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Volume IV - Design and Structure - The Owner-Built Home - Chapter 6 - Cooking-Dining

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Volume IV — Design and Structure The Owner-Built Home — Chapter 6 Cooking-Dining

By Ken Kern

(continued from last month)

The principal concept of New House cooking design is that storage for each of the major cooking centers of activity is provided at the point of first use. The major cooking centers are sink, mix, range, refrigerator, oven, and serve. Wall and base cabinets for each of these activity centers should be the same length: about 4 feet for each unit, except those for the sink, which should be about 8 feet long. A wall cabinet provides a good place for indirect lighting (the light shining directly on the work counter). The usual center ceiling fixture gives light where it is least needed.

Much cabinet storage research has been done in recent years. Perhaps the most noteworthy is the work done at Cornell University. A type of "swing cabinet" is suggested. This is a compact cabinet made of sections that swing open like a book. Storage is one row deep, making each item easy to see and grasp. Only the item wanted has to be lifted out. Door storage is a sensible method of storing small food items, as well as small cooking utensils, spices, etc. Base cabinets with the usual stationary shelves should be avoided wherever possible. Shallow pull-out trays and drawers give far better visibility and greater ease of reaching contents. Heavy pots and pans are brought into easy reach and full view by pulling a tray forward. Vertical drawers are especially satisfactory below the sink, where the often-used dishpan, dish drainer, and brushes may be hung on hooks. A similar vertical drawer beside the range is handy for pans and covers. Vertical partitions or files can also be installed to advantage. Articles stored in these files are within easy reach and can be grasped readily. Overhead cabinets should have sliding doors wherever possible. They do not offer as full an exposure of contents as do swinging doors, but this possible disadvantage can be overcome by using glass-paneled doors.



A poorly designed cooking area costs as much to build as a good one. The popular "Pullman," or strip-type, cooking area, for instance, has traffic objections and is too long for convenient working. The L-shaped arrangement is better, especially when the range is located at the corner, where undisturbed cooking can be done. Probably the most practical and efficient cooking arrangement is the U-shaped plan. (A variation of the U-shape—a circular cooking arrangement—was found to require only 70 feet of walking to prepare a meal; the same meal in an L-shaped cooking area required 245 feet of walking.)

New House design concepts indicate a totally new and fresh outlook on cooking-room arrangements. The traditional window-over-sink, for instance, is now considered obsolete, as so little time need be spent at the sink. Cooking space is best lighted by clearstory or skylight, and the sink should be located near the dining area. Eating space or the mix center, however, might well utilize window exposure. In a good plan the cooking area is convenient to the garage as well as to the front entrance. Yet, entrances to the cooking area should be grouped to minimize through traffic.

Another New House design tendency is to "open up" the cooking area to form a sort of cooking-dining-family room area. This single-space arrangement does not isolate the housewife from the rest of the family or visiting company. The formal dining room of the 1920's has now shrunk to dinette to alcove to nook. Actually, the dining room can function better as a second group-living area, with the dining table itself set in an angled alcove. The dining table should be as close to food preparation as possible. It is also desirable to locate the table close to the sink for simplified cleanup. When food preparation and cleanup are separated from dining, a utility cart can become a useful device. The Cornell investigators designed a neat cart that holds service for eight persons.

BIBLIOGRAPHY (books listed in order of importance)

- The Cornell Kitchen*, Glenn Beyer, Cornell University, 1952.
- Kitchen Cupboards That Simplify Storage*, McCullough, Cornell Bulletin 703.
- The House*, Agan & Luchsinger.
- Human Engineering*, McCormick, 1957.
- Modern Kitchens*, Sunset magazine.

Letters To The Editor

Lamaze Method

To the Editor:

Guess what I got for my birthday this morning? Rebecca gave birth to a beautiful boy! He came to us with nearly no pain to his mother. We used the Lamaze method of childbirth. As you probably know, its aim is to eliminate or to reduce contraction discomfort to a minimum and to let the mother completely participate in this thrilling experience.

In the previous three months I had monitored Rebecca in the various physical and mental exercises recommended by Lamaze

and his students. The only really difficult period we encountered was during the very demanding "transition" stage. She became very tense and it required several loud "commands" from me for her to regain control over the mounting contractions.

