

As the home of America's first president, Mount Vernon bears an almost mythical status that continues to draw visitors from around the world. Mount Vernon is more than just a built biography of George Washington, however; it also represents a remarkable and important chapter in the annals of historic preservation.

The exhibition *Saving Mount Vernon: The Birth of Preservation in America*, co-organized by the National Building Museum and the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, documents the ambitious and ultimately successful effort to purchase, stabilize, and gradually restore the house and grounds. The exhibition is open at the Museum through September 21, 2003.



Mount Vernon

An American Icon

This issue of *Blueprints* includes several items inspired by the Mount Vernon exhibition. In the following article, William Seale provides an overview of the house's history and changing meaning over time. Mr. Seale is an independent historian with expertise in architectural preservation and restoration. He is the author of *The White House: History of an American Idea* and *Temples of Democracy: The State Capitols of the USA*.

Saving Mount Vernon: The Birth of Preservation in America is made possible by Ford Motor Company, which marks its Centennial in 2003.

ABOVE: Drawing of Mount Vernon, by William R. Birch, 1801. All illustrations for this article courtesy of Mount Vernon.

FEATURE

by William Seale

The author and the Museum thank Barbara McMillan and Dawn Bonner for their assistance with this article.

Our American fascination with the dwellings of the famous, if not exactly unique, is close to being so. Jefferson is not as easy to imagine without Monticello; Jackson without the Hermitage; even to an extent Elvis without Graceland. Sometimes called “biographical houses,” these are more than sites, such as that of Mozart’s house in Salzburg, where a reproduction now stands, or John Hancock’s in Boston, which has been gone since the Civil War began. They are places that survive, are filled with things known to the former owners, and hold for us some mystical connection with the persons who lived there.

Mount Vernon was the first. Washington loved his house, but apart from bequeathing it to his kin, he made no provision for preserving it. Mount Vernon comes to mind at once when one thinks of Washington, indeed more quickly than the severe monument on the Mall in the city that carries his name. The house progressed from home to revered public relic to symbol of the man in a short time. Already by the time of his presidency, Washington’s “Mount Vernon” was a familiar place name in the American lexicon. After his death, literally in the final days of the 18th century, his house came to represent him—the closest relic to the reality of the man. William R. Birch made a drawing of the mansion in 1801, which became the basis for many other representations of Mount Vernon, both in prints and on chinaware. Along with published illustrations of the house, versions of the image were hand-worked in silk threads by successive generations of schoolgirls.

When transportation to the national capital grew more convenient in the decade following the War of 1812, Mount Vernon became a regular destination for the educated

visitor to the city of Washington. By steamboat, the trip could be made in one day, from the Navy Yard and back, or planned even as an interesting two-day excursion.

The old house has always had its powerful appeal. Even the dependably critical architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe, visiting there fresh from England while Washington was still alive, gave it good marks. Washington had created his house, adding various parts to the nucleus of a story-and-a-half cottage built by his father. Lee and Robert Dalzell describe the genesis of the house in *George Washington’s Mount Vernon* (1998), a fascinating account of improvements over 30 years that led to the house we know. The very development of the architecture of Mount Vernon reflects the character of Washington, the builder who believed in achieving his goals by practical steps based upon logic.

Standing on its high riverbank overlooking the Potomac River, the house received ever-increasing numbers of visitors through the 1830s and 1840s. The family finally had to move out, less because of the crowds than the burden created by genteel visitors who required dinner or some other hospitality. By the later 1830s, Mount Vernon’s visitors, both mighty and less so, walked through rooms largely vacated of their contents. In that decade the old earthmounded tomb was replaced by a new one, as Washington had wished, but the house itself



ABOVE RIGHT: For two centuries, Mount Vernon’s image has been used in myriad ways, such as on this 19th-century coffee cup.

ABOVE: Washington and his family entertain a youthful Lafayette. Thomas Oldham Barlow, after Thomas Prichard Rossiter and Louis Remy Mignot, 1860.

was barely maintained.

