eye,” and causing death. Red reflects victory; black represents death and evil. Blue, red, white, and black beads were recovered from the cabin sites, as well as one blue bead from just outside the sugarhouse. Perhaps these beads were more than just decorative to the individuals who wore them.

Louisiana slaveholders were somewhat indifferent to Christian religious instruction for slaves until the mid-1800s; therefore, African religious beliefs of some form probably continued in slave culture. Practices associated with these beliefs were forbidden, so little was written about them. But the presence of beads, pierced coins, polished stones, and seashells in the quarters suggests Ashland slaves’ sustaining belief in African ways.

Work in the Sugarhouse

The sugarhouse at Ashland Plantation was financed by Duncan Kenner and probably constructed by slave labor around 1836-1839. By this time, sugar cultivation was already well-established on the property, as further attested by the 117 slaves on the plantation in 1840. Prior to his purchase of nearby Bowden Plantation in 1858, Kenner invested a considerable amount of money in expanding and changing the Ashland sugarhouse to accommodate new, more efficient machinery and his increasing sugar yields. After that date, Kenner likely chose not to upgrade the Ashland mill because the Bowden sugarhouse had newer machinery. By 1887, the year Kenner died, both rice and sugar were being grown on the plantation. The Ashland sugarhouse was converted to a rice mill by that date, and only rice was processed there until the structure ceased to be used sometime after 1888. Sugar produced on the Ashland tract after 1887 was processed at Bowden.

Archaeological investigations focused on the sequence of structural changes to the Ashland sugarhouse and the interior layout of the various work areas in which cane was processed into sugar. The observed locations of large iron artifacts, such as mill gears, boiler firebox doors, and a furnace hoe, also provided clues about the activity that took place in a certain area.

Documented purchase of a new crusher mill in 1846 suggests that, at least by this time, Kenner was modifying the sugarhouse. The original brick structure was a 140 x 45 foot rectangle, later expanded to 200 feet in length. Two long wings, measuring about 8 x 39 feet each, were also added to provide adequate space for processing and storing the increased production brought about by new technology. The addition of these wings created the final T-shaped configuration of the Ashland sugarhouse, encompassing approximately 15,240 square feet (see photo).

Transforming raw cane into sugar was a multi-staged process, with steam used at this plantation to power the machinery. Basically, this process involved steps to squeeze juice out of the cane, remove impurities by straining the juice (clarification), thicken the juice into a syrup, or molasses, through evaporation, boil the syrup until the sugar crystallized, pack this sugar into barrels (called “hogsheads”), and, finally, ship the final product, to drain molasses from the packed sugar (purgings).

Sometime in the 1850s, Kenner had centrifugals installed as a more efficient means of separating molasses and sugar. This simplistic description of sugar production, however, does not adequately illustrate the labor or the technology required in this process.

Sugar production was all-consuming during harvest, when laborers in the fields and the mill worked virtually around-the-clock to beat the frost and save the crop. Historical sources report that maximum production was encouraged by owners who provided extra food and drink, as well as other incentives, to their slaves. According to an 1852 Ashland record book, only eight to twelve slaves worked in the sugarhouse during its operation that year. These slaves also worked as carpenters on the plantation. The bulk of the 169 slaves reported at Ashland in 1850 appear to have been cutting cane in the fields and transporting it to the sugarhouse. Obviously, the labor and expertise provided by slaves enabled survival of the plantation as a viable economic entity.

A Preservation Legacy

Only a smattering of the information discovered about Ashland-Belle Helene Plantation has been presented here. The three-volume project report reflects the true efforts of Earth Search and Shell Chemical Company to preserve the legacy of this remarkable plantation and the people who lived there. Shell has generously donated over 39,000 artifacts and the associated documentation produced during this project to the state of Louisiana. As a result, museums and future researchers will have access to this important collection for exhibits and comparative studies. The exemplary role Shell Chemical Company has played in investigating and preserving the heritage of Ashland-Belle Helene Plantation will certainly serve as a model in the years to come.

The author is indebted to the works of Earth Search, Inc., Eugene D. Genovese, Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, and John Vlach from which information in this article was derived.
DILLARD UNIVERSITY
A Continuity of Design and Designers
by Milton G. Scheuermann, Jr., University Architect
photographs by Milton G. Scheuermann, Jr.

