
PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY UPDATE

A Loss Prevention Newsletter for the Design Profession

MSP PL 03/00: "Four Men and Their Visual Imprints on San Diego"

March, 2000



Four Men and Their Visual Imprints on San Diego

By Frank Cavnac

Photographs courtesy of the San Diego Historical Society Photograph Collection, <http://www.sandieghistory.org>

The typical resident of San Diego and the typical visitor to San Diego will not know the names of Gill, Requa, Johnson or Goodhue, nor may they have much knowledge of the structures designed by these men, but both the resident and the visitor have in their minds a feeling about San Diego, and part of this subconscious picture of our city has to do with the impact of visual experiences created by these men and others who have followed them.

Architecture, like painting, sculpture, and music, has for the typical person more to do with feelings than understanding. Many years ago a haughty potential buyer of artist Paul Gauguin's paintings approached the artist during a showing of his work and said to Gauguin that he would not be buying any of his paintings because he, the potential buyer, did not understand Gauguin's work. Gauguin looked at the man and said, "It has nothing to do with understanding; it has to do with feeling."

It is probably accurate to say that every memorable city has some memorable structures and that the positive memory or feeling that people have of these cities is somewhat influenced by the impact of the man-made structures that they have seen. The Parthenon in

Athens, the Empire State Building in New York and the Serra Museum in San Diego are just a few examples of structures that say something about their cities.

Four men who practiced architecture in San Diego and who have left a lasting mark on our city are Irving J. Gill, Richard S. Requa, William Templeton Johnson and Bertram Goodhue. All of them are deceased, but their work continues to provide visual enjoyment for us. In this article we want to refresh our memories about their contributions.

Irving J. Gill (1870-1936)

Gill was a farmer's son who had no formal education. He studied and learned architecture by working for architects, one of the firms being Adler and Sullivan of Chicago, where Gill worked

(Continued on page 2)

Published by

Cavnac & Associates

INSURANCE BROKERS
License No. OA99520

1230 Columbia Street, Suite 850
San Diego, CA 92101-3571

Phone: 619-234-6848 ♦ Facsimile: 619-234-8601

Website: www.cavnac.com

(Continued from page 1)

alongside Frank Lloyd Wright. He was influenced by the Arts and Crafts philosophy and designed the buildings in the Green Dragon in La Jolla. He also designed George W. Marston's Craftsman home and several other houses on Marston's block. His fountain in Horton Plaza was built in 1909, and while it endures today, it may not be representative of his best work. He designed buildings for the Bishop's School in La Jolla and the First Church of Christ Scientist at Second and Laurel.

Gill did not limit his work to prominent clients such as Ellen Browning Scripps; he also did design work on low cost housing in the Sherman Heights and Hillcrest areas, as well as in sites outside of San Diego County.

In a 1916 essay, "The New Architecture of the West," Gill discussed his ideal of simplicity in design. He felt that the source of all architectural strength emerged from the straight line, the arch, the cube and the circle in combination.

Irving Gill left bachelorhood at age 58 and after an unsuccessful marriage he died alone on October 7, 1936 in Carlsbad, California.

Richard S. Requa

(1881 – 1941)

Requa, who was born in Rock Island, Illinois, studied electrical engineering at Norfolk College, but learned his architecture in the office of Irving Gill. He ultimately left Gill's firm and established a partnership with Frank L. Mead. The two of them became interested in the Colonial Style of Mexico, the Pueblos in the southwest United States and Moorish design from Spain and North Africa.

In 1920 Frank Mead left the firm and Requa obtained a new partner, Herbert L. Jackson. Requa made trips to Spain and the Mediterranean area in the 1920's and wrote a book *Architectural Details: Spain and the Mediterranean*. A second book was titled *Old World Inspiration for American Architecture*.

Requa described his architectural style as

"Southern California Architecture." This style featured white stucco buildings, heavily tiled roofs, wrought iron ornamentation and interesting chimney designs. He felt it was important that the design of a building, the landscaping and the terrain should be compatible and should compliment each other. Landscape Architect Milton Sessions, Kate Session's nephew, collaborated with him on major projects.

