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SPONSORED UNIVERSITY PROJECTS

- GEOFFREY LE SUEUR TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIP
- PLATE GLASS FOUNDATION RHODES STUDY IN CONSERVATION



EDITORIAL OPINION

by Walter Peters

This issue of the *NPIA Journal* is devoted to sponsored university projects — projects funded from sources outside the university. The issue is divided into two parts: first, the journey in the Iberian Peninsula by Georgia Sarkin, Geoffrey le Sueur Travel Scholar of 1987, and second, the project in urban conservation in Rhodes, N.E. Cape, sponsored by the Plate Glass Foundation and carried out by fourth year students, also during 1987.

These are but two of the sponsored projects in recent years. Practical results cannot be expected to follow immediately; but, in the case of Lüderitz, a project in urban conservation carried out in 1979 and sponsored by CDM, this southernmost coastal town of SWA/Namibia is today a regenerated town that can offer hope to other towns in similar circumstances. This is, of course, not solely as a result of the student project, but due to the attention the publication was able to focus on the plight of the town and the catalytic role the project played in the ideas presented.

With annual cuts in state subsidy, universities cannot make such contributions to the environment and to society. Unless special funding is obtainable, awards — and rewards — as presented herein will not in future be possible.

COMMENT

by Barrie Biermann

A distinguished successor to the Herbert Baker Scholarship

Geoffrey Eustace le Sueur was born at Wynberg in the Cape in 1902. After matriculating from Bishops in 1917, he was articled to Reid & Delbridge — an old established firm of architects in Cape Town. Since there was no university School of Architecture available at the time, he studied for the RIBA Intermediate and Final under the "Cape School of Architecture", formed and staffed by a few practising architects. He was admitted to the Cape Institute in 1924, and to the South African and Royal British Institutes in 1927. A year later he came to Durban as chief assistant to A.A. Ritchie McKinley, and in January 1930 opened his own practice. By 1934 he had been elected President of the Natal Provincial Institute, and he received the Institute's Award in 1936 for the Royal Durban Golf Club Building. He entered for competitions and received several public commissions; for many years his firm, Geoffrey le Sueur and Partners, was the largest architectural practice in Natal. Geoffrey is a staunch individualist and a proponent of the public benefits of open competition. In May 1980, he donated the sum of R30 000 (which has since trebled) to the School of Architecture for the establishment of a travel prize for the most outstanding designer amongst the senior students. The then Principal of the University of Natal, Professor Des Clarence, described the gift as a major contribution to the future of architecture and of the University, expressing the view that "this challenge to scholarship will raise the level of study in that discipline and be a source of inspiration to its students". In the event this proved to be the case, and for Natal students the Geoffrey le Sueur Travel Scholarship effectively filled the gap left by the withdrawal of the Herbert Baker Scholarship 20 years before. The first award was made in January 1982 to Craig Hamilton, whose Le Sueur travels in the mountainous regions of Nepal and the Scottish Highlands resulted in his report, "So Very Far Above". In March 1983 the second award went to George Elphick. He chose to investigate the origins of the International Style in Europe and its extensions in the USA and Japan; his report was entitled "Origins, Transformations". In the following year Johan Slee was the winner and he pursued the roots of Palladianism in its homeland and its further ramifications in the USA. He submitted a report simply entitled "Le Sueur Scholarship Log Book". Georgia Sarkin won the award on the fifth occasion. Her travels from Portugal to the Greek Islands resulted in a report on the vernacular of those regions entitled "Four Notebooks: A Journey Recorded".

SALUTE TO SONNY TOMKIN



A cocktail party was held in the NPIA Boardroom on Wednesday, 17 August, to mark the 80th birthday of Sonny Tomkin. Seen above are Sandy Morrison (NPIA Secretary for the past 40 years!); Sonny Tomkin; and NPIA President, John Frost. On this occasion, Sonny Tomkin was presented with his certificate of ISAA life membership as well as a scroll "with affection and respect in recognition of his services to the profession of architecture over many years."

GEOFFREY LE SUEUR TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIP

A JOURNEY RECORDED

GEORGIA SARKIN — 1987 RECIPIENT

In the last decade there has been a rethinking of the urban quality of our cities; and a concern for the city as a theatre for daily life. The positive function of the city as an integration of architectural works is again being acknowledged. This can be seen, for example, in the IBA exhibition which has been an ongoing project in Berlin since 1980, mainly exploring the role of the architect within an urban and historical context. These ideas have been developed by contemporary architects and theoreticians such as Rob and Leon Krier, Aldo Rossi and O.M. Ungers, who try to link design invention with the urban context.

The way in which a work of architecture responds to and is part of a greater context has always been a concern in my own work here in the South African context. It thus seemed appropriate, when given the opportunity of travelling in Europe as a recipient of the Geoffrey le Sueur and Emma Smith scholarships, to explore this theme. The only requirements of these awards were that I "travelled and studied architectural design". Having just completed my architectural degree it was an opportune time to spend four months observing, sketching and analysing. This interest in urban spaces and places led me to many of the smaller, more isolated towns and villages of southern Europe where the urban fabric has been well preserved.

Although considerable change has occurred over time in the way people inhabit some of these urban spaces, their basic richness has remained and in most cases has been strengthened. This suggests that there are certain underlying physical principles which generate certain spatial qualities and which stimulate the enriching effect of change and time.

The approach that I took to this period of study-travel was to focus on particular themes of interest and then to spend time on site, sketching and making notes. The process of drawing was an important tool to "see" and "understand", and a method of remembering buildings and spaces that were integrated into the cityscape. I have isolated a few examples from the numerous studies which relate to the theme of urban space and the morphological treatments of an urban square.