The idea of the man of affairs leaving the rough and tumble of public life to spend his last years in the peaceful pleasures of farming was a concept Washington exemplified, like the Roman statesman before him, Cincinnatus, who bent his sword into a plow. The agrarian ideal, which is by no means lost to Americans today, was in its full glory in the mid-19th century, and growing levels of wealth led urban dwellers to build country retreats that suggested agricultural estates even though they did not depend upon the produce of the land to survive. Mount Vernon fit well into the ideal, but its true power came from its history as the home of Washington. Among the hosts of visitors who journeyed there were distinguished guests and foreigners. In 1859 a youthful Prince of Wales planted a tree at Washington’s tomb, in company with President Buchanan and the whole political power structure of the capital.

By the time of the prince’s visit, a threatened Mount Vernon had been rescued by Ann Pamela Cunningham and the Mount Vernon Ladies’ Association of the Union, which still protects it today. It was the wish of Miss Cunningham that the house be left as Washington had known it, the scene of his private life. Mount Vernon entered the period of the Civil War under the ladies as a national relic on Southern soil, and the story of its survival through the war is an inspiring one. During wartime, Mount Vernon was a major attraction to the droves of northern tourists visiting Lincoln’s capital. On the way downriver, these pilgrims stopped in Alexandria overnight to admire a real Southern town—the only one available for them to see during wartime. They walked through Christ Church, where Washington worshiped, then for contrast took a tour of the former slave “pens,” which the Union soldiers had enhanced with iron bars to augment their appeal. A visit to Gadsby’s Tavern was a must (it was there that the Birthnight Balls had begun, celebrating General Washington in the same way they had honored King George in colonial times). Then on to Mount Vernon, to spend the afternoon walking from banquet room to death room to tomb, and relaxing on the sagging river porch, before returning home.

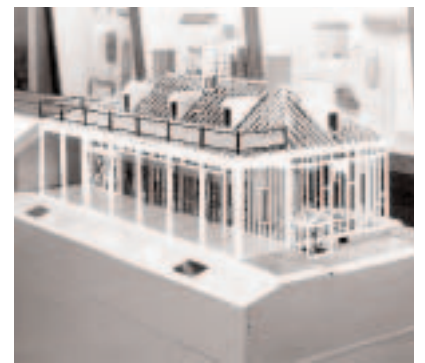
Something happened to Mount Vernon over the period of the war and it emerged a different place. Always attached to the biography of Washington and his achievements, Mount Vernon came to seem a physical link between the new nationalism and the Founding Fathers. As the war created for Americans an emotional sense of Union, so George Washington now became a part of that passion, a new ideal of nationhood entirely different from what had gone before. The stub that was the Washington Monument in those days was no rival to Mount Vernon. From the war on, the image of the house and its colonnade symbolized George Washington and, to an extent, America itself.

The ladies of Mount Vernon now held not just a hero’s house but a place of extreme, indeed almost sacred, national importance. They listened to the best advice of architects and businessmen (one idea was to replace it with a copy made of marble), but stood fast in Miss Cunningham’s original directive that Mount Vernon remain as Washington had known it.

The iconography of Washington and Mount Vernon became vast. As the 20th century dawned, the image of the house and the man entered commercial endorsement, appearing on jars of preserved apples, starch bottles, soap boxes, and every other sort of product. Washington’s portrait came to be a familiar feature of every American schoolroom until probably the 1960s, when it seemed inappropriate to the slick new “modern” school buildings and, with the Ten Commandments, went into storage. Mount Vernon became a much a part of American iconography as the White House, which has only superseded it through television



ABOVE: Mount Vernon Ladies’ Association Council on the portico, 1873.



This model of the wooden “bones” of Mount Vernon is a physical essay on the genesis of Washington’s house.

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Architectural History's Debt to Historic Preservation

by Dell Upton



RIGHT: First Parish Church, Hingham, Massachusetts, originally built in 1681. All photos for this article courtesy of Dell Upton.

Mount Vernon has been faithfully restored to replicate as closely as possible its condition during Washington's lifetime. In many cases, however, preserved landmarks can yield misleading or incomplete impressions of the eras and people they ostensibly represent. This article examines the ways in which the politics and processes of historic preservation influence our attitudes about, and understanding of, architectural history.

Dell Upton is currently the Harrison Professor of Architectural History and Historical Archaeology at the University of Virginia. He has written five books and numerous articles on American architectural history, earning him the Society of Architectural Historians' Alice Davis Hitchcock Award, among other honors.