Not being drugged to insensibility, Rebecca could be fully aware of the progress of labor, and of course the exhilarating expulsion of the little fellow. I had tears of joy as Jordi slid out onto his mother's thighs. We padded him dry as he lay on Rebecca's breasts.

This occurred in our small cab-

in. Noticeable contractions began about 3:45 a.m. and six hours later he squeezed out. No doctor was present. We had decided that our self-training in childbirth was adequate to meet the challenge.

Our most useful ally in bringing Jordi into the world was a thin manual entitled *A Practical Training Course for the Psychoprophylactic Method of Childbirth*, available from the American Society for Psychoprophylaxis in Obstetrics, 164 W. 79th St., New York City. Several other books were also studied.

Do you know of anyone who can give us a bit of rational and health-minded information on infant vaccinations, check-ups and tests? In peace and revolution, Ferdi Knoess, New Harmony Homestead, Pennington, Minn.

Capable People

To the Editor:

From May through September I have had a wonderful experience in the United States, photographing for film strip firms and making contacts with people for our intentional community in New Zealand. Perhaps I can write up my experiences and impressions.

For me, the people are the most important factor. I try to avoid the neurotic, misdirected rebels, those who are more interested in shocking than in communicating. I avoid those who attribute all of their ills to their environment and none to themselves. For a community to get started, fairly mature individuals are needed. Only later can a group afford to welcome or help those with serious neuroses. I seek people who are keen to continue educating themselves in how to live. I find many intelligent people who welcome physical and sometimes menial jobs for part of their day. I believe it is a fallacy to assume that all educated, intellectual persons do not enjoy manual work. A balance of physical and mental activity is an ideal which many people want. This is a goal in our community. — G. R. (Dick) Roberts, Oamaru, New Zealand

New Experiments

To the Editor:

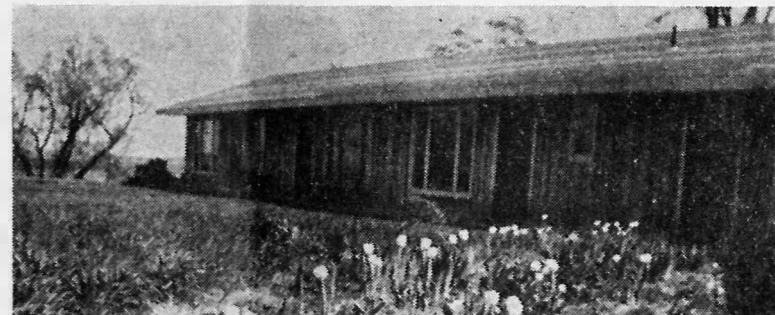
The newer intentional communities and homesteads, I believe, will increasingly include nudity, unmarried sex and psychedelics, as at Eden West, Kerista, Castalia (Millbrook) and other colonies which I have visited. While different age-sets of utopian libertarians may not endorse each other's personal life styles, it is important that we all keep in communication. Love, Jefferson Poland, Box 830, Berkeley, Calif. 94701.

Is It Farewell, Sweet Earth?

To the Editor:

How can we bear the steady

Community To Form, cont'd



WING of Candle Lights Crafts building, near Traverse City, Mich.

of the world, a beautiful and popular resort section, and the famous Interlochen Music Camp is within 15 miles. Employment of various kinds is also at hand, and the climate is ideal, winter and summer.

Program

Darrel Cole and Carl Ogren presented Homesteading As A Way of Life, describing their well-developed homesteads and their further goal of homestead community. The Ogrens have 150 acres organically handled at Rt. 1, Paw Paw, Mich. Another family is building on that land, and they welcome additional families to share with them.

Fred Wissing outlined a Natural Hygiene program; Refa Pos-

tel contributed greatly on improved functioning as creative human beings; Mildred Loomis presented Education for Living and Economic Causes of War. All shared in several unique discussion techniques, and some were heard to say, "We surely can count on a stimulating time and interesting people at School of Living affairs. We really must make sure we develop a regional School of Living here."

Ogren said, "I believe disastrous breakdown of our civilization is before us. I think we should use every bit of energy to get ourselves, families, communities and schools of living developed, to be of what help we can as this breakdown occurs."

