FIRST WORD

The Great Experiment

BY JONATHAN B. JARVIS

EVEN THOUGH IT HAS BEEN nearly three years, I have not recovered from the Discovery 2000 Conference, and I am not sure I ever will. I was merely an attendee, not an organizer, of this event that brought together visionaries from inside and outside the parks. And though I did present a few sessions, they hardly account for my continued angst. What I am still reeling from is the charge laid at the feet of the National Park Service by several prominent speakers: It is our task to make this great experiment in democracy succeed.

I HAD TO TAKE A WALK after hearing that, and think about it. Who, us? We are just "parkies." We tell people where the restrooms are. We shore-up old buildings and keep dogs on the leash (sometimes). We count birds, pull weeds, accession arrowheads, and clean toilets. We chase speeders, build parking lots and trail bridges. We rescue lost children and fight fires. What does that all have to do with democracy? We design exhibits and tell compelling stories about people of the past. We write brochures and erect signs; we prepare films and lead tours, to let people know what happened here and why it matters to them. We make no judgments. But are we more than just the sum of our parts and our daily duties? This is the question posed by our speakers.

IT HAS TAKEN ME some time but I have come to understand, and even embrace, with some trepidation, the challenge placed at our feet at Discovery 2000. To put it another way, why would a new American citizen, recently immigrated to the United States and having taken the oath of U.S. citizenship, need to visit Gettysburg or Yorktown? Does he or she really care about the details of Pickett's charge across the cornfields, or Cornwallis' surrender to General Washington, or should he or she visit because it is here that the fires of democracy raged, American blood was shed, and today he or she can enjoy the freedoms of our society? The fact that these great places of history, and their associated resources and stories, have been placed in our care by the U.S. Congress carries with it a great responsibility beyond mere caretaking.

IN OUR CARE are the places where our democratic society has evolved, exploded, retreated, and raged. They are the places of great inspiration and great pain: Independence Hall, Selma to Montgomery, the Statue of Liberty, Manzanar, Rosie the Riveter, Nicodemus, Mount Rushmore, and Nez Perce. The National Park Service has all of these places, but many more are in the care of States, counties, cities, and nonprofits. We are in this together, because the aggregate of these places and the stories that they embody create the foundation of our democracy. It is incumbent upon us, as the stewards, to make that connection.

THIS CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY is at the feet of all of us who are engaged in the noble work of park management and protection. Our professional stewardship of these places will guarantee that they are available for the public of today as well as the children of tomorrow. Our intellectual and scholarly pursuit of the past shines an increasingly bright light on the compelling stories of the people who shaped our lives by their actions and sacrifices. Our unbiased interpretation allows the public to form their own opinions and by doing so, practice the American freedom of thought and action. Our staunch requirement for authenticity and high standards for preserving cultural resources ensures that the public will encounter the real thing, or nothing at all, engenders a unique niche in the world of public attractions. And our commitment to future generations brings us to work day after day, with renewed dedication to a noble cause.

"We shore-up old buildings and keep dogs on the leash (sometimes). We count birds, pull weeds, accession arrowheads, and clean toilets. We chase speeders, build parking lots and trail bridges. We rescue lost children and fight fires. What does that all have to do with democracy?"

IF THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY is truly in the hands of the stewards of America's parks, I can think of no one better, and I will sleep well tonight.

Jonathan B. Jarvis is Pacific West Regional Director of the National Park Service.

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The preservation thinking that sanctified the Victorian now has to address the postwar suburbs. The modernist gems of Eichler Homes—which dot the California landscape—speak volumes about the period. **BY DAVID ANDREWS**

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Above: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Washington, DC, Marcel Breuer and Associates.
Cover: The night sky alight in the American Southwest.

STEVEN C. RUTH/
NPS HARPERS FERRY CENTER

NEWS CLOSEUP

MAKING SENSE OF THE SUBURBS

New Guidelines Point the Way for Preservation

We take them for granted, the places where we live. So much a part of the geography of the mundane, it is understandable that the notion of neighborhood as artifact may seem novel. Yet preserving historic suburbs is an increasingly complex and urgent issue, one that the National Park Service has addressed with a new study and publication.

Historic Residential Suburbs presents neighborhoods as documents of domestic America, scrapbooks of daily life from the 1800s through the 1950s. Assembling current scholarship and the latest preservation practices, the guidelines encourage surveys of historic suburbs in support of nominations to the National Register of Historic Places.

Though an evaluation process for suburbs has been in place for some time, co-author Linda McClelland, a National Register historian, describes the guidelines as an attempt "to get people to look at neighborhoods in different ways than they have in the past."

The evolution of transportation has been the traditional frame of reference in identifying historic neighborhoods, since it was the advent of the steam locomotive, the electric streetcar, and the automobile that largely shaped what was to become suburbia. According to McClelland, though, trends in landscape design, planning, development, and architecture were powerful influences as well. The publication provides guidance on evaluating suburbs as manifestations of these largely underappreciated forces. Also examined are critical factors such as zoning, the GI Bill, and FHA mortgages, all of which played key roles in making our suburbs what they are today.

From the early Picturesque movement of the mid-19th century to the sprawling mass production of Long Island's Levittown, *Historic Residential Suburbs* serves as a primer on the evolution of American communities. The major trends are described, many with roots in social reform. Potential nominations to the National Register can be placed within the general context provided by the guidelines.

National Register staffers note a spike in suburb nominations since 1996. McClelland believes that this reflects growing expertise in the subject matter at preservation offices in all levels of government, along with increasing popular support for preserving old neighborhoods. Many States now offer tax credits to people who rehabilitate their historic homes, some as high as 40 percent. This has proven to be a main preservation motivator for homeowners.

At the same time, entire blocks of older suburbs are razed for new housing. A study of 15 landfills by University of Arizona archeologists found that demolished buildings and construction material accounted for 20 percent of the refuse, second only to paper products. Increasingly, specimen houses of particular periods or trends that survive demolishing are altered beyond recognition.

And as waves of neighborhoods from the postwar boom reach the 50-year mark—and become potential candidates for the National Register—a host of questions goes to the heart of what is worth saving. Says McClelland, "The hardest thing is getting people to buy into the idea of preserving places that they see as recent and familiar."

Tract housing may seem a dubious candidate to some. Yet such communities, from their antecedents in earlier design movements to their unique division of social space, are witness to the

RIVERSIDE AND THE PICTURESQUE IDEAL

Platted in 1869 outside Chicago, Riverside exemplifies the Picturesque Ideal, a romantic movement that started in the mid-19th century, when reform-

ers like Andrew Jackson Downing promoted the moral virtues of life in a country setting as an antidote to the evil of the era's teeming urban centers.

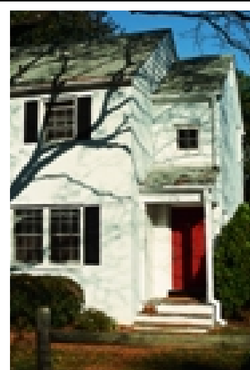
"Informal" and "naturalistic" are often used to describe the approach, which put a premium on the land's aesthetic charms and the seamless merger of house and yard into a bucolic vista. Curved streets, expansive lawns, and mature trees were prime components of a design calculated to maximize the pastoral effect.

The ideas behind Riverside—as realized by designers Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr., and Calvert Vaux in what is now a National Historic Landmark district—have resounded through the decades.

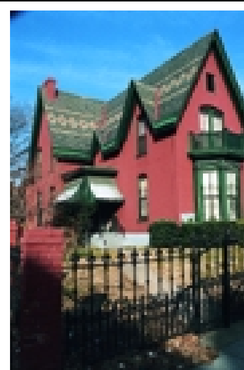
PHOTOS RIVERSIDE HISTORICAL COMMISSION/ EDWARD STRAKA

CLOCKWISE FROM LOWER LEFT: DAVID ANDREWS/NPS (2); WALTER SMALLING, JR./NPS/NATIONAL REGISTER; JACK E. BOUCHER/NPS/HABS; LINDA MCCLELLAND

TOP AND ABOVE: BALTIMORE'S ROLAND PARK, ONE OF THE FIRST PLANNED COMMUNITIES, ITS WEST WING LAID OUT BY THE NOTED OLMSTED FIRM. NOW ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES.



CONCRETE-BLOCK HOUSE BUILT TO FHA'S "TWO-STORY, SIDEWALL-STAIR PLAN."



LEDROIT PARK, IN DC, AN AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER.

KING WILLIAM NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS.

America of their time. In the postwar suburbs, "a distinctive settlement pattern emerged, centered on the single family house on its individual lot," says guidelines co-author David Ames, professor of urban affairs at the University of Delaware, who initiated the study. "It was a landscape in which the free market attempted to meld the attributes of the city and the country into a home environment."

Veterans Administration- and FHA-insured loans made it easier to buy a single-family home farther out than to rent closer in, a pattern that continues today, drawing criticism from New Urbanists. "Each year we construct the equivalent of many cities, but the pieces don't add up to anything memorable or of lasting value," say Andres Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and Jeff Speck in *Suburban Nation: The Rise and Decline of the American Dream*. "The result doesn't look like a place, it doesn't act like a place, and perhaps most significant, it doesn't feel like a place." The authors contend that until 1930, town planning was considered "a humanistic discipline" with roots in history, aesthetics, and culture, but later it became a numbers-driven endeavor designed to move people efficiently along the new highways.

In "Interpreting Post-World War II Suburban Landscapes," from *Preserving the Recent Past* (see sidebar, opposite), Ames says that

Online Resources

www.cr.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/suburbs/resources.htm

Hidden History, Revealed Landmarks by Alan Hess

The Houses of Levittown in the Context of Postwar American Culture by Barbara M. Kelly

Interpreting Post-World War II Suburban Landscapes as Historic Resources by David L. Ames

Ranch Houses Are Not All the Same by David Bricker

Surveying the Suburbs: Back to the Future? by Claudia R. Brown

Thomas Church, Garrett Eckbo, and the Postwar California Garden by Marc Trieb

Articles originally appeared in *Preserving the Recent Past 1 and 2*, published by the Historic Preservation Education Foundation with the National Park Service and the Association for Preservation Technology International, Washington, DC, 1995 and 2000.