In a 1923 story, the historical novelist Kenneth Roberts told of a fictional antiques picker who discovered a treasure trove of old furniture and household goods in the Whipple House, a 18th-century dwelling unaltered and unemptied since its first construction. In a series of visits, the antiquarian gradually relieved the elderly resident of all of his heirlooms in return for increasing quantities of gin. On his final foray, he bought the house's structural beams, and as he drove away the Whipple House (a play on the name of one of New England's most famous colonial houses) collapsed into its cellar. Shortly thereafter, a wealthy tourist bought the ruins to restore the old house "to the exact state in which it was before its collapse."

The sense of reverse priorities conveyed in Roberts' story aptly represents the relationship between architectural history and historic preservation in the formative years of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The buildings that comprise the canon of the architectural-history literature and the images that we may remember from textbooks and lectures often owe as much to the accidents of survival or to preservation for non-architectural purposes as they do to historical research and analysis. This is particularly true of the architecture of pre-Revolutionary America. Houses and public buildings that were saved for patriotic or filiopietistic—that is, relating to an extreme reverence for one's ancestors—reasons were "restored" before much systematic historical research had been undertaken. In their restored forms, they then guided subsequent research and restoration.

Early architectural history in America was shaped by the aesthetic ideas of the 18th century and the stirrings of patriotic sentiment. The link between the two was the 18th-century idea of associationism, a claim that each place or era had a characteristic visual expression and that people could learn to associate visual forms with the characteristics of the societies or eras that had first produced them. Visits to ancient sites, wrote one 18th-century commentator, were wonderful ways to understand history, "for ruins . . . teach it far



ABOVE: Fairbanks House, Dedham, Massachusetts ca. 1637.



ABOVE LEFT: Whipple House, Ipswich, Massachusetts, before restoration.

ABOVE RIGHT: Whipple House, Ipswich, Massachusetts, after restoration.

better than books, in that they affect the mind through the imagination and by sentiment.”

This Enlightenment-based belief in the embodiment of cultural history in artifacts inspired the earliest attention to American architecture. Historical societies and organizations were formed in most of the former eastern-seaboard colonies early in the national period—Massachusetts’ historical society was founded in 1791, New York’s in 1804, and Pennsylvania’s in 1825. All took it upon themselves to rescue those relics whose owners were willing in this way (in the words of the diarist William Bentley) “honourably to dispose of . . . what they feared to destroy and dared not disgrace.” Among these items were architectural fragments. The Rhode Island Historical Society, for example, acquired a casement window from Newport’s 17th-century Coddington House in 1842, having failed to preserve the entire house eight years earlier.

During the same era, antiquaries, architects, and journalists also began to explore, record, and collect the architectural remains of pre-Revolutionary America. The pages of the *New-York Mirror* in the 1820s and 1830s were filled with stories of the architectural remnants of 17th- and 18th-century New York. The budding architect Alexander Jackson Davis contributed a series of images and short histories of the city’s remaining Dutch urban houses, nearly all published as the buildings were about to be demolished. In Philadelphia the pioneering historian John

Fanning Watson collected oral and physical information about the city’s early architecture and often asked informants to draw vanished buildings and streetscapes.

Despite these efforts, the buildings that have entered standard American architectural histories have been those that preservationists *did* manage to rescue. And the vagaries of the preservation process have affected the historiography. For example, a sense of New England’s peculiar mission and of the importance of the first Puritans led the parishioners of the First Parish Church of Hingham, Massachusetts, in 1792 to rescind an earlier decision to demolish their 1681 meeting house. As a result, the “Old Ship” survives as our only example of a 17th-century Puritan religious structure, and it has appeared in countless surveys of American architecture as a “typical” meeting house. Its singularity has assured its iconic status even though modern research emphasizes the variety of forms assumed by the earliest New England meeting houses and the Old Ship’s atypicality, and even though it was altered twice in the 18th century and underwent a 1930 restoration that left it with a hybrid appearance that doesn’t resemble either 17th- or 18th-century meeting houses very closely.

