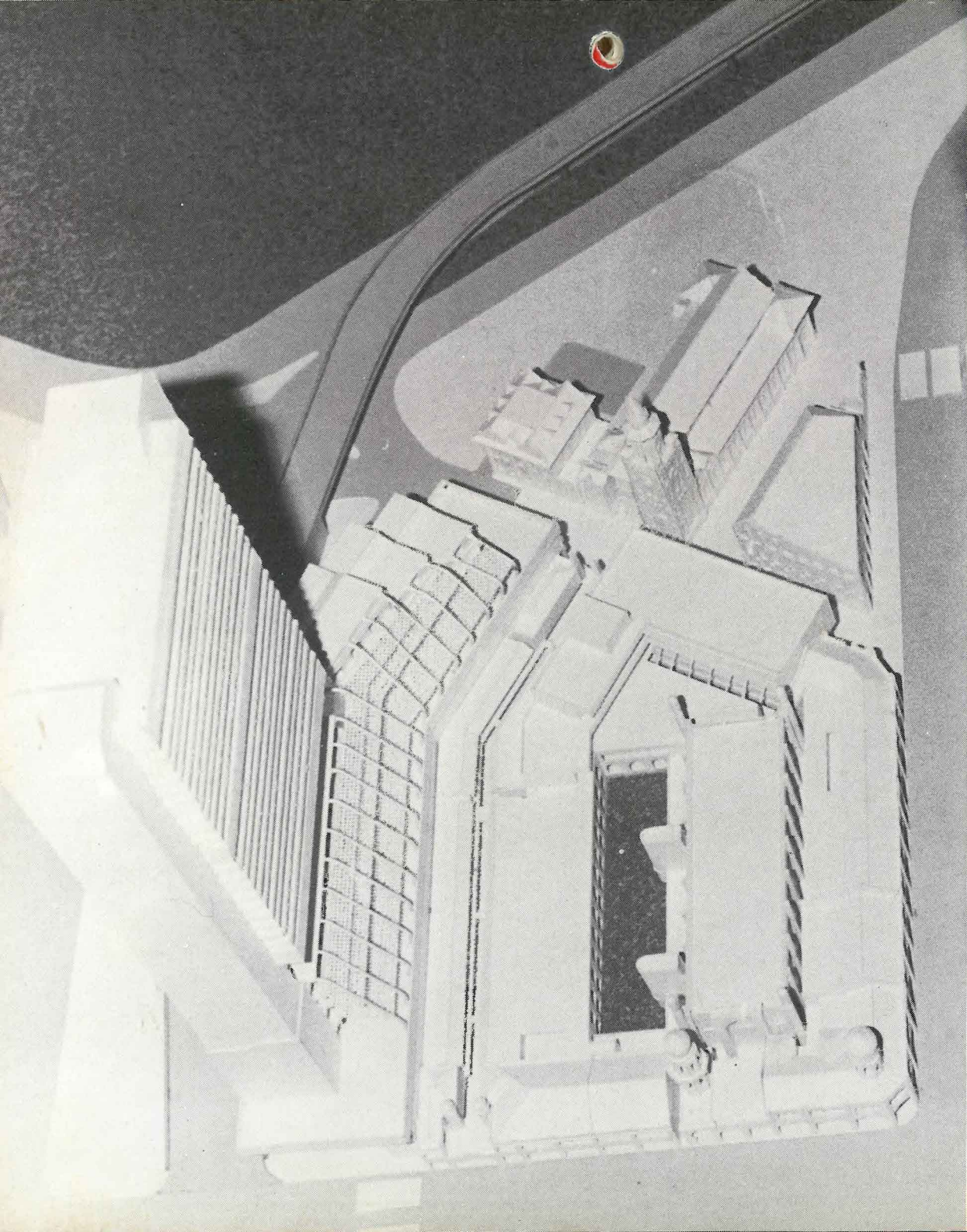




# QIP

newsletter

3-1978



edited for the natal provincial institute of architects by danie theron

**in this issue:**

- extracts from the Annual General Meeting held at the Caister Hotel, Durban, on October 30, 1978.
- an article on street furniture prepared by members of the Action Subcommittee of the Natal Provincial Institute.
- a report on the work of thesis students at the School of Architecture, University of Natal, Durban.

**annual general meeting**  
**16h00:30th october 78**

During the Annual General Meeting held at the Caister Hotel in Durban on October 30, 1978, the President of the Natal Provincial Institute of Architects reviewed the workings of the local committee and said:

"You have received the report of the committee and so it is unnecessary for me to amplify the workings of the local committee. You are also in receipt of regular circulars from the Secretary and the NPIA Newsletter has been issued twice this year with a third copy due during December.

Our sponsors have of necessity had to reduce the size of their subsidy and this is why there are only three issues this year but we must nonetheless express our grateful thanks to them for the considerable financial support they have given us in the past and hope that they can continue next year.

