

From inflatasnakes to radomes

Last month saw North America's largest conference yet on air-supported structures. Toronto architect Peter Goering, one of Canada's leading proponents of air as a building tool, attended the Chicago conference for A/C. The "esoteric" (like Ant Farm's suggestion for an inflatable snake, above left) he says, was touched upon but the main focus was on technical applications. His report: page 8.

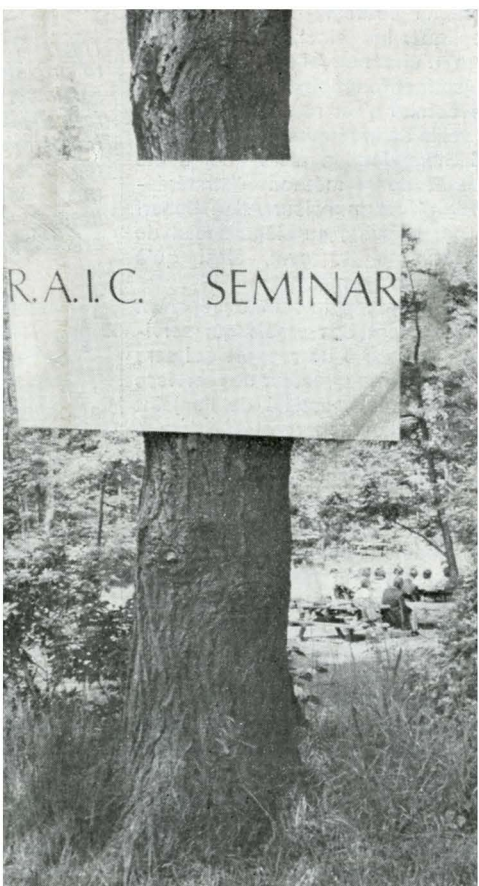
Architecture Canada

NEWSMAGAZINE

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On-site seminars

In spite of the RAIC host committee's hopes to get this year's Assembly "out of the smoke-filled hotel and into the city" the highest attended seminars were at the Inn-on-the-Park (other locations included a downtown church and the U. of T. School of Architecture). The urban ecology seminar (e.g. right) attracted only 40 participants. Assembly report, right, and capsule views of the six seminars, page 2.



RAIC/IRAC

RAIC Assembly, Toronto — where were the architects?

What went wrong? Of the 3,412 architects in Canada, why did a mere 5.4% turn up at this year's RAIC assembly?

Was it that the seminar topics weren't of interest? (They ranged from urban ecology, through socio-psychological considerations, to the architect's relationship to his professional associations.) At least one architect has said he didn't attend because these subjects were of no interest.

Was it that the subjects were too big for the time allotted (or too broad for meaningful discussion)? Was it that the city of Toronto has no appeal to architects from elsewhere? (And are Toronto architects not interested in meeting their colleagues from other cities?)

Are architects more interested in socializing than serious discussion? (Less than 85 out of 400 local architects registered although more attended the cocktail parties.)

Was it that architects didn't read their own news magazine and therefore didn't realize that the assembly was being held at all?

Was it the fact that the Ontario association had held its own convention in the same city just four months before? (375 attended the OAA affair.)

Or are most architects just plain disinterested in RAIC?



The ongoing controversy: people vs. the car. What next?

One of Toronto's more colorful areas, Kensington Market, above, has been saved by the provincial cabinet's decision to stop the controversial Spadina expressway. Toronto architects encouraged by this reaction to public protest are now urging a thorough examination of urban transportation needs. See politics, page 5.

At least, tight budget control by this year's host committee (chaired by Toronto's John Hoag) meant that the convention didn't cost the Institute a bundle (as did the Winnipeg assembly). But both RAIC and the host committee are wondering why the profession stayed away in droves.

An unstated theme

This year there was no official Assembly theme (part of a deliberate attempt to keep the meeting low-key). But there was a pervading, if unstated, theme: Why does RAIC exist at all, and what does (or should) it do for its members? The subject came up in the council meeting which wrestled with the problem of redesigning the Institute (see *opp.*). It was the focal point of the most popular seminar "The Architect and His Relationship to His Professional Associations". And it was a recurring subject for cocktail party chatter.

At least the discussion did not take the form of breast beating as it has done at so many past conventions. Those who did attend were mostly positive. They concentrated on what RAIC could and should do, rather than on what it isn't doing. Even though the Institute's Director of Professional Services, architect Wilson Salter, likened the RAIC to "an old threshing machine working with the machine running but the drive belt unhooked or threshing in many fields and not getting any bushels of wheat", the council seemed generally hopeful about RAIC's purpose. The new president, Jean-Louis Lalonde, emphasized and re-emphasized that RAIC should concentrate on service to the public (*A/C 6/7/71*). And the more vocal attending the architect-association seminar seemed to concur. How best to fill this role, along with the other RAIC functions, is the problem the '71/72 council is having to face. And, as OAA president Frank Nicol warns, "if RAIC doesn't come to grips with things like . . . establishing national standards for registration and synchronizing and coordinating activities . . . it will face a very serious crisis".

Should there be an RAIC at all? Emphatically "yes" says Vancouver architect Bill Leithead, who was president three years ago and this year bows out of serving the national organization after 20 years. He says: "Associations, provincial and federal, are not very strong. But in the meantime Canadian architecture has flourished. Architects who have done service to their communities would not have been able to do so without the back-up and assistance of associations who do the dirty work."

l'Assemblée

Réunions d'affaires, visites, séminaires, activités diverses et réceptions; possibilité de participer, de communiquer, d'échanger, et surtout, à peine 5% des membres se sont rendus à Toronto les 2-3-4

juin pour l'assemblée annuelle de l'IRAC.

Le besoin de se réunir, entre confrères seulement, pour discuter des problèmes de la profession est peut-être maintenant dépassé au profit d'une rencontre pluridisciplinaire?

Un "congrès" dans son essence même est-il chose du passé, ou est-ce seulement la formule qui nécessite d'être repensée?

En notre ère de technologie en constante évolution, où l'éducation détient le premier rang sur la liste des priorités, une semaine de cours intensifs, dans les cadres d'un programme d'éducation permanente, serait-elle plus à la mesure de nos besoins?

Eternelles questions!

Sondages, réévaluation, restructuration nécessaires, auxquels le comité de réception pour l'assemblée Victoria 1972 devra trouver réponse sous peu . . .

