



International Archive of Women in Architecture

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
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IAWA Spotlight

WENA DOWS

Wena Dows was born in the California Central Valley on April 1, 1928.

She decided to go to the University of California at Berkeley (UCB) because that is where all her family went. However, she decided NOT to study architecture because her older sister had studied architecture. Wena decided to study mathematics instead. After a couple of years she realized that she did not want to be a mathematician, so she started casting about other departments at UCB. She took Architecture 1, and, in Wena's words, "This is work? This is FUN!" She transferred to architecture, doubled-up on her course load, took one extra year to complete her studies, and graduated in 1950 with a bachelor degree in architecture.

She married after graduation, just as one was supposed to do back then. She worked four years for an architect and consulting engineer while her husband finished his Ph.D. She bore three children, and then gradually began her practice. From 1957 her children and her practice grew until it was, "Super Full-Time."

As an architect, Wena has never lost her feeling of gratification and excitement to see her creations grow into three dimensional reality. She prefers small buildings to large ones because people who live and work in small buildings are grateful for whatever she can do to make their lives better. Wena is sensitive to her clients, and she always listens to them. "I don't have a style. I just try to do what I do well," she says.

Wena's oldest daughter recently earned her California architecture license. So with Wena's older sister (Sally Stan of Lafayette, California), Wena and now her daughter, there

are three woman architects in this family. In Wena's words, "You can do it all."



A house remodel by Wena Dows.

OLIVE CHADEAYNE

Olive Chadeayne was born on February 9, 1904, in Ossinign, NY to a family of French Huguenot origin. When she was eleven years old, her family moved to Van Nuys, California.

To the surprise of her parents, she declared that she wanted to study architecture when she enrolled at the University of California in Los Angeles. Because the architecture program was discontinued at the university, Olive transferred to UC Berkeley where she received her Bachelor of Arts (1926) and Masters Degree (1927).

On trying to find her first job, Olive encountered many difficulties because she was a woman. After forty application letters, she finally got a job with a small firm, Pierpont and Walter Davis in Los Angeles. From then on, she did not experience any discrimination in finding employment although the depression and World War II had considerable impacts on her career and her ability to work as an architect.

Her early work was mainly residences and small institutions such as schools, libraries

and a post office. In 1938, after working with Lilian Rice on Rancho Santa Fe in Southern California and with her encouragement, Olive started her own practice. Since the time of war was not a good climate for a small architecture firm to go into business, she went into teaching and taught house planning in the College of Home Economics at Cornell University. During the war, she was "drafted" for production illustration at Lockheed in Burbank, CA. However, Olive resumed her own practice in Van Nuys after the war and also worked for other architects, including Edla Muir. In the early 1950's, working for Daniel, Mann, Johnson and Mendenhall in Los Angeles, she became experienced in specification writing for schools. This expertise broadened with other jobs and culminated in writing specifications for the Bank of America highrise in San Francisco for four years. Olive retired officially in 1970 but continued to work part time for a few

(continued next page)



A watercolor drawing by Olive Chadeayne made as a student at University of California at Berkeley. (One of a series.)

(Olive Chadeayne continued)

years with SOM and Wurster, Bernardi, and Emmons.

As a student in Los Angeles, Olive joined Alpha Alpha Omega to meet other women architects and became an active member in a variety of activities in this organization which today is known as the Association of Women in Architecture. On invitation of a colleague, she joined the AIA in 1944 and was on the membership committee. After her move to San Francisco, she enjoyed working on the AIA Code Committee.

Olive Chadeayne lives in Tracy, California, and recently donated her extensive holding of architectural drawings to the IAWA.