The Garden City

WHEN THE BALTIMORE SUBURB of Guilford broke ground in 1912—laid out by Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., and the Olmsted Brothers firm—the Garden City movement held sway. The approach originated in England, tied up with social reform and altruistic intentions for the beleaguered urban masses. **IN THE IDEAL** Garden City, sunlight, fresh air, and open space were abundant. Through careful placement of buildings according to function (commercial, residential, industrial, agricultural), a new formalism entered the suburban vocabulary. **THE AMERICAN VERSION** of the Garden City took shape under the influence of Beaux Arts planning (which emphasized a hierarchy of residential and community space delineated by radial and axial features) and the City Beautiful movement (which sought to elevate the standards, both aesthetic and practical, of American cities). **IN AMERICA THERE WAS** already a strong impetus to develop neighborhoods as residential parks, stressing both architectural character and landscape design. The English strengthened the idea, while emphasizing high-density housing at an affordable cost. Economic analysis entered the planning equation—as did residential covenants in high-end communities like Guilford. **SAY AMES AND MCCLELLAND**, "A general plan of development [and] the use of deed restrictions became essential elements used by developers and designers to control house design, ensure quality and harmony of construction, and create spatial organization suitable for fine homes in a park setting." Increasingly, projects drew on the combined expertise of planners, architects, and landscape design professionals. **ONE INNOVATION WAS** the dividing of land into "superblocks"—unified architectural groups alternating with green space. Planners Clarence S. Stein and Henry Wright came up with the idea in laying out Radburn, New Jersey, a planned suburb outside New York City. **STILL, AMERICA REMAINED** attached to the Picturesque Ideal of the 19th century. Today, elements of its relaxed rural flavor can be found in Guilford—which is now on the National Register of Historic Places—along with the formal precision of the Garden City.

GREG PEASE/COURTESY MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

"many would argue that the quality of American residential design—and town planning for that matter—reached a peak in the late streetcar and early automobile suburbs."

Yet we are now coming to grips with changing perceptions of postwar phenomena—a pattern not new to preservation. In "Surveying the Suburbs: Back to the Future," also from *Preserving the Recent Past*, Claudia Brown says that "appreciation of Victorian architecture began with the spotlight on the most exuberant Queen Anne extravagancies, and within a few years serious attention was being paid to the neighborhoods of run-of-the-mill Victorian houses."

McClelland says that the guidelines in part answer critics who contend that suburbs of more recent vintage do not deserve preservation. "Look at the intentions of the FHA," she says, "which set standards, drew up model house designs, and boosted lower income families into the middle class."

She and her co-author gleaned and synthesized a host of materials for a comprehensive view of the subject that exists nowhere else. "With the guidelines we say in effect, 'Here's what made these neighborhoods work,'" says McClelland. "'Let's re-examine how we came to be where we are.'"

Historic Residential Suburbs, with its expanded view of places and voices in the discourse on the subject, is a step toward preserving a legacy for the future.

***Historic Residential Suburbs* is online at www.cr.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/suburbs/suburbs-start.htm. For more information or to get a printed copy, contact Linda McClelland at linda_mcclelland@nps.gov.**

As a companion to the guidelines, there are plans to release a multiple property form summarizing the characteristics (called "registration requirements") of National Register-eligible neighborhoods. Both resources are intended for States, local governments, neighborhood associations, property owners, or others interested in starting a local survey or preparing a nomination.

PAUL ROBINSON

New Life for Old Hand

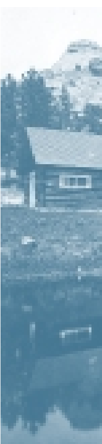
Dude Ranch Reborn as Research Center

For over 50 years, the McGraw Ranch operated at the edge of the Rockies. Homesteaded in 1884, it became a lucrative dude ranch during the Depression while continuing to raise cattle and horses. For another half-century the ranch offered tourists an idyllic, though pampered, "cowboy" experience with bunk houses, campfires, and horseback riding. Visitors were urged to "rough it with ease."

Changing tastes left the place fairly deserted by the 1980s. Nearby Rocky Mountain National Park purchased the 700-acre property and its 15 buildings with the idea of returning the site to wilderness.

News that the ranch was to be demolished galvanized preservation groups across the country. Its buildings, they said, were a prime example of 19th century rustic architecture. The park, under the guidance of new superintendent Randy Jones, consulted with the groups—among them Rocky Mountain National Park Associates and the National Trust for Historic Preservation—to come up with a way to preserve the ranch. The result: innovation in both adaptive re-use and partnering in the public interest.

The park, for its part, knew it needed space for visiting scientists and educators.



ICON TO SAIL AGAIN

Once a step away from the scrap heap, the SS *United States,* the greatest "superliner" ever built in America, will once again sail the seas. The once-proud behemoth, on the National Register of Historic Places, long languished at a Philadelphia dock. Following a groundswell of activism led largely by the SS United States Foundation, a foreign sponsor emerged to steer the ship into the future: Norwegian Cruise Lines.

One of the most elegant vessels of its era, the *United States* was an icon and a feat of engineering. It was a crown jewel in a time when a nation's prosperity and prestige were measured by its oceangoing luxury liners. In 1952, on its maiden voyage, it set a speed record for crossing the Atlantic in a little over three days. The record held until 1990. The dawn of jet travel was the beginning of the end for the affectionately named "Big U."

The foundation waged a six-year battle to raise funds, educate the public, and influence decision-makers. The work paid off when the Norwegians agreed to purchase the liner, restore it, and put it to sea as a cruise ship. Though the cost remains undisclosed, estimates run from $200 to $500 million. Meanwhile, supporters are trying to track down the ship's accoutrements, scattered far and wide.

Since Americans make up the largest segment of the cruise market, sailing on an artifact of history could be an irresistible draw—a boon for preservation and the bottom line.

CLASH OF CULTURES

Study Traces Tracks of Indian Wars

THE TRAILS OF THE INDIAN WARS have become legend through countless films and pulp paperbacks; the reality, one assumes, having gone the way of modern development. Yet a blue-ribbon panel of scholars recently studied five survivors as candidates for the national trails system.

THE TRAILS WERE ASSESSED with the criteria used to screen National Historic Landmarks, which has never been done before. Researchers looked at the Bozeman Trail (which traverses Montana and Wyoming), the Long Walk (Arizona and New Mexico), the Northern Cheyenne Exodus Trail (Oklahoma to Montana), the Smoky Hill Trail (Kansas and Colorado), and the Trails of the Great Sioux War (the Dakotas, Montana, and Wyoming). THE SCHOLARS USED the standard landmarks approach, employing a tool called a theme study to evaluate how the trails express their era and particular historical themes. This allowed comparative analysis of the potential nominees. Previously, trails were evaluated case-by-case, never in groups linked by an overarching subject. THREE MET THE CRITERIA established by the study: the Bozeman Trail, the Long Walk, and the Northern Cheyenne Exodus Trail. There are a number of places along their lengths—forts, a destroyed Indian village, the site of an ambush—that have potential as National Historic Landmarks. *Clash of Cultures,* the study's report, lists them with an eye toward encouraging nomination. ACCORDING TO Chris Whitacre, the National Park Service historian who coordinated the study, the impetus now rests with local trail groups or state agencies to take the lead in encouraging Congress to introduce legislation in support of the potential candidates. Meanwhile, *Clash of Cultures* not only sums up their significance, but also suggests avenues for future research.

For more information, contact Chris Whitacre at chris_whitacre@nps.gov. The study is at www.cr.nps.gov/nhl/themes/clash/ClashofCultures.htm.

Left: Navajo woman and baby at New Mexico's Fort Sumner, 1860s. White settlement in the northern Rio Grande displaced thousands of Navajos in the forced removal known as The Long Walk.

COURTESY MUSEUM OF NEW MEXICO

COLORADO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

So the ranch re-emerged in a new life as a study center. The place retains its original character, but now offers bunks, labs, a computer facility, staff offices, and a library. Rocky Mountain doubled the space for researchers, who study the park to inform science-based management.

Half of the project's $2 million price tag came from park fees for entry, camping, and back-country permits, under a congressionally authorized program. The rest was raised by the Associates and the Trust. Rehabilitating the place—repairing the log structures, foundations, roofs, and siding—brought out volunteers from Habitat for Humanity and other groups. National Park Service preservation specialists contributed their expertise too. Some 5,000 hours of volunteer toil went into the rehab; a British master craftsman stayed an entire year.

From guest ranch to research center, the project is a reference point for preservation.

For more information, contact Rocky Mountain National Park, Continental Divide Research Learning Center, (970) 586-1394, ROMO_Research_Administration@nps.gov.

TREND LINE

MODERN DILEMMA

"I Don't Understand It, It Doesn't Look Old to Me"

BY RICHARD LONGSTRETH

During the mid-20th century, the champions of modern architecture seldom missed an opportunity to ridicule the past. At best, the past was a closed book whose chapters had mercifully ended with little bearing upon the present. But often the past was portrayed as an evil. Buildings and cities created since the rise of industrialization were charged with having nearly ruined the planet. The legacy of one's parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents was not only visually meaningless and degenerate, but socially and spiritually repressive as well. Architects such as Walter Gropius saw the contemporary city as so much detritus. The more of the alleged blight removed from the scene, the better.

Such sweeping indictments in architectural and planning circles added fuel to the cause of historic preservation in others. It is no coincidence that the National Historic Preservation Act came at a time when the Modernist cause seemed to be exercising a hold on Federal policy.

This relationship, among other things, makes it difficult to consider the legacy of Modernism. Furthermore, Modernism is still with us. It can be argued that more of its agenda has been realized over the past three decades than over the previous half century.

Nevertheless, the products of a generation ago can indeed be examined from a fresh perspective. What was called by its proponents simply "Modern Architecture" does not always seem modern anymore.

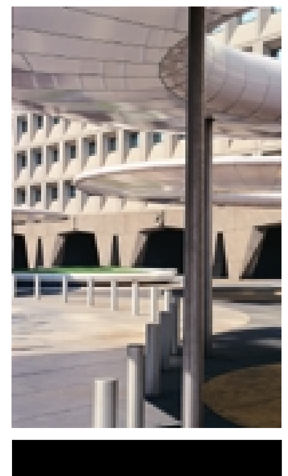
Washington, DC's southwest redevelopment area fully manifests the Modernist imperative. Planned in the 1950s, and largely in place by the mid-1960s, this model venture retained but a few vestiges of the previous urban fabric. Street patterns and block size were modified. New construction increased density and open space at the same time. Planning struck a balance between automobiles and pedestrians, and separated the two wherever possible.

The project was a consummate manifestation of Federal urban renewal programs, when wholesale clearance and sweeping new designs were irreproachable objectives. It was comparable to the National Mall, a few blocks away, in that nothing of its kind was more ambitious, more realized, and, arguably, more accomplished in its design.

Locally, the project represented not only major physical and demographic changes. It also, for the first time, allowed Washington Modernists to exhibit their talents in a conspicuous way. The precinct stands as a pantheon to the best and brightest: Chloethiel Woodard Smith, Charles Goodman, Keyes Lethbridge & Condon, among others. Famous practitioners from outside Washington, including Harry Weese, I.M. Pei, Dan Kiley, and Hideo Sasaki, also contributed.