The flurry of historic preservation activities in New England after the Centennial, culminating in the founding of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities in 1910, was the context for Roberts’ story of the Whipplefish House. Town after town established historic-house museums to commemorate early colonists. Often these early preservation efforts saved major examples of American architecture that might otherwise have been lost. The Fairbanks House (ca. 1637), in Dedham, Massachusetts, was made a museum in 1903 for its association with a family that produced politicians, actors, and the inventor of the Fairbanks scale, but to historians it stands as the earliest surviving Anglo-American building. It has afforded modern scholars a mass of information about the origins of American building technology and domestic life that would otherwise be unavailable. Other buildings, such as Ipswich, Massachusetts’s Whipple House (namesake of the Whipplefish House), Salem’s John Ward House, and Topsfield’s Capen House, have

become standard only because they came to light first. These buildings were restored before much research had been done, with leaded-glass windows installed in symmetrical 18th-century window openings, sober, “Puritan” dark-stained clapboards, and other anachronisms. As the houses of local elites, they are larger and better built than most of the houses in the region were. Nevertheless, these buildings most vividly represent early New England for most students and indeed for most architectural historians.

The result of all this was a kind of circular reasoning: buildings preserved and usually restored before much research was done became the touchstones that guided subsequent research. This was most evident in the historiography of the early South. Only a handful of large brick houses survive from 17th-century Virginia and Maryland—Bacon’s Castle (1665) in Surry County, Virginia, is the most notable—while many other 18th-century houses, such as Virginia Beach’s Adam Thoroughgood House, were erroneously attributed to the 17th century. In contrast to early New England, the 17th-century South appeared to be a land of genteel planters living in well-appointed brick houses. In part, this perception was a consequence of the disappearance of comparably grand 17th-century brick buildings in New England (such as Boston’s Peter Sergeant or Province House, whose remains were discovered encased in another building in 1922 and demolished), leaving only New England’s large but plain wooden houses (made to appear plainer than they originally were by the drab black stain inevitably applied by restorationists) as points of contrast. More important, archaeology since the 1970s has revealed that the houses (and many of the public buildings) of the vast majority of 17th-century southerners were tiny, badly built structures that lacked even elementary foundations, and that they therefore disappeared quickly and completely. The review of archaeological reports dating back to the early 20th century reveals, in retrospect, that archaeologists had been excavating these kinds of structures for three quarters of a century but, blinded by the examples of the Bacon’s Castles and Thoroughgood Houses, had been unable to understand their significance.

Without the efforts of 19th- and early-20th-century antiquaries many of our most significant architectural monuments would not have survived. Yet because the visible and the tangible are so much more compelling than the written or the imagined, it is important to acknowledge that early preservation and restoration have shaped our understanding of our architectural history in ways that historians and archaeologists have difficulty reworking. 🗨️



ABOVE LEFT: John Ward House, Salem, Massachusetts, built 1684, before restoration.



ABOVE RIGHT: John Ward House after restoration.



LEFT: Capen House, Topsfield, Massachusetts.



FAR LEFT: Engraving of Bacon’s Castle, Surry County, Virginia, 1665.



LEFT: Bacon’s Castle today.

A House for a (Future) President

Saving Mount Vernon: The Birth of Preservation in America tells the story of an iconic presidential estate and the heroic effort to conserve it, both as a museum and as an artifact in itself that reveals much about the life of George Washington. Other presidential houses—Jefferson’s Monticello, Franklin Roosevelt’s Springwood mansion in Hyde Park, New York, or even Abe Lincoln’s humble log cabin—provide equally important insights into the personalities and political beliefs of their occupants.

But what might the private house of a future president look like? How might it differ from the typically grand presidential estates that we tend to associate with great leaders of the past? Two inventive architecture firms

accepted an invitation from *Blueprints* to explore these questions through a “sketch problem”—a quick, conceptual design exercise primarily intended to elicit broad ideas rather than specific, detailed architectural proposals.

We are grateful to Stephen Atkinson, of Studio Atkinson, and Huff + Gooden Architects for producing the following “sketch” designs, which may look deceptively well developed thanks to the computer-generated drawings used to illustrate them. Brief project descriptions by the architects accompany their hypothetical design proposals.



A House for a (Future) President
by Huff + Gooden Architects

It is virtually impossible to design a house for a future president without being political. Our proposal is shaped around the premise that the president is an African American from the East Side neighborhood of Charleston, South Carolina. The house in this proposal represents his “retreat,” albeit located in what is presently a depressed, inner-city area experiencing gentrification and all the trappings of modern urban life. The essential aspects of the proposal—the selected site and the integration of the house into the neighborhood—have political overtones.