by Inge Horton

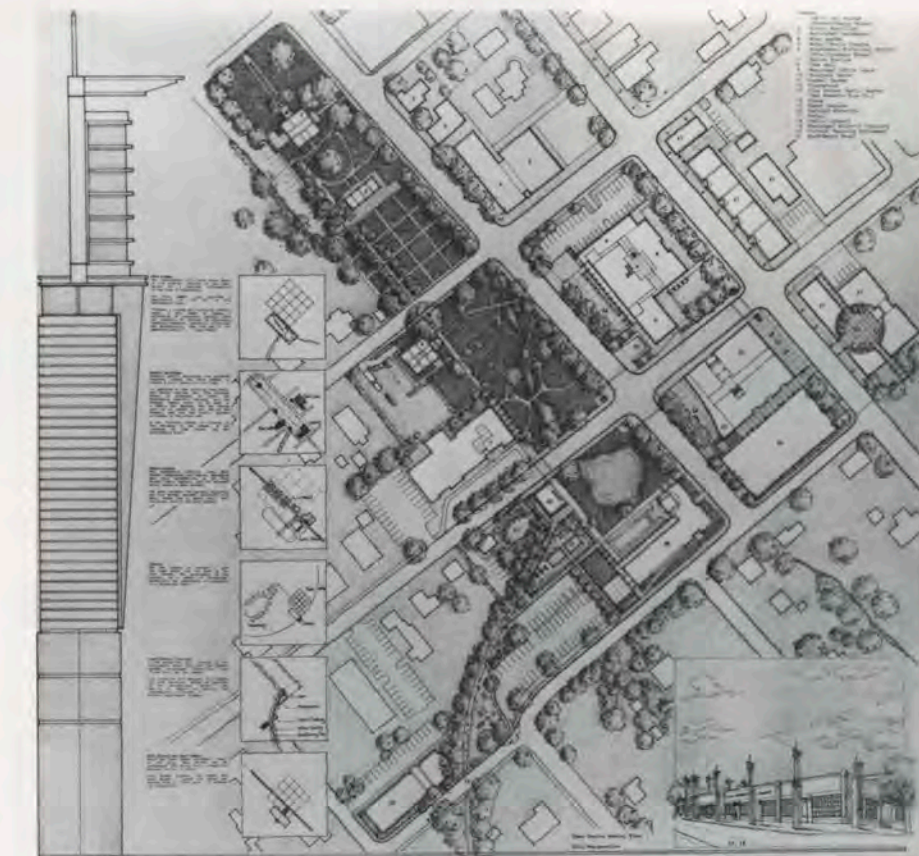
Recent Aquisitions

IAWA Reflects Wide Diversity, Pervasive Commonalities

Looking at the collection of the IAWA housed in Virginia Tech Libraries' Special Collections Department, one is immediately impressed by the diversity of the contributions: Americans, Europeans, Africans, and Asians, as well as landscape architects, architects specializing in historic preservation, houses, adaptations and renovations, commercial buildings, civic design, and academic structures. Yet despite so many differences among and within the IAWA's collections, certain commonalities are apparent. Recently the IAWA has been given or promised two outstanding collections which typify both this diversity and pervasive similarities: drawings by Shannon Taylor Scarlett and Melita Rodeck.

Established in 1990, the office of Shannon Taylor Scarlett has already been noted as an award-winning architectural team. It came as little surprise that Shannon Taylor Scarlett won the first place award in the Blacksburg Civic Center and Library Competition this year. The firm had won an honorable mention in the Matteson (II.) Public Library Competition this year. The drawings for both of these competitions have been promised to the IAWA.

Boston-based Scarlett's contributions to the Archive exhibit the type of diversity which makes the IAWA a unique, scholarly resource. Emphasizing "design excellence and client satisfaction," Shannon Taylor Scarlett prefers small public, residential, commercial and institutional projects, but she did not shy away from either of the major civic design competi-



Shannon Taylor Scarlett's winning exhibit for the Blacksburg Civic Center and Library Competition

tions. Blacksburg, home of the IAWA, and Matteson are as different from one another as Scarlett's hub of operation, Boston, is from each of the other cities. Perhaps good award-winning architectural design really is international! These two projects reflect differing, highly professional solutions to design problems posed by civic libraries. This diversity of approach to the same type of building rendered by the same architect within a few years span of time makes Scarlett's contribution to the IAWA very welcome.

Melita Rodeck's career has spanned over four decades. She has given the IAWA almost 50 of her drawings, the earliest (renovation of the Dental Clinic for the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare's South Building in Washington, D.C.) dated 1953, and the latest from 1967 of a six-unit apartment building in Wheaton, Maryland. Rodeck, herself, represents the type of diversity which makes the IAWA unique; born in Milan, Italy, she was educated at the Polytechnic Institute in Vienna, Austria; the University of Virginia; the New School of Social Research in New York City, where she studied aesthetics and moral philosophy with Jacques Maritain; and Catholic University of America. She has degrees in architecture as well as city and regional planning and is an accomplished musician.

Giving evidence to her role as author, designer, and social activist, Melita Rodeck's resume reads like a text book of the professional, intellectual, and international European-American woman from the generation which truly cared about social issues and got involved. She spent four years doing social work in a settlement house in Harlem, New York City. She worked for ten years with other architects and engineers on hospitals, schools, apartments, offices, and industrial buildings. Liturgical architecture and design are a special interest for this most diverse, concerned architect.

Both of these architects' careers share commonalities with architects of each of their generations, whereas a disparate energy and optimism can be found among the architects of Melita Rodeck's generation. Because of their generosity, the IAWA is that much richer in the diversity of resources demonstrating recurrent themes in the history of 20th century architecture and design by women.

by Stephen Zietz

Cary Donates Exhibit Materials

CARY, Chicks in Architecture Refuse to Yield, presented an exhibition entitled "More Than the Sum of Our Body Parts." The (continued next page)

exhibition was held June 16-July 2 in Chicago at the Randolph Street Gallery. The CARY collective that produced the exhibit was co-founded by three Chicago women architects. The women are Carol Crandall, Architect; Kay Janis, Peddle Thorp Pty, Ltd.; and Sally Levine, Levine Design, Ltd. The materials present a provocative exhibition of the current role of women in architecture and as professionals.