The Cape Provincial Institute's publication 'Architecture S.A.' has appeared on the scene and has rapidly grown to a journal of considerable quality. It is to be congratulated on undertaking a task which has daunted many in the long history of an Institute Journal. Despite minor shortcomings the lines of communication are open and members are kept well informed of Institute affairs.

Whether these communications are read is another matter.

No one can claim that the last few years have been easy for our profession which has been assailed by doubt and despondency within its ranks and quite positive assaults from outside.

As far as the doubts are concerned this seems to be an international malaise but I trust that we, in examining our position, will refrain from self-flagellation which seems to be so fashionable overseas and can only, when done in public, lead to lack of confidence in the Profession from those outside it. When, however, the whip is cracked from outside we must beware of being over sensitive to criticism and therefore over-reacting.

To my mind we have tended to jump too readily to the demands of the client bodies and the McKenzie

Commission in respect of the client/architect agreement and the revised scale of fees and I can assure you that the Natal Provincial Institute had adopted a strong line of opposition to the proposed fee scale and that this view is being put by your representatives on National Board.

Other bogeys which have to be faced are the National Building Regulations and Norms and the potential threat of the Project Managers.

Despite constant comment by the Institute and other bodies on the complexity, vagueness, sheer volume, conflict and downright absurdity of each section of the drafts, those in the drivers seat ignore all warnings and the great juggernaut charges relentlessly on until we will be confronted with the situation which exists in Britain — once a wise country — which relied on the minimum of regulations and the maximum of common sense and now enmeshed in the bureaucratic web of their new Building Regulations which in fact no one of moderate intelligence can understand and which inevitably are interpreted and administered by building inspectors of considerably less than moderate intelligence.

I must warn you that ours will be as bad if not worse and, in Pietermaritzburg having lived through a number of years of the Standard Building Regulations, particularly the lighting and ventilation section, which if applied, would turn such a house as 'Parkside' — in theory the premier residence of Natal — into an uninhabitable slum, then I can only look forward to the National Building Regulations shortly to be thrust upon us with fear and trepidation. It is extraordinary that these were born as the then Minister's contribution to the anti-inflation manifesto.

The same applies to the Norms Committee. I shall not dwell on this. Those of you who have been involved in hospital design will be more than aware of it and it will shortly apply to Universities and educational institutions of all sorts. I merely mention it as another head of the Hydra headed monster of Bureaucracy which is so alive and well and living in Pretoria.

By the time we will have complied

with all the requirements of the planning regulations, building regulations, and in particular circumstances, fire regulations, the Industries Act, Liquor Act and Sectional Titles Legislation, then the quality of an architect will be judged, not as his ability as an architect but on his skill as a juggler.

During the year the recognition of Schools of Architecture by the Royal Institute of British Architects was in jeopardy and it was due to the tactful and diplomatic approach of our President-in-chief that the crisis was resolved and the status quo maintained.

Apart from the Institute's concern in the standard of architectural education in the schools, the subject of ongoing education within the profession has been debated. It is unlikely that this will take the form, as it does in certain American states of proof of such continuing education being a requirement of annual registration. However, this Institute has all along maintained a programme of lectures, seminars and conferences on all subjects pertaining to the profession and will continue to do so. In this regard I would like to thank the University/Institute Liaison Committee for maintaining a full programme of such events.

In the new year it is hoped to repeat the highly successful series of lectures in Project Management arranged by the Transvaal Provincial Institute. By this I am referring to Project Management by architects and not by some new breed of managers hinted at so frequently by SAPOA. The Natal Provincial Institute is presently studying the implications of the course — mainly financial — and you will be receiving due notice.

The Practice Levy as you will have noticed has now become mandatory and how it is to be used is of some concern and forms a separate item on the agenda.

As regards Reservation of Work, it has been reported that the drafts are still with the Minister. As a result of late objection to certain minor legal phraseology by the Council for Engineers, certain redrafting has gone to the Council for Architects and their legal advisors.

Although reported on in the committee report, I would like to mention the highly successful exhibition seen by some 4 to 5 thousand visitors. Entitled 'Architecture and Our City' it was held in conjunction with the Durban Art Gallery and was the result of a tremendous amount of work by the traditional 'willing few'.

As a National Body we were 50 years old last year, but we seem to have overlooked our origins a little. It is hoped that Danie Theron, who has volunteered for the task, will carry on where Colonel Hirst left off many years ago in maintaining a history of the Natal Provincial Institute which as the Witness says, has contributed considerably to the quality of building in Natal.

Let us remember the objectives of that small body of men 76 years ago and not be too sidetracked by internal doubt and external attack into losing sight of our main goal which is the quality of our buildings and our environment."

The main issue at stake remained, however, the matter of corporate and independent advertising in the profession, and Danie Theron, in putting forward a case for advertising, said:

"In February of this year I spoke in favour of advertising and the profession and although it raised the hackles of a few colleagues, the meeting at the time voted overwhelmingly in favour of exploring further the ideas of advertising. To refresh your memory, allow me to repeat the recommendations made at that meeting:

'The image of the profession can only improve if the Institute can change its image from that of a weak and ineffectual body to that of an active and effective one: if it can negotiate the future of the profession in a confident way. Until it is held in high regard and esteem by its members, certainly no one else will do so.