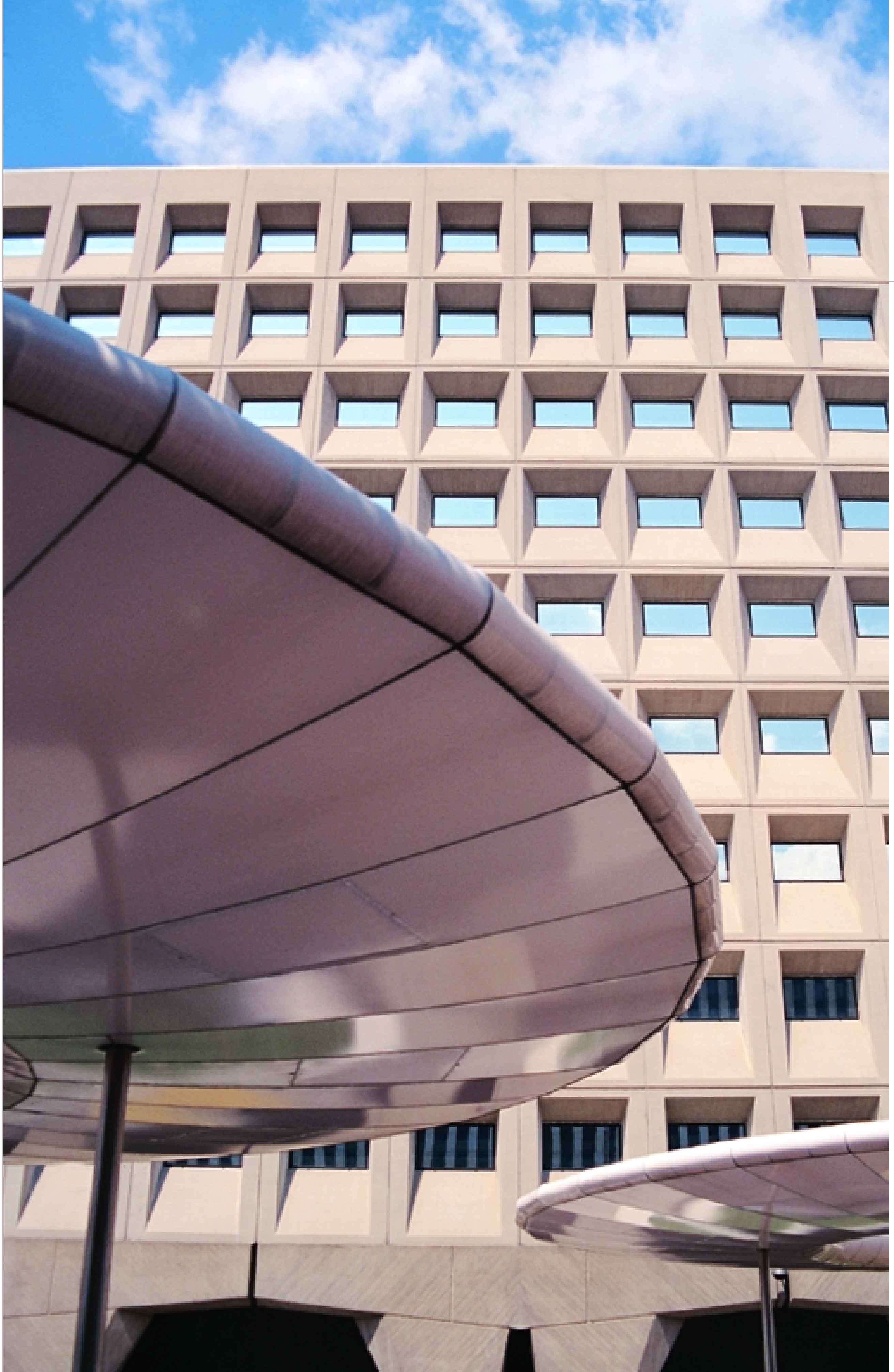
We would not question the historical significance were the area developed 175 years ago, and we should not from a distance of some 40 years either. The scheme no longer represents the present: the buildings, the planning, indeed the approach itself differ from anything in our current vocabulary. Yet the project possesses an enduring value, and not just as a museum

IT IS NO COINCIDENCE THAT THE NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT CAME AT A TIME WHEN THE MODERNIST CAUSE SEEMED TO BE EXERCISING A HOLD ON FEDERAL POLICY.



Right, above: **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, architect Marcel Breuer and Associates, 1968, in Washington, DC's southwest redevelopment area.**

LEFT AND RIGHT: DAVID ANDREWS/NPS



LEFT, BELOW, FAR RIGHT: DAVID ANDREWS/NPS; RICHARD LONGSTRETH

piece. Some residents refer fondly to their neighborhood as Brasilia. The idea of an historic district has been entertained by those who, just as Georgetowners a half century ago, fear that outside forces will alter what makes the place like no other.

Another example is a benchmark of its kind: Shopper's World, in Framingham, Massachusetts, 16 miles west of Boston. When it opened in 1951, it was the second regional shopping center developed as an integrated business around a core pedestrian area—a mall (Northgate, opened in 1950 in Seattle, was the first). For many years, Shopper's World was the only one of this first generation of malls, and perhaps the only one from before the 1960s, to remain in anything close to original form. It was the foremost example of the initial trend that revolutionized shopping patterns and outlying development. Like southwest Washington, it embodied beliefs that the old order could not meet contemporary needs, that radical new solutions were needed. Shopper's World should have become a National Historic Landmark, although arguing the point is academic because it was leveled in 1994—for a parking lot.

The complex was clearly of national, perhaps international, significance. Why did the preservation effort, a local one, focus on the anchor department store's saucer dome, interesting in its own right, but with little bearing on the design's transcendence?

Often we do not "see" the landmarks of the mid-20th century. Their landscape is not centralized. Rather it is multi-nucleated, and the nucleations often lack traditional focal points. Southwest Washington has a main thoroughfare, but no vantage point from which to appreciate the precinct. Shopper's World was hardly noticeable from its approach, even in isolation, before an array of businesses began to surround it, a result of its drawing power. Moreover, the shopping strip does not read as a district, it lacks visual coherence. Similarly, little apparent relationship exists between like groupings scattered about a metropolitan area.

Examples of this kind are the rule. Chances are that the elementary school does not crown a hill or otherwise conspicuously demark its importance. More likely it is sited well back from the road, from which, if visible at all, it appears as a series of unobtrusive pavilions. A number of headquarter offices, such as those of Reynolds Aluminum and John Deere, are the polar opposites of their skyscraper precursors, sited like great country houses on the edge of the city in lush preserves. It is easy to cast them as anti-urban. However, the past 50 years show that there is a clear order in recent growth, a distinctly metropolitan offshoot of the old, more traditional forms.

OFTEN WE DO NOT "SEE" THE LANDMARKS OF THE MID-20TH CENTURY. THEIR LANDSCAPE IS NOT CENTRALIZED. RATHER IT IS MULTI-NUCLEATED, AND THE NUCLEATIONS OFTEN LACK TRADITIONAL FOCAL POINTS.

Perhaps no type is so central to preservation, in the popular mind at least, as the single-family house, and here, too, modern architecture defies convention. The great modern houses do not line main streets, nor do they cluster in defined, viewable enclaves such as Kansas City's Country Club District. Most are as invisible as the mountain cabin, marked only by an unassuming driveway through dense foliage. Even in communities with an abundant collection of noted examples—New Canaan, Connecticut, for instance—little is known about them except through individual encounters with domiciles owned by friends.

And even when property sizes are smaller, the setting not quasi-rural, the impact often is no greater. Los Angeles affords a telling example, with great works from the mid-20th century sequestered on tiny hillside sites, seen by the few who drive the winding roads as sheer walls, garage doors, and vegetation. The plant life can completely subsume a building, such as Richard Neutras' Nesbitt house of 1942, even without the aid of the topography. Thousands of people pass by each day and never "see" it.

"Brasilia on the Potomac"—the fond moniker of some residents for this southwest DC enclave from the urban renewal era—gave local modernists a place to shine. Charles Goodman's townhouses, far left and right, frame Keyes, Lethbridge & Condon's Tiber Island complex.

Modern architecture often cannot be appreciated from one or two exterior elevations, a single photograph or description. Movement around and through a building, or its complex, may be essential. Just as the experience is frequently more internal and private than external and public, so space is often accorded primacy over form. One must look beyond motifs and veneers. Modern architecture did not just eliminate ornament; it did not just eschew references to the past; it did not just emulate a machine aesthetic; it challenged basic assumptions about design.

Despite innumerable claims to the contrary, modern architecture has never been monolithic, but rather defined by an array of individualistic approaches. Look at the picture around 1955: the laconic structuralism of Mies van der Rohe; the geometric organicism of Frank Lloyd Wright; the understated abstractionism of Richard Neutra; the "soft" naturalism of William Wurster; the flamboyant expressionism of Bruce Goff.

In banishing academic principles, modern architecture's proponents established a new order defined to a stunning degree by individual will. Many espoused purportedly transcendent principles of design—Wright's and Le Corbusier's among the best known—but these were seldom used by others unless transformed in an equally personal manner. Furthermore, the academic notion that principles were immutable was silently discarded in favor of an outlook that encouraged more or less continual change, so that the premises espoused by one group were, and are, frequently challenged by others. Modern architecture, in short, is very much relativistic.

Modern conceptions of space have certainly affected settlement patterns since World War II. Too often this landscape is dismissed as "sprawl," with no effort to understand the forces that shaped it. The modern metropolis is not the product of fools, any more or any less than the industrial city. Functions gravitate to where they

appear to operate efficiently from an owners' perspective. The shopping mall flourished not just because larger numbers of the middle class possessed unprecedented mobility, disposable income, and leisure time. Retail districts in many cities were saturated, unable to expand at a rate commensurate with market growth.

Decentralization has been a fact much longer than many realize. Beginning more or less with the railroad, factories and worker housing scattered about the large cities. The rich and the middle class sought the periphery. The sprawl of cities such as Detroit seemed epic by the late 19th century, but this, in turn, was diminutive compared to the next several decades. The surge after World War II was hardly unprecedented, and, had it not happened, cities would have had to remake themselves, leaving little fabric to preserve.

What did change, of course, were the particulars. The major cause was the car. These machines not only consume space themselves, they allow us to traverse space in ways never before imaginable. Driving time, not linear distance, has been a standard locational measure since the 1940s. We think little about driving an extra five miles— a few minutes—for shopping, to church, to our home. The car did not so much introduce choices as it allowed us to retain the openness and free movement associated with many towns (but not with most cities) in the 19th century. The modest tract houses of the postwar era are really incarnations of the modest ones in most American towns.

LEFT, BELOW: RICHARD LONGSTRETH

Far left: North Shore Congregation Israel, Glencoe, Illinois, Minoru Yamasaki, architect, 1964.
Near left: Dace House, Beaver, Oklahoma, Bruce Goff, architect, 1964.

WE DO NOT THINK OF THE MODERN WORLD AS TIED TO THE PAST BECAUSE ITS AMBIENT NEWNESS IS SO UNRELENTINGLY PROMOTED. HOW CAN THE STRENUOUSLY BILLED HARBINGERS OF A BETTER TOMORROW BE CONSIDERED IN THE PAST TENSE?

Shopper's World took the New England green as a prototype. The open spaces around the school, amid the office parks and apartment complexes, are latter-day surrogates for seeing the country from the town and being able to reach it in minutes.

We do not think of the modern world as tied to the past because its ambient newness is so unrelentingly promoted. How can the strenuously billed harbingers of a better tomorrow be considered in the past tense?

