# SOUTH AFRICAN ARCHITECTURAL RECORD

*THE JOURNAL OF THE CAPE, NATAL, ORANGE FREE STATE AND TRANSVAAL PROVINCIAL INSTITUTES OF SOUTH AFRICAN ARCHITECTS AND THE CHAPTER OF SOUTH AFRICAN QUANTITY SURVEYORS*

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EDITOR: W. DUNCAN HOWIE
ASSISTANT EDITORS:
ANGUS STEWART
UGO TOMASELLI
DONALD PILCHER

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# EDITORIAL

The partial lifting of Building Control came as a dramatic announcement in the Press. It is not necessary to recount the history of a measure that has affected members of the profession so closely for years, and which, on the face of it, has determined the size of their practices and in turn their incomes. Although regulation does not always seem to give equity, it need not necessarily be damned as being iniquitous. Control has been irksome, and may, in some cases, have seemed to act unfairly; but it has served to distribute and direct the products of an industry of limited capacity. It is as well to recall the words of our President-in-Chief (Mr. Hanson) at last year's Congress: "The Building Industry, the capacity of which, in the final analysis, determines the amount of building possible in this country, was placed under direct Government control through the operation of a Building Control organisation, . . ." And, as restrictions have only been removed from houses not exceeding 2,000 super feet, control is still with us. That leaves the loaf of ministerial beneficence unleavened for architects and quantity surveyors.

There are architects with many crumbs. They, however, would seem to be the exceptions; for as Mr. Cowin, in his presidential address at the Durban Congress, said: ". . . members (of the Institute) in any case are responsible for only about 5 per cent. of individual housing." The figure of 5 per cent. might serve as a gauge for estimating the benefit to the profession of Building Control's partial relaxation. Practitioners will benefit; but not as much as they should. Perhaps they will derive the greater benefit in time. Perhaps Mr. Cowin's prediction of last May, made when he was advocating the lifting of control off housing, will be fulfilled. It reads: "Chaotic conditions may prevail for a time, but the law of supply and demand must come into operation with eventual saturation and subsequent reduction of prices. The outcome of this might well indicate, after a few months, that Building Control can be abandoned entirely." However, Mr. Cowin also said: "Out of the many conflicting statements issued by the Government, two facts emerge clearly: (a) housing is to be the first priority, (b) the shortage of steel is likely to continue."

Housing, as the latest governmental action shows, still has priority, and the shortage of steel still continues. Nevertheless, all is not as it was last year. There has been a passage from "conflicting statements" to a discrepancy between statement and action. Mr. Mushet is reported to have stated that he would not lift control piecemeal: Senator Clarkson, the new Minister, has done so. Although more might have been hoped for, it is doubtful whether more could have been expected. Practitioners, in respect of their own immediate interests are fortunate that the limit has been set as high as it has, because the larger the house the more likely is an architect to be employed. None the less, not only architects' interests are involved in the full or partial lifting of Building Control; though as citizens and taxpayers, and perhaps even, apart from other virtues they share with more clamant pressure-groups, as actual and potential disseminators of culture, they are entitled to consideration. Housing has been referred to by Mr. Hanson as one of the "stark necessities," and it is particularly stark among the lower income groups. Therefore it is possible that, especially as to-day a house of 2,000 super feet with provision for horizontal extension and vertical infilling borders on the luxury class, a lower permissible area would have shown more consideration for this group.

It is to the credit of the Institute that it has taken, in Mr. Cowin's words, "the disinterested view," when, with smaller houses affecting its members' incomes so little, it might well have been completely uninterested in control that served to further their building. It consequently helped to launch the National Housing Scheme—and this action, as bread cast upon the waters, has been rewarded by some of its members receiving commissions to do houses. It is to be hoped that the Institute will be able to help instigate a Native Housing Scheme—for a reward, at its least assessment, of enabling its members to use the Johannesburg-Potchefstroom road without being forcibly reminded of South Africa's urban deficiencies. On the other hand, it cannot be hoped that practitioners, even in the future, will be allowed to participate much in ordinary domestic housing, which has already largely passed into the questionable care of the unregistered draughtsman and speculative builder. There is no reason why the process should not continue.

Legislation would stop the process. However, it would be a forcible means of making people accept, and pay for, architects' services. It can be argued that people ought to be protected from their real and attributed follies. That is the legislative trend in many countries to-day. In this connection it may be noted that the Building Control organization was in a position to protect people from the less reputable speculative builder. Consideration had to be given to speculative builders as a group, a proof, if ever it were needed, that their activities constitute part of the normal economy of this country. They give a large section of the community what it wants for its money. It is a community that is inclined to judge values in terms of quantity and to lack a desire for quality.

The attitude is a reflection on the community's culture. However, a derogation of cultural standards is to be expected in a civilization that seems to be well into its "time of troubles." The profession can take its stand, though it ought to appreciate the strength of the current it stands against. To this end it might have advocated the retention and extension of Building Control; because in this measure lay the possibility of enforcing higher standards of building and architecture. It has not done so, which is as well. No real gain, no lasting improvement in cultural standards, is to be had other than by example, precept, and persuasion.