Corporate advertising and the promotion of the profession's image should be commenced with immediately, a plan of action should be prepared and it should be budgeted for this year.

The possibility of allowing members to advertise individually

should be investigated immediately, preferably in the form of a trial period; because, even if work reservation comes into effect, architects will still be up against unfair competition from unqualified persons.

The appointment of a highly skilled Public Relations Officer/Advertising Manager to market the image and services of the profession on a national scale (film, television, radio, national press, conferences, general liaison) and to advise provincial committees on local marketing and advertising campaigns.

The budgeting by each local Provincial Committee for a planned advertising campaign (television and radio interview, local press, liaison work, yellow pages) integrated with the national campaign. Each Provincial Institute to maintain a small permanent exhibition space easily accessible to the public for exhibitions.

The redesign of the architects notice boards by a commissioned graphic designer to improve its design, appearance and legibility.'

The recommendations of the sub-committee on independent advertising were not approved by the Provincial Committee and would be referred back to a Special General Meeting to be held during the latter half of the year. The recommendations not approved read as follows:

'A space would also be made available to practising architects for private exhibitions for a small fee on a strict roster basis.

That Natal be allowed for a trial period, to allow its members to advertise in the local press. These advertisements would appear in a specified format under the seal of the Institute.'

I think that the idea of continuing this debate is a very good one because it challenges some of the very basic beliefs on which our profession operates.

Corporate advertising: I do not think that this aspect would encounter much disagreement. I think that we

all agree that it is up to us to improve our image if we intend continuing as architects and this effect can be pursued at two levels:

1. The elected bodies of the Institute:

Apart from forwarding the above recommendations to National Board, the local Committee has recognised the need to do something themselves about it, and has already set in motion machinery to obtain the services of a professional to promote the image of Natal architects. As you are probably well aware, the image of the architectural profession in Durban is generally speaking very high, mainly through its outspoken concern about environmental issues, its many publications and exhibitions. This was publicly acknowledged by Justice Didcot when he opened the exhibition 'Architecture and our City' in August this year, when he referred to ours as the one outstanding example of a profession which transcends, in its concerns and activities, the limits of narrow professional gain. The mere fact that most candidates for City Council this year included in their election platforms environmental issues as priority concerns must be, in no small way, contributed to the continued efforts of the Natal Institute.

2. Individual members:

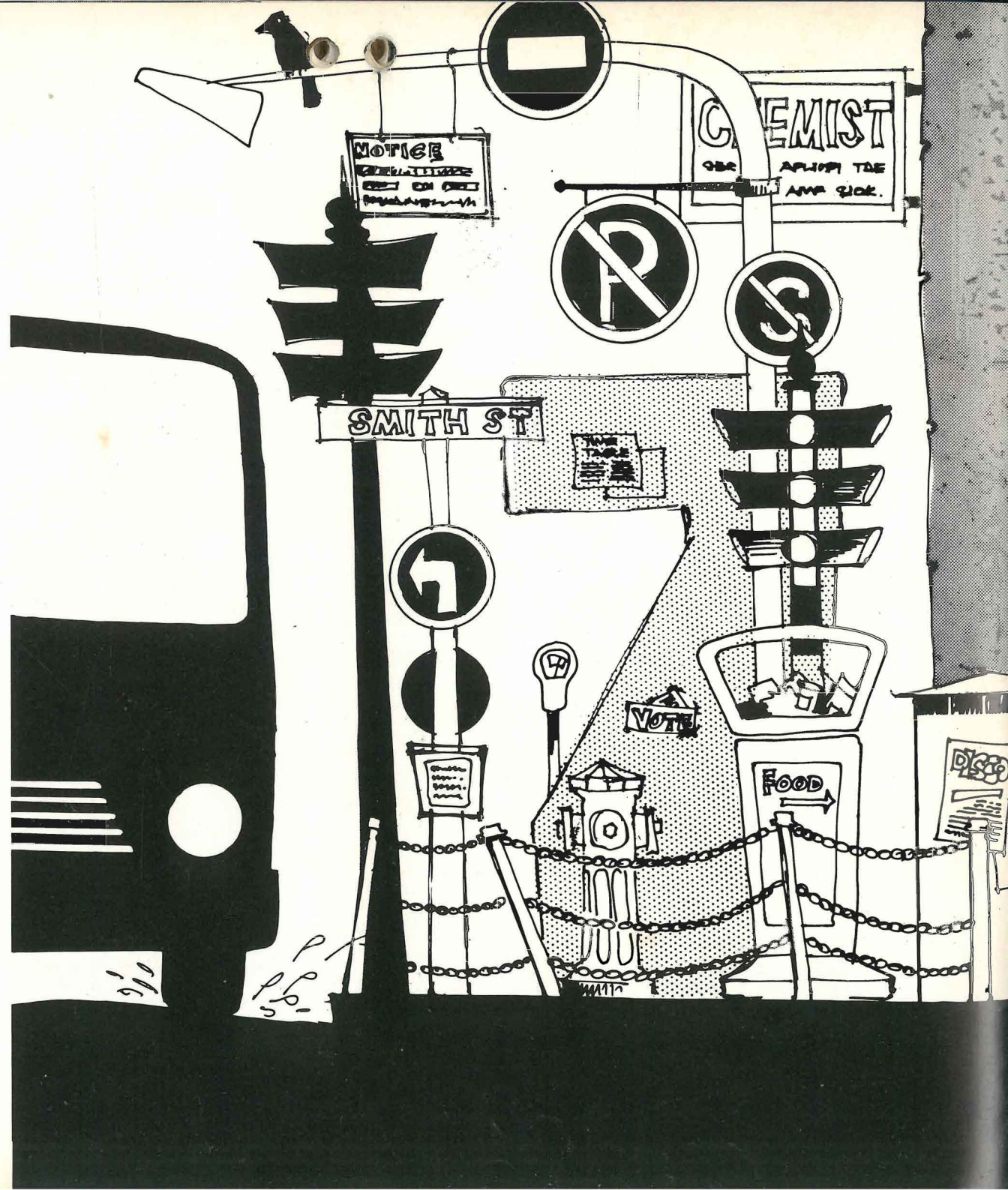
It has always been the Institute's declared attitude to encourage and even assist in playing a full role in community and political affairs, thus enlarging the influence of architects. In this respect I think Natal is fortunate — not only have we a large number of architects actively working on Institute and Institute related matters, but many of them also playing roles in local communities. In this respect I would especially like to congratulate Don Smith and Barry Clark on their election to City Council — they have both been closely related to our Institute.