Part of the challenge is for preservationists to think less like critics and more like historians. Most are bad critics of the built environment, which they cast in simplistic terms, the development Godzilla versus the preservation Bambi. But it's not all their fault. Even the most sophisticated tend to cast things in black-and-white. Lewis Mumford did this: Park Avenue was no better than a slum; ye olde New England village was beyond reproach.

Yet preservationists have done a pretty good job with history. Over the past 40 years, they have saved a remarkably diverse swath of the past. And they made a major contribution to the academy by insisting that more things were significant than the textbooks let on.

Still, much remains to be saved. After World War II, the United States became an international leader in modern architecture. The legacy of a broad range of creative designers—of landscapes and interiors along with buildings—is probably unmatched by any other nation. The vernacular realm offers many examples as well. At no time has such commodious housing been available to persons of moderate means. All the derisive comments about sprawl, about ticky-tacky, inhumane boxes out to the horizon, refer to a remarkable phenomenon that may never be duplicated, with the family-run motels, the chain department stores, the idiosyncratic cheek-by-jowl with the idiomatic.

We cannot squander this legacy the way we squandered what came before. We do not have the luxury of time.

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GRANT SPOTLIGHT

FROM RUIN TO REHAB

Landmark Prison Reverses Decay with Dose of Own Philosophy

The sinister castle-like structure on the outskirts of Philadelphia would seem to have nothing in common with the inspiring landmarks for which the city is known. While Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell symbolize the great American experiment, Eastern State Penitentiary is a stark reminder that sometimes the experiment can go wrong. From petty horse thieves to crime boss Al Capone, its Gothic confines have housed every strain of criminal, in a place that charted new territory in the exploration of criminality.

But like Philadelphia's more familiar places, 142-year-old Eastern State has been honored with high status for its historic value. In 1965 it was designated a National Historic Landmark. In spite of that, it was, until recently, a spectacular vision of decay. Abandoned since 1971, water poured through its deteriorated roofs, coursed down the plaster walls, slowly dismantling the place and rendering parts of it dangerous. Annually it appeared on the National Park Service's endangered NHL list. Twice, it made a similar list kept by World Monuments Watch.

A $500,000 grant from the National Park Service-administered Save America's Treasures program has been crucial to staving off ruin. The funds, part of a Federal program to preserve threatened sites, buildings, and artifacts, have helped meet a desperate need: new roofing on the prison's central rotunda and several other structures. The grant was matched dollar-for-dollar, primarily by the State.

Eastern, closed in 1970, spent the next 20 years in steady decline while State and city officials wondered what to do with it. With public and private backing, the site has made considerable strides. It has gone from an abandoned hulk to a popular cultural attraction offering exhibits, educational talks by scholars, and an audio tour of reconstructed cells narrated by actor Steve Buscemi. With support from The Pew Charitable Trusts, the prison opened to the public in 1994 and 11,000 visitors walked its cavernous passageways. By 2002, the number had swelled to 64,000.

The grant "helped tremendously" to preserve the place, says Sara Jane Elk, the site's executive director. Tourists walk from the prison's central rotunda through a series of passageways, or "links," radiating out to cell blocks, like the spokes of a wheel. Thanks to the roofing, hardhats are no longer needed.

Built in 1829, Eastern State was a sensation almost upon its opening, the expression of a radical, Quaker-inspired theory of rehabilitation through reflection and spiritual change (hence solitary confinement). This departed from the traditional system, whose staples were corporal punishment and abuse. The prison was the model for 250 others worldwide, visited by foreign dignitaries, intellectuals, and social reformers like Charles Dickens and Alex de Toqueville. Ultimately, solitary confinement, under criticism as inhumane, gave way to 20th-century ideas of equipping inmates for re-entering society.

The prison is so vast—17 buildings and nearly 1,000 cells over 10 acres—restoration is slated only for places important to the story: cells, exercise yards, mess halls, and death row.

Left: Al Capone, in on a brief hitch for firearms possession, dodged the rehab regime shown here in a cell with Oriental rugs, furniture, and a radio—plus cigars, champagne, and women. Right: Today's scene.

Eastern State, an ironic presence at the edge of the City of Brotherly Love, has become an unparalleled venue for examining some of our most difficult social issues.

For more information on the penitentiary, go to www.EasternState.org or e-mail Sean M. Kelley at sk@EasternState.org. For more information on Save America's Treasures grants, go to www2.cr.nps.gov/treasures/.

ALL PHOTOS EASTERN STATE PENITENTIARY, INC.

JIM GALE

THE NIGHT Sky

PROTECTING A CULTURAL TOUCHSTONE

BY JOSEPH FLANAGAN

NIGHT IN NATIVE AMERICA, when people laid down in the boreal forests of the North, when the tribes of the vast eastern woodlands drifted off to sleep, when the last fires died out in the stone villages of the Southwest, was complete. Above the continent, the darkness was profound, yet bristling with light and mystery, an intense kind of night that seems to have gone the way of the world that slept beneath it.

That sense of infinity at the fingertips, once as much a part of America as its rivers and mountains, is now rare, largely evaporated in only three generations. As our cities consume more and more open land, the night sky has disappeared proportionately, lost in the 24-hour industrial glare of modern life.

Left: Seventy miles away, Albuquerque lights up the night south of Socorro, New Mexico.

Losing the night sky might seem the least of our worries in today's world. And yet a growing chorus of voices, many in the preservation community, is making a case for action: The night sky is a primal element of our human heritage, perhaps the ultimate cultural entity. It is the eternal backdrop to human history, inspiration of thought and belief, source of some of the deepest questions human beings have posed about themselves and their place in the world.

The concept initially bloomed in national parks of the Southwest, where staffers embraced the idea of the night sky as a cultural landscape. "From the Pleistocene to the present, the night sky has influenced the fundamental idea of what it means to be human," says Jerry Rogers, a former top National Park Service official in the region.

The idea expanded into a statewide initiative in New Mexico, where the legislature, prompted by a grassroots alliance that declared the night sky an endangered place, passed a law to preserve it. The New Mexico Night Sky Protection Act—the culmination of an effort launched by a loose confederation of preservationists, astronomers, environmentalists, and the National Park Service—bridged the cultural and natural camps in a way that has inspired others to follow suit.

Listing the night sky as an endangered entity, its value vital to our culture, pushed the boundaries of how we think about place, history, and the human experience. It also required overcoming a lack of public awareness and opposition from powerful forces such as land rights organizations and sign manufacturers.

The Southwest would seem a natural place for the idea. With its open spaces, clear, dry air, and relatively spread-out population, the region still has a lot of dark sky at night. In many of the national parks, petroglyphs and the remains of ancient villages were directly influenced by planetary movements and constellations. The region, a rich field for archeo-astronomy, is abundant with signs left by people whose lives were very much influenced by the order of the universe.

Over the years, the national parks have watched with what Jerry Rogers calls "growing and helpless dismay" as light sources crept closer and closer: among them growing towns, mining operations, drilling rigs, and refineries. In 1999, the National Parks Conservation Association conducted a nationwide survey of light pollution in the parks, summing up the situation with the title chosen for its report: "Vanishing Night Skies."

Charting a Course in the Parks

It wasn't that people were completely unaware. Astronomers have long advocated for a clear night sky, as have environmentalists who cite the importance of the dark to the function of ecosystems. The International Dark Sky Association, based in Tucson, works exclusively on the issue.

By the early 1990s, the National Park Service knew it had to tackle the problem, at least in the Southwest. In a 2001 edition of the George Wright Society's *Forum*, Rogers and National Park Service colleague Joe Sovick laid out how formerly isolated parks were no longer immune. "A bright aura above a city might be visible from a park more than a hundred miles distant," they wrote. They also described the increasingly popular practice in rural areas of mounting mercury vapor lights on tall poles to discourage

Above: Santa Fe.

"FROM THE PLEISTOCENE TO THE PRESENT, THE NIGHT SKY HAS INFLUENCED THE FUNDAMENTAL IDEA OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE HUMAN," SAYS JERRY ROGERS, A FORMER TOP NATIONAL PARK SERVICE OFFICIAL IN THE REGION.

ROBERT CHAVEZ

thieves. "These streetlights without streets," they said, "are more statements of modernity than devices for security. They even penetrate Indian country." So many Navajo residences had mercury vapor lights that "their vast and mostly empty reservations sparkle at night like a thinner suburbia."

Sovick and Rogers likened park managers to ship captains, responsible for their individual vessels, expecting little help from the outside world. Yet it was at New Mexico's Chaco Culture National Historical Park, site of the ruins of an ancient metropolis, where some of the first innovations appeared.

Sovick, on temporary assignment as superintendent, heard concerns from staff first hand. What he describes as the "magnificently unspoiled night sky" had been carefully studied by the Chacoans themselves as a blueprint for their builders. The pattern of the universe is integral to the ruins, and therefore part of Chaco's significance (see sidebar, page 22).

Sovick found that some of the most immediate threats were coming from inside Chaco. Lights at the visitors' center, on roadside signs, and other features were sending their glare upward. An obvious question followed. How could the park promote appropriate lighting elsewhere when its own lights were causing pollution? Through Bobby Clark, Chaco's motivated facility manager, the park reoriented its lighting, replacing much of it with shielded, efficient, nonpolluting substitutes. The change made a remarkable difference, illuminating a flaw in the argument of those opposed to curtailing light pollution: the cost of retrofit lights is not as prohibitive as claimed. And Chaco's electric bill dropped by 30 percent.

Building on Chaco's success, a regionwide night sky initiative followed. Carlsbad Caverns, Canyon de Chelly, and other parks began reorienting and retrofitting their lighting. There was a new awareness of the sky too. Nighttime interpretive presentations appeared at a host of parks. With the help of grants, Chaco built a small observatory. The stage was set for action outside the parks.

The Stars Align

The newly formed New Mexico Heritage Preservation Alliance was at work seeking to protect the State's history and cultural heritage. The alliance, a citizens' organization, is like other groups of its kind short on money, time, and personnel. What it had going for it, according to Sovick, was "a precocious energy and a bent for innovation." It so happened that Jerry Rogers was on the alliance's committee charged with naming New Mexico's most endangered places. A discussion between Rogers and Sovick led to the bold idea of nominating the night sky as an endangered cultural place.

Defending the idea meant, in a way, defining the universe. It also called into question the way we have traditionally thought about places deemed worth saving. Writing an early draft of the nomination, Joe Sovick encountered the difficulty of capturing the complex quality of the night sky's significance. The words "historic" and "cultural," he wrote, "imply places and things that are created by human hands and meet criteria for the National Register of Historic Places."

"I have always thought it important to continually press to expand the imagination of preservation professionals," Rogers says, too many of whom, he believes, are content within the narrow confines of their academic specialties.

