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Summary

Group 6, Geneva

Apartment Houses on Avenue de Bel-Air, Geneva (pages 98-100)

Apartment house, three stories plus ground floor, with moderate rentals, planned in 1958, built in 1960.

Block A: 94 flats (10 1/2-room flats, 18 2-room flats, 363-room flats, 30 4-room flats).

Block B: 51 flats (6 2 1/2-room flats, 18 3-room flats, 9 2-room flats, 6 4-room flats, 12 1 1/2-room studios).

Hollow deck construction and pillars of reinforced concrete (no supporting wall). Flat roof, multi-ply insulation. "Plastofloor" flooring in the flats, the kitchens, bathrooms and WC are tiled. Electric and gas connections in kitchens for ranges. Single-pane windows with inside blinds. Balconies on each side. Central heating oil fired with radiators in front of windows.

Block A

Construction cost Fr. 2,622,000.-
Volume 27,100 cu.meters

Cost per cu.meter according to SIA norms Fr. 96.80

Exterior approaches and landscaping Fr. 82,000.-
Cost of total operation Fr. 2,704,000.-

Block B

Construction cost Fr. 1,049,000.-
Volume 10,836 cu.meters

Dom + Maurice, Geneva

Apartment House at Thônex (pages 101-103)

The builders had the idea of erecting apartment houses according to a total prefabrication process. The basic programme was broken down as follows:

80 units totalling 320 rooms and consisting of:

- 20 3-room flats,
- 40 4-room flats,
- 20 5-room flats.

The buildings had to meet the H.L.M. regulations.

The plan and the interior lay-out were bound to be very regular owing to the pre-fab method and to the fact that there is an equal number of 3- and 5-room flats.

All the apartments have identical equipment. The north face consists of a curtain wall (wooden frames, double panes with Venetian blinds), the south face is articulated honeycomb fashion by loggias (each cell defining one apartment unit). All the apartments go all the way through, making possible cross-ventilation and giving an effect of spaciousness.

The general utility services (heating system and large laundries with automatic washers) are centralized, being situated between the two blocks.

The principal interest of this project consists in the pre-fabrication system applied here, and the standardization of the elements has been very thoroughly worked out. This project was one of the first carried out in association with the IGECO works, at Etoy (Vaud).

Study

Before undertaking the construction of these buildings, we made a careful study of the structural system of the complex, in association with the engineers and the builders (IGECO).

This structural system is composed of supporting shells with intervals of around 5.80 meters, forming the cell unit, its depth being around 14 meters. The whole complex is made up of 20 bays of 5.80 meters representing 10 blocks with their own stairways, each tract having 8 flats on 4 levels. The entire structure was assembled within 2 1/2 months, the foundations and walls of the basements having already been completed. The heaviest elements weighed around 3 tons.

The total construction, from the excavation work to the final finishing on the ready-to-occupy flats, took 10 months (March to December 1959), which is very fast for present-day conditions. The landscaping was executed after this.

The advantages of pre-fabrication (in comparison with the system employed here) can be summarized thus, according to our experience, which has been transferred subsequently to other similar jobs.

Saving of time due to the fact that the rough structural work is independent of weather conditions and that the readying of the work-site is far advanced (planning of element sites, planning of transport, etc.).

Increased demand for workers on the site, which has favourable social repercussions.

Since each construction detail is studied in advance with the builders, a great many unforeseen factors can be eliminated.

Owing to the rapidity of execution of the rough structure, the average earnings of the workers on other parts of the project register a net increase.

Socially and psychologically the worker feels more bound up with the job, which he feels to be less cut and dried and more constructive. The work project is better organized, it is neat. The worker is in this way integrated in a structure of which he is an active member and his role becomes more interesting and concrete.

L. C. Daneri, L. Grossi-Bianchi,
G. Zappa, Genoa

Bernabò Brea Residential Colony in Genoa

(pages 108-109)

A number of luxurious villas have been built on the slopes of the Ligurian coast east of Genoa. On a site in a park measuring 45,000 square metres the Ina-Casa building society planned 14 apartment houses containing 360 flats. Most of the houses stand parallel to the slope. In the bottom of a little valley are situated the public premises, such as a kindergarten, swimming pool, playgrounds and a primary school.

17 types of flats were planned.

One of the buildings, sited diagonally to the plot, contains the shops and a walk from which there is a magnificent view. Directly connected with the complex is house No. 3, the residence of the doctor and the location of the welfare center.

Pre-fabricated concrete elements were employed in the construction.