upon. However, in the last 100 years or so, it has continuously developed and adopted itself to changing circumstances and it will have to continue to change and to adapt if it is to survive and I am certain that we will have to look closely at the value and necessity of independent advertising. Other professions, like the legal profession has already done so. I have no doubt or uncertainty about the principle of advertising; only about the appropriate form; about the how and the when. No matter how successful corporate advertising may be, there would still be the need for the individual architect to enter the market place in a more direct way than he is at present allowed to do, especially if the principle of no minimum fees is applied in certain sectors of work, as is at present contemplated by the South African Council for Architects.

The arguments against independent advertising are familiar, and you will hear them again today, but the fact of the matter is that nobody really will know how successful or unsuccessful such a step would be as no precedent for this exists at the moment in any of the professions. It would therefore be my feeling that independent advertising should be instituted for a trial period amongst the architects of Natal only, under certain conditions and monitored by the Institute in order to gauge its success or otherwise, and I think it would be appropriate if this meeting could indicate its attitude on this issue to the Provincial Committee."

After a lively debate the meeting recommended, with overwhelming vote to the Provincial Committee that the matter of individual advertising within the profession be further explored.

**Don't be ridiculous Gladys!! If we get separated — just keep the sun over your left shoulder and I'll meet you on the other side for lunch!!**



Independent Advertising: This is the really difficult aspect of advertising. Our profession has evolved from the concept of a gentlemen profession, in which all forms of advertising and publicity has been looked down



# a planetary disease?

Is man a planetary disease? This is the central theme of a talk given by Ian McHarg in July 1970. Mr. McHarg imagined a man far out in space seeing the Earth as a small green rotating orb and imagining it as a kind of celestial fruit, he looks at the blemishes — black, brown and grey — the extending tentacles which are the cities and works of man, and thinks that man could perhaps be better described as an epidemic. McHarg goes on to say: "... If you were a planetary doctor, you would see one creature multiplying at a great rate, destroying the environment on which he depends and therefore threatening his own survival. If you said 'Look Jack, what the hell do you think you are doing?' he would say 'Don't you know me? I am man ...' and he would open the flap of his head to show his brain and say, 'This is my justification.' The same planetary doctor would then conclude that the brain is not the apex of biological evolution but a spinal tumour."

Hard words from Ian McHarg, but the fact remains that if you covet your neighbours wife, the church, the priest, society will rap you across the knuckles, but should you want to kill every whale, fell forests of trees, poison the oceans, pollute and destroy the city and countryside with freeways, signs, billboards, hydrants, effluent and junk, you are free to do so; if not with societies blessing — then certainly with its benign, indifferent consent!