Two homes that Requa built for himself are good examples of his work – his first home is located at 4346 Valle Vista in Mission Hills and the second home can be seen at 2906 Locust Street in Loma Portal. Other structures he designed are: the Torrey Pines Lodge (now the State Park Ranger Station), the Del Mar Castle at 544 Avenida Primavera in Del Mar, the Mt. Helix Theater, the William A. Gunn house at 1127 F Avenue in Coronado and a number of projects for the 1935 California Pacific International Exposition: Spanish Village, Ford Building, Automotive Museum, Alcazar Garden and others.

Requa was very active in community affairs including the Chamber of Commerce and San Diego Symphony Board. Following his death in his office in June of 1941, the San Diego Symphony dedicated its opening summer season concert in his honor.

William Templeton Johnson

(1877 – 1957)

Johnson was born in Staten Island, New York, and pursued an interest in architecture at Columbia University in New York and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. In 1905 he married Clara Sturges, whom he later divorced. She can be remembered as the founder of the Francis W. Parker School, a school which he designed and where his children received their elementary schooling.

Some of Johnson's style can be characterized as Spanish Mission and Spanish Revival. The La Jolla Athenaeum is a notable early building

(Continued on page 3)



Irving J. Gill



Richard S. Requa

(Continued from page 2)

in the Revival style. Other work which can be seen in San Diego: the Fine Art Gallery and the Museum of Natural History in Balboa Park, The San Diego Trust and Savings Building at 6th and Broadway (now a hotel), and the former Lion Clothing building directly across from the San Diego Trust building on the southwest corner of 6th and Broadway. Undoubtedly his most memorable building is the Junipero Serra Museum at the top of Presidio Park.



William Templeton Johnson

dio Park.

Johnson died in 1957 at the age of eighty. He was a leader in his community and his official posts included: President of the Fine Art Society and the San Diego Chapter of AIA, member of the City Planning Commission, Park Commission, Library Commission and a number of other organizations.

Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue

(1869 – 1924)

Born in Connecticut, Goodhue was not college trained; he studied for six years under James Renwick, the architect of St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York. He came to California partly to improve his health because he suffered from neurasthenia, a disorder that left him fatigued, irritable and in pain.

As the result of a friendship that he established with John Olmstead, master planner of the San Diego Panama-California Exposition he became the project architect for the Exposition and was responsible for the key Exposition buildings which he designed in a Spanish Colonial Revival style. Part of the inspiration for this style resulted from a trip that he took to Mexico in 1895 where he became intrigued with the use of domes, towers, ornate facades and plain walls. One contemporary observer of his work said that the buildings he created in the Revival style created a craze for Spanish Colonial Revival structures which included red tile roofs, stucco walls and indoor-outdoor living as a part of their ambiance.

The buildings that Goodhue designed for the

1915 Exposition were temporary structures which lasted far beyond their expected lifetimes – into the 1990's when their disrepair finally required their demolition. Perhaps the finest tribute to Goodhue's work is the fact that when the buildings were rebuilt, they were rebuilt to conform with his original design, thus preserving the aura of the Park experience for future generations.

Goodhue, who died in 1924, did important work outside of San Diego. Included in his repertoire are the Los Angeles Public Library, the National Academy of Sciences Building and the Nebraska State Capitol building.



Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue

Conclusion

Architects (and their fellow design professionals) have a fortunate position among those who work in the professions or in business for their daily bread. The work that most people do does not live after them, but the work that design professionals perform lives on and delivers enjoyment for others long after the designer has passed from the scene.

Greek and Roman structures built hundreds and thousands of years ago remain today to inspire awe in the mind of the viewer. The people we visited with in this essay have left legacies that may not endure as long as long as a 2,400-year-old temple on the Acropolis in Athens, but many of their structures will exist for many generations in the future for the benefit of viewers yet to be born. *

Did you know...

- Clients often ask for non-insurable indemnifications. Accept them, and you lose coverage and gain exposure.
- A client can sue an A/E's estate for damages relating to the deceased's prior professional acts.

*Courtesy of the Design Firm Management
& Administration Report, May 1998*

Statute of Limitations

Overview

A statute of limitation establishes time limits beyond which lawsuits alleging design or construction defects are barred. Unfortunately, the California statutes overlap and may be unclear and confusing about their application to a particular set of facts.

When analyzing a claim based on a design or construction defect, a good starting point is to determine if the defect was “patent” or “latent.” A defect is considered “patent” if it was readily discoverable or apparent by reasonable inspection. If not, and if the defect is hidden, then it is “latent.” The distinction is of great importance because the two defects have different time limits for filing lawsuit.