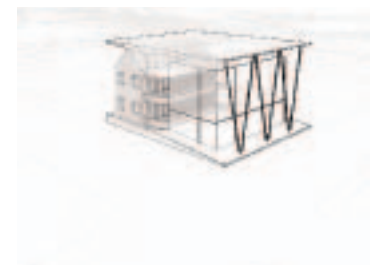
The site for the project stands at an important intersection, and incorporates elements of an installation by African American artist David Hammons created for the 1991 Spoleto Festival. The traditions of the African American community’s use of public space and the nature of social intercourse within this community are profoundly important and play a major role in the conceptualization of the house.

The project calls for a new “living room,” a transparent building that serves as the primary public space of the president’s house. The transparent structure is appended to an existing Charleston “single house,” which holds the family’s private quarters. Associated program elements, such as Secret Service facilities, press facilities, guest quarters, etc., are located in other, renovated houses dispersed among the regular, private houses in the surrounding neighborhood.

Although security remains paramount in the consideration of the president’s house, in this case the neighborhood itself provides that security. It derives from the relationship between neighborhood and native son, at once self-regulating and reaffirming.

This idealized circumstance about the relationship of the body politic to the heart and soul of the disenfranchised is the *raison d’être* for the proposal, with all its hopes and aspirations.

Huff + Gooden Architects, llc is an architecture and urban design firm based in Charleston, South Carolina, which has earned several design awards from The American Institute of Architects. Principals Ray Huff and Mario Gooden have both taught at various architecture schools.



TOP: A composite image showing the house in context.

ABOVE: A diagram of the new “living room” appended to a traditional house.

BELOW: View of the transparent public space of the house.

Picture This...

Windows on the American Home



Office of War Information Collection, Library of Congress

The National Building Museum has made a tradition of presenting exhibitions that examine seemingly mundane building elements to reveal surprising layers of meaning. So it is with *Picture This: Windows on the American Home*, which is on view at the Museum until August 11, 2003.

Windows are easily overlooked—though “throughlooked” might be a more apt word to coin—in favor of that which is seen on the other side. Yet windows themselves play an important role in how we perceive such vistas. They not only frame views, but also influence, whether subtly or dramatically, our perceptions of light and color. Sometimes, through a combination of transparency and reflectivity, they create hybrid visual compositions, melding inside and out into a single image, like a double exposure on film.

In domestic environments, windows assume special significance. As the “eyes of the house,” they provide occupants with a direct sensory connection to the outside world, while also suggesting something about the character of the house’s inhabitants to passersby. The careful control of this two-way relationship is a hallmark of the American home. Curtains, shutters, shades, screens, and other devices are among the most noticed elements of a typical house, and their modulation throughout the day or from season to season constitutes an ongoing ritual that reveals much about individual identity and social structures.

It seems quite natural that windows have assumed a metaphorical status. As the most prominent points for the transmission of light, air, and sound between a house’s interior and the outdoors, windows are laden with symbolism. An early television owner might have considered the newfangled appliance “a bright new window overlooking the world parade,” to quote an advertisement from 1947, and of course, today the very word “windows” immediately conjures up for most Americans an image of a computer screen. Intriguingly, while actual windows can provide as much of a physical barrier as a solid wall, in metaphorical terms, they are almost always regarded as symbols of hope, openness, and opportunity.

Picture This ends with a prototypical item that suggests a possible future in which the physical and the metaphorical window come together. It is a device that allows a viewer to alternate easily between traditional, transparent glass and a computer screen bearing information or entertainment. It seems that an “eye of the house” just winked. 🐣