A. S.

# NEW BUILDING FOR GERMISTON HOSPITAL

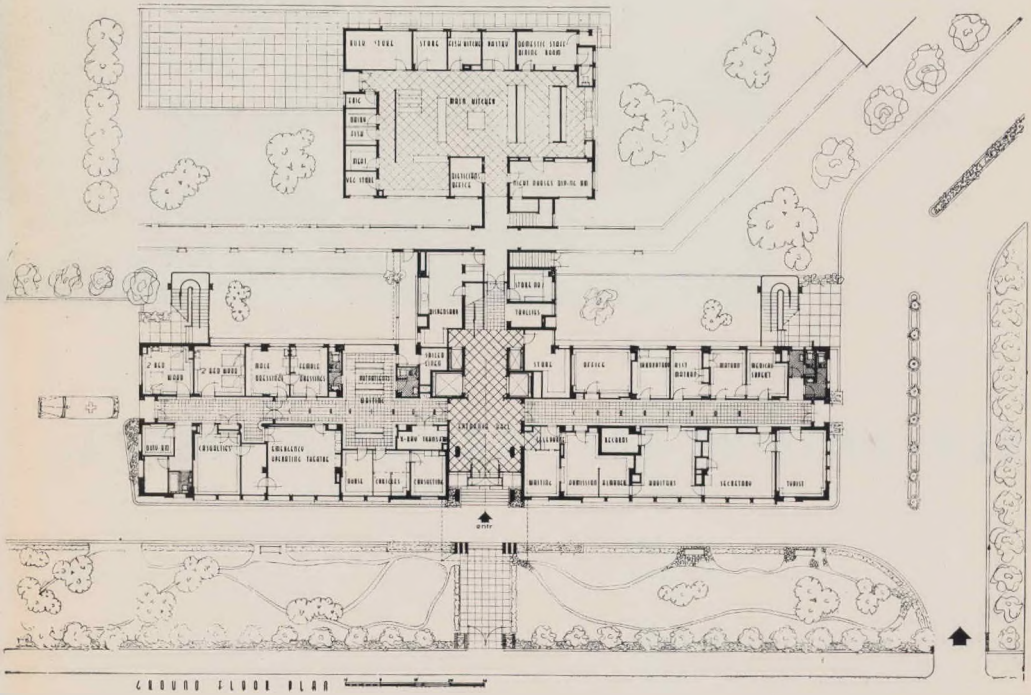
**COWIN AND ELLIS, ARCHITECTS**

The requirements of the Hospital Board included accommodation for 80 European beds, a casualty department, two operating theatres, a maternity floor, a kitchen wing and an administration section. The addition was to be sited in close proximity to the existing single storey hospital block to allow an easy circulation for visitors from the administration department of the new block to the existing hospital. A connection between the Nurses' home and new block was essential and it was suggested that the existing link from the home to the old hospital building should not be disturbed. Access to the block from Oosthuizen Street was insisted upon.

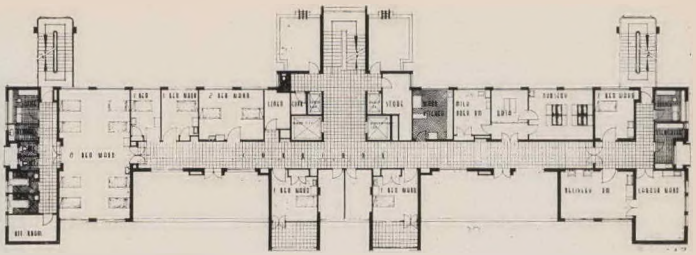
## SITING

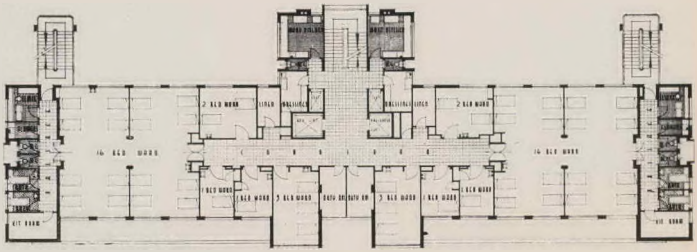
The new block was sited in the North East corner of the hospital grounds, midway between the existing hospital block and the Nurses Home, near the boiler house and in close rela-

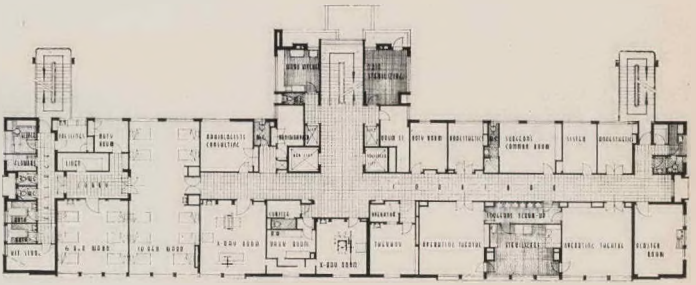
The main facade to Oosthuizen Street shows a definition of planes treated in two colours of facebrick and smooth plaster. Steel panels between the windows on ground and first floor conceal the special mechanical winding gear operating the shutters in the theatres.



GROUND FLOOR PLAN







# GERMISTON HOSPITAL

**COWIN AND ELLIS, ARCHITECTS**

tion to Oosthuizen Street. A new covered way and enclosed passage connected the three buildings. The existing drive was retained with an ambulance turning area common to the new and existing hospital blocks.

## PLANNING

The block was resolved into a simple rectangular plan form with central vertical circulation, and the kitchen wing on an axis with the centre line of the building. Vertical planning was adopted due to the restricted nature of the site with each particular section of the hospital on an independant floor. For reasons of economy a central corridor, acting as a spine off which the various departments lead, was used as the basic circulation system throughout the building. A passenger lift, bed lift and a very spacious stair give vertical access to each floor. Two commodious food lifts are arranged in this central tower and discharge into a ward kitchen lobby on each floor.

For convenience, the administration, casualty and outpatients departments were planned on the ground floor. The casualty department is approached from the ambulance area through a separate entrance; access to the outpatients department and the administration wing is gained from the main entrance hall.

The operating theatres with all the necessary ancillary accommodation are located on the first floor. Two wards of 16 beds, for patients receiving special electrical treatment are incorporated on this floor.

The second, third and fourth floors are planned with 1, 2, 3, and 8 bed wards with duty rooms, ward kitchens and dressing rooms. The ablution block serving the wards, is isolated in a separate wing at each end of the main building with a passage giving access to the bathrooms, W.C.'s, kit and flower rooms.

The maternity floor is designed on an upper floor consisting of 1, 2, and 8 bed wards, labour and delivery rooms, nursery, milk preparation room and ward kitchens. A solarium has been designed as part of the lift tower on the roof.

Delivery of stores and food-stuffs to the main kitchen is made from the enclosed yard off the driveway behind the

1

2

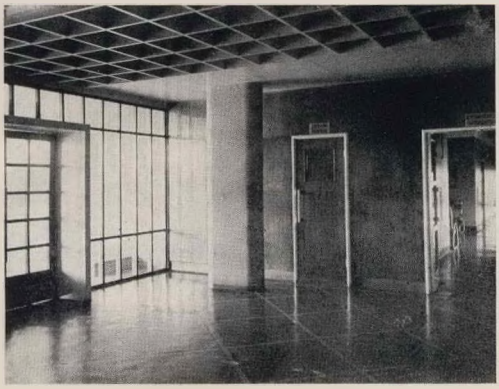
3

(1) Side entrance to hospital block. Light ironspot facebricks in stretcher course with close butted perpends and ¼in. horizontally raked joints with concrete surrounds to windows and doorways painted white. Soldier course panel of brickwork in light facings beneath window. Brick on edge risers to steps with terazzo treads. (2) Fenestration to the main staircase with the kitchen block in the foreground. (3) An Operating Theatre showing the surgeons' scrub-up through the door to the left. Floor covered by 12in. x 12in. black asphalt tiles and the walls with 6in. x 6in. "eggshell" green glazed tiles. Ceilings are in a pale lemon yellow paint. The flush panel swing doors are painted to match the walls and set in steel frames. Steinless steel instrument cabinets are set flush with the tiled walls.

