorn, AIA, nomination preparer.

Because the Institute opposes nomination of the entire site, the property was determined eligible for listing on the National Register but, unfortunately, cannot be listed on the Register itself.

To express your support for the nomination, contact:  
Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA,  
California SHPO, fax:  
916.653.9824,  
mwdonaldson@parks.ca.gov  
Janet Snyder Matthews, Ph.D.,  
Keeper of the National Register,  
fax: 202.371.2229

## Member News

**Thomas F. Little**, AIA, President of DOCOMOMO/US, Georgia Chapter, Inc., received the Atlanta Urban Design Commission's Jenny D. Thurston Memorial Award to an Outstanding Preservation Professional on June 29, 2005. The award, given annually, recognizes design professionals working in the preservation field and exhibiting the scholarship, leadership and dedication to preservation that the late Jenny Thurston possessed. The award was established in honor of Jenny Thurston, the Commission's first Executive Director.

The Officers of DOCOMOMO-US recently elected **Jon Buono** to serve as Interim Chair of the National Register Committee. Buono will organize the efforts of the US Chapters in the Register project and will implement a newly developed online Register database.

## Cousins Develops New Plans for 615 Peachtree

JON BUONO

During the summer, Atlanta-based Cousins Properties Inc. notified tenants of the 615 Peachtree building of their plans for redevelopment of the site. Constructed between 1958 and 1960, the intensely geometric 12-story building exhibits numerous design and construction advances from the postwar era.

Originally commissioned by First National Bank of Atlanta (later purchased by Wachovia), the building was designed by Smith & Smith Architects of Atlanta. Francis P. Smith, a student of the noted American architect Paul Cret (1876-1945), moved to Atlanta in 1909 to become the first chairman of Georgia Tech's newly established architecture department. He worked in that capacity until 1922 when he returned to private practice.

The next year he formed a partnership with established Atlanta architect R. S. Pringle. The partnership lasted until 1934, during which time Pringle & Smith designed several important buildings in Atlanta, including the Rhodes-Haverty Building (1928) and the William-Oliver Building (1930). Pringle retired in the 1930s, but Smith continued to practice independently. Smith's son, Henry H., followed his father's footsteps to the University of Pennsylvania, and after ending his military service in the 1950s, joined his father in practice.

Prior to 615 Peachtree, Francis had served as an architect to First National on numerous projects. The new commission was prompted by the city's widening of North Avenue, and subsequent narrowing of First National's property at the intersection of Peachtree. The client decided to raze an existing branch bank on site and develop the property for commercial office space.

According to Henry H. Smith, the design proposed by he and his father attempted to maximize rental space on the narrow site resulting from the roadwork. Their concept also utilized a passive solar design. The slab-like building's monumental east and west elevations are noticeably without windows. This design avoided the intense solar heat gain at those expo-



At top, view of 615 Peachtree's south elevation (Special Collections Department, Pullen Library, Georgia State University). Below, view of street level interior (Jon Buono).

-sures, and instead, provided glazing at only the south and north elevations. The majority of the office spaces were ideally configured for southern exposure.

The building was constructed by Daniel Construction Company and was reportedly mostly rented by the time of its opening. In interview, Henry recalled the circumstances influencing the unique choice of materials for the building's exterior.

Georgia Marble was chosen for the solid facades and other accents to complement First National Chairman Jim Robinson's stock holdings in the industry. But apparently Robinson never demanded the choice.

The curtain-wall for the south elevation was a natural choice in satisfying the space demands of the office market. Henry traveled to Canada to tour new installations of the still experimental building system. During this trip he witnessed the use of decorative metal panels within curtain-wall designs. Following the

*continued next page*

determination of a weather-resistant finish, Henry specified red panels within the building's facade design to contrast the uniform white marble panels on east and west elevations (the panels are currently painted grey). At the building's base, non-domestic blue-grey granite was used in conjunction with an elaborate installation of decorative metal sun screens.

The ground floor banking hall was finished with travertine floors, accented with a red grout. The building also included a radiant heat and cooling system that was novel for the time.

Today, Henry Smith regards the building as the most significant in his career. It was the last major project designed with his father before his death in 1970.

Calls to Cousins Office concerning plans for redevelopment of the site were not answered.