In his many years as a preservation official with the National Park Service, Rogers had been involved in a growing trend of honoring the natural world for its cultural importance. Landscape architects were early proponents of the concept, as were anthropologists and tribes. Tracts of land and prominent topographical features were designated as cultural landscapes because of what they meant to the beliefs and traditions of cer-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 25 >>

Who Will Keep the Night?

by Angela M. Richman

No sight that human eyes can look upon is more provocative of awe than is the night sky scattered thick with stars. – Poet Llewelyn Powys

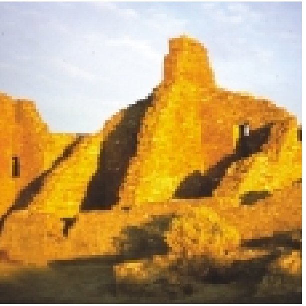
WITH ENCROACHING LIGHT POLLUTION, astronomers travel high atop mountain peaks or send telescopes into space to experience the natural darkness of the night sky. In the Southwest, professionals and amateurs alike may drive hundreds of miles to a national park, where the ancients had only to step outside their door. This is where the initiative to preserve the night sky began.

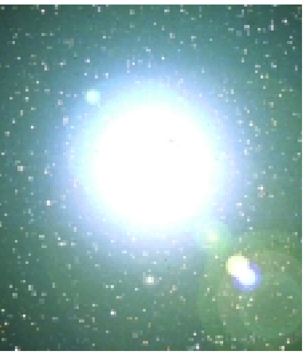
WHEN WE LOOK AT THE STARS, we see the same sky that the ancients saw. The night sky is our best link to those who came before, and though filled in the last century with airplanes, satellites, and the glow of cities, of all the resources on earth it is the one we have the most power to restore. **THE CANYONS** and the valleys, the buttes and the mesas are alive with the evidence of ancient astronomers, with carved and painted images of the sun, the moon, and the stars. **AROUND AD 900,** what is now New Mexico's Chaco Canyon National Historical Park bustled with perhaps 6,000 people, archeologists say, with thousands more passing through. They built roadways extending hundreds of miles. They erected homes and buildings, both public and religious, with hundreds of rooms. They farmed the land and worried about what they were going to eat. At night they sat under an immense sea of stars and pondered what they saw. And they left many clues to how they tried to give order to the seeming chaos in the sky. **ATOP FAJADA BUTTE,** a beacon for travelers that can be seen 40 miles away, is a solar marker known as the "sun dagger." Three sandstone slabs lean against the cliff face, above two carved spirals strategically placed to interact with the sun. On the summer solstice, when the sun reaches its highest point around noon, the three slabs project a dagger of light bisecting the larger of the two spirals. Similar scenes unfold at the winter solstice and vernal and autumnal equinoxes, with daggers of light in a pattern dance with the spirals. These daggers of light marked not only the time of year, but the time of day as well. They indicated when to plant, harvest, hunt, and the timing of ceremonies. **FROM THE FIRST SLIVER OF LIGHT** to the last, the daggers quickly make their mark, giving those privileged to witness the event the sensation of a moving planet. We can be sure the magic was anticipated year after year. **JUST SEVEN MILES WEST** is a pictograph of a handprint, a crescent moon, and a starburst, deliberately sheltered from weathering. Some believe it records a dramatic celestial moment. **IN AD 1054,** at the height of the Chacoan civilization, a supernova blazed across the sky, lighting up the night. Perhaps it scared them a little, interpreted as a sign from the gods or an omen of change. And on the first and brightest day, a crescent moon was the supernova's close companion in the heavens. The handprint might be the artist's signature. **NOT FAR AWAY** is an even more powerful symbol—three concentric rings with a large tail of red paint. In AD 1066, only 12 years after the supernova, Halley's comet visited the skies of New Mexico. So the same person could have recorded both events. How sad it would be if such a rare and spectacular event happened today and the people on our planet were not be able to bear witness. **THE CHACOANS** took inspiration from the stars. Many buildings align directly north-south or east-west. Archeologists suggest that the North Star guided the layout of the civilization. Doorways faced north, orienting one from the threshold of home to any point on the compass.

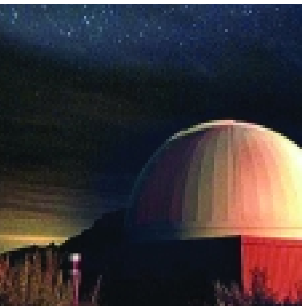
HIDDEN IN the rock shelters of Arizona's Canyon de Chelly National Monument are what archeologists first called ancient planetariums; a better word would be star ceilings, some created with arrows dipped in paint and shot aloft. Like a planetarium, these spaces displayed the stars during the day, probably as a set for storytelling. We can never be sure of the purpose, but we do know that the Navajo created the ceilings, and most of their rituals were performed for protection. **THE NAVAJO** also used star patterns to symbolize moral codes. The Fire Star (North Star), Revolving Male (Big Dipper), and Revolving Female (Cassiopeia) illustrate how life should be lived in the hogan, with the constellations revolving around each other and a center fire. **THE DILYÉHÉ** (the Pleiades star cluster) signalled when to plant crops. When the cluster is no longer seen in the evening sky, crops can be planted without threat of frost. Conversely, when the cluster is seen in the morning, it is too late to plant. Hunting season begins with a signal from the tail of Scorpios, known as the rabbit tracks. Modern Puebloans believe that the night sky is important not only to connect to past generations, but also to teach the children of today. **WITH TECHNOLOGY,** astronomers have been able to look deeper into space and, therefore, farther back in time. Aware of the importance of the night sky to visitors, the National Park Service launched a project to measure light pollution in the parks, which became known as the Night Sky Initiative. Some parks, like Petroglyph National Monument just outside Albuquerque, have largely lost the night sky experience. Others throughout the Southwest face a serious threat. Satellite images show the increase in light pollution over the last 40 years; in another 20, the effect could be disastrous. **WE HAVE** long recognized the importance of sites like the sun dagger and the star ceilings. By preserving these places, we preserve a part of the people who made them. Where most people live we have already lost the pristine sky. It is imperative to keep at least a few places to be inspired. There is hope; we haven't completely lost this piece of who we are.

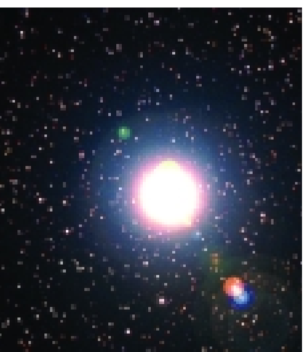
Angela M. Richman is a physical science technician with the National Park Service. Contact her at angie_richman@nps.gov.

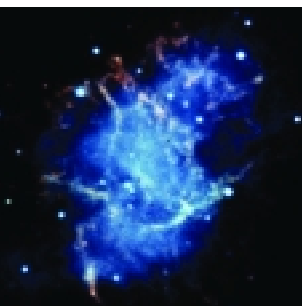
Right: **Hale-Bopp Comet over Chaco's Fajada Butte;** **Below:** **The ruins, the observatory, and shots through the telescope.**



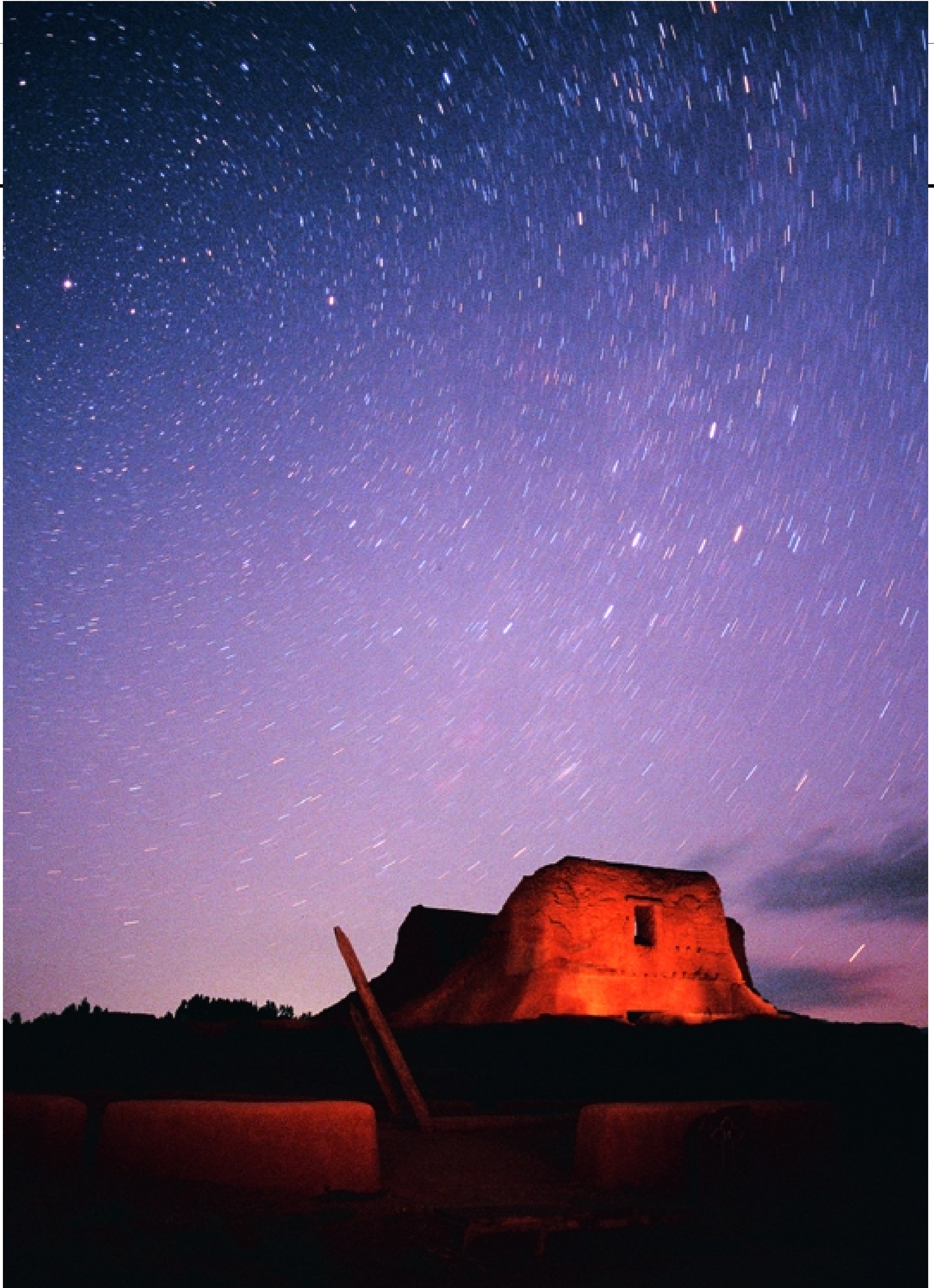








ABOVE: MARKO KECMAN; LEFT: CHACO CULTURE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK



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tain groups. If people had difficulty grasping the night sky as a cultural entity, proponents were ready to support the idea with a well-established precedent.

When the alliance released its first list of New Mexico's most endangered places in 1999, the night sky was on it. The novel idea caught on quickly with the press and an informal coalition began to take shape. Astronomers and environmentalists applauded, while wilderness advocates, tribes, the National Parks Conservation Association, and even some developers got behind the concept. Op-ed letters in the newspapers added to what became a growing awareness.