The first glimpse of the campus from Gentilly Boulevard is quite an impressive one. The majestic avenue of oaks, recently named the Rosa Freeman Keller Avenue of Oaks of Dillard University, draws one's view down to the impressive white antebellum-style Kearny Hall, the student union building constructed in 1937.

It was not by accident that this imposing vista came about. Longtime president Dr. Albert W. Dent was instrumental in laying out these trees with the assistance of Moise H. Goldstein, the architect responsible for the original concept and initial master plan of the buildings of the university.

It was over sixty years ago when Rosenwald Hall, the first building of the Dillard University campus, was erected. This then unnamed antebellum-style building contained a very elegant two-story wood paneled library in the rear center wing while the rest of the structure housed a number of classrooms as well as a few rooms devoted to administration. Architect Moise H. Goldstein continued until his retirement in the early sixties to be the guiding hand in all subsequent building designs for the campus. In the years that followed the firm went through a few name changes: Moise H. Goldstein and Associates; Goldstein, Parham and Labouisse; Goldstein and Goldstein (including son Louis Goldstein); and Parham and Labouisse (descendants of the Goldstein, Parham and Labouisse firm after Mr. Goldstein's retirement in 1962). It is interesting that in the long history of the building of the Dillard campus there has always been a continuity of designers and firms.

I was associated directly as architect with Goldstein, Parham and Labouisse and Parham and Labouisse. After the dissolution of the firm of Parham and Labouisse I became university architect for Dillard with my office housed on the Dillard campus. The major part of my work in those firms was in the design of the Dillard buildings. In the building boom of the sixties, almost half of the buildings were constructed as well as additions and renovations to existing buildings. When Parham and Labouisse dissolved in 1972, I was very fortunate to be able to bring to the university all of the original drawings for every building. In the words that follow I would like to give a short description of the major buildings and how their design and the overall design of the campus came about.

Goldstein's concept was to lay out a formal design with the oak trees forming the major axis. By the early fifties three major buildings in the design were completed: Kearny Hall (the student union building, at the end of the avenue of oaks); Rosenwald Hall on the left (the original library and classroom building named in 1948 after Julius Rosenwald); and Stern Hall on the right (housing the Division of Natural Sciences, named in 1952 after Edgar B. Stern). The president's residence, a guest house and five faculty cottages were also part of the initial set of buildings and were set along the perimeter of the horseshoe-shaped road entered from Gentilly Boulevard. Stern Hall was built in the early fifties and is an exact exterior copy of Rosenwald Hall. These two buildings provide a very formal frame for Kearny Hall in the distance. Prior to the completion of this impressive three-building axial design, two dormitories were built: Hartzell Hall, for men, on the west side of the center axis, and Straight Hall, for women, on the east side. They are in complete harmony with the design of the elegant Rosenwald Hall but on a much smaller scale. Care was taken to put both of these buildings beyond the outer limits of the oak trees to maintain open and green spaces.

There is an interesting story about the design and construction of these dormitory buildings. When they were designed in the late thirties, the standard practice for architects was to produce only basic drawings to give to the building contractor for construction purposes. Contractual and legal problems were almost non-existent in those days. I remember Mr. Goldstein telling me that it was more of a "gentlemen's agreement" than a legal building contract. A hand-shake was very binding. Consequently the drawings for Hartzell Hall (the first to be built) were done on just eight sheets, two of which were furniture plans. Since Straight Hall was an exact mirror image, both interior and exterior of Hartzell flopped over on the other side of the oak tree axis, it was decided to use the same drawings by printing the sheets in reverse! Because of the reversal of the sheets, notes on the drawings would also come out in reverse. This problem was solved by erasing all of the notes and dimensions on the front of the sheet and then re-lettering them on the reverse side of the sheet with the original drawings remaining on the other side!