### **Modern Villa Rica Library Threatened by Demolition**

ERNEST BLEVINS

A proposal to demolish one of Villa Rica's rare modern buildings has resurfaced following two years of inactivity. The Old Library at 116 South Carroll Street was constructed in 1951 and served as the city library until a new facility was constructed in the 1970s. The building has since been used as a doctor's office and currently houses the county service program. Despite these changes in ownership, the building's modern characteristics, namely its flat roof and unadorned exterior have remained unchanged. Currently the architect is unknown. The building is reportedly in need of repairs, but recent proposals by the city have focused on demolishing the structure to provide surface parking for the downtown business district, or creating a greenspace.

### **FOR SALE Martin Residence 1750 Mt. Paran Rd. NW Atlanta**

Atlanta architect Bill Martin, Jr. AIA's Usonian residence is currently for sale.

Following his discharge from the Navy in the early 1950s, Martin accepted a 2-year apprenticeship with Frank Lloyd Wright. Wright originally began a program for practical instruction in 1932 at his Taliesin compound in Spring Green, Wisconsin. By the time of Martin's instruction, young architects divided their time between Wisconsin and Wright's later development outside Scottsdale, Arizona.

Martin's apprenticeship with Wright occurred during a period of high demand for his architectural services, and included such notable commissions as the Guggenheim Museum, Price Tower, and Florida Southern College. The postwar housing boom also allowed Wright and his apprentices to produce many of his Usonian designs.

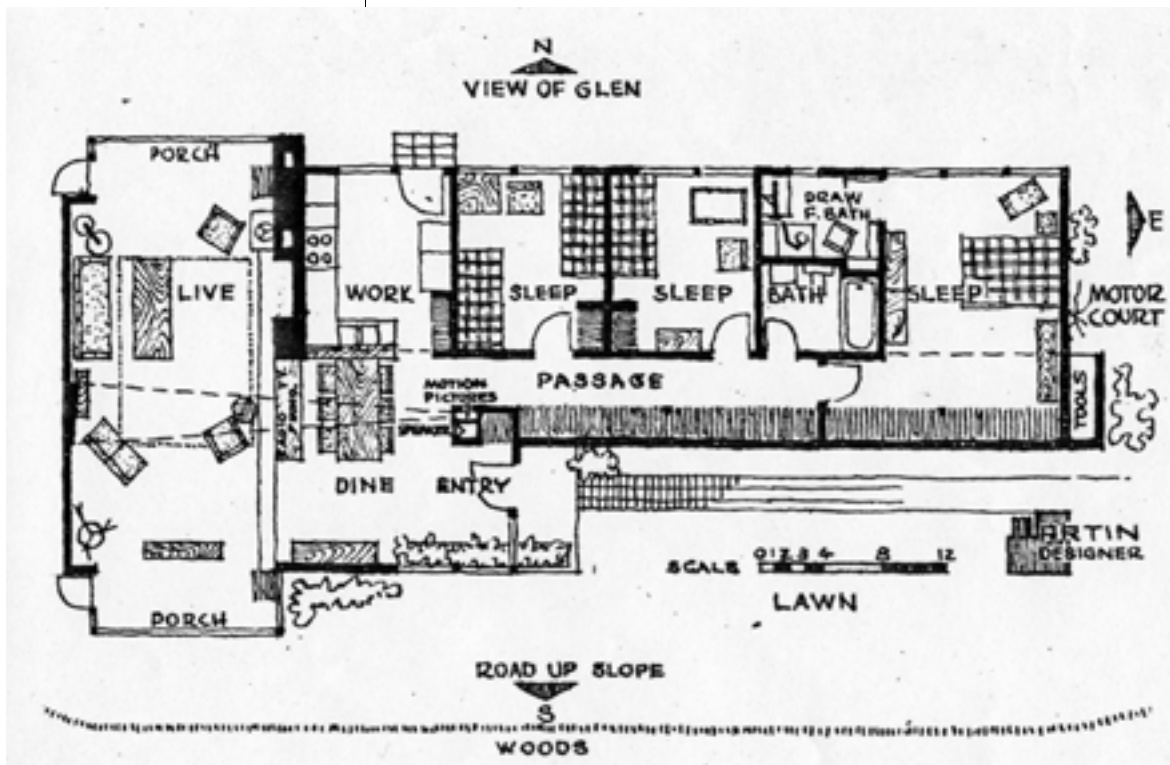
The typical Usonian was a single story built on a monolithic concrete slab and joined to a carport as opposed to a garage. Wright believed the model could be replicated all across the country. Only 60 of Wright's designs were ever built.