ABOVE: Connecticut family in their living room, 1980. Photographer: Neil Selkirk

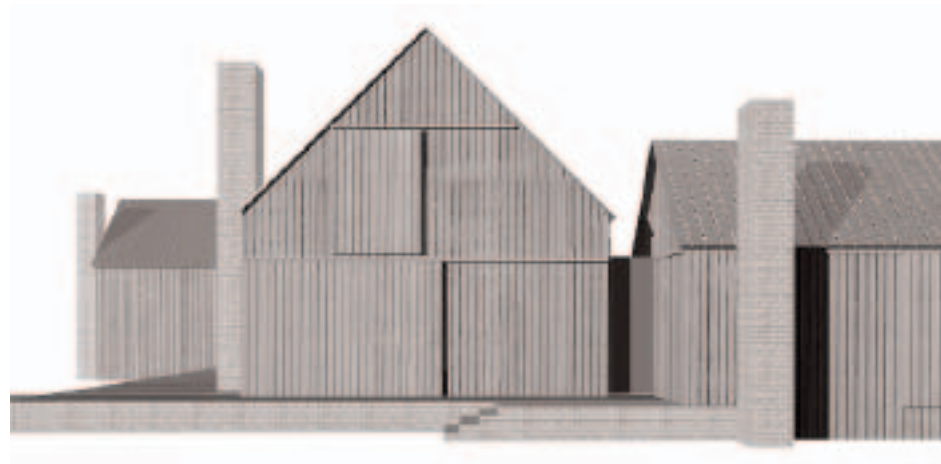
LEFT: Mrs. Harold Garrity, suburban housewife, Yonkers, New York, 1942. Photographer: Arthur Rothstein

Picture This is exclusively sponsored by Andersen Corporation, celebrating 100 years in 2003.

RIGHT: Computer-generated drawing showing the sliding panels that protect the house when unoccupied.

BELOW: A sketch plan of the house.

FAR BOTTOM: The house is an assemblage of simple forms reminiscent of rural vernacular structures.



A House for a (Future) President
by Stephen Atkinson

This house is conceived as a hypothetical country place for a president to retreat from the demands of office. Architecturally, such a house must achieve a delicate balance, providing a rustic retreat while still reflecting the stature of its very distinguished occupant. This paradox mirrors the dual demands often placed on our presidents: to be noble and refined without losing the appreciation and capacity for the simple, the common, and the ordinary.

Famous presidential houses of the past, such as Mount Vernon and Monticello, were inspired by European precedents, ultimately yielding a transplanted language that was interpreted through local American traditions in a distinctive, compelling, but sometimes naive way. In my sketch proposal, I am trying to recall this particular blend of European classicism intermeshed with the anonymous, agrarian, and vernacular forms associated with the American built landscape. The house therefore uses disparate sources of inspiration, such as the multi-faced Greek temple—like the Erechtheion on the Acropolis in Athens—and the well-known profile of the typical American barn. The main body of the house is raised on a masonry plinth to lend greater dignity to what is a relatively informal arrangement of very simple forms.

The house is of wood frame construction and weathering-wood cladding with masonry chimney structures. There are sliding shutters over all of the windows and doors, so that when the president is not in residence, the complex is not only physically protected, but also reduced to the purest possible visual composition. The result is a presidential estate that, ironically, achieves a stately quality through extreme simplicity and humility.

Stephen Atkinson is principal of Studio Atkinson in New York. His work has received a Progressive Architecture Award, and has been published in Architecture, Wallpaper, and Architectural Review, as well as in other journals and books. 🐣*



Building Images



ABOVE: U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colorado, from the exhibition *Building Images*.

ABOVE RIGHT: Pacific Highway U.S. Port of Entry, Blaine, Washington. Thomas Hacker Architects, Inc.

At the National Building Museum, *Building Images* is made possible by the Museum's F. Stuart Fitzpatrick Memorial Exhibition Fund and the Ferris Foundation.

The idea of architectural photography as a distinct branch of a broader art form is now taken for granted. In the early days of the medium, however, buildings were typically photographed in an uninspired, documentary fashion like most other inanimate objects. The resulting images revealed little about the ineffable qualities of the architecture, such as light and shadow, visual depth, and texture.

In 1929, Ken Hedrich and Henry Blessing founded a photographic studio in Chicago that would revolutionize the ways in which buildings were seen and recorded. The studio's photographers shot structures from unconventional perspectives, exploiting unusual compositions and dramatic lighting to convey as strikingly as possible the essence of the architect's design intent. Such innovative techniques endeared the firm to many prominent architects of the mid-20th century, including Frank Lloyd Wright, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, and the Saarinens. Today, the firm of Hedrich Blessing still flourishes, its remarkable longevity attributable to a highly effective apprenticeship program and a succession of talented, prolific photographers.