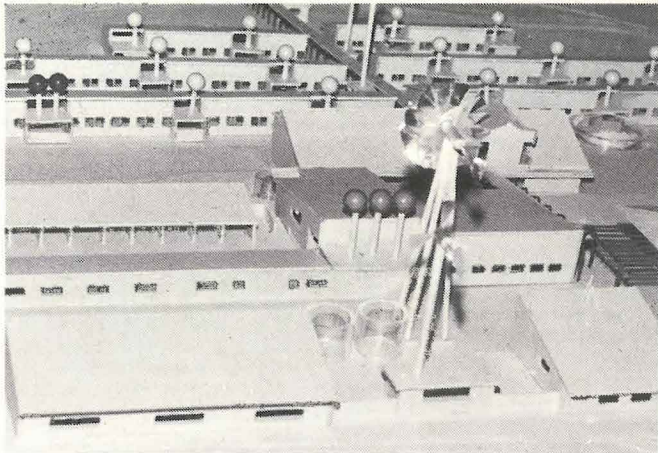
Two catch-words of our time are 'hardware' and 'software' — meaningless jargon to all but the computer people who are so fond of

them, but if we see the physical form of our city and all its component parts as the 'hardware', and the 'software' as the process by which developers, municipalities, traffic department, etc., respond to the city and by which, in turn, the city and its dwellers may respond to the choices and decisions that are made, then the words take on whole new shades of meaning. Nebulous, indifferent and soft are all words which could, and should be applied to the response to the rape of our city-scape. Architects and townplanners have long been concerned and have been vociferous critics of such schemes as the proposed Esplanade commuter railway line, the beachfront Disneyland fantasies and the demolition of city blocks to make way for more and more freeways.

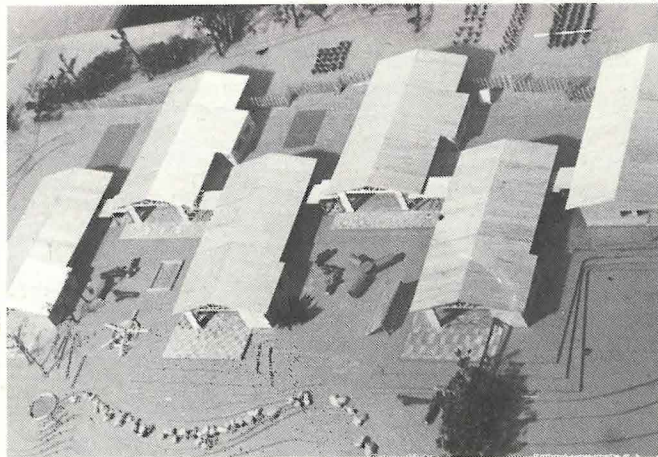
Is it too much to expect man, who has been conditioned by advertising to think that R8000,00 spent on his motor car will rejuvenate his atrophied sexual ability, to renounce the cult of the car, the freeway, the stop-signs, the go-signs, the road-signs, speed-signs, turn-signs, no-entry signs, one-way signs and the robots that like Topsy, just seem to go on growing? It would be utopian to suggest that the answer to that could be anything other than 'Yes', it is too much to expect!! And yet there is a ray of hope. Why else do we make pilgrimage to Piazza San Marco in Venice or the Piazza del Campo in Sienna, when the fleshpots of Europe are beckoning? Certainly not to admire the beauty of the roads, and signs and lamp-posts. Perhaps we all recognise in these places the truth of the phrase 'Less is more'. Here we are not obstructed by post and chain barriers at every intersection, we do not trip over fire hydrants, we don't have to fight our way past concrete benches on the pavement, our view is not obstructed by glassfibre bus shelters of uncertain pedigree, and rubbish bins full of adverts ... and immediately and instinctively we recognise the 'rightness' of it all.

The evidence of our jaded aesthetic sensibilities is all about us if we care to look, and is certainly not confined to our own city.

Ian Poole



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# thesis projects 1978

Final Year architectural students at the University of Natal recently completed their theses for their degrees.

This is primarily a comprehensive test of design skill and the student is required to demonstrate his all round architectural ability, from the formulation of a programme through to the detailed design based upon conclusions arrived at from his research.

The process starts with the choice of subject. The students are encouraged to choose a thesis subject soon after their completion of third year. The culmination of the process occurs towards the end of October in their final year when each student is required to present his scheme before a panel of examiners.

The submission showed an increasing concern on the part of the students for the problems facing the less privileged sector of the population. The subjects ranged from the topical issue of housing for Urban Blacks to a large scale renewal/preservation scheme for the Grey Street Mosque complex.

Less topical but equally relevant were schemes for a convention Centre for Durban, a Maritime Museum for Durban, a Casino for the Transkei Wild Coast and a new Library for Durban.

A representative selection of schemes:

1. Boys Town — A decentralised self-supporting community for the rehabilitation of Blacks — The thesis explores an alternative for the rehabilitation of Black juveniles who have displayed anti-social behaviour in the magisterial area of Durban. The student's research of existing corrective institutions for Blacks revealed a lack of adequate institutions, staff, variety and training facilities and concludes that a facility like Boys Town (based on a peer group system) would fill a much needed purpose in the rehabilitation process.

The 'Town' is situated on a site near Shembas Village, north of Durban. Its organisational structure is derived from that of the village with the communal

facilities located along the road. From these facilities a major movement spine runs at right angles to the road and connects a series of secondary routes running along the contour feeding the residential units.

The scheme makes extensive use of 'solar technologies' to overcome the shortage of services in the area. The layout makes possible the central collection of rainwater, the use of a passive ventilation system, solar collectors for heating purposes and, should it prove feasible, the production of gas from a methane generation plant.