Comité spécial de l'IRAC – "Stratégie – design"

Suite à la proposition de M. Henry Grolle (représentant de l'association des architectes de la Saskatchewan au conseil de l'IRAC) pour une restructuration des objectifs et fonctions de l'Institut, le conseil, lors de sa réunion du 14 janvier à Toronto, a mandaté le vice-président Jean-Louis Lalonde, les conseillers Grolle et Butcherd (de l'association des architectes de l'Ontario), le directeur des services professionnels ainsi que l'adjoint exécutif pour étudier ce système "stratégie-design" afin d'en appliquer les principes dans le design d'une nouvelle structure des objectifs et fonctions de l'IRAC.

Le comité s'est réuni à Regina, à la veille de la réunion du conseil du 25 mars dernier, alors qu'il a été instruit de la méthode "stratégie-design" par monsieur Allan Scharf et par la suite, au siège social de l'Institut le 30 avril, ainsi qu'à Toronto le 14 mai.

Les membres du comité préparent actuellement des essais qui serviront de base à un rapport qui sera préparé par le directeur des services professionnels, assisté de l'adjoint exécutif. Le rapport sera présenté au Conseil lors de sa prochaine réunion.

A new design for the RAIC

A scheduled highlight of the June 2 council meeting was to have been the report from councillors working in committee to design a new structure for the RAIC (see above and *A/C 2/1/71*).

While an official report has not yet been prepared, committee members Stan Butcherd, Port Colborne, Ont., RAIC president Jean-Louis Lalonde, Montreal, and Chairman Henry Grolle of Regina have met three times since February and are still working on papers which will form the basis of a formal report. And now Chairman Grolle has made some comments at the meeting that indicate all is not going well. He was at the outset quite confident

that his suggested technique (IDEALS – for Ideal Design of Effective and Logical Systems – it's been used by several government agencies in Saskatchewan) would help RAIC "rethink its aims and objectives and sort out organizational difficulties." But he now seems a great deal less enthusiastic.

Opinion has apparently differed among committee members not only in matters related to the Institute but in degree of confidence in Grolle's system. Lalonde told council point blank that it "has limitations. The aim of the RAIC," he said, "has already been stated in the objectives as set out in the charter".

Grolle agrees that the prime function of the RAIC is "to create a demand for architecture . . . through education" but differs on how the Institute should determine the best way to do this.

His position is that architects are not experts in organizing of organizations. Therefore experts should be called in to help. "As professionals ourselves," he says, "we have no alternative but to engage consultants or else stand to be compared with contractors who feel they do not need the services of an architect for their projects".

Lalonde and Butcherd, says Grolle, both feel "we should do the work ourselves". Discussion will continue at further council meetings.

Opinion

Assembly seminars: how six architects saw them

This year the host committee aimed to provide, through the scheduled seminars, the opportunity to informally discuss a broad range of issues relating to the architect and the urban environment. How did this work, what were the highlights? A/C asked one architect attending each session to report:

1

The topic was 'systems approach', the question was 'what is an architect?'

After more than two hours of lively interchange the panel and the 75 architects attending this seminar realized that they were really trying to answer the most pressing question facing our profession today. What is an architect?

The panel was very well balanced and well versed in their respective fields. Phillip Bobrow, chairman of the panel, an architect with Descon/Concordia, was the pragmatist . . . the systems approach starts with user requirements. Peter Kluchard of Jespersen Kay Systems Ltd. was the manufacturer . . . your building might well fit into our system. He was able to fortify his points with a most interesting and informative field trip to his plant and to one of their apartment buildings under construction. Roger

Hallenbeck of the State University Construction Fund of New York was the user . . . systems construction has a long way to go before we can use it. Martin Schulmeister, an aeronautical engineer with the TRW "think tank", was the technician . . . technicians make up the team.

The systems approach is inevitable and it's here. It is the method of structuring input and content in order to meet the objectives of user requirements: suitability; larger volume; lower costs and better quality. In order to do this the rational judgment of many specialists is required. The results of this approach do not necessarily lead to a system, or component form of construction. What is the architect's position in all this? What should he do? The answer according to the seminar is obvious. He should do whatever he can do better than anyone else. This could be in any role. At the present time the architect is the best person to develop concept and translate user requirements. He can't run the whole show.

In order for the architect to take a more meaningful role in the team or systems approach to building he must reassess his whole decision-making process.

D. Geoffrey Armstrong, Toronto

2

Socio-psychological considerations – a tantalizing brush over an important subject

The lure of a subject architects all feel they should know something about, even if they don't understand the turgid jargon that tends to enshroud it, attracted over 50 members to the seminar on socio-



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psychological considerations. To the credit of the participants, they rarely slipped into jargon as they explained their esoteric studies.

George Stern, professor of psychology at Syracuse University, reminded us that every individual has his own conception of space. Behavioral scientists are still only playing hunches; it is essential that they work together with architects. There is not yet any literature which tells us how to create environments to achieve specific purposes.

Helen Breslauer, a sociologist, also supported interdisciplinary study, but warned that we must beware of losing identity and all becoming generalists. Only a few sociologists are concerned with the physical environment, but those who are can assist architects in programming, and with research, particularly in the evaluation of buildings in use.

Kiyoshi Izumi, architect and teacher, is attempting to distil the available knowledge on how man forms his concepts of his environment. He is concerned that the increasing density of world population imposes more and more restrictions upon mankind, with the result that men will tend to live on an intellectual level in conceptual space, a completely antisocial tendency. Izumi draws ingenious models to demonstrate these ideas, and to explain their design implications.

Ben Hoffman is a research associate at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. He described how computer techniques can be used to analyze attitudes and thus assess probable reactions before new programs are implemented.

The subsequent discussion took off from Izumi's thoughts. It was obvious that new ways of satisfying men's environmental needs must be found, and that many disciplines must participate in the search. The seminar was a tantalizing brush over a complex and important subject.

Anthony Butler, Hamilton

3

Advocacy planning — no one asked the architects to take over

This important but sparsely attended seminar, in addition to advocacy planning, also dealt extensively with the closely related subject of citizen participation.

Although doubts were expressed by some panel members as to the need for advocacy planning, the panel with assistance from the floor established that citizens in the wealthy parts of the city always have had advocacy planning and are involved in the shaping of their neighbourhoods, whereas the poor citizens have in the past been treated in a patronizing manner and information has often been kept

from them. They do not understand the planning process and they need education and information. They need to know alternatives. People will accept changes if these are good for their neighbourhood as well as changes against the community, if these are adequately explained.