Night sky proponents soon turned their focus to the legislature. On the surface it seemed a stretch in a region where land use issues are delicate and divisive. The myriad voices made a persuasive argument: Less than 10 percent of the population, nationwide, could see the Milky Way. Two-thirds of our national parks could no longer offer the experience. New Mexico was losing one of its most unique features, the ability to look into the same sky the ancients saw thousands of years ago, with the sense of a spiritual link between our world and theirs.

New Mexico State Representative Pauline Gubbells introduced a bill in early 1999. Sovick worked with her on the draft and testified at committee hearings using Chaco as the example. Even with opposition from the outdoor advertising industry and various land rights organizations, the bill passed. Then-Governor Gary Johnson, persuaded by the benefit that such a law could yield at a low cost and virtually no regulatory burden, signed it into law in April 1999.

Taking Back the Night

The law requires outdoor lighting to be shielded and directed downward (rather than upward or laterally, which is not only polluting but wasteful). Mercury vapor lights, one of the greatest sources of light pollution, can no longer be sold in the State. Though inexpensive to buy and install, the lights are costly to operate and 50 percent of the illumination goes skyward at a wasted angle. The law says that as they wear out they are to be replaced by non-polluting alternatives.

Cities and towns across the State whose street lights are among the primary sources of glare will be required to make changes. Local communities can adopt stricter ordinances if they see fit.

As always, compromises had to be made. Ranches, farms, and the outdoor advertising industry are exempted. There is also no enforcing entity, so the job of educating the public is still largely done by night sky advocates. It is a start, however—a foundation for future action in New Mexico and beyond. The coastal Long Island town of East Hampton, New York, recently adopted a night sky ordinance based on cultural values, and Connecticut has enacted a law as well.

"I HAVE ALWAYS THOUGHT IT IMPORTANT TO CONTINUALLY PRESS TO EXPAND THE IMAGINATION OF PRESERVATION PROFESSIONALS," ROGERS SAYS.

For its part, the National Park Service continues to benefit from its night sky education effort and the partnerships it has fostered, an experience that serves as a blueprint for others. Meanwhile, its own night sky work continues to gain momentum.

Park interpretive programs addressing the night sky continue to expand and many parks, including Yellowstone, are beginning to retrofit outdoor lights. Recently, the National Park Foundation has also become active. Through the foundation, Musco Lighting, an Iowa firm that specializes in illuminating sports venues, is retrofitting the outdoor lights at Canyon de Chelly. The National Park Service's Denver Service Center is also paying special attention to lighting in facility design.

Quantifying light pollution in parks—and progress to curtail it—is essential. In 2000, the National Park Service Night Sky Team was established. Led by Chad Moore and Dan Duriscoe, the group is developing a measurement system. The team also offers assistance in the form of public outreach and evaluation of existing lighting.

While governor of New Mexico, Johnson declared August 12 "Dark Sky Appreciation Night." Recalling the nightscape seen by the mammoth hunters of the Clovis age and Vasquez de Coronado on his explorations, he urged the public to "turn out the lights, go outside, and enjoy the blessings of an unspoiled night sky."

Left: New Mexico's Pecos National Historical Park.

For more information, contact Chad Moore at chad_moore@nps.gov. Visit the New Mexico Heritage Preservation Alliance at www.nmheritage.org, Chaco Culture National Historical Park at www.nps.gov/chcu/nsindex.htm, and the International Dark Sky Association at www.darksky.org.

MODERNS FOR THE

MASSES

THE SUBURBAN IDYLL OF EICHLER HOMES

OVER THE GOLDEN GATE, south on Highway 101 down the San Francisco Peninsula, lies the legacy of the postwar boom: chockablock subdivisions, cheek-by-jowl, around the bowl of the bay. Yet, if you look close enough, another legacy lives on in coveys from San Jose to Palo Alto, north to Marin County, and east over the Oakland hills—the space age progeny of Eichler Homes.

They were not so much houses as "machines in the garden"—descendants of Frank Lloyd Wright and Germany's Bauhaus—with command pod kitchens, wingspread roof lines ready for takeoff, and windows to the sky.

The Eichlers touched down in California circa 1950, seat of the car culture ramping up in burgeoning suburbs across the country. The automobile was the star of the American dreamscape, a rocketship on the road with torqueflite transmission, taillights like afterburners, and windshields in widescreen. VJ Day meant the future was here, and everything from hair dryers to hanging lamps went along for the ride.

Effused *Architectural Forum,* the Eichlers "hit the public like a new car model, with all the drawing power of new design and the latest engineering." A two-tone Chevy with rocket fins was right at home with the Jetsonesque facade, nestled under the wing of a cantilevered carport.

Of course there was more than that going on under the hood.

The Eichlers were unmistakable in their modernity, their single stories hugging the ground, facades fairly opaque from the street, with flat or low-pitched roofs, some with steep, jocular gables. "Stark" some said, yet the simple, Asian-flavored fronts were a perfect foil for landscaping.

A. QUINCY JONES ARCHITECTURE ARCHIVES

Between 1949 and 1974, Joseph Eichler, a former executive with Nye and Nisson—a foods distributor run by his in-laws—erected 11,000 homes, most in the Bay Area. Defying conventional wisdom, the maverick builder sought to bring modernism to the masses, tapping a niche of buyers with champagne taste and a beer budget—"people with upper class taste and lower middle class incomes," says his son Ned in *Eichler: Modernism Rebuilds the American Dream*, a new book by architect Paul Adamson, Marty Arbunich, and Ernie Braun, the architectural photographer who originally shot the homes.

Eichler sold to anyone who wanted his product, period. In the days when racial covenants were common, he resigned from the National Association of Home Builders in protest of discrimination policies.

"My father never held a hammer, a saw, or a wrench in his hand. Still, he became a master builder," adds Ned. He had no design training, either. Many say his genius was in finding talent. Robert Anshen, a founding partner of Eichler Homes and its first architect, picked up the builder's challenge on a dare.

Eichler recruited a stable of progressive, empathic artists to design his projects, says Adamson. Anshen and partner Stephen Allen, notables in their own right, were soon joined by the firm of A. Quincy Jones and Frederick Emmons, who went on to win an achievement award from the American Institute of Architects. Claude Oakland, another architectural heavyweight, was another long-time contributor.

Prefiguring management ideas of coming decades, Eichler cultivated a team approach between the architectural firms, mixing up a cocktail of high modern and California casual, taste-enhanced with top flight landscape designers like Thomas Church. "Delighting the customer" was no mere catch phrase; the architects went door to door after owners moved in, getting feedback to nurture the next set of designs.

Eichler and his architects devised a nimble construction process, mostly from prefab parts, that gave buyers a formidable bang for the buck. It was big living in a small package—seemingly much larger than the 1,000 square feet of the first homes—thanks to a near-constant nudge of the design envelope.

And today, amid efforts to reshape the suburbs, the sleek and sexy "Thunderbird of developer housing" is getting a fresh eye from a new breed of owner—in part the customer catered to by Ikea, Crate & Barrel, Design within Reach, and other purveyors of good design for the masses. Says former Eichler resident Ron Crider, "The modernist aesthetic raised consciousness in this country about design at its best. We see a resurgence of this today as design again has become the center of all things new. The 'less is more' concept truly is beneficial to us all as we grapple with economic and environmental issues." Indeed, the Eichler has new relevance as a swath of structures becomes potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, from an era that's a challenge in terms of what to preserve [see stories on pages 4 and 10].

Unfortunately, not all is blue skies around the bay. "The blessing and the curse of Eichlers is that many happen to sit in the heart of Silicon Valley, where tastes among the newly rich often run to freshly built Tuscan villas and medieval chateaus," writes Patricia Leigh Brown in the *New York Times*. "The Eichlers are particularly vulnerable to the teardown syndrome."

Eichlers have always lived in a world of larger forces.

LEFT: W. P. WOODCOCK, RM SCHINDLER COLLECTION, UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM, UC SANTA BARBARA; RIGHT: JULIUS SCHULMAN

Gamble in Modern

At war's end, lured by Federally insured mortgages, ex-GIs, defense workers, and young marrieds streamed out of the cities in search of a slice of life in the embryonic outskirts. To meet the demand, the government estimated that over a million houses were needed every year for a decade.

Above: **Eichler's savvy marketing targeted those who dreamed of a custom but couldn't afford the ticket: educated, with taste and a modernist bent. "They were somewhat adventurous and often creative," says Adamson—artists and professionals commuting to San Francisco from Marin; doctors, architects, and advertising people; Stanford researchers and aerospace engineers from San Jose. "A sort of pipe-smoking, sports-car-driving, modern-art-buying hipster" was a popular ad-agency stereotype, Adamson says.**

contemporary influences Rudolph Schindler and Richard Neutra

"THE PRIMARY MATERIAL OF UTOPIA was sheet glass"—says Robert Hughes in *Shock of the New*—yet this Viennese pair brought the language of light to California a decade before their Bauhaus brethren fled Hitler to re-shape America through architecture. Being modern meant a moral stance, and the two friends, ex-employees of Frank Lloyd Wright, linked up with like minds in 1920s Los Angeles. | NEUTRA'S commission for naturopath Dr. Philip Lovell—a *Los Angeles Times* columnist who advocated bodybuilding and vegetarianism—was "like a beacon of a brave new world," says Thomas Hines in *Richard Neutra and the Search for Modern Architecture*. Outdoor sleeping porches, private decks for nude sunbathing, and a commodious pool promoted communion with nature. In composition, the steel, glass, and concrete villa tumbles down a hillside (near left), a nod to the twining shapes and volumes of Cubism and de Stijl. | CULTIVATING NATURAL vistas enhanced health, Neutra believed, and small houses profited most from the endeavor. In the quest for the low-cost, replicable prefab, he relied on "simpler, lighter, more modern, more skeletal, more industrial means" than his peers, says Hines. | SCHINDLER COURTED an often bohemian clientele with a sculptural style typified by his own communal abode and Pueblo Ribera Courts (far left) from the 1920s. "He combined the massive with the delicate," says Adamson. "So often his houses were part cave, part tent." Such idiosyncrasies could keep him out of the spotlight. "That frequently happened to the modernists," Adamson adds. "If they were too individually expressive, they fell out of favor with the tastemakers." Neutra, by contrast, was a go-getter with a smart sense of sell.

Above: **Ernie Braun's impossibly idyllic images were a focal point of the market push, which also deployed a sharp sales team. Catherine Munson started out "in a fluff position" as a $3-an-hour part-time hostess, she says in the *Eichler Network*. "Hostesses were to be some sweet little housewives who told the potential buyers as they walked through how groovy it was to live in an Eichler home. We were supposed to look pretty and decorative, demonstrate the swivel table, and serve chocolate milk and graham crackers to the kids." Munson, with a dual masters in microbiology and microchemistry, was soon sitting pretty as the first female "salesman."**

It was a bonanza for builders. In Lakewood, California, a newly minted community, house starts hit a 100-a-day clip.