Nurses' home. The kitchen has been designed with a central cooking and food preparation area taken up above the roofs of the adjacent stores and dining rooms to allow the introduction of celestory windows on all four sides of the kitchen, to ensure adequate light and ventilation.

## CONSTRUCTION

The block consists of a reinforced concrete frame faced with 2½ins. "Primrose" facing bricks. The operating wing and administration floor are air-conditioned, with central heating by steam radiators throughout the remainder of the building. This addition to the hospital was completed in 1943.



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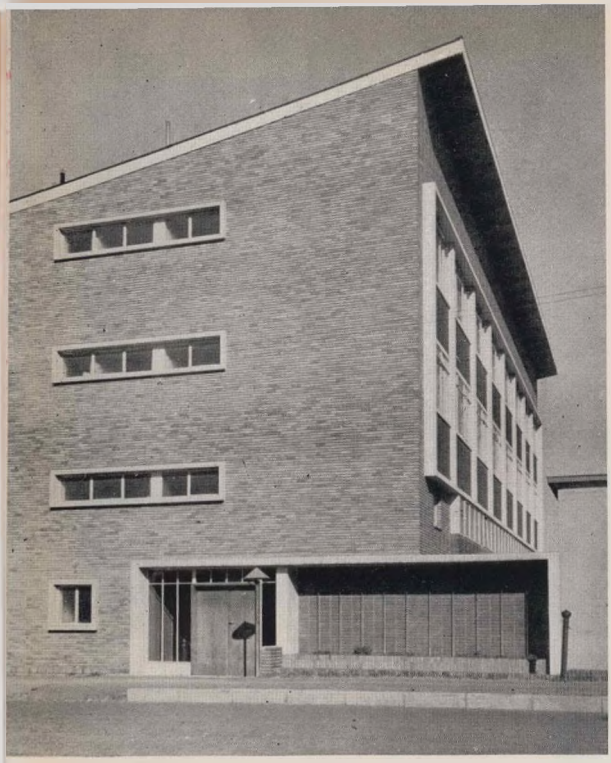
Photos: E. Robinow.

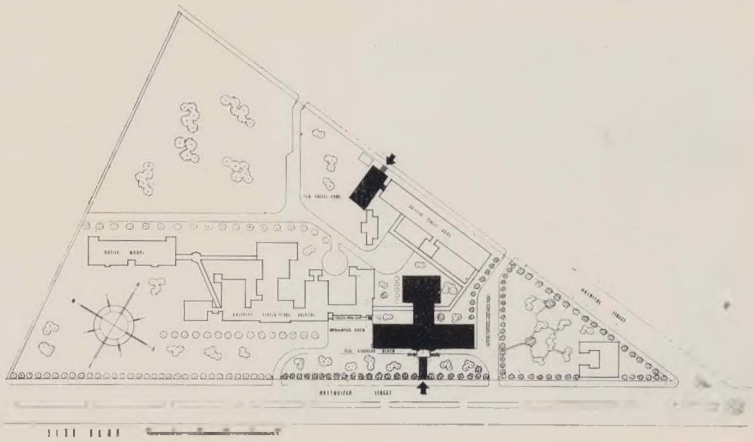
6

(4) The Main Entrance Hall has a Rubaleum covered floor in terra cotta squares and white diagonal strips. The column is sheathed in blue mosaic. Kiaat panelling has cream trim to door architraves. The egg-crate ceiling is painted white on the edges and pale blue on the returns. The swing doors are set in a deep timber framed portal surround set into the glazed screen. Access corridors throughout are painted a bright apple green. (5) Steriliser Room showing steriliser battery and operating theatre beyond. Green tiled walls, pale lemon yellow ceiling and black asphalt tiled floor. (6) Babies' Nursery in the Maternity Ward.



## ADDITIONS TO THE
# NURSES' HOME
## GERMISTON HOSPITAL

**COWIN AND ELLIS, ARCHITECTS**



ABOVE: General view from the North, showing the main entrance.

RIGHT: The Site Plan showing the location of the new buildings.

## NURSES' HOME

As an addition to the existing nurses' home at Germiston Hospital, this building presented difficulties in siting to obtain a satisfactory connection with the existing building, reasonable aspect for the nurses rooms and access from Hospital Street to the hall when used for public functions.

The building has a dining hall on ground floor with a foyer off the paved entrance. The exit foyer can be used as an extension to the main hall. The nurses' cloakroom is located on a mezzanine floor.

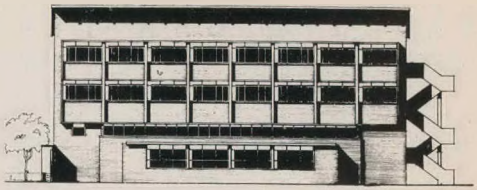
Twenty-six nurses' rooms with ablution block, ironing rooms and trunk store occupy two further floors. Each room is fitted with a wash hand basin and a fully fitted built-in wardrobe and dressing table. The building is centrally heated throughout with steam radiators.

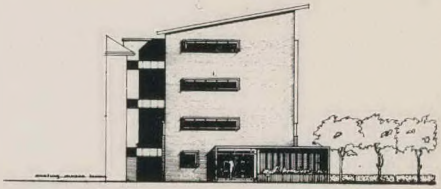
The nurses' rooms are simply treated in pastel shades of flat oil paint with room and cupboard doors in natural Kiaat. Glazed tiling to the backs of all basins and a slate shelf over, complete the fittings in these rooms.

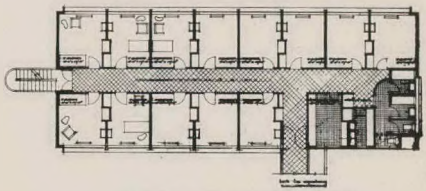
The entrance foyer is paved in slate with "hardwall" plastered walls painted blue, ceiling off white and doors in natural grained wood.

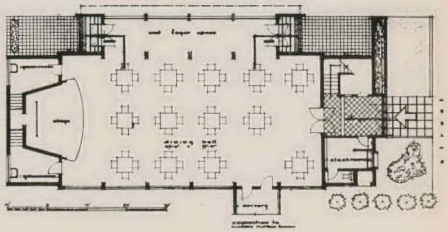
Dining hall floor is of 3in. maple strip. The panels between the columns are in 2in. light "Primrose" ironspot face-brick up to the black slate cills of windows. The portal frames are painted a dark oatmeal with ceiling off white. The stage walls are pale blue with corrugated screen in silver. The front of the forestage is built in 2in. bricks with a Kiaat fascia board to the footlights. The doors throughout are natural Kiaat faced.