The National Building Museum's current exhibition, *Building Images: Seventy Years of Photography at Hedrich Blessing*, presents 80 of the studio's most stunning photographs. These images, many of which are part of the Chicago Historical Society's archives, illustrate how professional architectural photographers have actively shaped the public's understanding of the built environment. The exhibition is on view until July 27, 2003. ☺



Of Our Time 2002 GSA Design Awards

In 1990, the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) re-instituted its biennial Design Awards program to recognize outstanding federal projects in various categories, including Architecture, Graphic Design, and Workplace Environment. The National Building Museum has regularly exhibited the winning projects from the various installments of the program.

This year's exhibition, *Of Our Time: 2002 GSA Design Awards*, derives its title from a spirit that pervades many of the winners in the most recent round—the desire to create federal buildings that take full advantage of up-to-date technologies while simultaneously reflecting a sensitivity for local culture and architectural character. For example, the design team for the renovation of the José V. Toledo U.S. Post Office and Courthouse in San Juan, Puerto Rico, successfully integrated two historic buildings from different periods—1914 and 1940—to yield a thoroughly modern facility. In a project honored in the Interior Design category, the adaptive re-use of the Tariff Building in Washington, D.C., which the federal government leased to a private firm for conversion into a hotel, the architects meticulously added new building elements while minimizing their physical impact on one of the capital's most historic structures.

Other featured projects in the exhibition include the inventive design by the firm of Morphosis for a new courthouse in Oregon that challenges traditional conceptions of judicial architecture. *Of Our Time* will run through October 19, 2003. ☺

A Tribute to Daniel Patrick Moynihan

by Carolyn Brody
Chair, National Building Museum

The National Building Museum lost a great friend, and our nation a remarkable public servant, when former Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan died on March 26. Admired by liberals and conservatives alike, Senator Moynihan was a rarity—a true scholar-politician, whose erudition was rivaled only by his wit, and whose candor routinely infused fresh air into stale debates.

While Senator Moynihan's interests and areas of expertise were famously diverse, there can be no doubt that architecture and urban design occupied a special place in his heart and mind. Perhaps this was because he saw the public realm as a natural adjunct of public policy. "Architecture is inescapably a political art," he said during a symposium at the Museum in 2001. The senator understood that buildings—be they national landmarks or private houses—both reflect and promote societal values, and he believed that government and private industry shared responsibility for creating successful and attractive communities.

It is not surprising, then, that Senator Moynihan was a prominent advocate for the establishment of what eventually became the National Building Museum. He was also the author of "Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture," a document that, among other positive influences, provided the philosophical foundation for the U.S. General Services Administration's much-praised Design Excellence Program. It was also Senator Moynihan who was the most outspoken proponent of the revitalization of Washington, D.C.'s Pennsylvania Avenue, and who later practiced what he preached by moving into one of the elegant new residential buildings built along the rehabilitated boulevard.

The National Building Museum was, I dare say, ahead of the curve in recognizing Senator Moynihan for his advocacy of design excellence, presenting him with the Honor Award in 1989. He went on to receive the Thomas Jefferson Award for Public Architecture from The American Institute of Architects in 1992, and the Heinz Award in Public Policy in 1999. In 2002, the senator was one of six recipients of the Chrysler Design Award, a prize that has also gone to star architects such as Frank Gehry and information-age gurus like Apple founder Steve Jobs. Consider this for a moment—a bespectacled, bow-tied politician receiving an award normally associated with trendy designers and denim-clad techno-wizards. It is a testament not only to the senator's support of high-quality design and planning, but also to his intellectual depth and breadth. In fact, it is curiously easy to imagine Senator Moynihan chatting comfortably and animatedly with just about anyone regarding just about anything.

Senator Moynihan was fortunate to have a true partner in life—his wife, Elizabeth. Liz was a member of the National Building Museum's Board of Trustees from 1995 to 2000, and during that time, she consistently proved that the senator was not the only intelligent and insightful member of the Moynihan household. The trustees and staff of the Museum extend heartfelt sympathies to Liz and her family. We shall all miss Pat Moynihan.



ABOVE: Senator Moynihan at a National Building Museum symposium, 2001.



