



ROGER BAILEY, Founder of Architecture at the University of Utah

A HISTORY OF ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

By Peter L. Goss, Professor

Many assume architectural education at the University of Utah began with Roger Bailey and evolved into what is now the Graduate School of Architecture, but this is not entirely true. Architectural education at the university actually began in the early 1880's with courses taught by none other than Brigham Young's son Joseph Don Carlos Young.

One of the first of Utah's native sons to receive an architectural education, Joseph Don Carlos Young attended Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York. He taught mechanical and architectural drawing classes during the 1880's at university. Later in the decade his courses were shifted to the Department of Fine Art organized in 1888-89. Young was appointed Latter Day Saint church architect to succeed the architect-builder Truman O. Angell, and after 1889 his courses were taught by William Ward, a Stonecutter and self taught architect.

Course work in architecture at the University lasted three years and enabled students to work in local architects' offices. Unfortunately the Department of Fine Art was terminated during the 1891-92 academic year. Then aspiring architects in Utah either left the state for an architectural education or studied an engineering curriculum. A number of Utah's future architects studied the architecture and

engineering courses offered by such institutions the International Correspondence School of Scranton, Pennsylvania, while apprenticing in an architectural office.

The fine arts curriculum re-emerged at the university on a grander scale under the presidency of A. Ray Olpin. In December of 1946, less than a year after he assumed the presidency of the university, President Olpin former Director of the Research Foundation and Professor of Industrial Research at Ohio State University, recommended that music, drama, dance, art and architecture be administered by a new "School of Fine Arts."

His recommendation was approved by the Board of Regents and the nationally known sculptor Avard Fairbanks, a professor of art at the University of Michigan, was recruited to be the school's first dean. It is unclear whether Olpin's suggestion that the School of Fine Arts include architecture was his idea or a response to a professional request by Utah architects.

In late June of 1948 the annual conference of the American Institute of Architects took place in Salt Lake City. The choice of the annual conference site may have been influenced by Salt Lake architect Raymond J. Ashton, national president of the AIA in 1944, and the only Utah architect to have served in this capacity. Galen Oman, architect of Columbus, Ohio and adjunct professor of architecture at Ohio State University, attended the conference and while in Salt Lake City had the opportunity of meeting President Olpin.

This meeting resulted in Olpin inviting Oman to start the department of architecture in the school of fine arts. According to architect Burtch Beall, an employee of Oman's at the time, his boss turned down the offer to come to Utah. It was later that summer that Roger Bailey met A. Ray Olpin and inquired as to why there was no architectural curriculum at the university.

The School of Fine Arts (now a College) envisioned by President Olpin was established in 1949, three years after his arrival. That year Maurice Abravanel and the Utah Symphony created a relationship with the music department; William F. Christensen, choreographer for the San Francisco Opera Company, returned to Utah and joined the faculty as dance director and Roger Bailey came from Michigan to found the Department of Architecture.

And the rest, as they say, is history!

ROGER BAILEY'S HISTORY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

A NEW SCHOOL

In the late summer of 1948 my wife and I drove into Salt Lake City for an overnight stop on our way to the West Coast from Ann Arbor. We were impressed with the city and the Intermountain region and I wondered why three students from Utah were currently studying architecture at Michigan, so far from the environment in which they would eventually practice.

The next morning we were fifteen miles on our way west when I began thinking about those three students again and, on an impulse, turned the car around, found the University of Utah and the president's office, and asked his secretary if I could see him. She said that would be impossible. I said I only wanted to ask him one question. At that, a man came out of an inner office and asked what the

question was going to be. I replied, "Why isn't there a fine school of architecture here?" He introduced himself as President A. Ray Olpin and asked if I would come back the next day to talk about it.

I returned the next morning to discuss my background, including my considerable experience in civic and residential planning and my view on architectural education. At the close of the interview, he asked me to write a letter outlining my ideas for establishing an architectural school and I preceded on my way west.

A few weeks later the University of Utah took title to 340 acres adjoining the campus and used as an induction center during World War II. The acquisition of this land, with its scattering of temporary buildings, focused attention on the need for planning and President Olpin called me in Ann Arbor as to my availability. I agreed to come although I had not had an opportunity to write the letter about what was required to start an architecture school. I assumed that campus development was the pressing need and that I would have until the following September to organize and staff a school.

We arrived in Salt Lake City on January 1, 1949, January 2, was registration day and, to my complete surprise, forty five students were waiting to sign up for architectural courses with classes scheduled to start the next day. There was one classroom available at 8:00a.m. on the 4th floor of the main administration building, we could use some engineering drawing tables on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and there was a desk for me in a shared office.

The architecture budget consisted of my salary and \$500.00 for secretarial help, and I learned that I was to have but one new staff appointment annually. Immediately, I had to find additional space and drafting room equipment and make a start on an architectural library. Enrollment at Utah had jumped from less than 400 before World War II to upwards of 10,000 immediately thereafter, putting severe space and financial pressures on the entire institution. I soon learned something about the local capacity for "making do" and hard work, traditional in a community founded by pioneers.