Materials throughout the building have been chosen with a view to reducing maintenance costs to a minimum. Externally a 2½in. 'Primrose' ironspot brick has been employed massed in light and dark colouring to distinguish the various planes and projections on the facades. All windows have been boxed in a fine concrete surround painted white, as a relief against the face brickwork. The fascias and exposed rafters of the monopitch roof have been painted white, with the underside of the corrugated iron roof in pale blue. The building was completed in 1942.









THE DINING HALL

# RECENT TOWN PLANNING IN HOLLAND

## 1. THE REBUILDING PLANS FOR THE HAGUE

*By J. J. van Voorst, M.I.A.*

As a result of the building of the "Atlantic Wall," bombardments, V-2 bombs and plundering, a section of the Hague has been destroyed. Now, one and a half years after the liberation a great deal of clearing and repair work has already been done and it is expected that all restoration of existing buildings will be finished by 1948.*

However, a start will also be made with the rebuilding of the 8,300 living quarters and other buildings which were destroyed, with additional buildings to accommodate the increased population.

The Hague has given the direction of the rebuilding plans to the architect, W. M. Dudok. There are two main plans: one for the "Bezuidenhout" quarter and one for a long strip near the coast.

To understand Dudok's plan it must be realised that the Hague is a town with its own character. Mainly it is a residential town for the Government staff with also, of course, Government offices. The atmosphere of the town and attitude of its inhabitants is one of dignity and grace — the "Hague" accent is often derided by the Dutch people from other towns.

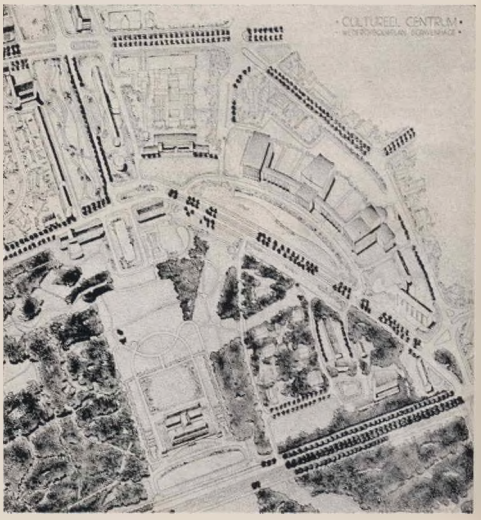
The Hague has long been an international political centre of Europe, housing the Permanent Court for International Justice and many buildings where international conferences are held. The Government departments have their offices in the Hague, and, because of the increased accommodation needed, these offices were spread out over the town.

Dudok has planned to accommodate the group of five ministerial buildings near the existing centre of the town and close to the Central Station. The new Cultural Centre, Municipal Centre and Recreation Centre Scheveningen are spread over the town to avoid traffic congestion. Also a complete plan has been prepared for the final shape of the Hague which will be approximately a square, the logical shape for the original layout of the streets. The enlarged town will accommodate a maximum of 850,000 people, and will be divided into quarters, separated by green strips.

The architectural layout of the "Bezuidenhout" plan is expressed in a sequence of squares connected by wide streets. These squares are in themselves designed as "town-squares" with building facades on four sides varying in height from four to seven storeys. "Square 1945 has the Departmental Buildings six and seven storeys high with main entrances on the axis of the streets leading to the square. The "East Square" is surrounded by offices, flats and a bioscope. The "Church Square" is also of a less formal composition; noticeable in the position and shape of the Church which does not appear too small on the side of the six-storey office block. The position of the Church tower, set back from the slightly curved road approaching it and linking the different groups of buildings, is according to Dudok, essential for the composition of the square. The buildings along the streets have been mainly grouped in "open" fashion with much green and trees between the buildings.

The plan for the strip near the coast has been designed with freely grouped flat buildings and verdure, ending in the

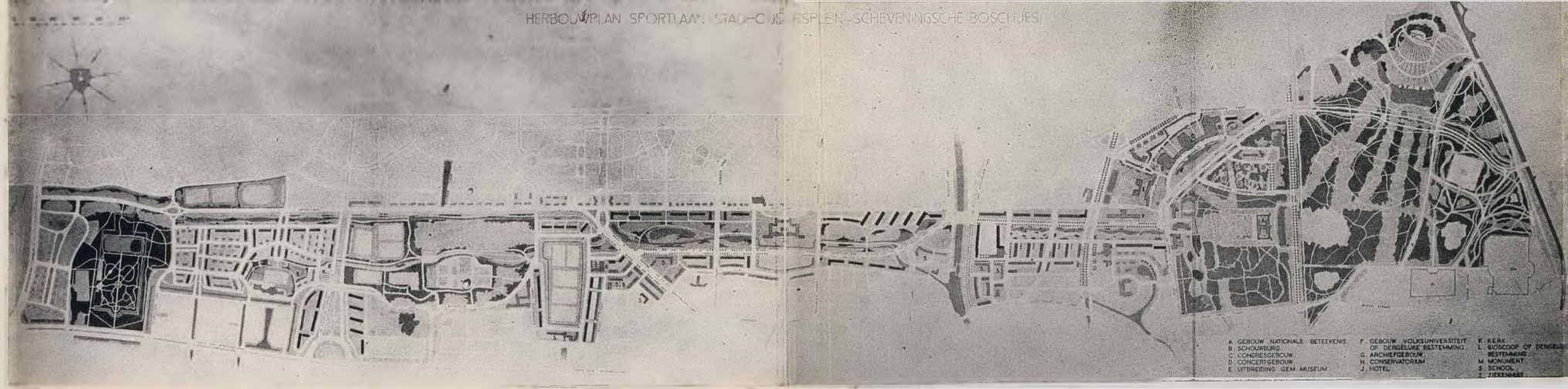
Model showing The Bezuidenhout-Suiplan replanning.