Several problems regarding citizen participation today were identified. Public meetings between citizens and planners do not work well and the latter feel abused. There is also a risk that power might fall into the hands of small groups or politicians not representative of the people in an area.

It was stated that nobody has elected, or asked, architects to take over advocacy planning. Citizens do not need architects and planners; they need assistance from political strategists to obtain power. Problems in the cities are political, not professional, and the politicians who are trained for this task should deal with the citizens. A parliamentary system to run cities may be needed, each politician representing smaller areas and fewer people in the city than now.

The main future objective must be the participation of all citizens in city planning. Fragmentation into small groups which will not yield must be avoided as this may tear the community apart.

As an advocacy planner, the architect must change his "I know what is best for everyone" attitude. His main function must become one of a strategist. The architect must interpret the needs of a neighbourhood and its people and he must help translate ideas of the poor into a presentable form.

Erland Gustavs, Toronto

4

Urban ecology: development vs. the environment

Robert Dorney, Dept. of Environmental Studies, Waterloo University, Roy Tinney, Federal Dept. of Fisheries and Forestry (to be Dept. of the Environment) and Vic Rudik, Ontario Energy and Resources Management, joined with approximately 10 shirt-sleeved architects under a warm, June, Ontario sun in Serena Gundy Park (education in its most wonderful sense) to talk about "Urban Ecology". Although urban ecology was left ill-defined, the informal discussion highlighted some interesting points. It went like this:

Roy Tinney: acknowledges that there is no policy on either urbanism OR ecology at the Federal level, although there is much interest. The questions of how the government should be involved are under study as well as a process for a Federal policy. Four embryonic organizations already exist: Urban Secretariat under address, CMHC, Dept. of Economic and Regional Expansion, and Dept. of Fisheries and Forestry (soon to be the Dept. of the

Environment). The objective is to produce planning, regulating, financing, research, and information strategies. A Federal program for mass education in the urban ecology and environmental issues is also imminent.

Robert Dorney defined urban ecology as the interaction of man and environment; and the role of an ecologist as an environmental manager. Downey saw Ontario's present regulations as "protective" in nature and not really effective. He also cautioned against overly regulatory legislation and saw important positive contributions that could be made by the private consultants. The talk was illustrated by examples of his work in the Guelph and Waterloo areas where, through ecological mapping and impact studies, sensitive ecological alternatives for development have been initiated.

Vic Rudik outlined the Provincial interest in the field of ecology and acknowledged the preventative or protective nature of present legislation. It is difficult to get environmental analysis from development proposals and it is only through the right for final review that the province is able to maintain some kind of environmental check.

The open discussion that followed centred mostly on development vs. the environment. (No developers present to defend their point of view.) Peter Sheppard, President of the RIBA and the Dean to be at the University of Pennsylvania, questioned the present system of land development with the illustration of the new English system which determines *where one can develop* as opposed to when one *can not develop*.

Whether it was due to the isolation of this beautiful setting or the magnitude of the subject (without specific definition of issues) the discussions remained generally superficial.

The program, however, is to be commended and as a constructive suggestion, I would recommend that in the future seminars of this nature, which have immediate public interest, could be staged in public arenas with public participation. We need not also *learn* in isolation. The value of the public seeing at first hand our concerns is obvious.

Barton Myers, Toronto

5

Urban affairs: showed up diversity of views

The seminar on urban affairs dealt with a subject of enormous dimension and complexity. The discussions revealed quite a diversity of views primarily concerning the nature of urban problems, the causes, and the procedures required to solve them. Mahlon Apgar, speaking from the point of view of one involved in private new town development, emphasized the fact that efforts should be focussed on problem solutions, on the appli-

cation of the knowledge we already have of urban problems, rather than on more research. In this context, he felt that the public sector could assist developers in four ways:

- (1) in communicating societal goals to developers
- (2) in land assembly
- (3) in financing, and
- (4) in offering procedural assistance during the development process.

Ying Hope, a senior municipal politician from Toronto, put the finger on architects, planners and developers as those primarily responsible for the unsightliness of the urban environment. He felt that the developers' selfish goal of obtaining a maximum dollar return on investment at any "legal" cost, was socially unacceptable. He attacked municipal politicians who equated success with the size of developments and the dollar value of building permits. He emphasized the view that architects should not work solely as agents for developers but instead should acknowledge their responsibilities to society and take a direct hand in shaping the environment by running for a political office, by working at the citizens' level in advocacy planning role, and by infiltrating the political structure.

The assistant secretary in the new Federal Ministry of Urban Affairs and Housing, Harvey Lithwick, prefaced his remarks by saying that his real experience was in asking questions and in putting together the machinery necessary to interpret the answers to those questions, rather than in the implementation of programs. In contrast to Apgar, Lithwick felt that while we may recognize urban problems, we certainly do not understand them. Lithwick went on to describe the new Ministry of State for Urban Affairs and Housing. This agency is intended to have a strong research base and will, in addition, undertake policy analysis as well as dealing with implementation, that is with the real world organizations necessary to create the kinds of physical, social and administrative environments we require.

Don Taylor from the Department of Municipal Affairs of the Ontario Government was in agreement with Lithwick's view of the need for valid problem analysis and quoted: "It hurts you most when what you know ain't so." One of the key questions asked by the audience was whether they felt the Government agencies would impose their policy guidelines on private developers. Don Taylor's reply was the most direct when he said that a greater degree of government involvement in the implementation of urban policy was occurring and that for every dollar invested by the private developer, there was a matching, and frequently much higher dollar investment, from the public sector. Clearly, the implication was that the public sector had more to lose if the developer made a mistake than the developer had in fact himself.



The only major zoo of the '70's: ecology is a keynote

Spring 1974 is target date for the opening of Phase One of the Metropolitan Toronto Zoo, which, say the architects, will probably be "the only major zoo to be founded in the 1970's".