There is a range of basic typologies which can be identified from the examples studied. Firstly, the loosely arranged urban space where the buildings that enclose the space have grown in a fairly organic way. At the other extreme, we have the rigid, tightly defined square with formal facades on all sides. Marvao, a hillside town in the east of Portugal, has a loose-organic arrangement of buildings enclosing the space (Fig 1). It is situated in a central position in the town on the slope of a hill with a number of pedestrian roads

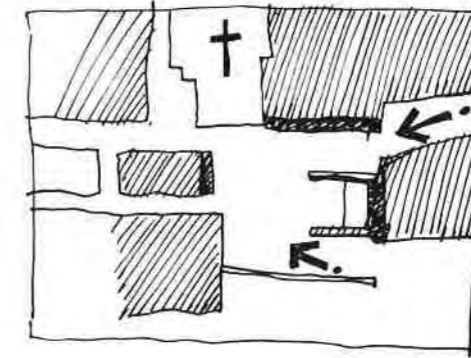


Fig 1



Fig 2



Fig 3

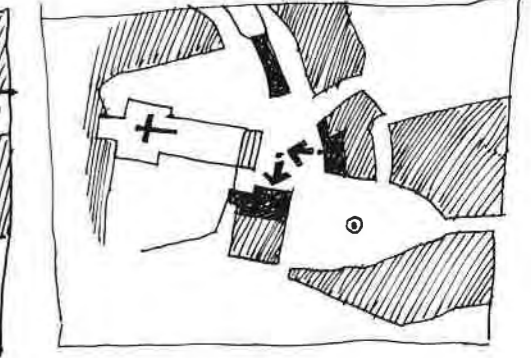


Fig 4



Fig 5



Fig 6

GEOFFREY LE SUEUR TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIP

converging on it (Fig 2). The focus is the church (Fig 3).

The wide doors of the church are flung open on high holidays and the square becomes an outdoor extension of the church; the terraced roads and houses that lead up the hill have excellent views of the precinct and festivities.

The few days that I spent in the town coincided with a holy festival and I was able to witness the way in which the streets of the town took on a new meaning with solemn processions of people, in which nearly all the inhabitants followed a huge statue of Christ.

Along the route people had decorated their windows and doors with flowers and cherished religious objects. The streets became outdoor rooms which were an extension of the church.

San Gimignano, a small hilltop town in the province of Siena, Italy, consists of a number of interleading squares of different shapes and sizes, where views and vistas suddenly become apparent in a subtle and intriguing way (Fig 4).

The Basilica of Santa Maria Assunta with its simple and austere facade, looks out on to the Piazza del Duomo (Fig 5). This square leads into the Piazza della Cisterna on the one side (Fig 6) and the Piazza della Erba on the other. They communicate with one another through narrow and intricate lanes.

The town was one of boastful aggressiveness where it was imperative that the citizens demonstrated their power by building high towers and giving their buildings austere facades.

Evora, one of the oldest cities on the Iberian peninsula, is situated to the east of Lisbon, Portugal, rising out of endless green plains and olive trees.

The Praca di Giraldo (Fig 7), which is the principal square, demonstrates a more formal arrangement than that of the previous examples, with its church, town hall, fountain and shops. The ground slopes gently up towards the Church of Santo Antao, an example of regional renaissance architecture (Fig 8).

At the opposite end of the square is the town hall (Fig 9). On the north-east side of the square an arcade, punctured with arches of various sizes, links the buildings at ground level. The south-west side has no arcades.

The last category of urban square typologies is that of a fairly formal, geometric arrangement.

Tembleque, situated in southern Spain, has a geometrically proportioned square surrounded by continuous built fabric which changes and alters height, lending an air of informality to the space (Fig 10).

The architectural language of stone columns supporting light timber verandahs (Fig 11) is vernacular in feel, also contributing to the sense of informality even though the space is geometrically rigid in its plan.