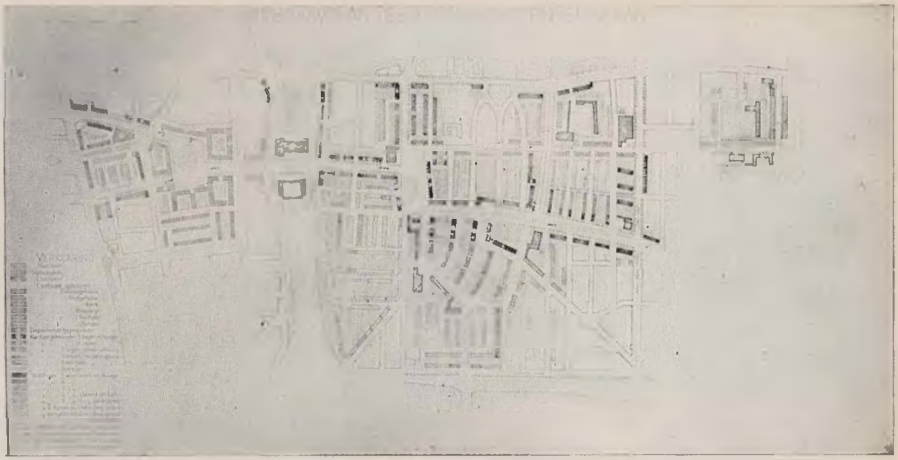



Axonometric of the Cultural Centre seen in plan on the right of the general layout on inset.

* This article was written after a visit to Holland early in 1947.

HERBOUWPLAN SPORTLAAN - STADION - SPLEIN - SCHEVENINGSCHE BOSCHJES

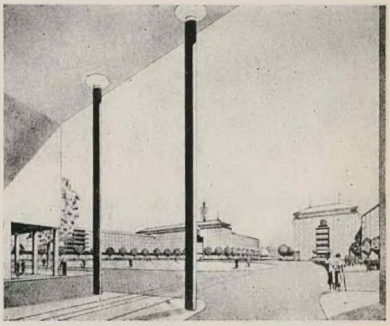




Cultural Centre, comprising a building of national importance, a group of cultural buildings — theatre, congress building and concert hall, linked by foyers and restaurants — University, Archive building, Conservatorium, Hotel, Church, Bioscope, Monument, School, Hospital and the future extensions to the Municipal Museum.

The layout is partly on monumental lines, but the parks have been laid out in English landscape style. In this part of the plan, as in a lesser way in the other parts, there is a certain dualism, a compromise between the monumental and the "free design."

Dudok has tried to develop a sequence of architectural shapes in interesting harmony. The contrast of masses and spaces makes for a living composition. Traffic problems have, of course, been studied thoroughly, but the aesthetic importance of the squares, streets and buildings is expressed freely in these plans. Architectural beauty has been the first impulse on which the Architect has based his layouts and he has managed to avoid monotony. Dudok has also designed the main outlines of the buildings to enable the authorities and the public to get a clear impression of the plans. The architects who, in future, will design the individual buildings will have to conform to Dudok's main lines and will work under his supervision. In this he has gone far — probably too far — and there is a danger that the result will be too much of a "one man job." However, Dudok is now about sixty and the rigid attitude of the younger Dudok has mellowed considerably with age.



ABOVE: Layout Plan showing Dudok's proposals for the replanning of the Bezuidenhout and Suiplan areas, together with two perspective views of "Plein 1945" as seen from point "a" and the "Juliana van Stolberglaan" seen from point "g."

# THE WORLD OF ARCHITECTURE

*By UGO TOMASELLI*

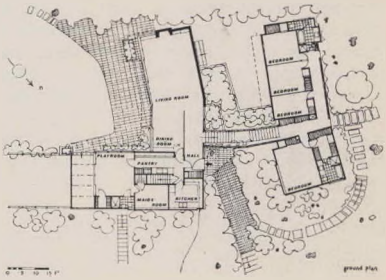
**"THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW."—AUGUST, 1947.**

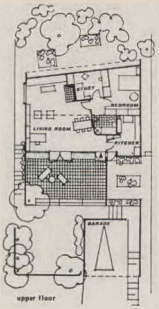
Two very interesting houses in California are illustrated in the August issue of "The Architectural Review." In the design of the house at Piedmont, Clarence Mayhew, the architect-owner, invited designer Serge Chermayeff to collaborate with him. The resultant design evolved by the collaborators, displayed an architectural plan, whereby the zones for sleeping, living, playroom and car storage were divided into separate units. These units, successfully connected by two enclosed staircases, are located in descending order down the natural slope of the narrow site which falls steeply to the south-east overlooking a magnificent view. The wings are grouped to give privacy from the street to the east, while the zoning of the living and bedroom units up the slope of the site offer complete privacy and at the same time preserve the view for all the major rooms. The house is constructed in timber in the manner characteristic of the region, and is finely modelled to the site, presenting a picturesque merging of building with landscape.

The house at Redwood on a small site 50ft. x 90ft., called for the utmost economy of space. The house was designed by Ernest Born and Serge Chermayeff for the Professor of History at the University of California and his wife who is an architect. Situated on the brink of a cliff opposite the superb view of the Golden Gate, the designers had to contend with the persistent raw winds and rain that prevail in the stormy season, without sacrificing the view. This was achieved by placing the house away from the road towards the cliff edge, thus acting as a wind break for the terrace on the approach side. This house, designed primarily for living, nevertheless makes provision for the required work space. The owner uses the south-east corner of the living room as his office, while his wife uses the study for her architectural work. The interplay of space between work area, dining area and lounge has been cleverly handled. The openness of design is well expressed throughout the living zone. From the patio zoned on the approach side the eye is carried through the living area and on to the view beyond. A redwood screen wall, which divides the service and living areas, and is carried into and through the house itself, furthers this visual continuity.

**HOUSE AT PIEDMONT, CALIFORNIA.** Clarence Mayhew and Serge Chermayeff, Associate Architects. Serge Chermayeff, Designer. LEFT: The lower living terrace relating to the living room. The playroom with its separate terrace is beyond.

From "The Architectural Review" — August, 1947.






From "The Architectural Review." August, 1947.

RIGHT: The sheltered outdoor-room on the approach side.

**HOUSE AT REDWOOD, CALIFORNIA.** Ernest Born, Architect. Serge Chermayeff, Designer. Garret Eckbo, Landscape Architect.

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## "THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW."—OCTOBER, 1947.

"The Architectural Review" for October, 1947, presents the Hotel Grand Gooiland at Hilversum, which has not yet been illustrated in any English publication. J. Duiker, the architect, died in 1935 before the scheme had been completed, and it was left to his friend and collaborator, B. Bijvoet, to carry the project to completion. This building unites hotel, cafe, restaurant and theatre into a single complex. Placed on either side of the main entrance hall are the cafe and restaurant. Adjoining the cafe is the foyer of the theatre, and these may be thrown into one by opening the division sliding walls. A meeting room and tea room are placed on the Mezzanine, the latter opening out on to the terrace over the cafe. The hotel rooms, each with separate bathrooms are on the two floors above.