International News

The Tenth Congress of the International Union of Women Architects (abbreviated UIFA from its French name) took place in Cape Town, South Africa March 13-19, 1993. The Congress celebrated the 30th anniversary of the UIFA, founded in 1963 in Paris by its tireless President, Solange d'Herbez de la Tour. The IAWA is fortunate to have Solange on its Board of Advisors. This important event included numerous activities laboriously organized by the Women Architects of South Africa (WASA) headed by Gerda Guillum-Scott. Mrs. Marike de Klerk, the First Lady of South Africa, opened the proceedings and the guest of honor, Mr. Olufemi Majekodumi, President of the International Union of Architects (UIA), addressed the participants.

The theme of the Congress, "Societies in Transition: Managing the Urbanized Environment of the Developing World," was covered in about 30 presentations followed by lively discussions. Of particular interest were the presentations by colleagues from African countries. The Women Architects of the Ivory Coast, for example, talked about "The

Mutations of Housing in the Ivory Coast" and presented a videotape of the capital, Abidjan, as a case study. The materials, including the videotape, were graciously donated to the IAWA. Other studies examined the role of the architect in developing countries and the socio-economic problems of urbanization. Members of the Development Bank of South Africa provided invaluable information about the economic dimension of housing and the role of women in development.

The Post-Congress tour was exhaustive, exciting, and unforgettable. After visits to spectacular sites, like the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve, Stormy River Mouth, and three days on Safari in the Kruger National Park, I began to wonder if the destruction of nature in the name of "progress" was a worthy cause or justifiable goal. Our profession needs reexamination of its ethics, and women architects should lead the dialogue.

The next Congress of the International Union of Women Architects (UIFA) will take place in Budapest, Hungary. The organizer of the congress, Maria Anna Fejes announced that 30 percent of the Hungarian architects are women, and their number is growing. We are looking forward to making new friends in Hungary.

M.T.B., Chair

Transitions

Stephen J. Zietz, the IAWA archivist, joined the Virginia Tech Libraries in May as Head of Special Collections, which includes the IAWA. Stephen has worked at numerous prestigious institutions, among them the

University of Pennsylvania, the New York Historical Society, and Columbia University. With rich experience in the development and management of historical, artistic, and architectural collections and a wide-ranging technical expertise, he has a background especially appropriate to the IAWA collection. He is an art historian, an artist, a writer, and a book illustrator, as well as a stage designer. He has served as curator for exhibitions and has extensive knowledge of painting, drawing and book conservation. Stephen is also well acquainted with European culture, having studied and worked in Italy and Germany. The IAWA is fortunate to have Stephen Zietz as an officer on its Board of Advisors and can look forward with confidence to a bright and productive future.

Donna Woodrum Dunay has been on the faculty of the College of Architecture and Urban Studies since 1974, the year she completed her M/Arch. Donna's interest is in urban design and her research is focused on the town architecture of urban Virginia. Recently she organized and managed a national competition for "A Center for Civic Activities in the Town of Blacksburg."

Arlene Hopkins, a member of the Board of Advisors IAWA since 1986, joined Virginia Tech's College of Architecture and Urban Studies in January 1993. Arlene is both an architect and an educator. She holds a M/Arch from SCI-ARC and a MA in Education from San Francisco State University. A native of California, she has been active in a number of women's organizations, including California Women in Environmental Design (CWED).

M.T.B., Chair

Let us know if you are interested in (please check)

- Learning more about the IAWA and its associated programs
- Donating your papers to the IAWA
- Becoming a Friend of the IAWA

The International Archive of Women in Architecture invites you to join the Friends of the IAWA. Contributions can be made in the following categories:

- \$25-\$39 Friend (\$10 for students)
- \$100-\$499 Benefactor
- \$40-\$99 Sustaining Member
- \$500-\$1000 Life Member

Enclosed is my check payable to the
Virginia Tech Foundation/International Archive of Women in Architecture for \$ _____.

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Please return to University Libraries Special Collections Department;
Attn: Archivist, IAWA; P.O. Box 90001; Blacksburg, VA 24062-9001 U.S.A.

In the Archive

Crawford, Martha J. (b. 1925). Architect and interior designer of Warikesh, Wisconsin; first woman member of the New York Metropolitan Chapter of the Construction Specifications Institute.

Gran-Garcia, Christina. Professor of Architecture at the Escuela T.S. de Arquitectura Universidad Politecnica-Valencia, Spain. Practicing architect and writer. Among her publications is the book *Borges y la Arquitectura* of 1989.

Hakala-Meyer, Maija. Architect of Braunschweig, Germany.

Hayden, Florence Kenyon. First registered woman architect in Ohio and architecture instructor at Ohio State University in 1905. She is the designer of Oxley Hall, a dormitory for women at OSU.

Lassman, Edith. Architect of Vienna, Austria and designer of hospitals, children's centers, and a hydroelectric plant in the Austrian Alps.

Erratum

In our previous issue, Vol. 4, No.1, the Vine Terrace Apartments by **Beverly Willis**, FAIA were presented as a renovation. Actually, the apartments were a new design and construction, not a renovation. They were later renamed Nob Hill Court Condominiums.

We apologize for this error.

M.T.B., Chair

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