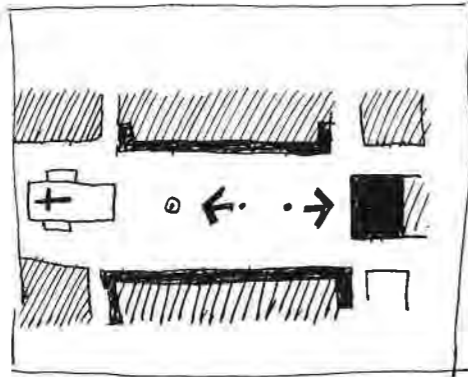


Fig 7



Fig 8

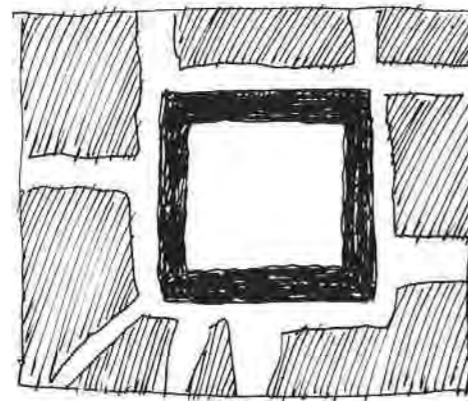


Fig 10

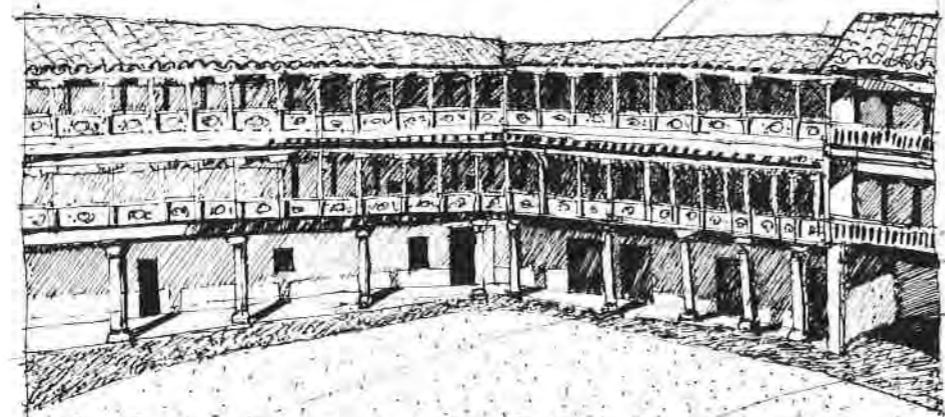


Fig 11



Fig 9

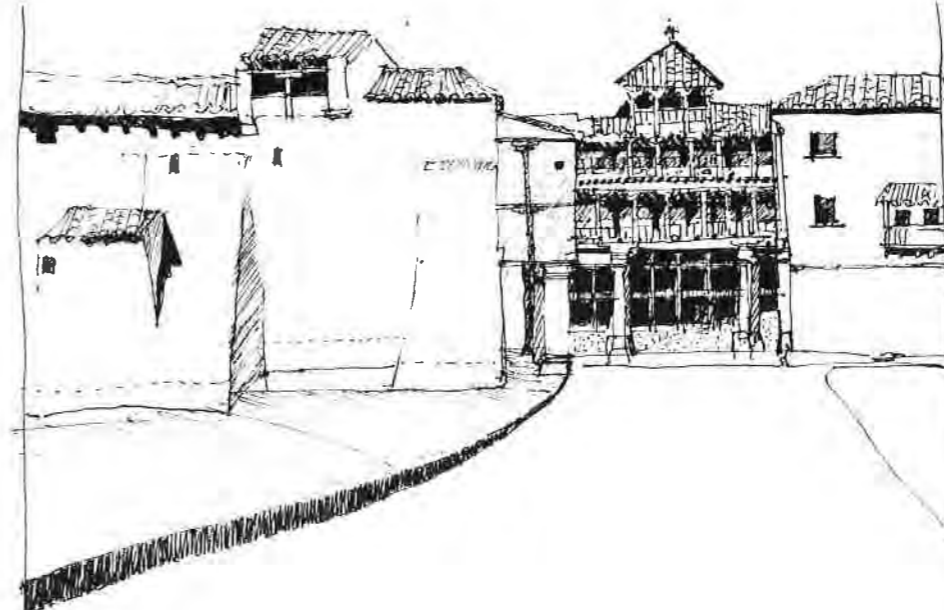


Fig 12

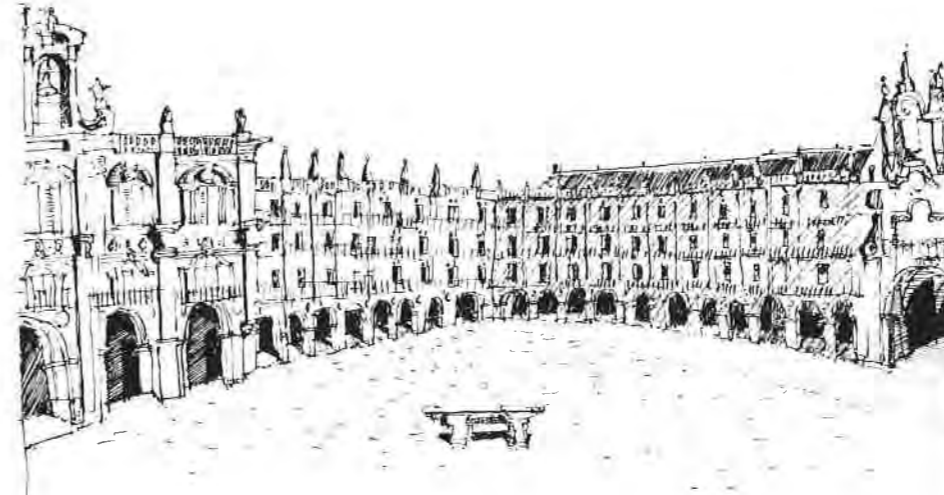


Fig 13



Fig 14



Fig 15

The square is reputed to have acted as a bullring in its early days, with its verandahs acting as viewing stands.

On the ground floor, shops open out into the arcade and above are residential units with commercial activities occurring at times.

The square is surrounded on its outer side by a white "crust" with simple, powerful, whitewashed walls and small punctured openings (Fig 12).

Salamanca, in north-western Spain, has a town square regarded as Spain's most beautiful. The Plaza Mayor retained its medieval irregularity until it was rebuilt in the eighteenth century. It is framed by uniform four-storied houses with arcades by Garcia de Quinones (Fig 13).

Horizontal bands are continuous around the four walls of the square, contrasting with the vertical relief of ornamental Bourbon lilies on the balustrades of the roof.

The elevation of the town hall is slightly higher, with larger arches on to the square. Entrances to the street are beyond the arcades, thus the square has four completely enclosing formal walls.

The Plaza Mayor in Madrid is in many ways similar to that in Salamanca. Notable differences are the vertical spires, placed at regular intervals, and the celebration of the entry points from surrounding streets with larger, more ornate openings (Fig 14, 15).

In conclusion, it is by observing these spatial forms and systems that exist in traditional cities that lessons can be learnt which are of significance and importance for architects.

A framework of reference is necessary in order to define ways in which new design intervention can integrate with the existing urban context. In addition, other equally important, non-physical factors have to be taken into account.

"Creating high performance city environments in the face of exponential growth rates is one of the most important issues of our time" (Dewar & Uytendogaardt, 1987). This is especially true in our South African context where land is compartmentalized into large, single-use areas consisting mainly of low-income housing linked by transport routes.

Attempts to compensate for this by creating areas of open space result very often in barren wastelands designed by standards and rules, rather than a concern for the human being, where the collective urban event enriches the quality of life for the individual.

Whilst it is accepted that richness and texture of the urban environment occur in a layering process over time, the pre-conditions for this richness and texture to occur are controlled by architects.

RHODES

PLATE GLASS FOUNDATION SPONSORSHIP

In the second semester of 1987, Fourth Year architectural students who had previously completed the optional course Architectural Conservation, were able to undertake a study in the conservation of the village of Rhodes, sponsorship having been made available by the Plate Glass Foundation. This article presents a synopsis of the surveys and proposals, with extracts from various chapters as elaboration to the illustrations.

Introduction

Renowned for its cold climate, the village of Rhodes in the north-east Cape has for a long time been of special interest to many architects. Neither architecturally pure nor homogenous, Rhodes has an interesting if apocryphal social history, a consistency of building scale and materials, and a landscape and setting that make it exceptional. For the layman, as much as for architects, these are the kinds of surroundings that make for human contentment.

Unlike many other country villages, the gradual economic decline of Rhodes has actually been its salvation. Outsiders appreciative of its attributes have invested in obsolete housing, and though the village is populated to any significant degree only in holiday periods, the buildings are generally in a reasonable state of repair.

Aim of the project

The aim of the project was to make proposals for the continued existence of the village of Rhodes. These do not only cover new development but essentially the conservation of the existing assets of Rhodes. Far from creating a "museum piece", the formula of approach was conservation = preservation and controlled change. To achieve this Rhodes had to be studied in detail and in the context of its region, to get a firm understanding of what forces or factors combined to give Rhodes its unique character. Of equal importance was to determine why Rhodes has survived.

