

PEOPLE+DIARY

APPOINTMENTS

Anthony Dabbs FIOB, chairman and managing director of Dove Brothers Ltd, has been installed as master of the Worshipful Company of Joiners & Ceilers for the coming year.

PRACTICES

Clifford Culpin & Partners (North), Newcastle upon Tyne, announce that **R T Bulmer** RIBA has become an associate of the practice and **William Dungey** OBE ARIBA Dip TP (London) has been appointed a consultant.

D F Mason and **S P Harmer** announce that, as from 1 September, they have entered into partnership as quantity surveyors at 37 Widmore Road, Bromley, Kent.

Widnell & Trollope, chartered quantity surveyors, Davis House, 129 Wilton Road, London SW1, announce that **D G Lain** ARICS has been appointed an associate.

Alan Marshall & Partners, consulting civil and structural engineers, announce that **Dr K J Brown** has retired as a partner but has been retained as a consultant. The name and address of the practice will be unchanged.

BOARDROOM

Concrete Masonry Group, Llay, Wrexham, has appointed **M J Smith** CEng MIMechE as technical director and **A G M Thomson** as group production director.



Leo Bryan, Key Terrain Ltd

Leo Bryan has been appointed managing director of Key Terrain Ltd, a member of Reed International's Building Products Division.

Colin Holt has rejoined Carters, the Burnley-based fire alarm and security system manufacturer, as marketing director. He was sales director from 1968 to 1972.

Naylor Bros, vitrified clay drainage goods manufacturers of Denby Dale, near Huddersfield, has ap-

pointed three new directors. **David Billington** is sales director, **Brian Riding** ACIS is secretary to the board and **Michael Avery** is production director.



Alan E Thomas, John Willmott

Alan E Thomas FRICS FIOB AMCT has been appointed executive director responsible for marketing of the John Willmott Group. He will continue as consultant to Strutt & Parker on building matters.



A C Melhuish, Rawlplug

A C Melhuish has been appointed chief executive of the Rawlplug Division of Burmah Industrial Products Ltd and managing director of Rawlplug Ltd, with effect from 1 August.

DEATHS

R G Ackland ARICS AIArb, of Bradford Ackland & Bowen, died on 16 August.

NEXT WEEK

SUNDAY 19 SEPTEMBER
Environmental noise planning and control: course to consider in detail technicalities, background and ramifications of anti-noise regulations and practices. Venue: University of Technology, Loughborough. Date: until 24 September. Fee: £110. Details: Mrs Sonia Withers, Centre for Extension Studies, University of Technology, Loughborough, Leics LE11 3TU. Tel: Loughborough 63171.

MONDAY 20 SEPTEMBER

The other side of the hill: third annual Churchill lectures of Institute of Building's Eastern Region. Venue: Churchill College, Cambridge. Time: 9.30 am. Details: Don Foord, Regional Administrative Officer, 69 Eastwood Boulevard, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex.

Project Management: Urwick Management Centre is introducing a new one-week course for individuals with responsibility for managing innovative projects. Venue: Urwick Management Centre, Baylis House, Stoke Poges Lane, Slough, Berks SL1 3PF. Date: until 24 September. Time: 9.15 am. Fee: £180. Details: G S Sanders, Urwick Management Centre, Slough. Tel: Slough (75) 34111.

Application to reinforced concrete design: C&CA course introducing engineers to basic principles of limit state design. Venue: Fulmer Grange Training Centre, nr Slough. Date: until 24 September. C&CA, Fulmer Grange, Fulmer, Slough SL2 4QS.

TUESDAY 21 SEPTEMBER

What's new in concrete for the builder?: seminar organised jointly by the C&CA and the IOB. Venue: Fulmer Grange, Slough. Details: The Registrar, C&CA, Fulmer Grange, Fulmer, Slough.