My discovery of vacant space in the basement of the Administration Building was quickly transformed into drafting and office space giving us at least a temporary home. Saw horses and planks created instant, though crowded, drafting tables with three students per table. In order to cope single-handed with all forty-five students, those who had two or three years of engineering were given second year architecture standing and the remainder were listed as first year architecture students.

Most of the second year group had had some experience in builders' or architects' offices and were given simple problems in architectural design. The first year group filled normal programs, taking general campus offerings and engineering drawing courses. For that year only I delivered an 8:00am lecture course for all forty-five as an introduction to architecture, and together, we discussed the climate, geography resources and people of the region and what we thought lay ahead for architects and how they should go about it.

Jim Acland arrived in the late summer of 1949 with a B. Arch. Degree from Syracuse University and an MA in Philosophy from Harvard. Being Canadian, he had served in the Canadian armed forces in World War II and had had teaching experience in the Architectural Association of London following the war. He found me frantically revamping a former mess hall to accommodate the original forty five students plus fifty new admissions for that fall with sketchy plank and sawhorse furniture permitted by the \$5,000 budget we were given for remodeling equipment, and lighting. The new first year class sat four to a 12' plank table. The third year people had individual desks and lights. There were no complaints.

We set up folding chairs and a movable blackboard in one corner for lectures, and 10' x 10' enclosed spaces for secretary, books, a staff records and work area, and a department head's office.

A month after the fall quarter opened we had a dinner in the new Architecture facility for the area's practicing architects and our higher university administrative people. It seemed important to let the architects know what we intended to provide as a training process and to urge their providing postgraduate office training. The occasion also let our administration officials understand the need for and seriousness of our purposes.

Fourteen years later when I retired as Department Head, fifty of our graduates were registered as architects in Utah with several practicing in West Coast cities and over twenty had gone back to Colorado and New Mexico with 5-year degrees from Utah. We were accredited in 1954 in the minimum time required. Ten, and for several years thereafter, Utah had the only accredited architectural school between Lincoln Nebraska and the West Coast.

We averaged ten bachelor of Architecture graduates a year for the next ten years of our self imposed limit of fifty new admissions a year. This was a shocking mortality rate but we were determined to maintain high professional standards and looked forward to obtaining college status with even more control over our admissions.

From earliest pioneer days on, the Mormons had developed strong programs in music dance and theater. These activities found their way to the university campus under departmental headings and architecture was added to them in 1948 to make up the College of Fine Arts. The potential was great but the shortage of supporting funds for staff and space, plus the wide geographical separation of the older arts departments on campus, mitigated initially against a close corporation between the college's departments.

The rapid increase in enrollment, especially in architecture, painting and sculpture, lead to my making studies for relocating several two-story wooded barracks buildings in combination with several one-story cement block buildings (originally mess halls and service buildings for the military) into a complex to house those departments. The site over looked the old campus and beyond and below it, Salt Lake City and "The Valley." During Architecture's third year an architect was appointed and drawings, based on my study, were made for this complex called the "Fine Arts Center." It seemed fitting that the architect, Willard Nelson, was one of the three former University of Michigan students who unknowingly played a part in my being at the University of Utah.

Since I had accepted the Utah appointment convinced that the compartmentalization of the various elements of architectural curricula (design, structures, history, materials, etc.) I had experienced in seventeen years of teaching on three eastern or Midwestern campuses was not a good thing; I was determined to develop a process that involved every faculty member; whatever his special field, as a team member working with students in the drafting room.

The architecture curriculum Utah had adopted prior to my arrival was put together with strong advice from the deans of Fine Arts (a sculptor) and Civil Engineering with courses included to be taught by them or their staff people without benefit of architectural experience. I needed and obtained the understanding and support of the President's office in order to not only revamp the existing curriculum but to be free to make changes annually as we developed since the catalog was published annually. We were fortunate in having this support in not only this instance but in almost every important step of our

future. Despite the university's lack of funds, this encouragement was of the greatest value to our progress.

During our second year I taught third year design and Jim Acland was assigned to develop and teach courses in visual Design and an introduction to Architecture course for both our own and non-architecture students. Acland developed a wonderful introduction course covering the architect's role in our society, his training ethics, services, practice, etc; in a word all about architects. We hoped this course would acquaint some of the non professional student population with the importance of architects to their futures.

Later during the second year Acland developed and taught an introductory course in the history of architecture. This was a most remarkable course, starting with a brief review of the history of philosophy and emphasizing the development of structures from earliest forms through Greek, Roman, Gothic to cast iron steel and modern day materials and methods. This course introduced simple structural models, some by Acland and some student-made to illustrate structural principles. During his four years with us Acland continued to refine and deliver these basic courses. He also organized and directed planning projects at the 4th year level.