Four-Year Statute of Limitation

The four-year statute of limitation applies to patent defects. Individuals engaged in performing or furnishing design, specifications, surveying, planning, supervision or construction observation services cannot have a lawsuit filed against them more than four (4) years after the substantial completion of such improvement for any of the following:

- Any patent deficiency in the design, specifications, surveying, planning, supervision or observation of construction of an improvement to, or survey of, real property;
- Injury to property, real or personal, arising out of any such patent deficiency, or
- Injury to the person or for wrongful death arising out of any such patent deficiency.

Priorities and Exceptions

- Any property damage, bodily injury or death that occurs due to a patent deficiency during the fourth year after substantial completion may be brought to court within one year after the date

on which the injury occurred, irrespective of the date of death, but may not be brought to court more than five years after the substantial completion of such improvement.

- The four-year limit for patent defects is not applicable to owner-occupied single-unit residences.

Ten-Year Statute of Limitation

The ten-year statute of limitation applies to latent defects. Individuals who develop real property or are engaged in performing or furnishing design, specifications, surveying, planning, supervision, testing or construction observation services cannot have a lawsuit filed against them more than ten (10) years after the substantial completion of such improvement for any of the following:

- Any patent deficiency in the design, specifications, surveying, planning, supervision or observation of construction of an improvement to, or survey of, real property, and
- Injury to property, real or personal, arising out of any such latent deficiency.

Priorities and Exceptions

- This section does not apply to actions based on willful misconduct or fraudulent concealment.
- The ten year period shall commence upon whichever of the following circumstances occurs first: the date of the final inspection, the date of recordation of a valid notice of completion, the date of use or occupation of the improvement, or one year after termination or cessation of work on the improvement.

(See page 5 – “Time Limitations on Lawsuits for Design or Construction Defects” for an illustration)

Time Limitations on Lawsuits for Design or Construction Defects

Lawsuit for	Patent Defects (Readily Discoverable)	Latent Defects (Hidden)
Property Damage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A lawsuit is barred unless it is filed within 4 years of substantial completion ➤ A shorter time may apply once the defect is discovered ➤ The time limit is not applicable to owner-occupied single unit residence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A lawsuit is barred unless it is filed within 10 years of substantial completion ➤ A shorter time may apply once the defect is discovered
Bodily Injury or Wrongful Death	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A lawsuit is barred unless it is filed within 4 years of substantial completion ➤ A shorter time may apply once the defect is discovered ➤ The time limit is not applicable to owner-occupied single unit residence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is no time limit until the injury or death actually occurs ➤ Once the defect is discovered it must be filed within 1 year *

Cavnac & Associates

INSURANCE BROKERS

We've moved!

- ✦ Columbia Square
- ✦ 1230 Columbia Street, Suite 850
- ✦ Downtown San Diego

**Same great service
Still downtown!**

Cavignac & Associates

Direct Dial Phone Numbers

Principals	Jeffrey Cavignac	619-744-0567
	Robert Supple	619-744-0555
	Jim Schabarum	619-744-0565
	Scott Bedingfield	619-744-0560
Account Executives	Dorothy Amundson	619-744-0566
	Michael Strahan	619-744-0573
	Jeffrey Steen	619-744-0574
Account Managers	Penny Edgell	619-744-0568
	Jolinda Kramer	619-744-0578
	Susan McFarland	619-744-0572
	Bettye McLaurin	619-744-0556
	Celia Mondfrans	619-744-0570
	Lisa Wachholz	619-744-0571
Asst. Account Managers	Angela Duron	619-744-0579
	Sandy Hofmann	619-744-0576
	Merchanti Mongold	619-744-0558
	Estela Rodea	619-744-0562
Office Manager	Sue Marberry	619-744-0564
Administrative Assistant	Michael Lynn Edwards	619-744-0550
Communications Coordinator	Ginger Cornwell	619-744-0577

As part of our ongoing commitment to provide a level of service unavailable elsewhere in the insurance industry, we offer "Direct Dial" access to our staff and their personal Voice Mail lines during office hours, and Voice Mail access 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

You may reach members of our staff or leave them Voice Mail messages without having to go through an operator.