Compared to residential colonies in the suburbs of other large cities in Italy, where there is great waste of terrain, this project is an example of architectural responsibility.

G. P. Dubois, Zurich

Apartment House at Arbon (pages 110-113)

Owner: Employees' Retirement Fund of Adolph Saurer S.A., Arbon

Engineer: E. Schubiger, Grad. Eng. EPL/SIA Zurich-Solothurn

In comparison with architectural solutions in general, this building shows clearly how much the architect has sought to discover an adaptation to the problem of collective housing.

This block is very comfortable owing to the great variety of types of apartment aligned east-west that have been combined in 2 1/2- and 4 1/2-room flats alternating with duplex apartments with various plans and the south court with its 3-room flats.

The architect has applied the experiences gathered in the "cités radieuses" of Le Corbusier on a more modest Swiss scale, varied by reduced depth and by external galleries on the east.

The employment of raw shuttered concrete sacrifices some of its original expressiveness because of Swiss building regulations.

Only people who have themselves built in Switzerland can have any idea of the struggle that it is necessary to put up to realize such a concentration of 95 apartments in a single building.

The programme envisages on a site of about 26,000 sq. meters the construction of 200 apartments, in two stages. The site sloping gently to the south is crossed by a secondary street and bounded on the south by a brook and a public park.

The building of the first stage accommodates 95 families, i. e.:

230 adults
141 children (under 20)

total 373 persons
in 64 4 1/2-room flats,
25 3-room flats,
6 2 1/2-room flats.

The utility premises (cellars, garages for cars, motorcycles and bikes) are sited east and west of the building at grade level to avoid their being placed directly in the ground water table, which is only 1 meter beneath the surface of the ground. The cellars are also shelters and are covered by 1 meter of soil.

Each apartment possesses either a loft on the roof or a storage room in the flat itself. There are likewise located on the roof the laundries, which are very well equipped, and an open-air drier. The residents have at their disposal two public lounges:

A music room on the roof,

another on the mezzanine level for games and various functions.

One single stairwell and two lifts serve all the apartments and divide the building into two quite distinct tracts:

In the south tract, the 3-room flats, designed on one level; in the north tract, the larger "maisonette" type flats on more than one level traverse the building from east to west.

Suspended gangways on the east face run from the lifts to the individual apartments. From the stairwell there is direct access to the 2 1/2-room and 3-room flats. The stairway on the north face is required by the fire regulations.

The ground floor is free of all installations of any kind. The main entrance to the building is in the open air, as is the stairwell, so that the resident is not really in the house until he crosses his own threshold. This concept of passageways in common, already widely known, permits without further ado a high degree of concentration within one single building, entailing considerable savings in construction costs.

The construction itself is of raw reinforced concrete with interior supporting walls of special brick. These supporting walls provide excellent acoustic insulation between adjoining flats. Within each separate flat the partitions are of "Zelton" panels. Floating flags for all the floors. Concentration of sanitation and heating ducts in insulated sheathing.

Depending on his needs and his tastes, the resident can live a communal life or enjoy the privacy of his flat.

The green areas surrounding the building are divided into a playing-field (football, basketball) and playgrounds for children. It should be noted that the playgrounds are heavily utilized and that the plans have thereby been justified.

Once over the threshold of his own flat, the resident enjoys total privacy: On the lower floors the broad picture windows command views of the surrounding green zones.

On the upper floors there is a more extensive view, over the lake on one

side, toward the hills of Appenzell on the other.

The combined principle of respecting both the need for communal living and the requirements of private life was applied from the very first studies and carried through in the detailing of the actual project. Only the minacious application of this principle justifies such a high degree of concentration.

Example of a 4 1/2-room apartment, Type A

The apartment is reached via one of the suspended gangways. The living-lounge, on two levels, measures more than 10 meters in length and continues on to a loggia. Very effective east-west cross ventilation. Meals are taken on the common floor, on the kitchen side. On the upper level, the parents' bedroom and a child's room. The glass fronts are recessed from the face, well shielded from the elements.

Dieter Oesterlen, Hanover and Brunswick.

Contractors: Neuland AG for the housing projects at Wolfsburg

High-rise Apartment House at Wolfsburg

(pages 114-115)

This building with 16 decks gives its residential district with three- and four-storey row houses a metropolitan accent.

At the same time it is sited in the perspective of a major thoroughfare of Wolfsburg serving to define from afar its long curve.

The cubic mass of the complex is articulated into two slender prisms which offset each other and thus give clear expression to the plan and help to reveal its structured plasticity.