A small time-card budget increase allowed us to employ a leading Salt Lake City architect (Henry Fetzer) to come once or twice a week (\$50 for a 10-week quarter to teach a course in plumbing to our 2nd year group. As an example of the cooperation we enjoyed from the practicing architects, this busy man continued this favor for several years and as they were needed, other professionals pitched in with their time and expertise to teach architectural design, mechanical and electrical systems, and acoustics and became instructional team members in planning projects or served on our evaluating juries.

It was not until 1957 when Stanley Crawley joined us that we were able to establish and control our own programs in structures and mechanical equipment or consider research in structures. We did establish quite early on, however, special sections of math for architectural students taught by the Math Department staff in our own classroom and special sections in the Art Department (water color painting, lettering) for our students.

I managed to teach first year pencil sketching course for several years along with architectural design, but as the school developed and administrative time requirements increased, I had to settle for detaining direction of the 5th year thesis work and a course in water color in the spring quarter: I still took time however to interview every applicant for admission to the school, along with parents on occasion. In the fall of 1951 Charles W. Moore joined our faculty.

This was an especially pleasant occasion for me since Moore had been an architectural student at the University of Michigan during my tenure there and was one of a small group of student members of an architectural office I established in Ann Arbor: This was a nonprofit arrangement set up to give students practical experience before graduation. In 1949 he came over to see me in Salt Lake City prior to applying for and receiving a traveling fellowship from the University of Michigan.

He spent a year visiting and photographing key historical buildings and monuments throughout Europe; the Mediterranean countries and the Near East and returned with 4000 slides and five moving pictures. Many of the slides were taken in response to my request that he try, if possible to show how the people who built these monuments lived, what tools they had, and what life was like in their times, in order not to have to settle for the impersonal facts of names and dates that made up the courses in History of

Architecture. Being a bachelor his teaching day did not necessarily end at 5:00p.m., and if he wasn't spending the evening discussing and arguing with one or all of our small staff, he was continuing until late at night with students in the school studio space.

During this year MacDonald introduced problems in design involving the principles of acoustics, or requiring the design of efficient heating and cooling systems as factors in arriving at design solutions. At about this same time we also arranged with a practicing electrical engineer in Salt Lake City to take on a ten-week course in illuminating which culminated in a student competition for a prize offered by the Society of Illuminating Engineers. This annual event continued throughout the remainder of my tenure as Department Head along with another special course established a year or so later by consultant in acoustics. The contributions of these professional people meant much to our students and to me. As well as I can remember, the fee for their services never increased over the \$50.00 per quarter originally offered.

Life was getting pretty crowded and noisy in our revamped mess hall building during this year and the lack of a quiet lecture facility or meeting room began to be felt severely. Our design jury meetings were public whether we wished this or not, and faculty meetings and discussions were all overheard by the student body, nearing 150 now. The Art and Sculpture Departments were also suffering space problems in makeshift quarters.

Late in the spring we moved into the new Fine Arts Center which served all three departments for the next twelve years and provided Architecture with three design studios, a shop, a photo lab, adequate staff and secretarial space, staff conference area, class and lecture rooms and a large exhibition area. The complex contained a small library building central to the group. The architectural students designed and planted a pleasant courtyard that our studio wing created and we at last enjoyed good light, peace and privacy, parking and even some storage and expansion to accommodate starting graduate work when the time came.

In the fall of 1952 Gordon Heck joined us after earning his B.Arch. From Minnesota and M.Arch from MIT. Gordon was the first of several talented men who came to us directly from MIT and his special skills and attributes were outstanding. His first accomplishment was to develop what he termed a tools-skills course in basic design for our 1st year students.

Gordon is an accomplished draftsman and artist with a wonderful sense of design and color he took over the Visual Design course from Acland with qualifications gained from Kepes at MIT. The combination of being in adequate facilities with a hard working and enthusiastic student body that seemed to appreciate the efforts of the faculty and the great morale of the school made our world seem bright. Our spirits were only dampened when the Army beckoned and Charles Moore left for military service in Korea in June.

We received our first accrediting visit in the winter of 1954 and were approved that spring. Joseph Shelly came from the now defunct Denver school to take on our history sequences. We also welcomed our second MIT graduate, Donald Panushka, who taught design for several years.

I had written a set of aims for our school as part of our requirements for accreditation. One of these aims, and an important one in my view, had to do with finding and helping to train future leaders for education in architecture. After receiving our fourth or fifth MIT graduate as additions to our staff, I was

convinced that what I had thought of as a new activity for an architectural school-training future leaders for education had been going on very effectively for years at MIT!

At about the same time the Fine Arts Center buildings were demolished in line with campus expansion and the Architecture Department was forced to move into scattered temporary quarters, making severe problems for the new director; Robert L. Bliss who had come from the University of Minnesota to replace me as Department Head in 1963, when I reached 65. (Robert Bliss also holds an architectural degree from MIT.)