History and case for conservation

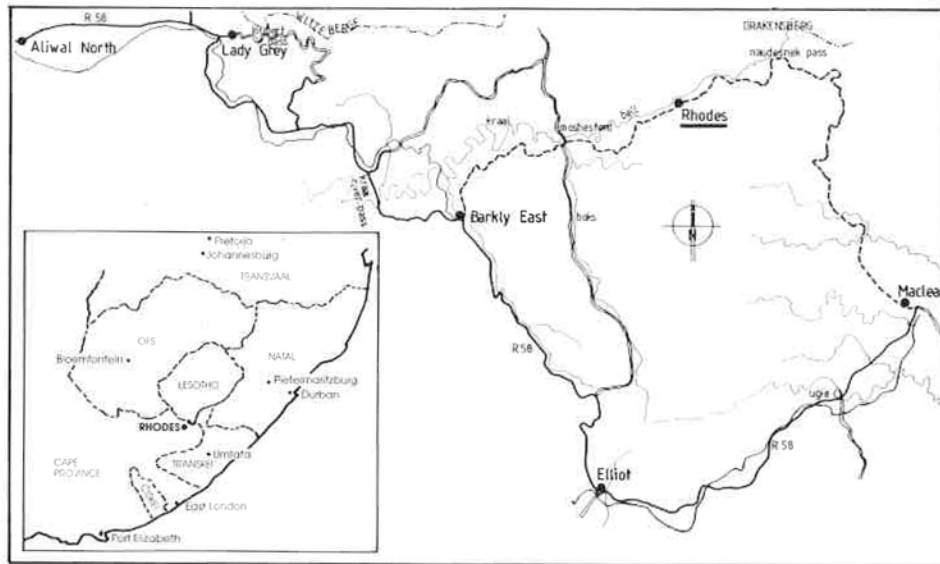
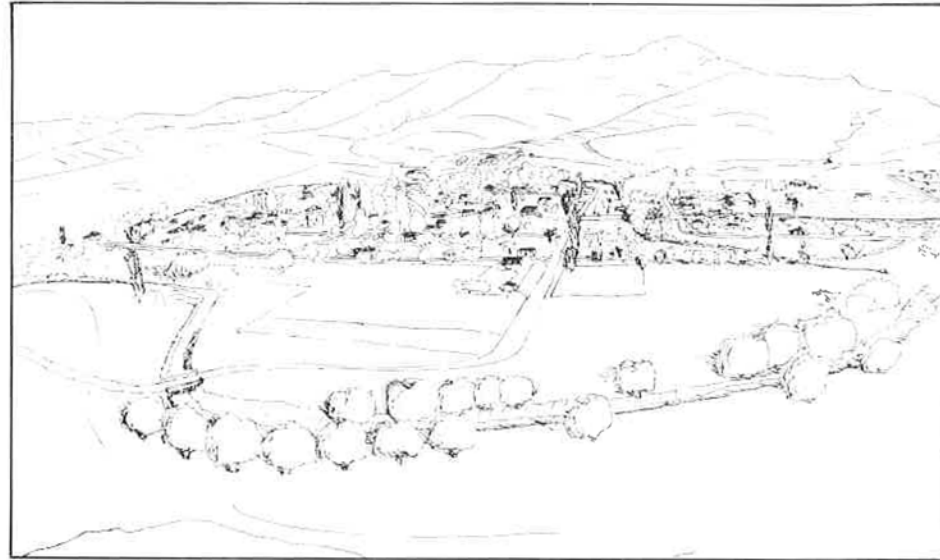
Rhodes, founded in 1891, was named after Cecil John Rhodes (1853-1902), statesman and politician. It is a village of fairytale beauty in an isolated but special geographic region of the NE Cape. Lying at the foot of the highest mountain pass in South Africa and the snow-covered ski-slopes of Ben Macdhui, it nestles in the confluence of Lesotho, South Africa and the smallest of the three parts of the Transkei. This remote village is in many ways a microcosm of Africa with its regular grid layout of the white town on the one side and the irregularly planned black location on the other.

A remarkable profusion of trees — pines, cypresses, poplars and willows of every species — cover the village, and trace the path of the tranquil Bell River as it meanders its way past the tiny village. Green pastures surround it on all four sides.

The man-made elements of the town are

SETTING, HISTORY AND CASE FOR CONSERVATION

STUDY IN CONSERVATION
FOURTH YEAR ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS — 1987



TOP: View of Rhodes from the hill south of the village. In the foreground, the Bell River; in the centre, the profusion of trees; and above the village, the avenue leading to the school. To the right, and in typical South African fashion, lies the Black location alongside the white village.

ABOVE: Rhodes in its regional context. Barkly East is the administrative centre containing the offices of the Drakensberg Divisional Council. Of great scenic value, the surroundings contain some of the best preserved bushmen paintings in South Africa; Naudé's Nek, the highest pass in the country; water-sport facilities; skiing in nearby Ben Macdhui, hiking and partridge hunting. The tourist potential is as yet unexploited.

INSET: Rhodes is situated in the north-eastern Cape at the confluence of Lesotho and Transkei. It lies remote from the major centres of South Africa: 560 km from Durban, 400 km from Bloemfontein and 60 km from Barkly East, the nearest service centre.

also not hard to quantify. Seventy-six out of the 108 buildings in the town are of architectural and historic merit worthy of conservation. Ironically, poverty has made it one of the best preserved towns in South Africa. The wealth of quaint old houses with their stoeps and curved corrugated iron eaves, dating from the turn of the century, make Rhodes "in the best sense of the phrase, something else". Myths surround the historical importance of Rhodes. The students found no evidence of a name change from Rossville to Rhodes as entered in the "Dictionary of South African Place

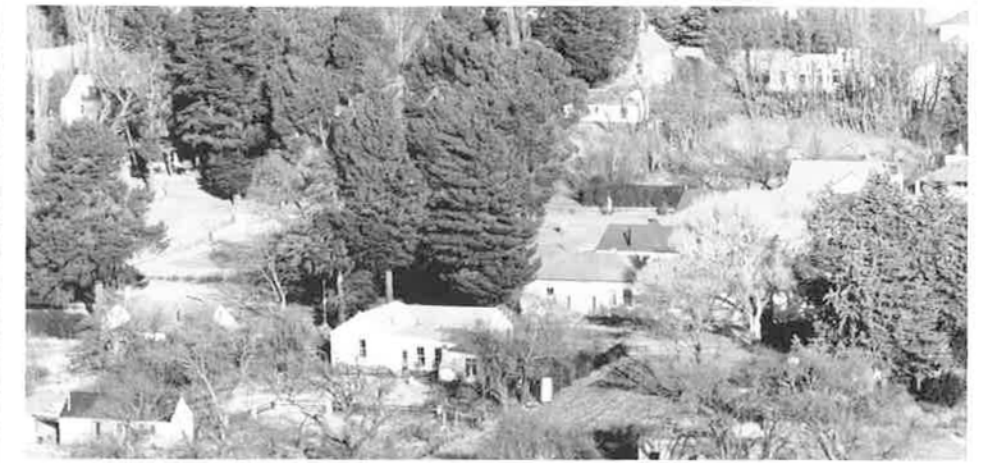
Names" by P. Raper, despite careful archival research of extant official documentation. Neither could support be found for the donations of trees or moneys Cecil John Rhodes had allegedly made as a sign of acknowledgement of the name change. It is also unlikely that the school building was designed by Sir Herbert Baker. Rhodes is an exceptional village because of its idyllic setting and architectural charm and because of the lifestyle associated with its remoteness. The students were unanimous that Rhodes warranted conservation.