Still, it was uncommon to find tract developers consorting with architects. The ubiquitous "rancher" dominated the market. Eichler sought to distinguish his product.

It's not clear what led him to modern. It may have been Frank Lloyd Wright, says Adamson. In the early 1940s, at loose ends over his work life, Eichler happened to be renting one of Wright's Usonian homes, the Bazett House, in Hillsborough, California. The Usonians were a pared down version of Wright's fare for well heeled clients, an attempt to address the urgent problem of mass housing. Yet the Usonian houses were too custom and too expensive to replicate on a large scale.

Eichler's goal, in his initial tracts after the war, was a house that could be built efficiently, yet flex to afford design permutations, avoiding the cookie-cutter look when lined up along a street. He soon discovered that hiring architects was the key.

Robert Anshen took several pages from the Wright catechism—natural wood interiors, heated slab-on-grade floors, large expanses of glass, and a captivating sense of space. All were to become hallmarks of the Eichler home.

The first offerings by Anshen and Allen sold out in two weeks: 1,044 square feet of high design for $9,500, including appliances.

But this was more than a house. It was a blueprint for the American dream.

Better Living Through Architecture

Many of California's young architects mixed a penchant for the modern with American can-do optimism, stirring in a belief in architecture as a path to a better life. Modernism meshed with the emerging California culture—unpretentious socially, embracing the outdoors—with a growing economy based on aerospace and electronics.

Eichler and his architects believed that good houses did not stand alone;

they had to add up to a vibrant, livable community with places to play, shop, worship, and send the kids to school—a high-density, shared landscape with a sense of itself and its occupants.

A. Quincy Jones saw his work with Eichler as a laboratory for ideas. Yet the architectural mantra stayed the same over the years: attention to the user, orientation to light, sensitivity to surroundings, interplay between house and garden, and a drive for labor-saving methods. Add to that simplicity of design and expressive use of materials, and you get the picture.

Eichlers were unmistakable in their modernity, their single stories hugging the ground, facades fairly opaque from the street, with flat or low-pitched roofs, some with steep, jocular gables. "Stark" some said, yet the simple, Asian-flavored fronts were a perfect foil for landscaping. Vertical tongue-in-groove redwood was a featured cladding before Korean War shortages set in; later it was a mix of custom plywood, concrete block, and other proletarian materials favored by the California modernists.

The idea was to capture the outdoors and build a house around it, extending the living area out through great sweeps of glass all the way to the fence at the rear of the property. The backyard—usually "left to the weeds and the buyer's imagination" in the words of one publication of the day—completed the tableau, in the models sculpted by the likes of Thomas Church, a modernist who favored plants indigenous to the region, then a radical idea. Eichler charged a premium for this "lot line-to-lot line experience," but buyers went for it, and other builders followed suit.

The architects sought to shape the view from every aspect (and shield for privacy), even in densely populated areas. In Marin County, gables frame the chiseled hills that define the nature of the place.

In some models, you walk in the front door and step back outside, via an open-air court that daringly dissolves indoors and out, animated by cross views. At night, aquarium-like, it emits a languid light under twinkling stars; during the day, it's open to fleecy clouds and sky. Occasionally trees poke out to punctuate roof lines.

Inside, a host of unorthodox features vamp on the vibe. "In keeping with the modernist spirit," says Adamson, "outdoor panels often overlapped interior spaces at the glass walls," further blurring the out-in boundary. Easy-clean waxed-cork tile, resilient in a rich honey hue, graces the floors of the first models. In the narrow galley kitchens, masonite sliders sub for swinging cabinet doors, an intrusion and a hazard. Finger-sized pulls, bored into the masonite, obviate the need for hardware.

In most homes, a bank of cabinets seems to float over the countertop, separating kitchen from family room with a swish of style. Often the spaces modulate with a minimal move like a subtle shift in floor material. The open-plan kitchen, a command post where "mom could keep an eye on the kids," in the parlance of the day, proved immensely popular.

"The rooms were less thoroughly defined than in a traditional house," says Adamson. "One is not relegated to dining in a room set aside for dining, it's part of the general living space. The sliding glass meant you could move very easily from outdoors to in."

There was a sense of freedom, a sense of calm, a sense of being in touch with nature. There was nothing like an Eichler.

"There is an almost Zen-like quality to an Eichler home," says Adamson. "Where the Western eye is predisposed to interpreting empty space as a void or an absence of things, in Japan empty space is viewed as the presence of possibilities."

Aware that the hard-edge geometrics might seem unyielding to a customer's decorating touch, Eichler hired Matt Kahn, a design professor at Stanford, to bring the models

"IF YOU WERE SCOUTING for images of a new, relaxed, and open kind of domestic life, southern California was a natural," says Thomas Hines of the postwar years in *Blueprints for Modern Living.* Yet the Los Angeles-based *Arts+Architecture* magazine did more than proffer pictures of a sunny future—it built places to live it in. | TO EDITOR JOHN ENTENZA, prefabs were the answer to the housing crisis. Between 1945 and 1966, thanks to his sponsorship, California's top architectural talent crafted steel, glass, concrete, and wood into some of the most innovative and influential houses ever constructed (like Case Study House #18, by Rodney Walker, below). | THEY MIXED THE MACHINE AESTHETIC with the Johnny-come-marching-home can-do of an army that built bridges with oil drums. Stir in a dash of Southwest pueblo, add a dab of the early California modernists, and you're cooking with gas. Stocked with high-style furnishings donated by leading manufacturers, the homes became stage sets for the pages of the magazine. People lined up to see them. | YET FOR ALL THE PREFAB PRETENSE, the houses couldn't be mass produced at a low cost. They were still stand-alone customs, the initial models lacking a model neighborhood. At Levittown on the East Coast, by contrast, people bought a lifestyle, not just the four walls around them. | ENTENZA AND HIS ARCHITECTS, who targeted the elite, saw themselves united in a sternly rational view of the future. Yet "the one penchant they all possessed, one which they failed to see and would vigorously have denied, was the quality of being profoundly romantic," says Hines. "As modernist 'true believers' girded by a sense of millenialist mission, they subscribed to the cult of the 'romantic engineer' as the fixer, the doctor of civilization's ills."

RODNEY WALKER

It was luxury without ornament, simplicity without austerity. Next to the dowdy homes glutting the market at the time, the Eichlers were light, fresh, and modern—patio living served sunny-side up, California-style.

A. QUINCY JONES ARCHITECTURE ARCHIVES

Below and right: Braun's photos "show stylish, casual furniture and blissed-out models seemingly caught unaware in the act of being modern," writes Susan Kuchinskas in the *San Francisco Examiner*. Yet the very modernity of the product sometimes made for a hard sell. Many people "simply didn't understand the houses," says salesperson Munson. Plus, the competition had a pack of barbs aimed at the Eichler, like its supposed flammability. "We had an explanation for every objection," Munson says. She told buyers, "Imagine the house cut into two diagonal parts. On the one side, the master bedroom, the study, the living room, the dining room—the adult side of the house. On the other side, the kitchen, the family room, the three children's bedrooms. 'Isn't that interesting,' they would say."

to life. Kahn, also a painter, dramatized the flexibility by turning the houses into a work of theater. Along with his wife Lyda, a weaver, he pushed the palette with an array of animated accents: feather duster bouquets, lab flasks filled with colored water, cheeses and salamis slung from the kitchen ceiling. Whimsical still lifes, tribal art, and antiques coexisted with contempo classics by George Nelson and Charles Eames. The two made much of the artwork themselves, often paired with pieces from the Stanford Art Museum.

In a tour de force of skill, a promotional exhibit called "Art About the House," the duo placed the work in a play of the unexpected—in the fireplace, on the backyard fence—provoking an unconventional take on house and garden. Customers took notice, and so did *Life* magazine.

The eclectic aesthetic, says Adamson, married America's much-publicized ascendance in modern art with the public's exposure to foreign influences wrought by the war.

Kahn, artistic consultant for a decade, developed signature colors—Cabot stains in earthy hues like brown and green for the outside and Zolatone for the kitchen. A thick, plasticized industrial coating suitable for boat hulls, Zolatone had a spatter pattern that could hide stains. Kahn got the manufacturer to retool the spatters to a smaller, residential scale. The result was a variegated surface of multicolored flecks on a contrasting background.

Kahn's own house (an Eichler, naturally) still models the look: The kitchen, a riot of color with Zolatone cabinetry, takes a sharp left from the living room's neutrals, where the upbeat-hued cushions and '60s mod-striped lamp from Italy carry the tonal scheme.

You don't have to go modern to be modern, Kahn says, in response to today's trend of turning Eichlers into retro sets replete with reel-to-reel tape decks, Danish teak ice buckets, and orange globe barbecues.

It was luxury without ornament, simplicity without austerity. Next to the dowdy homes glutting the market at the time, the Eichlers were light, fresh, and modern—patio living served sunny-side up, California-style. Success was swift.

Still, the avant-garde Eichlers weren't everybody's taste. The very features that the faithful thought splendid, says Adamson, put off other potential buyers. Some "found the innovative engineering intimidating, the indoor-outdoor relationship uncomfortable, the open plan lacking in privacy, and the exposed construction insubstantial." Says Kahn, "For most people, these houses were severe."

Yet they were a darling of the shelter magazines, an icon of the trend-setting West Coast lifestyle. Says Thomas Hines in *Blueprints for Modern Living*: "Month after month, readers throughout the country were whisked from Silverlake or Brentwood to Beverly Hills, Pasadena, and Hollywood to look at California houses. The *Readers Guide* lists four times as many references to California domestic architecture as to that of any other state from 1945 to 1947."

California was the place to be.

Open to Innovation

When it came to erecting an Eichler house, the soul of the machine was a skeleton of hefty columns spaced five or six feet apart, skyscraper style, topped with wide beams. At a time when most homes were "stick-built," with wood studs a foot-and-a-half apart, the post-and-beam system was perhaps the key innovation integral to the vocabulary of sweeping space, striking proportions, and floor-to-ceiling glass.

The system was speedy and malleable, needing fewer structural elements than conventional construction. Cantilevered eaves—an inexpensive by-product—became a signature in the Eichlers, stretched six feet over south-facing windows.

Because the roof rests entirely on the post-and-beam frame, Adamson says, "none of the walls are load bearing, and both inside and outside partitions can be exceptionally lightweight. In fact, it was common to refer to the exterior cladding as a lightweight 'skin' fastened to the structural skeleton."