The ground-floor on piling allows the green zones to run clear under the building and yields an unobstructed view.

On the ground level, a structure perpendicular to the main complex accommodates the entrance, the caretaker's flat and a physician's consulting-room, with an extension envisaging a second office on the opposite side. The 14 upper levels house 84 apartments, with four 2-room flats with loggias and two 1-room flats per floor.

The fifteenth floor, which is recessed, accommodates a restaurant served by two direct lifts and commands a panoramic view of Wolfsburg.

Construction:

Skeleton of reinforced concrete.

There are supporting walls along the corridors and between the apartments. The exterior skin is of pre-fab elements furnished with heat insulation and a humidity check, with differentiated colour scheme. It is mounted on the site with the aid of a crane. These elements function likewise as exterior facing constituting an integral part of the building.

The larger parapets beneath the projecting kitchen windows, which are faced with glass mosaics, are also pre-fabricated.

To avoid all scaffolding, the pre-fab elements possess a joint whose special profile permits assembling without the use of mortar; in this way thorough advantage is taken of pre-fabrication by way of a sure assembling method that is not subject to subsequent repair work.

The café on the last floor has a steel frame structure.

The realization of such a fine example of pre-fabrication required the co-operation and teamwork of a leading artificial stone works, a distinguished architect and an open-minded owner.

Alix Kaenel, Solothurn

Apartment House in Solothurn (pages 116-118)

Without being absolutely successful, a group of architects attempted to build a moderate-cost apartment house on a restricted and very expensive site, where their problem was to concentrate 24 3-room apartments on 1000 sq. meters.

They opted for cell apartments with external stairwells. Only the galleries and the cleaning balconies open on to the noisy street, and the living area is oriented toward the south on the other face.

However, the plan is suitable only for a modern style of living; the space separated from the living-room by sliding walls was originally intended to be used as a parents' bedroom, but they have in all cases occupied the space on the street side for this purpose.

The building is of raw concrete and faced on the inside by fixed coffers whose visible plaster surface is painted egg-shell white. The wooden windows are painted white on both sides, and all the metal parts are royal blue.

The sanitary installations core sited in the centre of the apartments is dark brown on the outside and faced with white tiles on the inside. The floors are covered with green-blue linoleum, and the limba woodwork is left un-painted.

Finally, the architects obtained permission to install a 4-room flat on the roof. The building is air-conditioned (Wayne 4-Aggregate System) and is equipped with ventilated refuse shafts in the kitchens.

The 3-room flats can easily be converted into single tracts (offices).

Cost per cu. meter: Fr. 130.-.

Rentals: Frs. 230.-, which is clearly below the average. The apartments are designed for families of three.

Lothar Götz, Heidelberg and Karlsruhe Associate; Heribert Sode and Klaus Unruh

Residence for Nurses and Staff of the Heidelberg Hospital

(pages 119-121)

Execution: 1959-1961

The building is situated in a zone reserved for the erection of university clinics, the entire surgical section of which already exists.

This high-rise structure comprises 180 single rooms and 20 doubles for a total of 220 nurses. They are distributed over 10 levels all having the same plan. The secondary rooms on each floor are a living-room with kitchen, two showers and a bath, a place for light washing and the toilets. Vertical communications consist of two stairwells and two lifts. The ground-floor accommodates an entrance lobby, a porter's office, two telephone booths and a music room. The basement contains a laundry with two washing-machines, a drier, a sewing and ironing-room with ample facilities. The roof terrace is equipped with a shower and a storage place for deck chairs.

The nurses' rooms face east, south and west while the living-room faces north and commands a very fine view.

The installations core and the vertical communications sited in the centre of the building are sealed off from the other tracts by special joints ensuring good acoustic insulation.

The fan scheme of the bedroom layout reduces the area of the corridors and in this way avoids giving the impression of a barracks.

Apart from the premises already mentioned, the space beneath the piling at grade level is left open permitting the pedestrian to get an over-all picture of the whole complex of the clinic.

The building comprises around 21,000 cu. meters at a cost of DM 130.-.

The nurses maintain their rooms themselves, including the cleaning of the windows, and three hired employees take care of the common rooms.

Construction:

Reinforced concrete including the partitions to ensure acoustic insulation, to which particular attention was devoted with a view to guarding against disturbing noise at night.

As the building is very much exposed to the sun on the west, Venetian blinds of synthetic material have been installed on the south and the west, which can be lowered as well when the windows are opened. The insulation of the last floor is assured by the presence of the installations level above.