Martin returned to Atlanta, married, and completed the architecture program at Georgia Tech. In 1954 he began construction of his own house, and completed it for less than \$10 a square foot.

The design includes an open plan with dining room, kitchen, and living room distinguished by minimal divisions in floor levels and waist-high walls. The living room features a long, 20-foot hearth and can expand 10' when opening the opposing screened-porches to allow cross-ventilation. The "Cherokee" red concrete slab floor still bears the grid (4' module) which was the basis for Usonian home construction.

*continued next page*





Above, original floor plan of home by Bill Martin, Jr. (courtesy Michael Palma). Upper left, current views of home (Jon Buono) and below, circa 1955 view of the living room (courtesy Michael Palma).

-tion. The house was originally 1400 square feet, but has since been enlarged with a second floor.

In the following year, the house was featured in both *Atlanta Magazine* and *Living for Young Homemakers* (a precursor to *House and Garden* magazine). The editor for *Living* amusingly noted that their experience of the house "softened the views of (their) rather anti-Wright staff members."

Current owner Michael Palma has restored many original features of the house, following renovations by multiple owners since the Martins. Interested buyers may contact Palma at: michael.palma@bbdoatl.com

### Too Busy to Remember *continued from page 5*

fair building-the entire fair under one roof. Paxton submitted his design on an envelope, presenting it well after "the train had left the station." An active and controversial architectural competition for the building had long ended, and the inaugural world's fair idea seemed about to collapse. A date for the fair's opening had been proclaimed, and it was too late, everyone assumed, unless, of course, Paxton had a better idea. Then, in less than two weeks, Paxton produced (with a handful of gardeners) complete working drawings for an unprecedented iron and glass building. Given the go-ahead, he then built the entire 1850-foot-long building (that's 6 football fields) in a matter of months, all at a time when there was only one glass manufacturer in the whole of England who could make enough glass for the building. The train has not yet left the station.

I suspect if the Atlanta terminal's architectural firm is worth its fee, that a viable and timely design which incorporates a preserved Constitution Building, could be achieved and that the multi-modal station might be all the better for it.

Oh yes, and if the Constitution Building is incorporated in the mixed use scheme, then the large sculptural frieze by Julian Hoke Harris (AIA Fine Arts Medalist and the most significant 20th century sculptor this city has produced), could be reinstalled on the very newspaper building it was made for. And wouldn't that be fine!

### CALL FOR PAPERS 36th Annual Popular Culture Association Conference

**April 12-15, 2006  
Atlanta, Georgia**

Popular Art, Architecture and Design is concerned with the aesthetics of popular material culture in the everyday world of the past, present and future. Scholars from such disciplines as Architecture, Art History, Fine Art, Industrial Design, and Interior Design are invited to submit proposals. At previous conferences topics have included World Fairs, architectural follies, urban image, Buckminster Fuller, Tadao Ando, urban memory, Disneyland, railroad stations, literary architecture, Vietnamese shop-houses, mobile homes, and the effect of television on home and clothing design.

Popular Art, Architecture and Design papers may be published in an e-zine after the conference. Please e-mail a cover letter with contact information and 150-word abstract of your proposed paper to Dr. Rett Lorange at lorange@earthlink.net and Dr. Derham Groves at derham@unimelb.edu.au. NO ATTACHMENTS. The deadline for abstracts is November 15, 2005. Registration fees apply.

For information about the Popular Culture Association, please go to:

<http://www.h-net.org/~pcaaca/pca/pcahistory.htm>

## EXHIBITION

### **Raymond Loewy: Designs for a Consumer Culture**

This engaging exhibition will celebrate the life's work of the father of American Industrial Design: Raymond Loewy. Audiences will travel through the evolution of Loewy's design career and at the same time experience the technological boom associated with mid-twentieth century America.

From Loewy's early advertising illustrations, through his works in transportation design for household names such as Greyhound buses, United Airlines, and the Pennsylvania Railroad, to his famous household products including the Sears Coldspot refrigerator cre-



Avanti car design, Raymond Loewy.

-ated during the post-war era, Loewy's ingenious skill for creating functional yet fabulous design shines through.

Portions of the exhibition will be drawn from the private collection of Laurence Loewy, the daughter of Raymond Loewy, who resides in Marietta, Georgia and is CEO of Loewy Designs, LLC.