RHODES

ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEYS



ABOVE: Vestiges of an old irrigation channel which drew water from the Bell River higher along its course.



ABOVE: Bird's eye view of the centre of Rhodes. At top left, the Rossville parish church; centre left, the tennis courts; centre right, the Rhodes Hotel; and centre top, the Post Office and former Magistrate's Court. Note the profusion of mature insignia pines.



LEGEND

1. The former Market Square.
2. Rhodes Hotel.
3. Rossville Parish Church.
4. Post Office and former Magistrate's Court.
5. The former school.

RIGHT: A great part of the students' labours went into work not presented in the publication. They undertook a survey of the whole of town, all contours, positions of buildings, significant trees, hedges, fences and storm water channels. Every house was measured and photographed and plans and sections prepared to a common scale. This time-consuming work was essential as base material and could only be carried out in groups.



Rhodes Hotel, originally known as Horseshoe Hotel, built c.1898. Sited opposite the tennis courts — in the former Market Square — this building forms the heart of present day Rhodes.



Originally Rhodes was the centre of a large farming community who built "dorphauses" or "tuisgaanhuise".



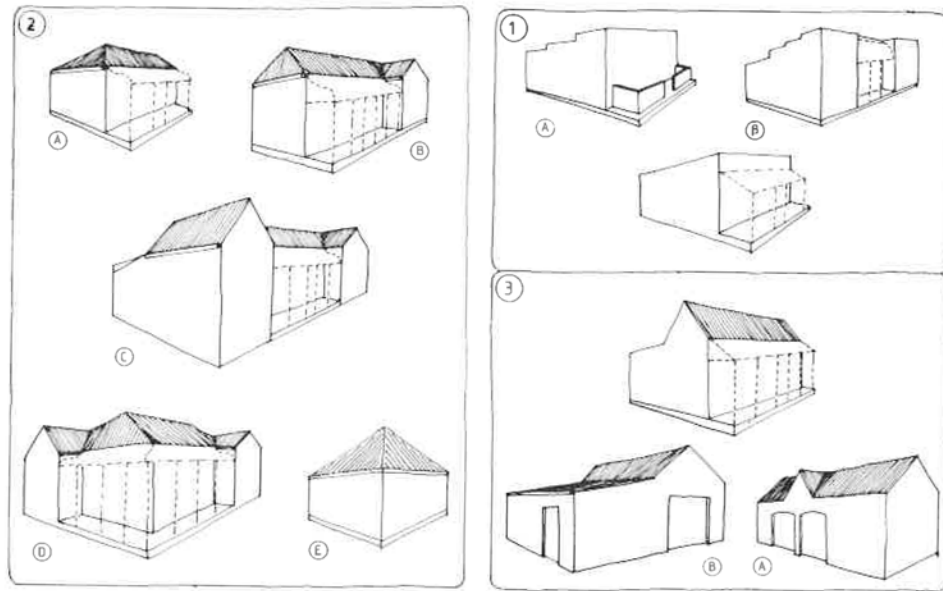
The school of c.1924, reputedly by Sir Herbert Baker. Judged on stylistic grounds and the fact that Baker had left South Africa in 1913, it is most likely that the design stems from the offices of Baker's former partners Morris or Kendall. It is improbable that Baker designed the school by proxy.



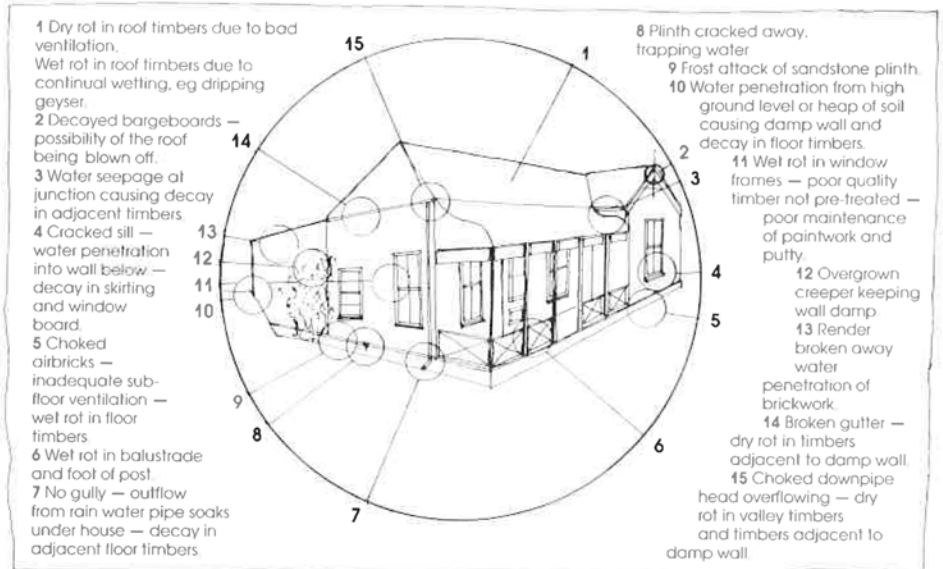
A metaphor of Rhodes.



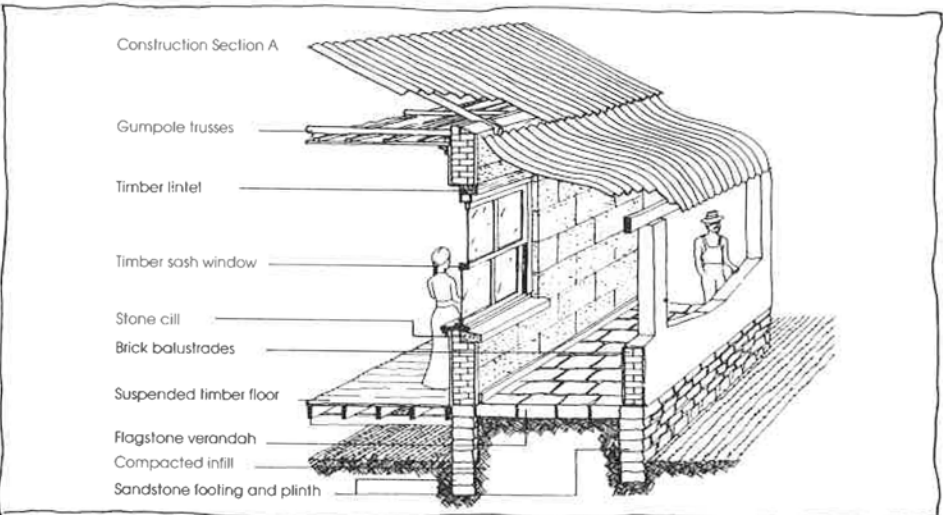
Upper Naudé Street. View from north.