Construction materials are chosen for their low capital cost, local manufacture, their ability to create jobs, employing local skills and labour, and for their ability to be re-used and adapted to the changing needs of the town.

2. A Social Amenity Centre — Chesterville:  
"Consistent with the notions of a sense of place and the quality of life, the purpose of this study is to observe, examine and establish the conditions that make for a healthy and viable human settlement, with the objective of providing the enabling physical conditions for their emergence."

In achieving this objective the student undertook a study of the existing resources in Chesterville. Together with an analysis of the functions of a social amenity centre. The study culminated in the student's interpretation of the problem in built form.

The solution (master plan) is based on the concept of staged development, the use of existing buildings, and the making of meaningful external public spaces. Over time new facilities will supplement the existing basic services, old buildings will be adapted and others will make way for improved ones as the needs and resources of the community change.

3. Islamic Cultural and Community Centre:  
Essentially a study in urban design culminating in an alter-

native development proposal for the Juma Masjid Mosque site in Grey Street, Durban.

The stated objectives of the study were to develop the site to its maximum potential while preserving certain buildings which were considered to be of immense historical, cultural and architectural significance for the city and people of Durban.

The stated objectives of the study were to develop the site to its maximum potential while preserving certain buildings which were considered to be of immense historical, cultural and architectural significance for the city and people of Durban.

The conflicting forces of development pressures and the desire to retain those elements of our city which make it unique is resolved in a proposal which relies on a system of infill and bulk transfer. The allowable bulk (P.A.R.) is transferred to a site between the new freeway and the existing Madressa Arcade. The resultant building although largely office space, contains a number of community functions including a large residential component designed to restore the traditional relationship between mosque and community.

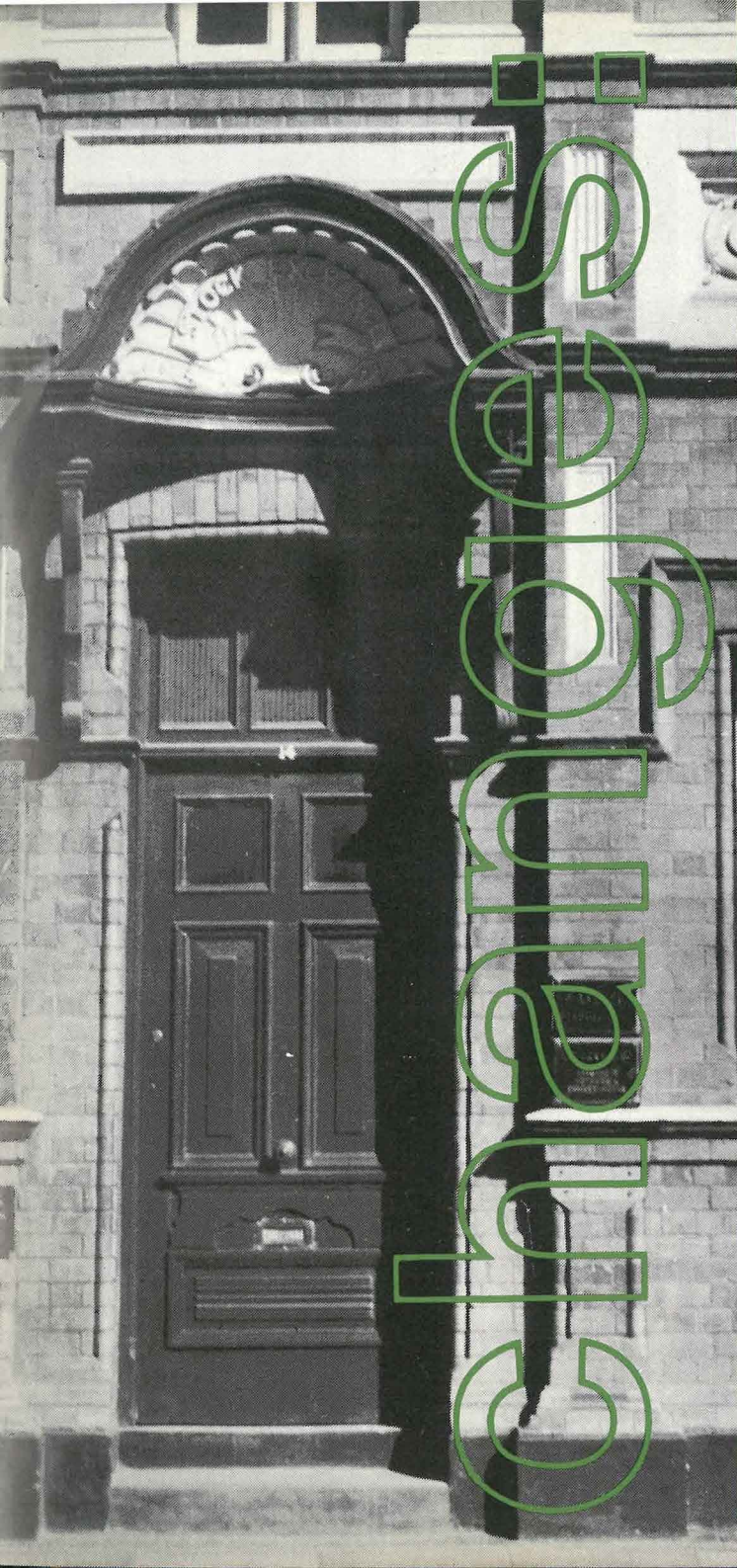
The building is designed so that it can be built in two stages — the office component being developed at a later stage when the market improves.