Reconstruction of Robert Stephenson's Britannia railway bridge: paper with colour film presented by Michael Seward B Eng AMICE for Faculty of Building, Midlands Branch. Venue: Crest Motel, Birmingham Road, Walsall. Time: 7 pm. Tickets: R V Wharton, High-Point Services Ltd, King Edward House, New Street, Birmingham B2 4QJ. Tel: 021-643 7881.

The selection of energy resources for housing: conference. The introductory paper will be given by Gordon Oakes MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Energy. Venue: University of Salford. Date: until 22 September. Details: Professor R A Burgess, Department of Civil Engineering, University of Salford, Salford M5 4WT.

European economic concrete '76: Concrete Society convention. The opening talk "The concrete industry and the national economy" will be given by Sir Frederick Catherwood. Venue: Sherman Theatre, University College, Cardiff. Date: until 23 September. Details: D M Porter, University College, PO Box 97, Cardiff CF1 1XP.

Paint in the service of the community: international conference to mark Paint Research Association's golden jubilee. Venue: Excelsior Hotel, London Airport (Heathrow). Date: until 23 September. Details: Mrs Gill McDonald, PRA, Waldegrave Road, Teddington, Middlesex. Tel: 01-977 4427.

WEDNESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER

Use of asphalt: seminar to promote the use of asphalt in underwater engineering and water conservation. Venue: Intercontinental Hotel, London. Details: Mike Deathridge, Tarmac Roadstone Holdings Limited, 50 Waterloo Road, Wolverhampton WV1 4RU. Tel: Wolverhampton (0902) 41101.

Glass in building: exhibition demonstrating the most effective use of glass as a material. Venue: Building Centre, 26 Store Street, London WC1E 7BT. Date: until 8 October. Details: Andrew Brett, Group Exhibition Manager, Building Centre. Tel: 01-637 1022.

FUTURE EVENTS

Design is . . . : Open University TV programme for Foundation Course in Technology, including Richard MacCormack on his Merton housing scheme. Channel: BBC 2. Dates: 26 and 27 September. Times: 7.40 am and 6.40 pm.

Plant engineering and maintenance exhibition + conference: industrial equipment show organised by Clapp and Poliak Europe Ltd, Machine Tool Trades Association and the Andry Montgomery Group. Venue: National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham. Date: 27 September - 1 October. Details: Clapp and Poliak, 232 Acton Lane, London W4.

American and British planning: bicentennial conference organised by the Regional Studies Association. Venue: US Embassy. Date: 29 September. Time: 10 am-5.30 pm. Details: RSA, 62 Chandos Place, London WC2N 4HH.

Housing - the consortia way: symposium organised by National Housing Consortia Co-operative Committee. Venue: The Royal Society, Carlton House Terrace, London SW1. Date: 29 September. Details: North Group, London Housing Consortium, 639 High Road, Tottenham, London N17.

COURSES

The use of concrete in schools: C&CA course for handicraft and art teachers. Venue: Fulmer Grange Training Centre, nr Slough. Dates: 26 September-1 October and 17-22 April 1977. Fee: £45 (+ £3.60 VAT). Details: Registrar, C&CA, Conference and Training Centre, Fulmer Grange, Fulmer, Slough SL2 4QS.

Project organisation and control: third presentation of course dealing with aspects of management in projects. Venue: Loughborough University. Date: 26 September-1 October. Fee: £125. Details: Centre of Extension Studies (1), University of Technology, Loughborough, Leics LE11 3TU. Tel: Loughborough 63171, ext 213/249.



DENYS LASDUN

A NEW NATIONAL ROLE



The work of Denys Lasdun has consistently won the respect of his fellow architects and his design for the new National Theatre has now brought him into the public eye. He talked to *Dennis Sharp* and *Colin Davies* about his influences, his work with partners Peter Softley and Alexander Redhouse and the triumphs and setbacks of a thirteen year involvement with the National Theatre project.