"A work of the early Thirties the hotel was conceived as a piece of landscape as well as a piece of architecture. Now that it has had time to mature, the attention which was directed to the design of the building, to surface finishes and minor details has been repaid by that absence of streaks and cracks which unfortunately are too frequent an indication of the architecture of that decade. But what is more rare and more significant, is the success with which the architects have grasped the dramatic possibilities of modern architecture as urban scenery in a given urban setting. They have handled brilliantly one of the more subtle visual problems, the interplay of the private with the public landscape, the imaginative handling of which is the basis of successful urban scenery. Here is a building that, as it were, opens its arms to a typical street scene, while enclosing at the same time a private landscape of its own."

**GRAND GOOILAND HOTEL AT HILVERSUM.** J. Duiker, Architect.
ABOVE: A view from one of the upper floor balconies on to the roof garden and the tree bordered street beyond.
From "The Architectural Review," October, 1947.

## "ARCHITECTURAL RECORD."—JULY, 1947.

In an article on "Modern Mexico" Ann Binkley Horn gives her impressions, observations and appraisals of current Mexican architecture. She says: " Mexico City is a boom town —buildings are mush-rooming throughout the city, jostling and crowding over one another. Each building is brazenly indifferent to the rights of its neighbours. Each structure tries to outstrut, to be taller, more daring, to use more glass or cantilever further than the rest. There is a good deal of visual hysteria in the composite picture of Mexican architecture" and continues to say, "There is no architectural co-ordination in Mexico because there is little urban planning."

This deficiency, this lack of a building code and absence of aesthetic control is all too evident in our South African cities, and particularly the larger centres where the city street scene is chaotic. Mr. John Fassler in various discussions and more recently in an address on "Urban Aesthetics," at the Fourth Congress of the Institute of S.A. Architects and Chapter of S.A. Quantity Surveyors, held at the Marine Hotel, Durban, urged the formation of Advisory Committees, formed of representatives of the community who have the necessary knowledge and experience, to examine all new projects in the sketch scheme stage, and in relation to the site on which it is proposed to erect the new structure, and thereafter recommend the acceptance or rejection of the proposed scheme. In this way we would encourage a more sympathetic orderly and stimulating street scene—an ordered city plan, which appears to be lacking in Mexico City as well.

Miss Ann Binkley Horn analyses "Modern Mexico" under the following sub-titles—History, Social Context, Construction, Nationalism in Architecture and Stylistic Trends, and illustrates the text with many photographs of current buildings.

One of Mexico City's finest office buildings was designed by the architects Augusto Alvarez and Juan Sordo Madaleno with Leonardo Zeevaert, Consulting Engineer. Glass walls, with sliding panels, extend completely across the north facade in front of the columns. The building is both fully air-conditioned and centrally heated.

From the "Architectural Record," July, 1947.

Photograph of a model of the school, Centro Escolar Ribera de San Cosme, Mexico City, Enrique Yanes, Architect, designed to accommodate 3,000 pupils.

**CENTRE FOR MOTHERS AND INFANTS, TACUBAYA, MEXICO.**

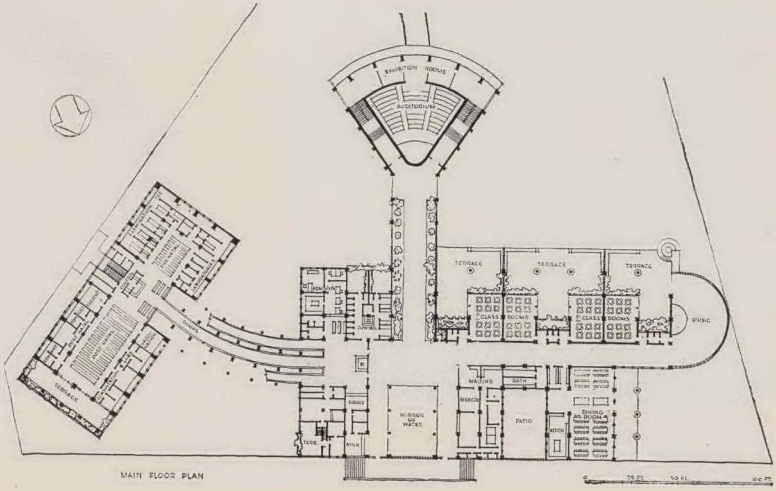
Enrique de la Mora, Architect.

The Polyclinic building is in the foreground with main building beyond.

From the "Architectural Record," August, 1947.

## "ARCHITECTURAL RECORD."—AUGUST, 1947.

An extremely interesting and imaginative design appears in the August issue of the "Architectural Record." The problem "A Centre for Mothers and Infants" is creatively handled, and the standard of general planning shows a lightness that one is apt to associate with hospital, health and welfare planning. The centre at Tacubaya, Mexico, designed by E. de la Mora, shows boldness and confidence in the treatment of surfaces. Flowing ramps and passages connect the three functions of the building. A three storey building houses the Polyclinic; the ground floor of which is devoted to dormitories for the temporary accommodation of mothers; medical, pre-natal and post-natal examination treatment, complete with laboratories and radiological equipment is provided for on the second floor; and various treatment rooms, laboratories and an operating suite, is provided on the third floor. The centre portion of the building accommodates the administration and admission offices, the classrooms and terraces, the dining room and various other services and utilities. The third zone consists of the auditorium and exhibition rooms.

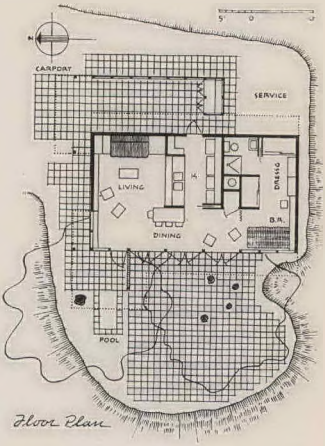


**" PROGRESSIVE ARCHITECTURE."—JULY, 1947.**

The "winner of Progressive Architecture's award for private residences, completed during 1946, that best exemplify sound design progress" is illustrated in the July issue. This small house, designed by Gordon Drake, was cited for its imaginative contribution as an architectural concept as well as for its brilliant plan. Within modest confines, by interplay of living, dining and sleeping areas this minimum home achieves the spacious effect of a house many times its size. The house is sympathetically treated in relation to the natural surroundings.

ABOVE: The terrace on the west is trae shaded and screened from the road by a louvred wall at the front door. LEFT: The close integration of the indoor and outdoor living spaces and the elements of the building generally.