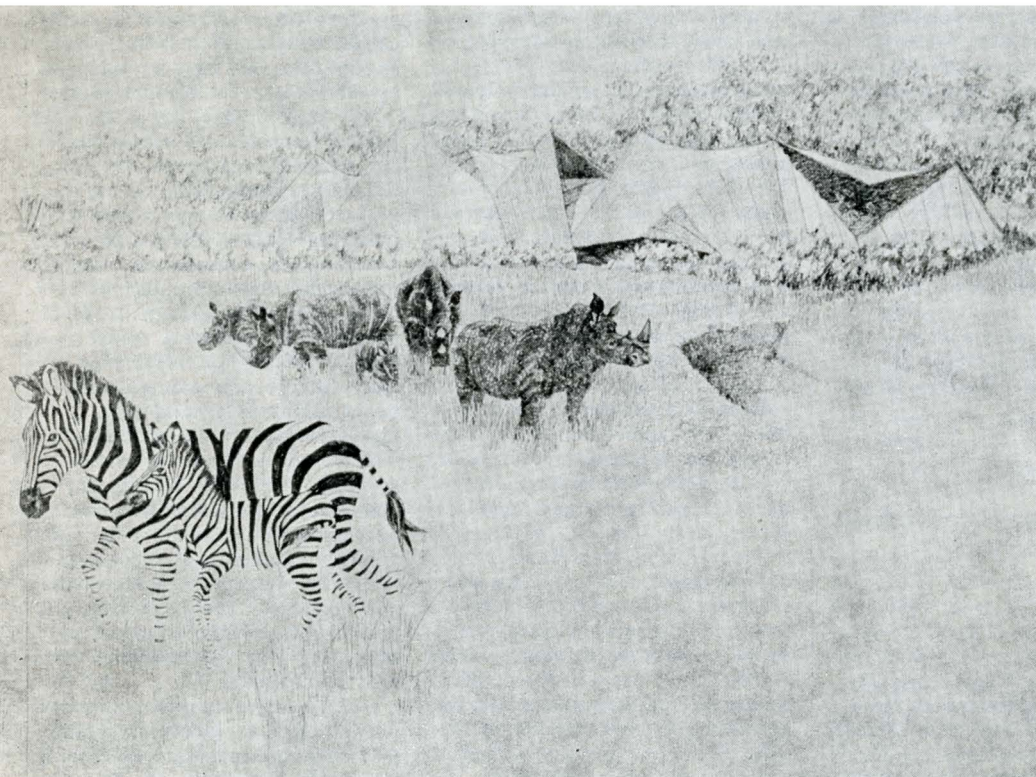
The new zoo, to be 25 miles north-east of downtown on 300 acres of tableland and 400 acres of valley including a portion of the Rouge River, is being designed architecturally by R. J. Thom, Clifford and Lawrie and Crang and Boake. Johnson, Sustronk, Weinstein and Associates are landscape architects.

This special group is incorporating into its plans the latest thinking in zoo architecture. At a time when preservation of life on earth has become a matter of profound concern, the zoo is being designed to help "increase an awareness of the interdependence of all forms of life". Visitors (the zoo will be geared to accommodate 50,000 on peak days) will be able to see animals in a natural environment with "the least awareness of their enclosure. Whenever possible", say the architects, "they will be seen in the context of the flora and fauna of their natural habitat". Exhibits with ecological themes will supplement these real-life displays.

Animals will be grouped according to zoogeographic regions. Each of five groupings will be introduced by a pavilion housing explanations of the special qualities of each region, as well as those animals requiring a controlled environment. Each continental area will reflect the special characteristics of the region it represents. Pavilions will be clustered around a walk referred to as the "core walk", which will encircle a central wooded hill.

More than one visit will be necessary to see the zoo in its entirety and three ways of seeing the zoo will be possible: a visit to the pavilions only, by way of the core walk; a visit to the pavilion and paddock of a single continental area; and the "domain ride" through the Rouge Valley to see the extensive herds of Canadian animals. The zoo is being promoted as a year-round attraction.

Cost of the first phase will be \$20-million. Future plans include an addition of the World of Oceans and auditorium-exhibit space.



Lithwick added that surely what everyone was after was a comprehensive, rational context within which to work, and that clearly the community would set out these rules, not the private developer.

J. M. Plumb, Toronto

6

The architect and professional associations, national, provincial and local: the day of the protectionist association is over

The relationships and lines of communication between the different

levels of professional associations, and between architects and these associations, were among the topics discussed at this seminar. But the role of the professional himself, and by implication the very existence of his professional organizations, was also opened to critical scrutiny.

There was a clear consensus that the day of the protectionist professional association is over. This is so not only because the legal base for such activity is being questioned by government, but because the members of these organizations are themselves rejecting the protection formerly afforded them.