In contrast to these three projects the submissions included a number of highly technical problems, among them a Thoracic Surgical Unit for Wentworth Hospital, an Outpatients Department for King Edward VIII Hospital and a Sugar Research Station at Mount Edgecombe.

That such diverse philosophy, as manifested in the submissions, can survive the rigors of a six year course in Architecture says much for the resilience of the student. Hopefully, this resilience and the high standards it has helped maintain won't be lost in the less understanding world of practice.

L. Smith

1. Boys Town for Blacks by P. Millborrow.  
2. A Nursery School for Maseru by P. Malefane.  
3. Inside cover page: Grey Street Mosque Redevelopment, Durban. Project by S. Mills.  
4. Back cover page:  
A Maritime Museum for Durban.



#### Changes in address

J.B. McCombe to 14 Azelea Grove, Morningside Gardens, Valley View Road, Durban.

P. Jones to 19 Mountainview Road, London N4 4SS.

T. Ward to 14 Lansdowne Drive, Westville.

P.P. Smith to 13th Floor, Trust Bank Centre, 475 Smith Street, Durban.

G.W. Bradley to 12 Homepark, 8 Charles Henwood Avenue, Durban.

Rein Pirn to Littleton Road, Harvard, Mass. 01451, USA.

K.S. Long to 31 Neden Road, Montrose, Pietermaritzburg.

G.M. Krogstad to Joh. Castbergs Vei 52, Oslo.

Mrs. R.M. Price to 15 Brand van Zyl Road, Prestburg, Pietermaritzburg.

N.R. Oldreive to 12 Montgomery Drive, Athlone, Pietermaritzburg.

G.F. Mullins to 75 North Ridge Road, Durban.

Prof. S. Piotrowski to 30-076, Krakow ul. Zakatek 2 m.45, Poland.

H.B. Parker to 13 Princess Street, Pietermaritzburg.

J.A. Duvenage (AnT) to 38 Sagewood Way, Glen Anil.

F.R. Fothergill to No. 1 Surreyvale, 116 Valley View Avenue, Roseglèn, Durban.

T.T. Mommsen — all correspondence to P.O. Box 10010, Marine Parade 4056.

R.F. Greaves to Shop 41A, Glenwood Shopping Centre, Durban.

J. S. Dommissie of Pretorius, Oosthuizen, Strydom, Lategan, Gilliland to Sanlamsentrum 1003, Weststraat, Durban.

G. Salt to 2 Ridge Gardens, Ridge Road, Berea, Durban.

I. Levy to 35 Benzelia, 276 Davenport Road, Durban.

M.M.A. Farinha (AnT) 1st Floor, 121 Earl Haig Road, Durban.

B. Doel to c/o Mrs. M.R. Reid, 113 Park Lodge Gardens, 369 Berea Road, Durban.

O.L. Pretorius, N.I.H. Smith, R. Butland, I.F. Poole (Olaf Pretorius, Peckham Smith and Butland) to 5th Floor, Highway House, 83 Jan Smuts Highway, Durban.

Mr. W.J.C. Watkins to 5th Floor, Highway House, 83 Jan Smuts Highway, Durban.

#### Changes in Partnership and new Practices.

The partnership of Fridjhon and Fulford has changed its name to Fridjhon, Fulford and Partners and has moved to new offices in 13th Floor, Ashley House, 320 Smith Street, Durban.

P. Mikula has resigned as a director of Building Design Group Inc. and D.A.D. Inc and has taken employment with the Urban Foundation Natal as Development Manager. His address is still 78 Julia Road, Overport, Durban.

J.S. Simpson and D.C. Smith (Hirst, Simpson and Smith) have dissolved partnership. Mr. Smith will in future practice under the style of D.C. Smith at 57 Art Centre, Albany Grove, Durban.

Paulus Visser and de Villiers have established a branch office at 1107E Sanlam Centre, West Street, Durban under the charge of Mr. J.P. Mentz.

C.H.D. Howes has retired from the practice of Keith Gow and Howes and all correspondence should be addressed to No. 1 The Moorings, 230 Musgrave Road, Durban.

F.J. Mitchell (Selsick, Wolpe, Levy and Partners) has transferred to his Johannesburg office and the Durban office closed on 1.8.78.

Geoffrey Le Seur — Stauch Vorster & Partners has changed the style of its practice to Stauch Vorster & Partners.