**DESIGNER'S OWN HOUSE, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA.** Gordon Drake, Designer.




From "Progressive Architecture," July, 1947.

# THE STUDENTS' FORUM

## THE HISTORIC BUILDINGS OF JOHANNESBURG - 18

**OFFICE BUILDINGS**

*By Cyril A. Stoloff, Dip. Arch. V*

The late 19th Century saw the advent of the first large office buildings in Johannesburg, and many of these landmarks still exist to-day. The massive, rusticated "Renaissance" pile that is Exploration Buildings (17) is typical of the 19th Century office block.

A particular feature of all these office buildings is the elaborate and ostentatious entrance hall, with black and white tiled floors, glazed tiled dados and cast iron balustrading to staircases. A most fantastic staircase may still be seen in Cullinan Buildings, corner Main and Simmonds Streets. The staircase, which appears to be partly spiral in places, is in cast iron with perforated treads and risers. The staircase-well is crowned by a highly coloured leaded light dome in bright blues and greens.

Palace Buildings, (4, 5) corner of Rissik and Pritchard Streets, is perhaps the most well known of Johannesburg's historic buildings. It is characterised by its picturesque appearance, which arises out of the most intricate and elaborate decoration. The building was commenced in 1888, two years after the founding of the town, and was completed in 1889, when it contrasted sharply with its mining camp neighbours. The architect was Mr. J. S. Donaldson.

Palace Buildings was an attempt at the grandiose; the men who had made their fortunes in the first two hectic years of Johannesburg's history, were, to a large extent, reflecting their newly found wealth in the erection of such ostentatious buildings. The facade, however, is not without proportion for the Neo-Classic motifs have been expressed in great detail

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1. GENERAL MINING AND FINANCE BUILDING, 1903, on the corner of Hollard and Marshall Streets, was formerly the premises of the United Engineering Company. A fantasy of stone elaborately detailed to culminate in a grandiose and picturesque building. Features are the central semi-circular gables, small triangular gables on either facade and the slender domed tower. 2. EXCHANGE BUILDING, 1890, was erected at a cost of £125,000. Designed by the Architects, Lennox, Canning and Goad in the Neo-Classic tradition, it was opened on the 10th February. Situated on the corner of Commissioner and Simmonds Streets, it was partly converted into the Paladium Theatre in 1912. 3. TOLLEMACHE BUILDINGS, 1889. One of Johannesburg's first double-storeyed office buildings, it was situated in Commissioner Street and adjoined the first Stock Exchange Building. While the second Stock Exchange was being built, offices in Tollemache Buildings were occupied by stock and share brokers.

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4. PALACE BUILDINGS, 1889, built on the corner of Rissik and Pritchard Streets, is one of Johannesburg's most famous landmarks from the historical building point of view. Characterised by its picturesque appearance arising out of intricate detailing and the fascinating, slender tower, the building was originally a brilliant silvery-white. Mr. J. S. Donaldson was the Architect. 5. Palace Buildings seen from Pritchard Street. In the middle distance, adjoining Palace Buildings may be seen the old Henwood's Building, constructed almost entirely of cast-iron. "Henwood's Arcade" was a great shopping venue for many years. 6. JOHANNESBURG CONSOLIDATED INVESTMENT BUILDING on the corner of Simmonds and Fox Streets. The new Reserve Bank and New Clewer House occupy this site today. 7. THE AFRICAN BOARD OF EXECUTORS AND TRUST COMPANY, LTD., on the corner of Sauer and Fox Streets. 8. COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS, formerly Robinson Buildings, on the corner of Commissioner and Simmonds Streets.

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9. SOUTH AFRICAN MUTUAL BUILDING, 1893, on the corner of Commissioner and Harrison Streets. In 1889, the Directors of the S.A. Mutual Life Assurance Society of Cape Town decided to open a branch office in Johannesburg with a view to the Society's extension of business in the Transvaal. The stand was acquired in 1893 for £12,500 and the construction of the building undertaken at a cost of £23,000. The formal opening took place in 1895. 10. VICTORY HOUSE, Harrison, Commissioner and Fox Streets. Formerly Permanent Buildings, this is one of the few remaining office blocks of 19th century Johannesburg. 11. ECKSTEIN'S "CORNER HOUSE." This glittering spectacle was the second "Corner House" on the corner of Commissioner and Simmonds Streets. Extensive use was made of decorative cast-iron in intricate designs. 12. AEGIS BUILDINGS, corner of Loveday, Commissioner and Fox Streets. This is typical of the "Late-Victorian" cast-iron bracketed style that characterised the Johannesburg street scene in the nineties. 13. AFRICAN CITY PROPERTY TRUST BUILDING. An Italian Renaissance Palace in Market Street—the Victorian architect has provided the Victorian businessman with an office block little different from a 16th century Venetian Palace. The 19th century architect seems to have been unable to appreciate the potentialities of the new methods of construction—an apparent retrogression in contrast to the progress of the 19th century engineer, whose ingenuity produced the Crystal Palace, London, and the Eiffel Tower Paris.

and the building as a whole, has a certain charm perhaps not only because of its rich historical association.

The tower of Palace Buildings is quite unique—there is surely no more delicate a collection of masonry in Johannesburg. This tower, in particular, gives the building its specific character.

Later office blocks constructed in the 20th Century reflect the tendency towards a greater simplicity and more honest expression of structure. The Chamber of Mines Building (14) in Hollard Street, is a good example of this new movement in the making. Although the first three floors make some concession to the Victorian period in the way of classical pilasters and window pediments, the upper floors are treated in an

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14. CHAMBER OF MINES BUILDING in Hollard Street, corner of Main Street. Constructed in 1921 this building represents the transition between the Edwardian Neo-Classic and the contemporary office block. Although the lower portion of the building makes certain concessions to classical design approach, the upper storeys are austere to the point of severity, and are a fore-runner of the modern "skyscraper." Emley and Williamson were the Architects. 15. CENTRAL HOUSE, 1911, formerly the Commercial Exchange Buildings, situated in Harrison, Simmonds and Main Streets. The unusual detailing includes elaborate gilt plaster designs to name fixtures. 16. CONSOLIDATED BUILDING on the corner of Harrison and Fox Streets. 17. EXPLORATION BUILDINGS. This picturesque pile of masonry has long been a famous landmark in Commissioner Street. It is overwhelming in character and is noted for its extraordinary colour, ranging from mustard to deep yellow. 18. TRUST BUILDINGS, 1897, built at the corner of Loveday and Fox Streets, displays a combination of a double-storeyed cast-iron verandah with upper floors in brick. This building originally housed the premises of the S.A. Investment and Trust Company, and the Southern Life Assurance Company.