Nonetheless, the houses were tricky to assemble; there was little room for error and nothing to waste. Although most builders staged tasks sequentially—the subdivision a series of sites like a stationary assembly line—Eichler's way was rigorous, says Adamson. "By dividing the construction into twelve separate operations, each with its own crew, Eichler was able to pare down the work so that no single task took more than a day to complete . . . At the end of any workday, he could drive through a subdivision and evaluate its progress. Wherever he spotted an incomplete task, he knew there was a problem." Eichler leveraged large scale purchases with suppliers, getting a better product and price.

contemporaneous contemporaries **Arapahoe Acres, Colorado**

ARAPAHOE ACRES, the first postwar subdivision on the National Register of Historic Places, weds the hard edge of the industrial aesthetic with the cozier touch of Frank Lloyd Wright. Each of the 124 homes, built between 1949 and 1957 just outside Denver, is an essay in expressive materials—stone, brick, concrete block, wood, glass—unified by an austere palette of earth tones. Their horizontal shapes, in a dance of angles counterpoised with the broad streets, sit in a landscape of sweeping, park-like views. | IN 1950, the initial units sold even before the press trumpeted the opening of the model, dressed up with furnishings by Knoll and Herman Miller. *Life* featured the "fine, mass-produced houses" in an article called "Best Houses Under $15,000." | EUGENE STERNBERG, who designed the first offerings, left after a rift with builder Edward Hawkins over the goal of low-cost housing. Hawkins, who valued style over economy, took over as architect, having studied Wright's handiwork up close while a contractor in Chicago. He tackled the job with a passion, down to personally supervising the mixing of the exterior colors. Original residents recall his advice (still followed today): "When in doubt, use putty." | AS WITH MANY modern houses, privacy was the byword. Much of Arapahoe Acres hides behind screened forecourts, narrow entry halls, and plantings designed to make homes recede into their sites. Inside, the living, dining, and kitchen areas flow in one dramatic sweep, with bedrooms and bathrooms clustered for quiet. Outside, hidden lights sculpt the nighttime facades.

Initially the post-and-beam system challenged the foreman and his crews. "In construction, something unconventional—regardless of the fact that it may intrinsically cost less, will cost more—because builders are unfamiliar with it," says Adamson. Once the crews got past the learning curve, the regimen ran well.

Generally, Eichler's architects tuned their innovations to the construction industry's abilities, at a time when America's war machine had seduced many with the dream of the factory-built house. Not that the industry did not present its own obstacles. In the early 1950s, building codes lagged behind technical innovations—often requiring heavier construction than necessary—and Eichler had to go to Washington to lobby the FHA, whose mortgage evaluators were scoring modern homes lower because they were a perceived poor investment, a passing fad.

"Eichler was a relentless go-getter who knew what he wanted, how to get to it, and how to get around the roadblocks and even his own shortcomings," says Marty Arbunich, Adamson's co-author. "He refused to be swayed by associates or competitors who saw greater profits in design shortcuts and inferior materials."

Tracts for the Future?

"Seen in a group—and Upper Lucas Valley [in Marin County] is one of the best-preserved Eichler groupings anywhere—the simplicity and near uniformity of the homes is hypnotic," writes Dave Weinstein in the *San Francisco Chronicle*. "A horsewoman heads for the trails that start where the streets end. Oak- and chaparral-dotted hillsides, so typically California, so normal, make the rest of the neighborhood seem odder still. It's just the houses, the beautiful hills, and the sky." The place has its own community center, pool, stables, cable TV—and no utility lines.

While tracts in the New Urbanist mode invoke traditional imagery to sell the suburb of the future, the Eichlers, once dissed as relics, look to some like the future is here. Not all agree.

"Eichlers legitimized the worst aspects of suburban sprawl and the complete destruction of the street as a public space," Daniel Solomon, a San Francisco architect and UC Berkeley professor, told the *Chronicle* after speaking at a forum on Eichlers sponsored by the university. With their near-blank facades, the homes turn their face from the street, says Solomon, and the subdivisions—some far from town centers, with "residents only" recreation facilities—are a formula for insular living.

"They're part of the abandonment of cities and older neighborhoods that we're only now starting to recover from," he said. "It only makes sense to look at Eichlers in that context."

Says Adamson, "The Eichlers get pounced on as part of suburban sprawl, elegant though they may be. They may differ from the New Urbanist ideal, but still fit what the average buyer seems to want. A sense of privacy, where you turn your living room to the backyard, suits the way people feel about their home, and has since the '50s and '60s when the middle class, freed from apartment living, began to cultivate more private lives. The notion of everybody having a front porch with eyes on the street is not really the way people feel about life in the suburbs. We've transformed in our relationships, for better or worse, by virtue of the car and the way we live and work."

It only makes sense to use forms to suit that sensibility, he says, and to that degree Eichlers still fill the bill. "You can choose. You're not forced to the front to confront your neighbors. You can choose to meet them at the community center or at the park. Otherwise your house is your place of repose after work."

Yet, given the chance to re-do the Eichler formula, he wouldn't. "Building single family units on quarter-acre lots is becoming irresponsible, because we're chewing up nature and farmland. It's better to densify." Adamson looks to Frank Lloyd Wright's idea of a four-home cluster, with each unit turned outward for privacy.

Which makes the remaining Eichlers rare birds indeed. Today, the houses go for half a million dollars and up, and untouched gems fetch top dollar. Meanwhile others masquerade as high-

Left: "How much more pleasant a room is if it has light coming in from both sides," Munson would tell potential buyers. Interior designer Matt Kahn brought his own voice to the promo packaging. He advised Eichler, "On Sundays, when people are coming through the model homes in large numbers, you should roast a turkey in the oven, you should smell food in the house." This was especially important, he says, "because one of the big criticisms was that [the open plan meant that] you couldn't isolate the kitchen odors from the rest of the house. You had to turn that to an advantage."

LEFT AND FAR LEFT: DIANE WRAY

end haciendas or pink stucco palaces, with Corinthian columns, Doric columns, picket fences, brick walks, multipane windows, Spanish tile, and lace curtains. In Atherton, California, a 3,000-square-foot Eichler—a rare custom house on an acre lot—sold for $6.5 million, almost a million over the asking price, and the buyers razed it. Some cave to the McMansion urge, tacking on another story—a dissonant note on the jazzy low-slung spreads.

Eichlers resist updating. The best road to renovation, architects say, is to stick close to the original. K.C. Marcinik, of Greenmeadow Architects in Palo Alto, strives for a "hyper-Eichler" effect, with modern wood cabinets and ceiling beams tricked out in potent hues like orange or mint green. In the bedrooms she deploys contrasty colors to foster a sense of spaciousness. You can't turn an Eichler into something it's not, she says.

A new legion of owners carries the gospel. In Upper Lucas Valley, homeowners stick to the original exterior tones. And the roofline is sacrosanct—no TV antennas, no second floors. An architectural committee reviews proposed renovations, backed by county enforcement. Muses resident Frank LaHorgue, a junior executive for Eichler in the 1960s, "Is it worth letting your neighbors as a group set standards for your property? Sales prices here in Lucas Valley run $100,000 to $150,000 more than the Marinwood Eichlers a half mile down the road."

A small group of committed preservationists, called "Historic Quest," is pursuing nomination of two Palo Alto neighborhoods for the National Register of Historic Places—Green Gables (1950) and Greenmeadow (1954-1955). For activists, raising awareness is a prime directive. The Eichler Network—a publishing operation with a tabloid and a formidable Web presence, run by Arbunich—takes the message to the masses on all things Eichler, from fixing roofs and siding to crafting architectural guidelines for neighborhoods.

Arbunich, acknowledging the guidelines' importance (places with them are the most intact), says that "subtle, long-term education, instilling pride of ownership, is the way to get to people. Hitting them over the head with 'stop doing that' doesn't work." Over the last decade, he says, "the attitude of homeowners has changed quite a bit with the exposure to what's going on in other neighborhoods. People are more actively opposing second stories, monster homes, and teardowns." Clearly, residents are engaged, evidenced by the crackling commentary on the Eichler Network's Web forum.

"The modern house, with its simplicity, efficient use of space, abundant privacy, and easy coexistence with natural surroundings is an antidote to the materialism and frantic pace of life today," says forum contributor LaHorgue. "When I see the ugly hodge-podge of structures that has arisen around beautiful Marin County, I am convinced that we Eichler owners should do all we can to keep our homes modern."

The Eichler home remains a place to hang your heart as well as your hat, just as it was for the builder and his architects. Says Ron Crider, "Living in an Eichler is more than just living in a house. It's living in an ideal and a piece of history."

Eichler: Modernism Rebuilds the American Dream examines the complete legacy of Joseph Eichler and Eichler Homes. For information, go to the Eichler Network on the Web at www.eichlernetwork.com. Co-author Paul Adamson, AIA, is currently with the San Francisco firm of Hornberger+Worstell, Inc. He lives in Kensington, California. Contact Adamson by e-mail at adamson@hwiarchitects.com. Co-author Marty Arbunich is director-publisher of the Eichler Network, a Bay Area company devoted exclusively to preserving the lifestyle surrounding Eichler homes. He lives in San Francisco. Contact Arbunich by e-mail at info@eichlernetwork.com. Ernie Braun's career in photography began six decades ago, and he served during World War II as a combat photographer. He lives in San Anselmo, California. View a portfolio of his images on the Eichler Network, www.eichlernetwork.com.

Above and left: "We showed how this was regional architecture designed for a benign climate, perfect for the Bay Area," says Munson. "And we put a huge emphasis on the 'no stairs,' and how the levelness of the house induced you to keep going outdoors." Today, Munson takes the message to a new generation, in her own realty firm specializing in Eichlers. "It's a home with a lot of emotion and a lot of passion," says daughter Shelly, an agent, who grew up in an Eichler. "They are really homes that wrap around you."

ARTI FACT

BEHOLD THE UNIVERSE

"LIKE BURIED TREASURES, the outposts of the universe have beckoned to the adventurous from immemorial times. Princes and potentates . . . have felt the lure of the uncharted seas of space." | **WITH HIS OPENING** in a 1928 issue of *Harper's Magazine,* astronomer George Ellery Hale hoped to convince Americans of the importance of exploring the universe. And just two years later, the edifice shown here depicted the heavens in their glory, arising on an artificial island along the Chicago lakefront. | **THE ADLER PLANETARIUM**—the first in the country and now a National Historic Landmark—sought to inspire through its form. Signs of the zodiac in bronze graced each corner. A dedication plaque in the lobby depicted the gods and goddesses of the planets. Twelve shallow pools, one for each month, led up to the entrance. Architect Ernest Grunsfeld, whose grandson John became a NASA astronaut, designed the place, mobbed by 20,000 people a week when its doors first opened. With one of the world's finest collections of astronomical artifacts, the Adler was a star of the 1933-34 Century of Progress Exposition. | **THE PLANETARIUM'S FIRST DIRECTOR,** Philip Fox, said at the time that "in the modern city, with its smoke and its night sky with artificial light, there is scant opportunity to see the greatest of natural wonders, the starry heavens. The planetarium is a splendidly successful achievement for the renewal of this knowledge among city dwellers." An observatory, completed in 1977, was recently equipped with filters to partly block the lights of Chicago. | **TODAY,** the planetarium continues to inspire with its scene of the sky at night. In the words of founder Max Adler, a former vice president with Sears, Roebuck and Company, "In our reflections, we dwell too little upon the concept that the world and all human endeavor within it are governed by established order and too infrequently upon the truth that under the heavens everything is inter-related, even as each of us to the other."