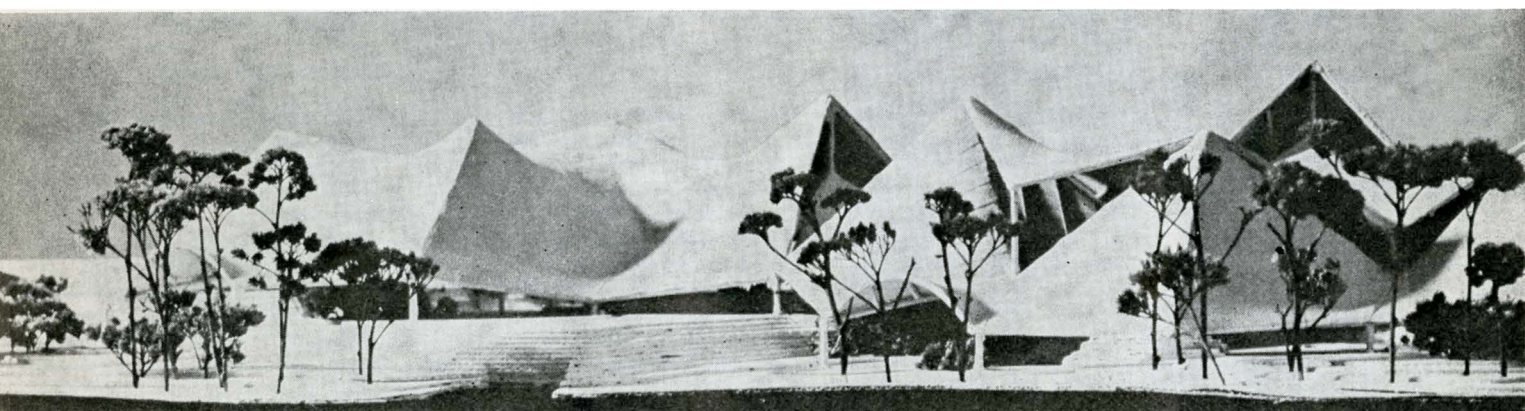
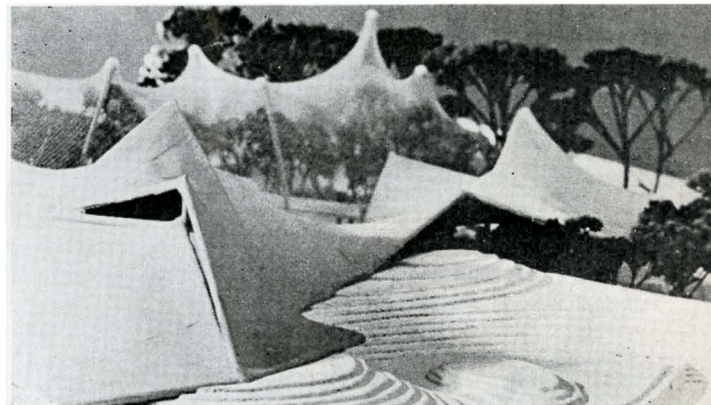
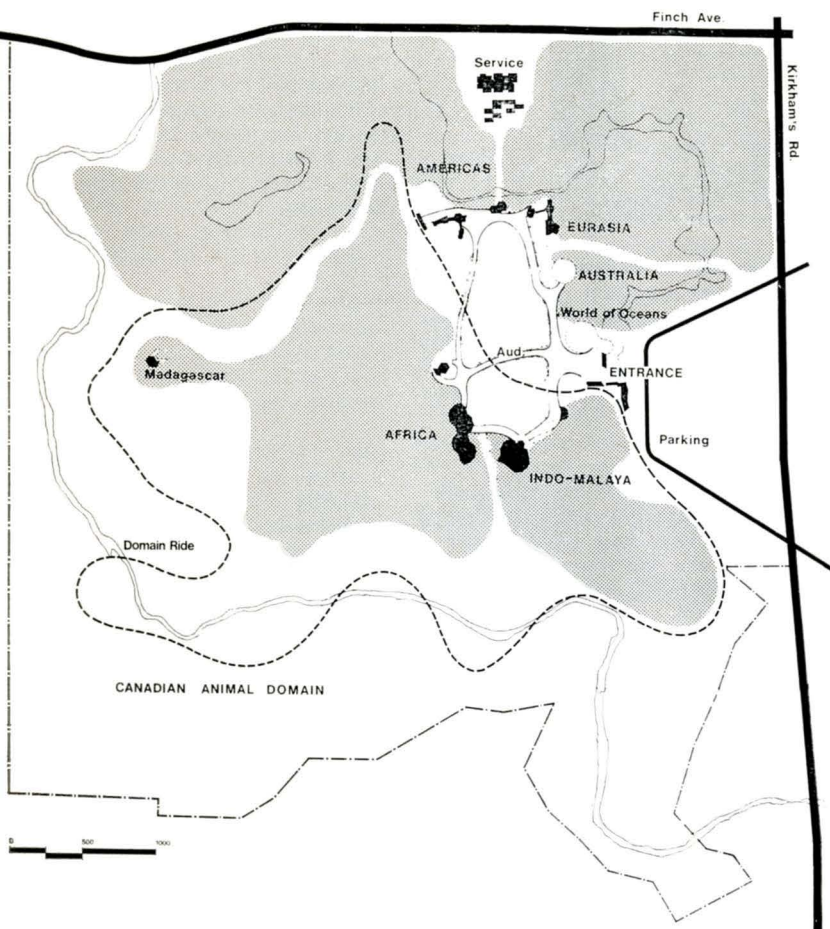
Architects are seeking new ways

of carrying out their responsibilities to society at large. By activities such as the Urban Action Committee in Toronto and the Urban Design Clinic in Vancouver (see p. 6) they are making their voice heard in the community. And they find, somewhat to their surprise, that the community is ready to listen to them.

If professional associations exist at all they should be there to make available education and research to their members. They also provide a forum where members can meet to discuss subjects of common concern. The most effective organizations may in fact not be those who limit their ranks to individuals with

specific professional qualifications, but rather those that can call on a wider range of interests for their membership. The use of the term 'architect' might well be broadened to include any number of related skills all concerned with the built environment.

The professional associations that we do have at present are, however, very specific about their areas of responsibility. The power structure between the RAIC, the Provincial Associations, Chapters and Members was carefully analyzed. Real authority rests with the Provincial Associations, and to them members (if they know what is good for them)



owe first allegiance. The RAIC is only a creature of the Provincial Associations, and is not something ordinary MRAIC's have any dealings with.

It is not altogether irrelevant to suggest that members-at-large know this. They showed it by staying away in large numbers. In the second largest city in Canada, only 5½% approximately of the RAIC's membership attended the three-day Assembly. It is to be hoped that Council and the Provincial Associations take serious note of this before the RAIC disappears altogether.

Alastair Grant, Toronto

POLITICS

The voice of the people

"I do not believe that the evidence as to good planning practice should prevail over the evidence of the rate-payers as to their wishes . . ."

So said a report from vice-chairman D. Jamieson of the Ontario Municipal Board, which this month turned down a would-be mobile home park developer's appeal to have the board overule a City of London refusal to grant him a permit (A/C, 14/5/71).

Coming hard on the heels of Ontario premier William Davis's widely-publicized halting of the

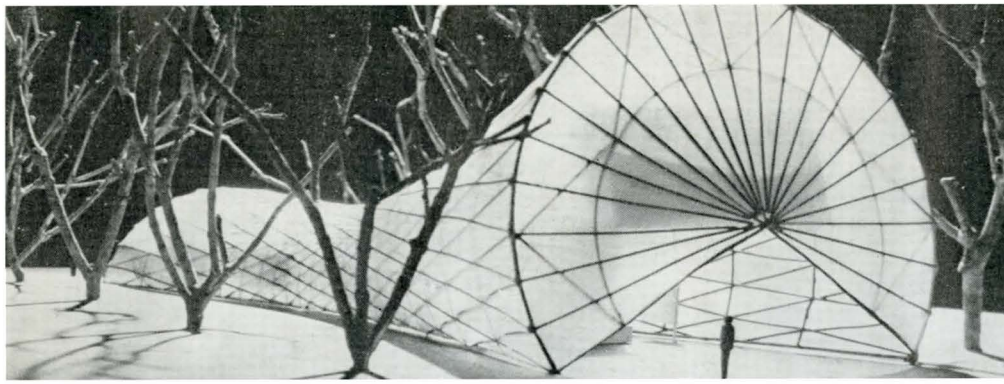
Spadina expressway, the OMB ruling went virtually unnoticed. But it underlines the real message of Davis's action: people power has really become a force to be reckoned with.