How can we sit still and see perhaps the grandest, most romantic and unusual park on earth—the Grand Canyon—going the way of the rest?

Above all how can we be still and let the whole of our earth be sprayed with poisons, no less poisonous to us than to the insects, though slower for the larger creatures and so not so noticeable. How tolerate, but also how prevent the silly explosions of bombs just to show we can?

More and more it feels as if we were all helpless morons in some institution where "experts" are "taking care of us" with poison. We dimly sense what is happening even as the dullest moron must. But we cannot find an effective way to take hold of so big a problem.

There seems nothing to do but try to live better, little-troubled family by little-troubled family, and to forget if we can all the useless waste, destruction, filth, cruelty, evasions, pretensions, lies or quibblings. Slowly, trust and patriotism melt away. And in the measure that these two emotions are lost are we all lost? Never to be found again in our time if, indeed, "time" in our sense continues at all.

No need for anybody to read Revelations; we will know it directly too soon anyhow. Or maybe it should be required reading.—June Burn, Florida

Sun Rise Community

To the Editor:

In June a group of some 20 adults and children came here to Bryce Ford's farm from the Intentional Community Conference held at the Maryland Center. A few have left; those remaining are constructing a building of stone, for our community building. We have somewhat crowded quarters at present, and have been struggling with most of the typical problems of a new community. On the whole I'm very happy about the way things are going. At present Bryce and Jan Ford own the land we're living on. We want to convert this as quickly as possible to ownership by a corporation, of which the community members will be the trustees. Advice on this will be appreciated.

Elaine and I will be in Berkeley, Calif., during the school year, but will return here next summer. We are glad for visitors and inquiries from prospective new members.

I will attend the workshop at

THE GREEN REVOLUTION — 3 October, 1966

ADVERTISING RATES

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LIVING HIGH by June Burn. Joyous homesteading classic. New illus. edition, \$3. Wellington Books, 346 Concord, Belmont, Mass. (y4)

MANUAL FOR A SIMPLE BURIAL. A very useful little booklet, written by Ernest Morgan (3rd edition). Shows how to obtain simplicity, dignity and economy in funeral arrangements through advance planning. Has lists of funeral and memorial societies and eye-banks; tells how to bequeath your body; etc. \$1 from School of Living.

THE OWNER-BUILT HOME is nearing completion. Vol. 4 will be finished in October issue of *Green Revolution*. It will be reprinted in looseleaf form, 3-hole punched for insertion in ring binder, as were Vols. 1, 11 and 111. Each volume is \$2, from School of Living or direct from Ken Kern, Sierra Route, Oakhurst, Calif.

BOOKS FOR SALE

- Go Ahead and Live!, Loomis \$4.00
- Normal Neurosis, Putney 4.00
- Get Well Naturally, Clark 5.95
- Let's Get Well, A. Davis 5.95
- Patterns in Anarchy, Krimmerman 1.95
- Human Ecology, R. Waller 4.50

ALSO

April-May "A Way Out" (1966) 50 (on way and peace)

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the Maryland Center in late August. It's wonderful to see how that place has developed since Jan. 1, 1965. Ben Zablocki, Sun Rise Hill, Conway, Mass.

Enjoys Simple Format

To the Editor:

Because of the varying and for the most part, incisive viewpoints, in your *Green Revolution* and *A Way Out*, these two publications should be read by anyone interested in the decentralist and back-to-the-soil movements. I've enjoyed *A Way Out* and the scope of the magazine and its simple format. One issue stated that mimeographing was a temporary expedient. Why is a more elaborate issue needed since this one is readable? Simplicity should be your forte.—R. J. Fahey, Rt. 2, Oxford, N. Y.

Doubts Parent Teachers

To the Editor:

I think those people who think they are capable of teaching their children at home should try a classroom in a regular school and see how little they know about subject matter, social and psychological problems. I have not known a dozen parents in 30 years of teaching who could do an adequate job of home teaching. I'm amused by all this talk from parents who think they can do it. — Agnes Toms, Canyon Blvd., Monrovia, Calif.

Hutterian Community

To the Editor:

Perhaps your readers may be interested in our community made up of about 50 community-minded Christians. Forest River Community is a cooperative fellowship, associated with the Hutterian Community. (continued on page 4)