#### Changes in Membership

J.P. Mentz — TPI to NPI

F.G. Price (retired) — NPI to TPI

F.J. Mitchell — NPI to TPI

A. Rennie — NPI to CPI

K. Laloo (AnT) — NPI to TPI

#### Changes in Class

H.M.J. Madlener — ordinary to retired

B.J. Davies — ordinary to retired

#### New Members

K.I. MacGarry — 7 Somme Road, Overport.

A.L. Barnard — 5 North Ridge House, North Ridge Road, Durban.

D.C. Boyd (formerly AnT) 23A Norfolk Road, Berea, Durban.

A.M. Ogilvie (AnT membership) Flat B, Greentrees, 80 Adrain Road, Durban.

L. Cronje — Private Bag X9041, Pietermaritzburg.

A. J. Williams — c/o Private Bag X9041, Pietermaritzburg.

C.N. Richards (formerly AnT) — 202 Homes Trust Building, Smith Street, Durban.

#### Resignations

Miss L. Shepherd.

#### Deceased

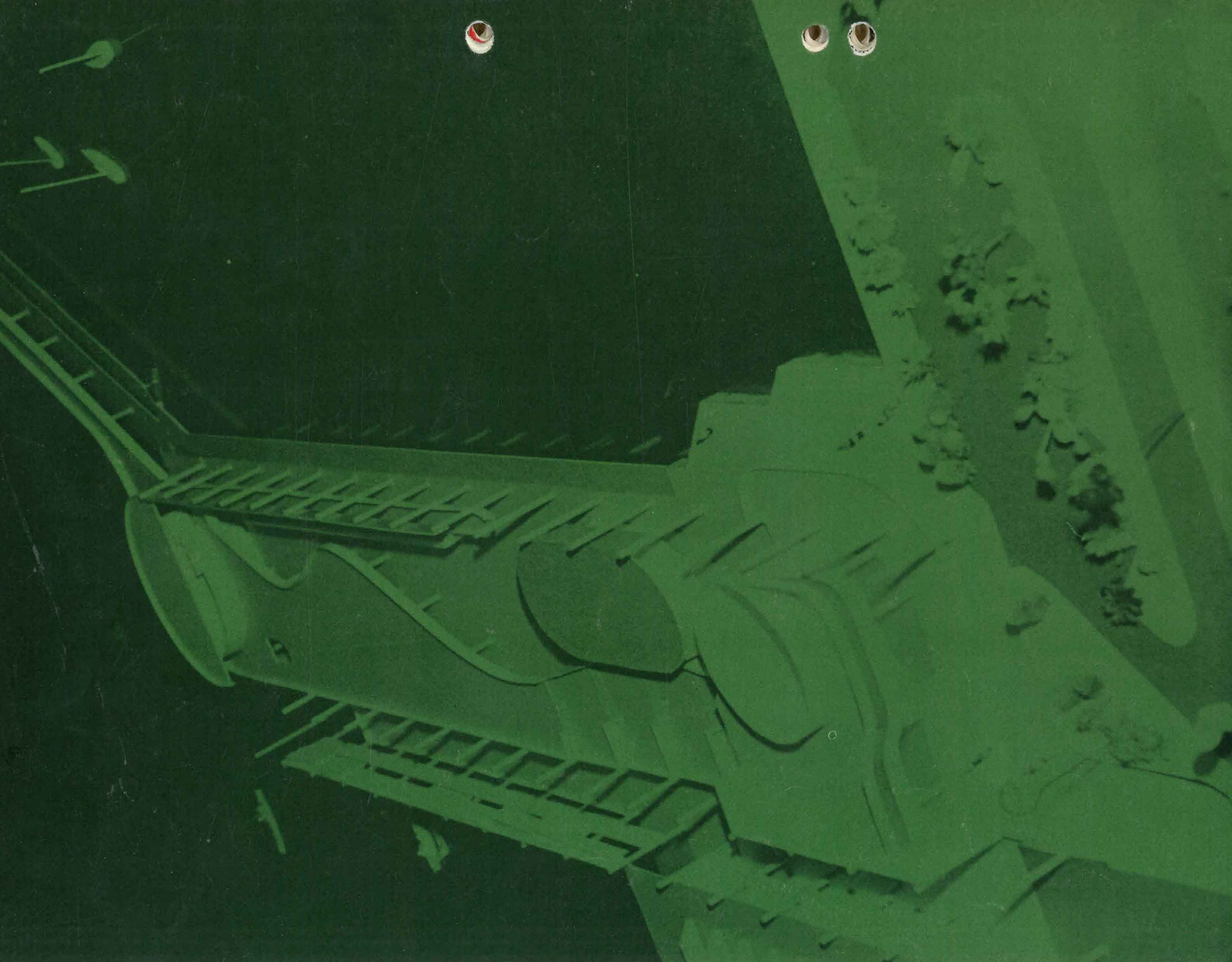
A. Woodrow

D.C. McDonald

C. Tilley

E.V.B. Tolliss

W. Hirst



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