Three basic house typologies are evident: monopitched Karoohuises with stoepmuurtjies and/or verandahs; Victorian cottages with verandah and gable variations; and vernacular barns with gables and lean-to extensions.



Maintenance problems of a typical Rhodes house. ↴



Typical house construction in Rhodes with walls of sun-dried bricks, plastered and painted, and corrugated iron roofs with catslide/bellcast verandah profile.

Objectives for conservation

The students saw the conservation of Rhodes as a balancing act, preserving its heritage whilst at the same time promoting greater enjoyment of it.

To achieve this, they set out the following objectives, based on architectural and townscape considerations:

- To arrest further decay within the village by promoting it as a tourist or holiday village.
- To enhance the character of the town by tree planting and restoration of the buildings of architectural merit (the houses should preferably be restored according to contemporary standards of comfort).
- To control any redevelopment of spaces or buildings within the town, ensuring that their designs are not harmful to the townscape setting.

General proposals

In order to demonstrate the application of conservation measures, each student was assigned a portion of the village defined in the townscape surveys as his or her study area. Detailed analyses of the study areas were then undertaken and proposals made within the overall plan for conservation in Rhodes.

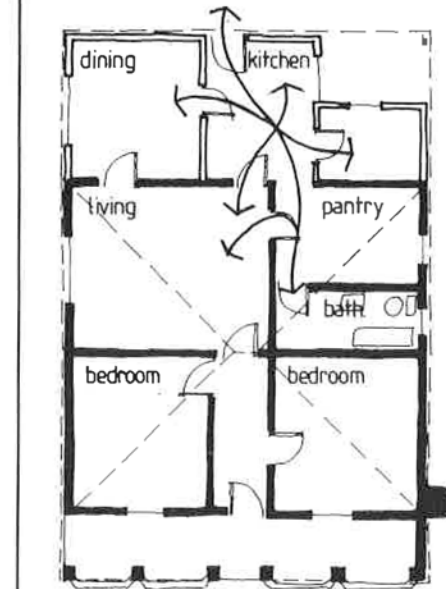
In each study area, the following points had to be considered:

- 1 Safeguarding the fabric of existing buildings.
- 2 The introduction of modern services and energy sources.
- 3 New uses for vacant existing buildings.
- 4 Landscaping and environmental improvements.
- 5 The screening of unsightly elements.
- 6 Sensitive solutions to traffic and parking.
- 7 New building and infill architecture.

To create a basis for their proposals, students prepared "credits and debits" maps of their study area.

In the proposals, students were advised as far as possible to concentrate on their skills: architecture and townscape. They are conscious that in this process they have had to make value judgements based on their own as yet limited experiences, opinions and prejudices. The ideas are presented primarily as stimulation for others with more resources and experience.

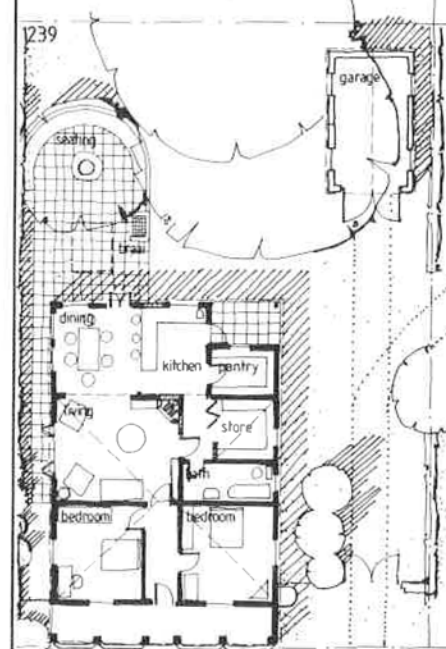
As this house was listed grade A, the emphasis here was on conservation and minimal physical intervention. Cross-circulation has been reduced and the space around the house incorporated as recreational space. Exposure to north sun is maximised.



EXISTING PLAN



STREET ELEVATION

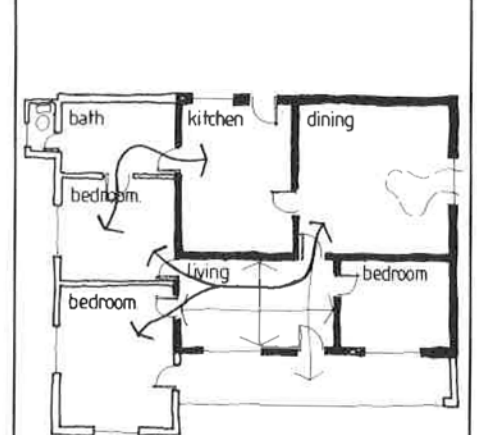


PROPOSED PLAN

As this house was listed grade D and therefore of lesser interest historically and architecturally, it could undergo a larger degree of change in becoming more comfortable as a living environment.



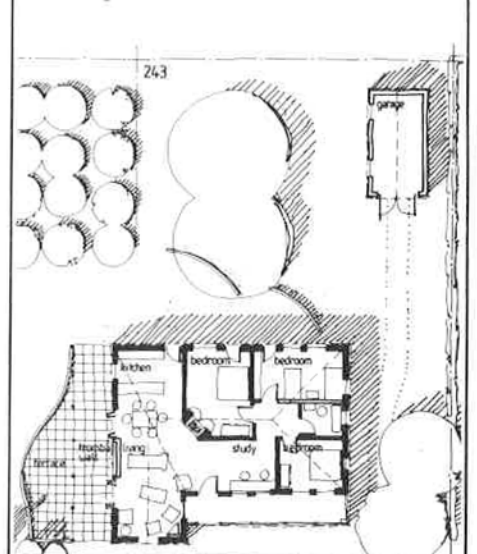
EXISTING STREET ELEVATION



EXISTING PLAN



PROPOSED STREET ELEVATION



PROPOSED PLAN

Implementation

Rhodes is marketable as a tourist attraction in its own right by virtue of its unique character. However, in order for tourism to become a viable economic proposition, Rhodes must be promoted as part of a regional tourist attraction.

