AIA Flint Newsletter

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AIA FLINT CHAPTER

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In Memoriam…

TOMBLINSON, James Edmund - Of Grand Blanc, age 83, passed peacefully into eternal life on Tuesday, August 10, 2010 at Genesys Regional Medical Center in Grand Blanc, Michigan. Jim was born in Grand Blanc, Michigan on February 12, 1927, son of Carl and Edna Tomblinson. He graduated from Grand Blanc High School and went on to serve his country in the United States Army. Following his military service, Jim graduated from the University of Michigan School of Architecture in 1951. He also attended the University of California in Berkeley for post graduate studies. After travelling in Europe for over a year to visit the architecture he studied in college, Jim returned home and founded what is now known as THA Architects and Engineers, which he nurtured for over 50 years. He was a member of the American Institute of Architects and the Michigan Society of Architects and became a Fellow of the AIA in 1980. Jim also served as a member of the State Board of Registration for architects. As a long time member of the Flint Rotary Club he served as president, on the board of directors and was a Paul Harris Fellow. Jim proudly devoted much of his life to community service as an Executive committee member of the Tall Pine Council, Boy Scouts of America, Troop 238 Committee Chair, U of M Club of Greater Flint (Board of Governors and past president), Junior Chamber of Commerce of Flint, YMCA Board of Directors, YMCA Camp Committee, First Presbyterian Church of Flint Board of Trustees, New Paths Board and Advisory Committee, founding member of the Flint Beautification League, founding member of the Grand Blanc Beautification League, 20 year member of the City of Grand Blanc Planning Commission, Mundy Township Planning Commission, founding member of the Flint Environmental Action Team, Grand Blanc Community Foundation, and the Flint Community Foundation. Jim is survived by his wife of 50 years, Betsy, daughter Amy Tomblinson, and grandchildren Abby and Ben Schultz. Jim was preceded in death by his son, John, and parents.

“Old School”

An Essay by John Gazall, AIA

As I sit here finishing my business day of emailing, texting, faxing, phone calls, cell calls, meetings, facebooking and interruptions, I have time to grasp the sad news of Mr. Tomblinson's passing. I believe that what Dave Bennett said was so true, Jim was a man of great character and integrity. But we all know there was so much more. A lot more than all those accomplishments and awards that Jim accumulated throughout his career. Jim had values. Jim was a family man.

I think early on in my career when I had a conversation with my father about *"who's the man with the bow tie",* and my dad explained to me that Jim was a *"true Architect, a man dedicated to his profession, and best of all, a Michigan man".* My father then went on to explain to me who Gerald Harburn was...."*the best designer in the area, he helped design the St. Louis Arch".* My father then said..."*together Mr. Tomblinson and Mr Harburn were his biggest competition".*

I think of my father, Mr. Tomblinson and Mr. Harburn as the "Old School" boys. I say that because in their day the profession of architecture was practiced differently. Being an Architect was a career, not a job. Owners went to the architect first, not a contractor. Designing a building meant more that a block wall with 3' x 3' windows every 8' and a gable roof, or a pre-engineered lifeless box of steel at $45.00 sq. ft. Clients were the owners, not accountants. Contracts were handshakes. Now we work in a Design Build world. How much is your architecture per sq. ft.? All I need is enough for a permit. Who needs a specification. Just get it done.

Howard Roark said *"I don't build in order to have clients, I have clients in order to build "* Mr. Tomblinson had clients.

Over the years imagine how many young interns and naive associates developed into good stewards of the profession of Architecture (and the community) being mentored by the "old school" boys.

(continued …next column)

In one shape or form all of us owe our individual success to them. They showed us how to do the things that you didn't learn in school. They showed us how to do things the right way. There weren't shortcuts. It wasn't a copy and paste environment. Even in the days that weren't so good, they never were argumentative with their clients, they never bad mouthed contractors, and they never raised there voices in conflict. They got things done and they didn't walk away. There was a level of mutual respect between them and for them. They were men of character. They believed in their profession, they believed in themselves, they had faith in the people that surrounded them, and they didn't compromise their standards. Its a different generation now.

Just think about how much this community benefited from Mr. Tomblinson's time, knowledge and experience. Sacrificing many hours away from his family attending boring planning commission meetings, dealing after hours with crazy church committees, and interviews that turn into interrogations all to benefit the community we live in. I would have to believe that he achieved more as a volunteer, and by being the example that we wish to see in the world, than he ever did as a professional.

When I read Dave's email I was reminded that Mr. Tomblinson was a distinguished member of the AIA College of Fellows. I actually forgot about that (shame on me). This Fall we will be celebrating the 50 year anniversary of AIA Flint. That's a lot of history. That's a lot of time committed to this community. That's a lot of hard work done by men that are no longer here to make it better for all of us as we practice the profession (and career) of being an Architect. I am not sure but maybe before I start my day tomorrow with emailing, texting, faxing, phone calls, cell calls, meetings, facebooking and interruptions, I need to challenge myself to be more like those "Old School" boys.

Happenings…



Margaret Kato from Genesee County Habitat for Humanity accepts a donation from AIA Flint

50th Anniversary

Planning is currently underway for a celebration to honor the 50th Anniversary of the formation of the Flint Chapter of AIA. More information to come…

Website…call for submissions

Be sure to visit AIA Flint's new website at **www.aiaflint.com**.

Please submit articles, features, firm information or other items that may interest fellow AIA members or enhance the website. We are currently seeking submissions for the "Member Highlights" section. For more information contact Lisa Demankowski at lisad@njbarchitects.com or (810)659-7118.

PARK(ing) Day

AIA Flint is organizing a Team to participate in PARK(ing) Day 2010. Please help us to convert a single parking stall in Downtown Flint into a park for the day! Contact John Costa for more nfo, (810) 659-5275

AIA150

The project is complete and booklets are available for distribution, contact Jeff Ferweda.

2010 Golf Outing

2010 marked another successful year for AIA Flint's annual Golf Outing. Special thanks are due to David Bennett, AIA, who chaired this year's event. In spite of a difficult economy, Dave was able to garner the support of 22 Sponsors and participation by 54 Golfers, raising a respectable sum of just under $3,000.

Margaret Kato from Genesee County Habitat for Humanity joined AIA Flint at the Coyote Preserve in Fenton to accept an impressive check for $2,000. Each year, AIA Flint makes a donation based on monies raised at the previous year's Outing.



Above: Dave Lurvey…winning AGAIN!

Below: John Gazall shoots in style!



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Dates to Remember

SEPTEMBER EVENTS

September 15 PARK(ing) Day

September 13 Luncheon Meeting, THA

Tiina Perttu from Haworth will be discussing "Organizational Culture" and its importance in the work environment, its four culture types, its assessment and its design implications

September 20 Executive Committee, Sorrento's Restaurant, Flushing (noon)

September 30 AIA Flint 50th Anniversary Event to be announced

OCTOBER EVENTS

October 11 Luncheon Meeting, THA

Roger Hall from Sherwin-Williams will discuss LEED paints, low VOC paints and no VOC paints.

October 18 Executive Committee, Sorrento's Restaurant, Flushing (noon)

AIA
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