Acknowledgements for photographic illustrations: 9, Alan Yates; 10 and 12, Africana Museum; 13 and 17, "The Star," Johannesburg; 15, Beane's Photo Service; 16, C. Stoloff.

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austere manner, with rectangular windows punctuating the wall surfaces.

A similar example of this treatment is found in Central House (15) formerly Commercial Exchange Buildings, at the corner of Simmonds and Main Streets. This was constructed in 1911, and was a forerunner of the modern Johannesburg office building. The only decoration in the entire structure is the plaster name feature, covered with gilt.

Aegis Buildings (12), in Loveday Street, was a typical late Victorian building, of which only two important buildings of the same type are existing in Johannesburg to-day, namely the Standard Theatre and Estcourt Buildings.

A large proportion of the buildings were constructed of cast iron, especially the balconies and verandahs. There were made up from stock patterns, the most well known being "MacFarlane's Castings." The showpiece of early Johannesburg was the second "Corner House," (11), built by Eckstein, in Commissioner Street. To all intents and purposes it appears to have been constructed entirely from "MacFarlane's Castings," and presented a most brilliant spectacle as it glittered in the afternoon sun.

# NOTES AND NEWS

## THE BUILDING CENTRE

The Building Centre at 9, Conduit Street, London, W.1. was founded in 1932 by a Committee of Architects and Builders as a development of the Building Materials Bureau which had been carried on by the Architectural Association for some years previously. The object of forming the Building Centre was to provide a Centre where those interested in building could see examples of practically every kind of material and equipment used in buildings. Working with the approval of the R.I.B.A. and in close collaboration with the various official organisations, it is run as a non-profit information and distributing organisation. The Technical Department is in close touch with the various British Government sponsored research-organisations dealing with the building industry, and maintains a reference library of their publications.

Visits from members when on leave or on business in England will be warmly welcomed, and it is particularly requested that they should make themselves known when calling.

### APPOINTMENTS SOUGHT AND OFFERED:

Experienced British Architect, aged 32. A.R.I.B.A., desires employment in South Africa as assistant to architect in private practice with possible view to partnership. Trained at the Architectural Association, London. Seven years general experience in offices of leading London architects. Extensive experience in problems of housing, private and for local authorities. Two years at Building Research Station, Herts. Close acquaintance with problems of building construction and behaviour of materials. Accustomed to control staff and interview clients. Letters of testimony forwarded on request. Salary by arrangement. Reply Editor for forwarding.

Architect, aged 32. A.R.I.B.A., A.A. Diploma. Qualified in 1938, ex-aircrew R.A.F. At present engaged in housing in London, seeks position in Dominions or Colonies. Prior to the war, experience in housing, schools, hospitals and aerodromes. Would consider any interesting proposition. Reply: K. S. King, 328a, King's Road, London, S.W.3.

Architectural Assistant wanted for Standerton. Applicant to state experience and expected salary. Reply to: W. Wagner, Architect, Charl Cilliers Street, Standerton.

## PARTNERSHIPS:

Mr. C. H. Sayce has entered into partnership with J. Eleanor Ferguson and Stakesby-Lewis. The name of the new firm is Ferguson, Stakesby-Lewis and Sayce, practising at the original firm's address.

Messrs. S. Price and M. Hackner have entered into partnership, practising at 12a Main House, 96 Main Street, Johannesburg.

Mr. H. L. Meyer has dissolved his partnership with Messrs. Alan Fair and Partners in order to take up the post of Architect to Barclay's Bank (D.C. & O.) in Pretoria.

Messrs. Verhoef and Smit have announced the dissolution of their partnership.

## TRANSFERS:

Mr. W. Bohlander has transferred to the O.F.S.P.I., Mr. W. Poole to the N.P.I., and Mr. C. D. St. Leger to the C.P.I.

## RETIRED MEMBERSHIP:

The following members have notified their retirement: Messrs. C. J. Crothall and G. A. Mabin.

# PROVINCIAL WORK

LIST OF ACCEPTED TENDERS FOR PROVINCIAL SERVICES FOR QUARTER ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1947.

| SERVICE | ARCHITECTS | QUANTITY SURVEYORS | CONTRACTOR | AMOUNT |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ventersdorp Road Depot: Extensions to Workshops. | Cook & Cowen | R. L. Lefeaux | Badenhorst & Stretton (Pty.), Ltd. | £30,420 0 0 |
| Olifantsfontein School: Additions, Repairs and Renovations. | Philip Nel | | H. G. Nolan | £3,194 10 0 |

# CORRESPONDENCE

THE EDITOR 6th January, 1948.

Sir,

In your July number, you reported the paper I read at the Durban Congress, wherein I referred to the decisions of the Cape Provincial Division of the Supreme Court in two cases where the building owner was restrained by the Judicial Managers of Building Contracting Firms from exercising the right of direct payment to nominated sub-contractors, which right is embodied in Clause 15 of our Standard Form of Contract.

In the subsequent discussion which you also reported, my friend Mr. D. S. Haddon, made the point that as these were decisions of one Division of the Supreme Court, other Divisions might differ.

I was unaware at that time of the decision of the Transvaal Provincial Division in the case of Sand & Company, Limited, v. Vaal Construction (Pty.), Limited (Unreported).

This was an application made apparently, by a sub-contractor of a building company, the latter under Judicial Management, to interdict the National Housing and Planning Commission from making any payment to any nominated sub-contractors as defined in a Contract between the Commission and the Vaal Construction (Pty.), Limited, or from deducting any of these claims of nominated sub-contractors from any payments due by the Commission to the Vaal Construction Company, and authorising the Judicial Managers of the latter Company to rank the claims of the nominated sub-contractors, on the same basis as other creditors of the Company. In other words, a similar application to the two which were before the Cape Courts.

The application in the Transvaal was granted by Maritz (J) on 13th February, 1947.

Unfortunately, I have before me, only a copy of the Application, but have communicated with the Applicants' Attorneys to ascertain whether the Judge, in granting the application, gave reason for his judgment.

The Standard Contract Form, employed by the National Housing and Planning Commission is very similar to our Standard Contract Form, and the Clauses relating to nominated sub-contractors are identical.

It is interesting to find that in the Transvaal case, the Application was made by a sub-contractor (apparently an unnominated sub-contractor), not by the Judicial Managers, and that the attention of the Cape Court was not directed to the Transvaal decision, which pre-dated the Cape case by a month.

Yours sincerely

E. DOUGLAS ANDREWS.