With an increase of visitors to Rhodes, more holiday accommodation will be required and the concept of the holiday house could be explored. The idea is to encourage the use of those houses owned by absentee landlords. The fact that these houses are normally left locked up, unventilated and uncared for, is of no advantage either to the house or the owner. It is proposed that the houses be upgraded to modern standards and then rented out to holidaymakers. Also envisaged is a central administration which would ensure regular cleaning and maintenance of the houses and administration of the renting.

More permanent residents are, however, needed in the village to secure some kind of commitment. To this end, one of the proposals suggests a permanent institution such as a religious community which would engender such a commitment.

A monastery/convent could benefit from the isolated location of Rhodes, a major factor inhibiting secular development. The rural, tranquil character of Rhodes imparts a certain "cleansing of the soul" atmosphere. It could become an integral part of the permanent local community and could perform social duties/services to both the black and white population, eg teaching in the location and operating medical facilities, as well as performing its normal religious duties. It could become, to a large extent, self-sufficient in terms of agricultural products.

"Our proposals should be seen as a guide or framework within which the character of Rhodes can be conserved. We, as a group of students, put these ideas across as stimulation to others more experienced in the ways of negotiation and in the interest of this unique village ultimately becoming self conserving."

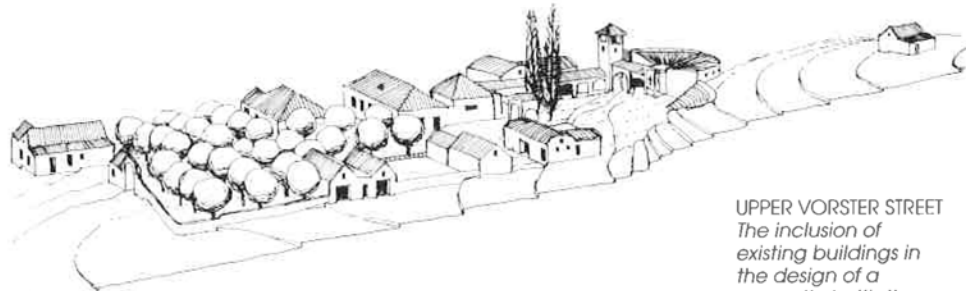
PARTICIPATING STUDENTS:

Marianne Malherbe, John Goldsmid, Kevin Bingham, Steve Millier, Alan Orman, Rodney Chromansky, Simon Pratt, Marco Ramacio-Calvino, Kevin Gevers, Geoff Allen, Tracey Cockhead.

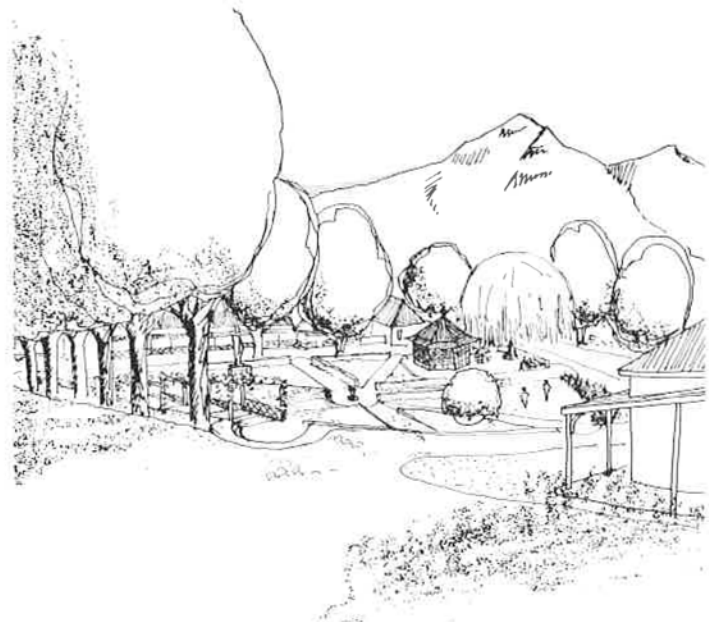
CO-ORDINATOR AND SUPERVISOR:

Dr Walter Peters

A limited number of copies of the 276-page report is available from The Secretary, School of Architecture, University of Natal, King George V Avenue, Durban 4001. Price: R25 including GST and postage.



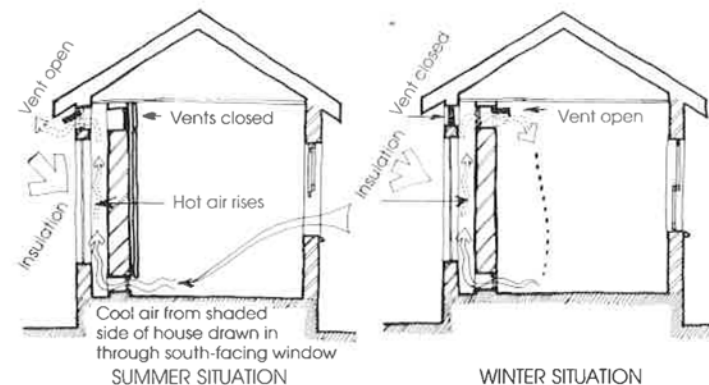
UPPER VORSTER STREET
The inclusion of existing buildings in the design of a monastic institution. View from the school.



MARKET SQUARE
View across the rehabilitated Market Square, with the hotel in the background. The geometric layout of the gardens presents a tangible link with the Victorian beginnings of Rhodes and the days of the Union Jack. Provision is made for a croquet garden, a gazebo and a statue of Cecil John Rhodes. The tennis courts are to be re-located diagonally opposite on the block bounded by Sauer, Church and Main streets.



A north-facing verandah of an existing house, glazed to conserve warmth, a principle exploited in the Trombe wall.



Rhodes is notorious for its extremely cold winters. One proposal for environmentally appropriate buildings would be the inclusion of the Trombe wall. This natural heat-conserving mechanism could work well in the high diurnal temperature range of Rhodes.

NPIA Vice-Presidency

On the resignation of Rob Platt who has left for the UK, the Provincial Committee unanimously elected Brian Johnson as Vice-President of the NPIA for the period 1988/89.