After leaving Rugby School Denys Lasdun went straight to the Architectural Association, London in 1931. His family had no direct connection with architecture. His father, who died when Denys Lasdun was only six, had been concerned with engineering and was a cousin of the famous French designer Leon Bakst who worked with Diaghilev. His mother was a pianist but the main connection his family had with the art world was through his paternal grandfather who was one of the founders of the Australian Impressionist Group in Melbourne. His own interest in architecture was stimulated by a fellow student at Rugby, Bill Henderson, who at the time was going off to Reilly's famous school at Liverpool.

Lasdun entered the AA First Year when it was going through a Neo-Swedish mood. A teacher who made a big impression on him was S Rowland Pierce, himself a classicist architect, who is probably best remembered today as a fine draughtsman and one-time co-editor of the book *Planning*. Apart from Pierce, Lasdun was also influenced by E A Rowse who took over from Howard Robertson at the AA. "Rowse made it clear that architecture was a social art, to do with society's values, which made me pick a thesis on housing".

This sort of fresh thinking led to Lasdun's early concern with town planning matters and cities. He still finds difficulty in understanding the incompatibility that exists today between the disciplines of planning and architecture.

Blurred boundaries

Referring to the current situation, he sees planning and architecture as interdependent: "I find the boundaries very blurred and I would be, I think, a lot happier if we accepted that the boundaries were blurred and not that there's one very hard-and-fast division that calls itself town planning and another called, to use the overworked word, environment. It's both buildings and collections of buildings and places; there is no rigid boundary."

Lasdun speaks of the great impatience his generation at the AA felt with a five-year secluded life. "We wanted to be far more involved, as indeed students always do." But things were not always serious and he remembers with a smile that "the cinema on the corner (of Tottenham Court Road) used to run a programme which started at 2 o'clock in the afternoon and didn't end till about 6, so it took care of the afternoon . . . it was a place we used to go to often".

At the time Lasdun was an

AA student, there were forces at work in European architecture which were eventually to have an irreversible effect on British design. Among these were new ideas on the use of reinforced concrete, on plainness in design, on a geometrical architecture and on "modernism" as an ideology. In 1927 the publisher John Rodker produced an English translation of Le Corbusier's tract *Vers une Architecture* (translated by Etchells as *Towards a new Architecture*). Lasdun recalls the impact this book had on him in the early 1930s: "I was absolutely hooked on *Vers une Architecture*, it was like a duck taking to water. I read it from cover to cover more than once and I went to Paris almost immediately . . . there was no question at all that this was what architecture was about and the way I was going . . . I found Le Corbusier's *Pavillon Suisse* in Paris stunning."

An AA project designed by Lasdun in the Corb manner (a hostel in Regent's Park), received a "first mention" and in 1935 was his first published scheme. While it can clearly be seen that Corb's ideas have been behind the development of Lasdun's work, over many years this pronounced influence has been essentially architectural, and he is less inclined to accept Corb's views on planning: "I was never

attracted by, or accepted, any of the urbanist utopian theories - they struck me as terrifying."

In 1934 Lasdun left the AA School to work for Wells Coates, another completely convinced Corbusian, and the founder of the English group of modern architects - MARS. Lasdun worked on Coates's Palace Gate flats. He also began to see the hazards and potentialities of reinforced concrete. However Coates was short of work and when Lasdun received a commission to design a house in Paddington for a friend, Bob Conway, he went out on his own.

First solo piece

The Paddington house Lasdun recalls, "was my first solo piece of modern architecture". It was Corbusian in essence with an added feeling for more friendly materials - Dutch tiles - which had probably been seen by Lasdun in Tecton's work High Point 2 at Highgate.

Lasdun next moved to Lubetkin's Tecton group with whose later work he is closely associated. He joined at the time the Tecton Partnership was completing work on the Finsbury Health Centre. After that came reinforced concrete air-raid shelter work and eventually the outbreak of war. Lasdun enlisted: "I went into