BE&K

Since 1998, BE&K has supported the National Building Museum's mission through membership in *The Corinthians*. A 30-year-old international design-build firm, BE&K employs engineers, project managers, and other professionals. The company's projects include chemical and natural gas processing facilities; manufacturing plants for automobiles, paper, wallboard, and pharmaceuticals; and power plants. The company also builds wireless communications and telecommunication solutions, as well as resort hotels, office buildings, universities, stadiums, and other diverse environments—from aquariums to theme parks.

The National Building Museum is grateful to BE&K for its support.

New Trustees Join Museum Board

The National Building Museum's board of trustees recently elected the following new trustees:

Christopher Dorval is president of Dorval Strategies, a Washington-based firm that provides strategic communications, media relations, and marketing services to commercial and public entities. He is also affiliated with Burton-Marsteller as a senior counselor. Dorval previously served in the



White House as director of communications at the National Economic Council and in other capacities, and was appointed by President Clinton as vice president of communications at the Export-Import Bank. An adjunct professor at George Washington University, Dorval received his undergraduate degree from Georgetown University and a master's from Harvard University.

Thomas C. Leppert is chairman of the board and chief executive officer of



The Turner Corporation, the leading general builder in the United States. Before joining Turner, he served as trustee of the

Estate of James Campbell, which has over \$2 billion in real estate assets. He is also a past vice chairman of Pacific Century Financial Corporation and former CEO of Castle & Cooke Properties, Inc. Mr. Leppert, who graduated from Claremont McKenna College and earned an MBA with distinction from the Harvard Business School, was a White House Fellow in 1984. He is currently chairman of the Greater Dallas Chamber of Commerce.

Eric Thorkilsen has been with AOL Time Warner and its predecessors since graduating from college. Currently president of This Old House Ventures, Inc., he was asked to start up *This Old House* Magazine while also serving as launch publisher of *Martha Stewart Living* and as president of Martha Stewart Television. He previously served as director of development for Time Warner, Inc., and as associate publisher for *People*. Thorkilsen, a graduate of the PMD program at the Harvard Business School, holds an undergraduate degree in English from Hamilton College, and is a connoisseur of 19th-century literature.



With Gratitude

The Museum thanks the following individuals, companies, associations, and agencies for gifts of \$250 or more received from November 2002 through April 2003. Some of the contributions listed below are in partial fulfillment of larger pledges.

\$100,000 and above

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Ford Motor Company
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The National Building Museum thanks Andersen Corporation for supporting a major exhibition on the defining role of windows in

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“Andersen Corporation is proud to be the sole sponsor of the National Building Museum’s exhibition *Picture This: Windows on the American Home*,” states Donald L. Garofalo, chief executive officer of Andersen Corporation. “We are very pleased to have worked with the Museum to bring *Picture This* to the public. We hope that people will better understand how windows have evolved through technology and design and come away with a better understanding of the past, present, and future of windows.”

Andersen, which celebrates its centennial in 2003, developed and introduced the first factory-made window frames, was the first to make a complete window unit ready for installation, and pioneered the use of vinyl in windows and frames. Three years ago, Andersen started Project Odyssey, an advanced research and development program that looks at how technological, anthropological, environmental, and cultural trends will shape windows in the future.

In late March, more than 200 guests attended the opening preview of *Picture This*. Senior executives of Andersen Corporation and three generations of the Andersen family participated in the festivities, which included a lecture by the exhibition’s historian and Yale University professor of modern architecture, Sandy Isenstadt. The lecture was followed by a reception in the Museum’s Great Hall.

Picture This is on display at the Museum through August 11, 2003. In late October, a traveling version of the exhibition will open at the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul.

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in the later 20th century.

While the reproduction of the house, or versions of it, appeared already in the last quarter of the 19th century in both exterior and interior architecture, it was the 20th century that gave nearly every town of any size a Mount Vernon. Alf Landon had one in Topeka. Delores del Rio had one in Mexico City.

The durability of Washington the hero takes him into mythical realms two centuries after he lived. His house keeps his reality and had it not survived, one can only wonder what bogus splendors it would acquire in our minds’ eyes. It prevails, however, as it really was, and is preserved with all its inconsistencies, oddities, imperfections, and its glory, keeping a very human picture of a man who might otherwise be lost to most of us in the clouds. ☺

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