NPIA AGM

The annual general meeting of the NPIA will be held on Friday 4 October at 4 pm in SH2, University of Natal. ISAA President, Robin Fee, will address the meeting on Voluntary Membership.

Practice Changes

New members
S Buys (Ord) (Theunissen Jankowitz), P O Box 1200, Ladysmith, 3370.
D J Graham (Ord) (Muir Associates), P O Box 3033, Durban, 4000.
D M Thorne (Ord), 26 Ezulweni, 77 Beach Road, Amanzimtoti, 4125.
Ms A L Pilkington (Ord), 6 Edgecliff Road, Westville 3630.

Changes in membership
Ms J Smith (NPI to TPI).
Transfers in class
Dr B E Biermann (Ordinary to Retired)
D W Ireland (Ordinary to Retired)
J R Yelland (Ordinary to Retired)
P M de S Buccellato (Ordinary to Retired)
L A Peyton (Ordinary to Retired)

Deceased
L R Williams
D Dodds
Changes in addresses
I W Gourlay (Gourlay Moore Harris Fels & Partners) to Suite 601, Sanlam Building, 231 West Street, Durban.

O Moodley to P O Box 3055, Durban, 4000.
J N Nieuwoudt (Theunissen Jankowitz), P O Box 1200, Ladysmith, 3370.
D N Parks (ZAI) to P O Box 275, Melmoth, 3835.
P R Ries to 115 St Georges Street, Durban, 4001.
C S F Shepherd to Suite 1313, Musgrave Centre, Musgrave Road, Durban 4001.

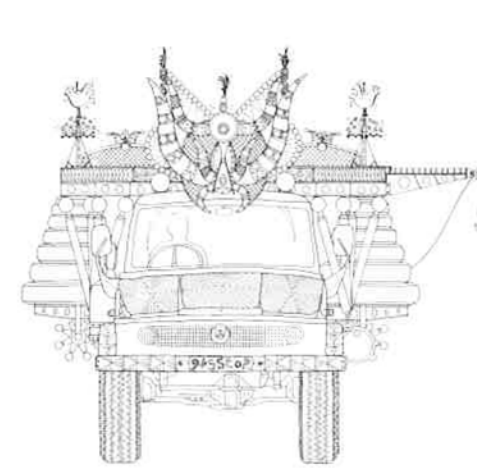
K R Breetzke (Keith Breetzke Architect), 141 Frere Road, Glenwood, Durban.
W A Bush, c/o E Singh & Associates, 78 Julia Road, Durban.
F D Spencer, c/o Vandeverre Apsey Robinson, 115 St George's Street, Durban.
J W Stanbridge, 1 Msenga Road, Kloof.
P R Ries, 28 Shuter Road, Glenwood, Durban.

Changes in partnerships, practices, etc
W Claassen and T H Smuts-Erasmus have dissolved their partnership. Mr Claassen is practising on his own account, PO Box 4003, Durban 4000, and so is Mr Smuts-Erasmus at 63 Ridgeside Road, Umgeni Park, Durban North.

A C V Clarkson, J F Coote and C F Glasspool have dissolved their partnership. Mr Coote and Mr Clarkson have entered into partnership under the style of Coote & Clarkson, the former's address being PO Box 1056, Vryheid, and the latter's address being PO Box 475, Ladysmith. Mr Glasspool is practising on his own account under the style of Colin Glasspool & Associates at PO Box 391, Newcastle.

Ms L Poulson is practising as Poulson Buccellato Architects at 142 Vause Road, Durban.
Lapsed
J W Newton
Re-enrolled
F J Beeslaar (F J Beeslaar Architect), PO Box 3886, Durban 4000.
Resigned
M A N P Cretikos

Natal University student wins joint first prize in Sixth RIBA Student Competition 1988



Above left: Jabulani gas stop proposal by Chandra Lee. Above right: Chandra Lee, fourth year student at the University of Natal receiving her prize of £1 375 from UIA and RIBA President, Rod Hackney, at the Royal Academy, London, on Friday, 15 July 1988.

This international competition for architectural students, organised by the Royal Institute of British Architects, was set for a very ordinary theme, a "gas stop" or petrol filling station. Devised by Derek Sugden of Arup Associates, he and his fellow jurors, sculptor Anthony Caro; architect Edward Cullinan and engineer Max Fordham; had to assess 376 entries from 35 countries.

Concentrating on the users, Chandra Lee designed her Jabulani Gas Stops as mobile service units which would broadcast music from the roof-mounted loud speakers while dispensing petrol and paraffin in the townships. The assessors were impressed by the "social dimension" of the proposal in tackling a "vast urban problem".

Further recognition for Natal University students include an honourable mention for the submission by fellow fourth year students, Maxine Arthur and Amanda Telford-Smith entitled "Vending Unit", and the submission by second year students Anna Claude, Michael Hatton, Peter Jones, Khotso Moleko and Anu Pather whose submission, "Isidumbu Vuswe Ekufafeni" or "The place where carcasses rise from the dead", was chosen to go on the exhibition at the Royal Academy. The exhibition was open between 16 July and 7 August.

BRICK DESIGN AWARDS

All architects who have designed projects in Natal are invited to compete for the Corobrik/Natal Mercury 1988 Brick Design Awards.

Buildings eligible for entry must have been completed in Natal using clay (face or non-face) or calcium silicate bricks in the period January 1987 to September 1988.

Entries can be submitted in two categories - residential or commercial and public. The winning architect in each category will receive a cash prize of R2 500, an engraved plaque and a certificate.

The awards are organised in consultation with the Natal Provincial Institute of Architects. The judges are Johannesburg architect Mr Willie Meyer and the managing director of Corobrik Natal, Mr Ray Andrews.

A prize-giving function will take place in the Grand Foyer of the Natal Playhouse on November 14, 1988. All entries will be exhibited at the award ceremony and at a public exhibition in the Grand Foyer for the period 14th to 22nd November 1988.

LETTER

Dear Sir

Issue 4/1987 - VARA Studio

We advise that our company was involved as main contractors for the VARA Studio and we note with disappointment that your article pertaining to the VARA Studio in the above issue of your Journal made no mention of our company as the general building contractor.

All the other main contractors involved on the other building projects covered in this issue of your Journal were made mention of and we would be most grateful if this matter could be remedied by highlighting this omission in a future Journal.

Yours faithfully

Giuricich Bros (Natal) (Pty) Ltd

The architects - Vandeverre, Apsey, Robinson & Associates - have asked for an apology to be printed on their behalf for this inadvertent omission. Editor