*On display: November 3-December 23, 2005*

*Opening Reception: Thursday, November 3, 6-9pm in conjunction with Turner First Thursday Gallery Walk*

## CALENDAR

Through October 30, 2005

### **Going, Going, Gone? Mid-Century Modern Architecture in South Florida**

Museum of Art  
Fort Lauderdale, FL

Can we still save South Florida's Midcentury Modern architecture? This exhibition is a photographic journey through Broward and Miami-Dade counties featuring the work of photographer Robin Hill, who has shot dozens of outstanding South Florida structures dating back to the mid-20th century. Visit [www.moaf.org](http://www.moaf.org).

October 12, 5pm

### **The Aesthetics of the Modern Plan**

Lecture by Sonit Bafna, Assistant Professor,

is available at <http://www.sesah.org/>.

October 26, 5 pm

### **Tuscan Terracotta in Ventilated Facades**

Lecture by Maria Chiara Torricelli, Professor of Architectural Technology, University of Florence, Italy

Georgia Tech College of Architecture  
Auditorium

October 26 - 29

### **V Iberian International DOCOMOMO**

**Conference: *Politics, culture and architecture in the thirties***

Barcelona, Spain

In celebration of the 75th anniversary of the founding of GATEPAC, the Spanish avant-garde group related to the CIAM which was instrumental in spreading the modern movement throughout the Iberian peninsula, the Iberian DOCOMOMO Foundation and the Catalan Architectural Association (Collegi d'Arquitectes de Catalunya) are organizing the V Iberian DOCOMOMO International Conference.

The V Conference will discuss the diffusion and reception mechanisms of the Modern Movement in Spain and Portugal, focusing on the proposals and ideas that the GATCPAC (the Catalan and most active of the three GATEPAC's sections, led by J. L. Sert and J. Torres Clave) developed through their contacts with the international avant-garde. The GATCPAC's intense activity, which was interrupted by the Spanish Civil War, represents the most important Spanish contribution to the architecture and urbanism of the Thirties, as testified, for instance, by the Plan Macia (1932-35), which was developed in collaboration with Le Corbusier. The conference will discuss not only the Iberian Peninsula, but also direct and indirect relationships with other international references such as Germany, France, Italy and the Soviet Union, among others. More information is available at [www.coac.net/docomomo5](http://www.coac.net/docomomo5).

November 2, 5pm

### **R.M. Schindler**

Lecture by Judith Sheine, Professor of Architecture and Architect, Los Angeles.

Georgia Tech College of Architecture  
Auditorium

College of Architecture, Georgia Institute of Technology  
Georgia Tech College of Architecture  
Auditorium

October 12-15

### **SESAH 2005 Annual Meeting**

Fort Worth, TX

The institutional sponsor of the Annual Meeting is the School of Architecture of the University of Texas at Arlington. The location will be the Fort Worth Plaza Hotel, on the edge of downtown adjacent to the Water Garden (877-389-7829). Registration fee will be \$100 (\$50 for students). Optional tours will include significant local works of modernists Louis I. Kahn, Phillip Johnson, and Edward Larrabee Barnes. More information

## DOCOMOMO GA MINIMUM FICHE

Use this form to record information about Modern Movement buildings or landscapes to aid the DOCOMOMO GA Register.

Submit forms to Jon Buono  
jbuono@docomomoga.org.

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composed by:

	db code
<b>1 Identity of building/group of buildings/urban scheme/landscape/garden</b>	
1.1 current name of building	3
1.2 variant or former name	4
1.3 number & name of street	5
1.4 town	6
1.5 state	7
1.6 zip code	8
1.7 country	9
1.8 national grid reference	10
1.9 classification/typology	11
1.10 protection status & date	12
<b>2 History of building</b>	
2.1 original use	13
2.2 dates: commission/completion	14
2.3 architectural designers	15
2.4 others associated with building	16
2.5 significant alterations with dates	17
2.6 current use	18
2.7 current condition	19
<b>3 Description</b>	
3.1 general description	20
3.2 construction	21
3.3 context	22
<b>4 Evaluation</b>	
4.1 technical	23
4.2 social	24
4.3 cultural & aesthetic	25
4.4 historical	26
4.5 general assessment	27
<b>5 Documentation</b>	
5.1 principal references	28
5.2 visual material attached	29
5.3 date	30



Rob Craig Considers Modern Losses to Katrina

Interior of Sullivan House, Ocean Springs, MS (Rob Craig)

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