The expressway's sudden end was largely unexpected, even among the most ardent 'Stop Spadina' activists. One of these, the Urban Action Committee of OAA's Toronto chapter quickly wrote Davis "to express our support of your recent decision." Committee chairman Irving Boigon's letter also offers the "hope that the decision will mean the end of planning for one individual mode of transportation in

isolation from others and without due consideration of the environmental implications."

Planner Hans Blumenfeld (who will be opening speaker at the Town Planning Institute of Canada's annual conference in Ottawa July 4-7) long an advocate of the expressway. He calls the way it was halted "proof of the colonial mentality predominant in Ontario . . . the freeway has become a symbol for everything that is wrong in society.

"The mass media," complains Blumenfeld, "are cleverly using this symbol to deflect attention from the real reason for the 'urban crisis,' — the policy of exploitation, super-



Australian Institute speaks up on pollution

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of architectural associations in Australia, the Royal Australian Institute of Architects sponsored last month an international conference on the effects of pollution. To coincide, the RAI A mounted an exhibition (in a Seidler-designed pavilion) in the heart of Sydney. The pavilion, left, is a hyperboloid space frame of steel and woven plastic.

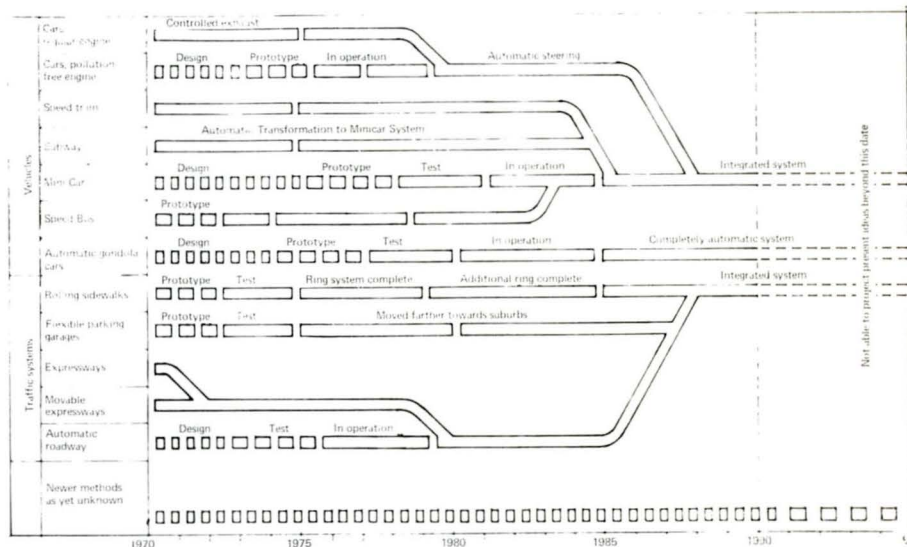


\$25,000 Reynolds award for aluminum buildings

This year's international Reynolds award goes to three Zurich architects, Walter Custer, Fred Hochstrasser, and Hans Bleiker for design of a machine factory in a Swiss village near Zurich. Through an expanse of sunscreen-shaded glass, workers are provided with a sweeping panorama of their Alpine Valley.

A plan for public transportation in Berlin

The fact that traffic deaths in Germany are reaching "near civil war proportions" has prompted a study predicting Berlin transportation modes for the next 20 years. By 1990 (see chart right) Berlin, if on its toes, could have a totally integrated three-part transportation network. Expressways? They should be constructed so that they can be either moved or phased out when obsolete, the study says.



armament and war pursued by the ruling corporate establishment."

If the political overtones of Blumenfeld's remarks sound extreme, it is worth reflecting that his voice is not a lone one. And that implies a whole new set of problems.

PEOPLE



Hastings



Sert

Robert F. Hastings, José Luis Sert and Peter Shephard received honorary fellowships at the RAIC Assembly convocation in Toronto June 4.

Hastings, president of the American Institute of Architects, is currently a member of the Michigan Housing Authority and on the Boards of Directors of Alma College, the Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce, the Engineering Society

of Detroit and the Building Research Advisory Board. His firm has received numerous design awards from national, state and local organizations.

Sert, founder and principal of Sert, Jackson and Associates, Cambridge, is an AIA fellow and a fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, London. He is a member of the Boston Society of Architects, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the National Institute of Arts and Letters, the American Institute of Planners, the Royal Institute of British Architects (honorary).

Shephard, who was made a fellow of the RAIC last year but was formerly inducted at this year's convocation, is president of the Royal Institute of British Architects. His firm's landscape and town planning work includes landscaping of part of the Festival of Britain South Bank Exhibition in 1951 and more recently the new plan for the London Zoo. He has written two books and contributed to many broadcast programs on architecture and landscape architecture and has been a professor of landscape architecture at the University of Pennsylvania since 1959.

Murray Polson, executive director of the Architectural Institute of British Columbia, will leave the position he has held since 1968 this summer. Mr. Polson, a fellow of the RAIC, a former partner in the firm of Polson and Siddall, and author of a book on everyday architectural practice, succeeded Warnett Kennedy in the AIBC post. A new executive director is being sought.

Toronto-based, Australian-born architect John Andrews is the first non-American to receive the architectural award of the National Academy of Arts and Letters. The award was presented recently in New York in recognition of his efforts "to solve the planning problems of this century". Scarborough College, praised by experts from the New York Museum of Modern Art five years ago, was the start of Andrews' international reputation.

THE PROFESSION

Storefront architects

The Architectural Institute of British Columbia has set up a free architectural advisory service in Vancouver

which AIBC pres. Fred Hollingsworth describes as a way of getting closer to the people.

The new program has its roots in the success of the Design Clinic introduced by AIBC at the Vancouver Home Show earlier this spring. The press gave it enthusiastic coverage and people thronged to get free advice. The ongoing Design Clinic is now held every Saturday morning and is manned by volunteer architects and architectural students. Appointments are necessary and advice ranges from help in choosing paint colors to working on complex environmental problems.