With this formal design now set (Rosenwald and Stern halls on the front, Kearny Hall in the rear, Hartzell and Straight halls on the sides, all neatly placed around the avenue of oaks), subsequent buildings have been added in the outer spaces in a careful manner to harmonize with the overall integrity of the original concept. Of first major importance was the building of the Lawless Memorial Chapel in 1955. Placed to the west of Rosenwald Hall off of the main axis, its L-shaped design is set around one of the most impressive and beautiful live oak trees in the city. It is quite visible from Gentilly Boulevard but is not overpowering to distract from the rigid formality of the design concept. This colonial style structure was primarily designed by F. Monroe Labouisse shortly after the architectural firm became Goldstein, Parham and Labouisse.

From this point onward in the firm every subsequent Dillard building had the input of Labouisse. Of major importance were the extensive additions to both Rosenwald and Stern halls. Identical wings were added to each on both the east and west sides.

Additions to Stern Hall included extensive new areas assigned to the Division of Nursing. Dillard has always
maintained an outstanding school of nursing. Its early connection with Flint Goodridge Hospital provided a practice ground for students and graduates. In addition to the nursing facilities, extensive additions were made to the science laboratories, classrooms, and faculty offices. In Rosenwald Hall the additions included many new classrooms and faculty offices, allowing much needed additional space for administrative offices. One of the major projects in Rosenwald was the addition of another floor in the center wing that originally housed the elegant library mentioned above. Needless to say the library by this time had outgrown its confined area in this building and a new structure for it was built in 1961, the Will Alexander Library, placed directly behind the Lawless Chapel. This building, with a slightly curved front, is a rather contemporary design, but Labouisse did very well in making it look right at home with the rest of the campus.

The last major structure under the administration of Dr. Dent was the health and physical education building that bears his name, Albert W. Dent Hall. In outward appearance it is akin to the Will Alexander Library with similar design proportions. Dr. Brodus B. Butler succeeded Dr. Dent as president of the university in 1970. During his relatively short administration further additions were made to the dormitories. In 1974 Dr. Samuel DuBois Cook succeeded Dr. Butler to the presidency and remains in that position today. The most important architectural improvement to take place under Dr. Cook's administration has been the fulfillment of an over thirty year dream of a fine arts building. Mr. Labouisse and I worked on a preliminary design for this in the early sixties, but for various reasons it never was built. Finally, in the early nineties it was decided to go forward with the project, due to the increased student body and definite need for the structure. The building was dedicated in March 1993 and subsequently named the Samuel DuBois Cook Fine Arts and Communications Center. Besides music, art, and drama, the structure also contains the most up-to-date mass communications facilities.

In the late eighties Dillard swapped about twenty-six acres of land it owned on the west side of the London Ave. Canal for a little over nine acres fronting on Gentilly Boulevard belonging to the New Orleans Parkway Commission. The land was a boon for the university because of its impressive visibility from Gentilly Boulevard. It is on this piece of property that the Cook Center was placed. It was the first major structure since the sixties. An architectural firm had to be selected that was sympathetic to the overall design concept originally conceived by (continued on page 14)
Moise Goldstein and supported over the years by the board of trustees. A formal search was made and the Mathes Group was selected. The tie with previous designers of the campus continues since two principals I worked with in that firm on the design of the Cook Center, Michael R. Howard and Ann Schmuelling, are former students of mine at the Tulane University School of Architecture.

The land acquired from the Parkway Commission is sufficiently large enough to allow for future building expansion. Presently, however, more renovations and additions are underway. Most important are the east and west wings being added to the student union, Kearny Hall, which is also being done by the Mathes Group. Thanks to the effectiveness of the Dillard Board of Trustees, and the leadership of Presidents Dent, Butler, and Cook for preserving and nurturing.

Moise Goldstein's initial concept, the Dillard University campus has been called one of the most beautiful in America. I'm very honored and proud to be part of the architectural history of this outstanding institution.

Milton G. Scheuermann, Jr. is both architect and musician. He is a graduate of the Tulane University School of Architecture and has been a member of the faculty since 1959, teaching architectural graphics and photography. Mr. Scheuermann was associated with the firms of Goldstein, Parham and Labouisse, and Parham and Labouisse from 1954 through 1972 when he became the university architect for Dillard University. He is founder and co-director of the New Orleans Musica da Camera, an early music ensemble researching and performing medieval and Renaissance music extensively in New Orleans and the Gulf South.

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