In many cases, says Hollingsworth, solutions can be provided "then and there". In others, the person is referred to an architect or a specific group of architects for help on an hourly or project basis.

Hollingsworth calls the service "a step toward better communication with the community and with the individual in that community. In the past," he says, "our profession, like others, has grown away from the people. Just talking to an architect has almost been considered by many a privilege of the corporations and the well-to-do."

ECOLOGY

Are the plains really for Indians?

No architect could disagree that one of his prime responsibilities is concern for the quality of life. Knowing how to discharge this responsibility is something else again.

Many architects who do indeed care are quietly keeping their own house in order; others are taking modern-day society to task more vigorously. A recent convert to this new breed of activist-architects is Douglas Cardinal of Edmonton, who also happens to be a Canadian Indian.

His concern is that both nature and people are suffering from the advances of our increasingly technological society. The problem, he says, is that "the real user is seldom the client".

While Cardinal's attention has recently focussed on an isolated Indian problem in Alberta, what he is really protesting is "that people's rights are being taken away over and over again".

The particular case that Cardinal has proceeded to document and publicize has been the subject of controversy in Alberta for a number of years. It involves Indian use of a piece of provincial parkland in the Kootenay Plains area, a "traditionally sacred land for the Indians". Several years ago, fed up with the effect suburban reserve living was having on his people, Chief Robert Smallboy moved his family to the Kootenay Plains wilderness to get away from it all. (Cardinal qualifies the word wilderness by adding that both a dam and highway have been added and bulldozers crawl through for exploration.)

The case came to the fore again this spring when it became evident that proposed legislation (requiring permission for stays in the park over 30 days) would force Chief Smallboy and his Indians back to the reserve. In a bid to stop this legislation, Cardinal set out to collect as much support as he could and, he reports, "by and large response was excellent". Many organizations and individuals sent letters (including then-RAIC president Gordon Arnott). But legislation went through anyway.

The most absurd thing, says Cardinal, was the argument that "the Indians (with messy camps) and hippies were detrimental to the park". This completely ignored the fact that right below the hill from Smallboy's camp, the whole ecology of the park has been destroyed for exploration".

Cardinal says still more letters might help. His address is 202 Kingsway Ave., Edmonton.

Happy Earth Day, Montreal

Earth Day, established last year by ecology-minded individuals in the U.S. to jog the public mind about worldly responsibilities, passed this year, both in Canada and the U.S.,

without too much public notice – except in Montreal.

Architects there, through the Montreal Society, not only took it upon themselves to promote Earth Day (which fell this year on May 14 and 15) but in the process accomplished some far-reaching results.

The idea for active Earth Day participation came about as the Society searched for new ways to get involved in community affairs. (The MSA has always been one of the more free-wheeling groups of architects and was the first in Canada to involve not only architectural grads and students in its society but non-architecture people as honorary members). The MSA has also recently been taking a stand on public issues: speaking up about both its concern for the extension of Montreal's East-West Autoroute (A/C 1/11/71) and CP's plans to demolish Windsor Station (A/C 2/15/71.)

What MSA accomplished through its Earth Day planning was unique in that activities were coordinated not only through the provincial association but throughout the entire building industry. Says the Earth Day Committee co-chairman, architect Walter Mace (who works with Descon-Concordia), "our aim was to get the whole building industry to be prime movers of Earth Day".

Co-operation, he reports, was excellent. He adds that MSA's close relationship with the other professional associations in the industry helped, "the only two groups not to participate were the Montreal Chapter of the Engineering Institute of Canada and the Montreal Construction Association".

By Earth Day, says Mace, over 60 groups of people – professionals, students and public – were working together, backed up with services and materials provided by many companies. The result: a city-wide blitz demonstrating concern for the environment. Activities included a bicycle rally, a folk mass, paper drives and clean-ups. Information was distributed by pamphlets and poster. The only note of irony in the whole celebration was provided by Mother Nature herself – high winds prevented erection of three plastic exhibition bubbles in Place Ville Marie Square.

But more important than just Earth Day, says Mace, are the future implications. Not only has this been a step to increasing public awareness but a step toward strengthening the bond between building community members.

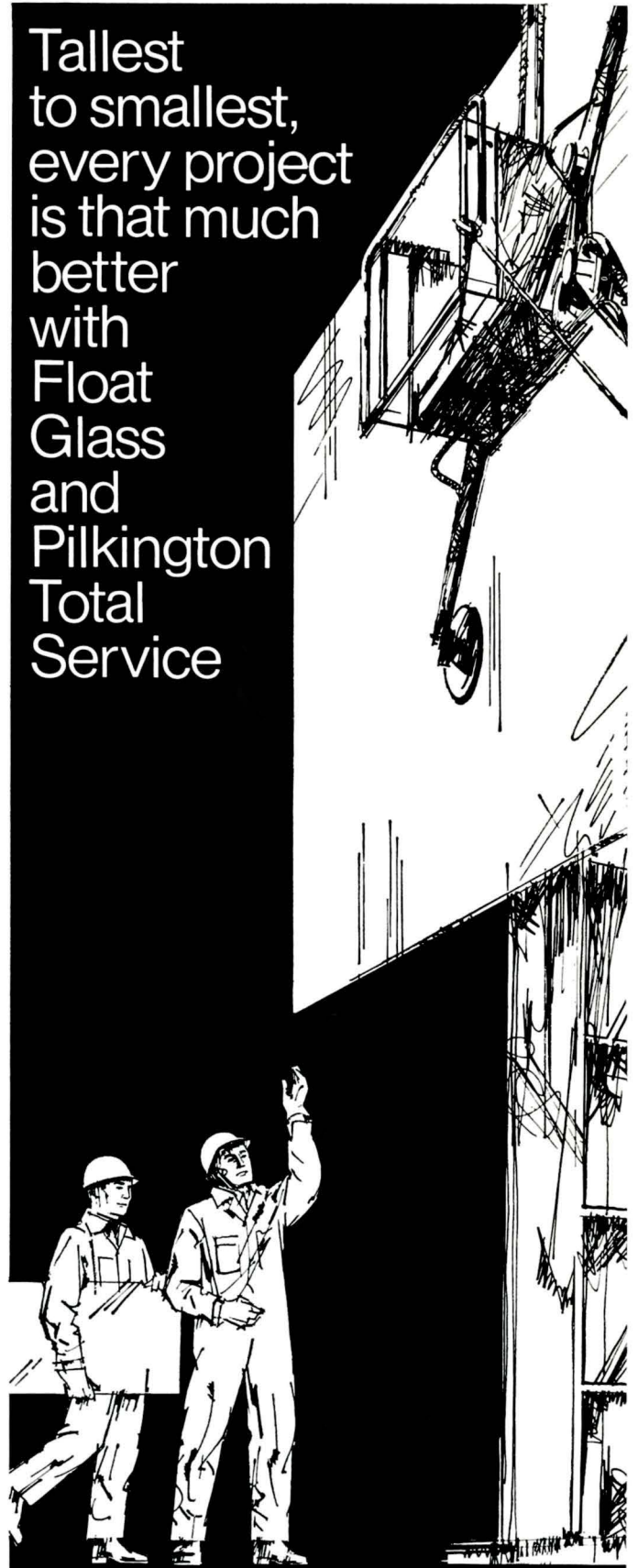
AWARDS

Seven students win CMHC scholarships

Seven students in Canadian schools of architecture will have the opportunity this summer to work at CMHC headquarters in Ottawa and travel, courtesy CMHC, to the UK.

The seven are winners of this year's CMHC scholarships made

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available each summer to students planning to enter their final year of architectural studies, and are awarded on the basis of scholastic achievement and marked interest in housing.

Students chosen this year are Thomas H. Morton, Vancouver (University of British Columbia); Jon Murray, Centreville, N.S. (Nova Scotia Technical College); Ronald Rayside, Montreal (McGill University); Marc Letellier, Sillery, Quebec (Université Laval); Jacques Fortin, Saint-Lambert, Quebec (Université de Montréal); Albert Gerry, Vancouver (University of Manitoba); Robert Hill, Don Mills, Ont. (University of Toronto).

This year's tour leader is Professor E. Lindgren of the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Manitoba.

It will be the first time in this program the touring students will travel outside the North American continent, this time to get personally acquainted with environmental architecture in the United Kingdom. Before and following the tour the students will work for a total period of ten weeks for CMHC.

OUTLOOK

Pneu technology

A two-day forum on the state of the art in the design and development of air-supported structures (bubbles) was the topic of a two-day conference in Chicago last month. Peter Goering reports:

The sponsorship by 15 manufacturers of the hardware of air-supported structures under the auspices of the Building Research Institute of the National Academy of Sciences, Washington, D.C., tended to weight the discussion on the side of technical considerations. Although the contributions of the free thinkers in the applications and experimentation of imaginative uses of these structures were minimized, discussion did wander into areas such as the social impact of nomadic pneumatic structures. For me, there was too much emphasis on such topics as puncture and tear performance of membranes, and fire-proofing problems of cables in cabledomes.

It was the students who brought human warmth, vitality, and hope to the whole forum. They saw how divergent were the levels of discussion, and attempted to achieve the vitally needed mix by surrounding delegates with a symbolic rope. But even this failed to reduce the polarity.

Alan Green, Secretary-Treasurer of Educational Facilities Labs, speaking at the opening day luncheon, was the first to point out the possibilities of air structures for cheap, changeable spaces, by referring to the Antioch College student project (*A/C 15/3/71*). With the help of Goodyear Tire and Rubber, a grant from EFL, and considerable assistance from Beckman and Howard Yarme (RDI) a \$300,000 "enclosure" has been designed to house

a college unable to cope with its present facilities space squeeze.

Other inventive speakers at the forum were Chris Dawson, from the Los Angeles based CHRYSALIS group, who spoke on cybernetic responsive environments, and Howard Yarme of the RDI showing office landscape approach to environments within a total pneumatic environment.

The best buy at the forum was a publication entitled "Ant Farm - Inflatacookbook. A pneu age techs book", a pot-pourri of do-it-yourself inflatables. [a taste of Inflatacookbook appears on page 1]

Peter Goering, Toronto

SEMINARS

Liability loss control

The third annual RAIC and Canadian Engineers Professional Liability Insurance seminar series is already underway across the country.

The last two seminars are being held in Halifax, June 24 (Board of Trade Club, Scotia Square, 2.00 p.m.) and Toronto June 29 (Inn-on-the-Park, 2.00 p.m.). Topics include "complete analysis of the professional liability policy", "how insurance of others can affect the consultant", and "the attorney speaks to the consultant".

MISCELLANY



... Here's a new one for the ecology buffs - a plastic casket especially designed for milady. The shell-shaped coffin is already under production by Sunray Boats of Victoriaville, Quebec, in white with metal handles. Production will soon start in "pale purple" no less. U.S. undertakers, according to a report in the latest *Fiberglas* newspaper, are interested in the shells which are "lighter and less costly than traditional coffins". What next!

... A "total reclamation" plant to treat all city garbage (and eventually sewage too) is planned for Kingston, Ont. Glass, metal and paper products will be extracted and returned to manufacturers for re-cycling. All other refuse, including plastic will be combined with sewage plant sludge into a compost which will be distributed free to local farmers.

... Last year approx. 100,000 electric room air conditioners were sold in Canada, but fewer than 2,000 gas ones. Toronto-based Consumers' Gas hopes to switch the odds in its favor, thanks to an experimental unit now in the final stages of development. "If it works out, we'll look for someone in Canada to make it ... every house in Canada with a gas furnace is a potential customer," says Consumers' president Joseph C. McCarthy.

karelia news

The real function of this column is to provide a means of communication with all architects in Canada. We are trying to keep you informed of our activities, plans and aspirations.

We are full of new, exciting ideas and want to try them all and make them successful. In order to make our dreams become reality we need your help.

One of our recent loves is the "Karelia Cook Shop" which some of you have seen take shape and develop during the past months. It is now becoming a reality and we are continuing to develop and expand this area as it is our aim to make our cookshop the best anywhere.

We have started to introduce certain food products into the "Karelia Cook Shop" and we are very excited about the possibilities of expanding this area to become a true gourmet shop, where you will be able to obtain all the utensils and ingredients for the preparation of fabulous feasts. We are working closely with France and will soon be importing a large assortment of prepared foods, ingredients and herbs from there.

Bon Appétit!

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Practice Notes

Peter McCutcheon/Architect, announces the opening of a practice at 2240 Mountinside Drive, Burlington, Ont. 639-3031.

Book Service

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