The white "Detopak" facing is placed 10 cm off the skeleton so as not to conduct solar heat in summer.

Hot-water heat via radiators fed from separate plant.

H. P. Baur, Basle

Home for the Aged at Aesch

(pages 122-123)

The situation and the lay-out of the different volumes create interesting and functional exterior spaces. By the approach, the main entrance and the delivery entrance give a good idea of the whole complex.

The essential quality of this plan consists in a good distribution of rooms by fours, this arrangement found on the three upper levels.

The connection among the bedrooms and the sanitary installations as well as with the vertical communications is carefully worked out.

The roof deck, which likewise houses the sick rooms, is heightened by a garden which catches the evening sunlight. A chapel constitutes a clear separation between the pastor's garden and the entrance court on the east.

The secluded garden court on the south-west is surrounded by the main building and subsidiary tracts and constitutes a prolongation of the entrance lobby with its office, chapel, lounges and dining-rooms, hobby shops and sewing-rooms.

The utility rooms are located on the same level as the three dining-rooms. The location of the staff tract, the pantry and the washing-up room allows the residents to participate easily in household activities.

The cellars found at grade level are also directly connected with the kitchens.

A special parking area and a separate entrance serve the utility zone, which are nevertheless intimately tied in with the main building.

Carlfried Mutschler, Mannheim

Associate: J. Langner

Home for the Aged and Protestant Sisters' Residence in Mannheim-Lindenhof

(pages 124-126)

Plan: 1958

Execution: 1960/1961

The programme comprised three tracts grouped on a small site:

Reception centre and lodgings for the pastor, the sacristan and the choir leader,

Residence for Sisters and nursing school for children's, nurses, Home for the aged with dining-rooms, kitchen, etc.

This complex is internally connected with the parish hall of the Church of St. John.

These three different functions are grouped in a six-decked structure whose exterior appearance reflects the character of the various divisions.

The east-west alignment makes for uniform distribution of sunlight in all the rooms and creates a specific relationship between the building and the church, in this way being clearly distinguished from the surrounding housing. Moreover, this location makes possible a desirable green zone extending down to the street.

The difference in level between the street and the garden that is often encountered in Mannheim permitted the siting of the dining-room and the kitchen at garden level. On the ground-floor are located the other shared premises and the entrances of all the parts of the complex.

The five upper levels comprise single and double bedrooms with loggias whose divisions correspond to the dimensions of the rooms situated behind and thus invest the face with a rhythmic quality.

On all the decks an elongated core accommodates the toilet facilities, baths, common kitchens, stairways, lifts and the special rooms for visitors, patients, etc.

Construction and materials:

Garden and ground-floor: reinforced concrete, untreated.

Upper decks: walls rendered white, reinforced ribbed slab.

Balconies and exterior walls of reinforced concrete.

Windows of painted wood (grey and white) with thermopane glazing.

Protection against sun glare: parasols on loggias.

Ventilated flat roof with multi-ply roofing and gravel top coat.

Floors: linoleum on floating floor base. In core: terrazzo and artificial stone, In dining-room: parquet.

Gardens by SOM

(pages 127-130)

Out of 50 photographs showing different gardens created by SOM, we have chosen 18 examples to illustrate what is being done by this renowned team of American architects. Their style based on principles of amplitude and clarity seeks to complement the crystalline architecture strongly inspired by Mies van der Rohe.

The severity of the structures carries through into the gardens, where the architects prefer right-angle dispositions.

In this way the basins of the fountains with their jets in front of the Air Force Academy, for instance, accents the precise cubes of the architecture and their generous dimensions are redolent of Versailles.

The head office building of the Connecticut General Company as well as that of Reynolds are reflected in a large pool set harmoniously in both cases in a very expansive landscape.

The fountain complex, which likewise functions as an air-conditioner on the roof of the Deering Milliken building, is one of their out-of-the-way creations.

The gardens are enriched by sculptures, stone benches, fountains and abstract pieces.

Special care has been devoted to the roof gardens of downtown buildings (Lever House, Head Office Building of Harris Trust in Chicago, where an attempt has been made to produce the illusion of continuity between the green exterior and the board rooms, even if they are located high up). The best example of this type is, in our opinion, the gardens on the second floor of the John Hancock Building in San Francisco, where severity of design is expressed in the disposition of the flagging, the pools and stone seats.

For the building of the Upjohn Company, the team has, in association with the Japanese landscaper Hideo, created seven patios, one in marble, and the others possessing an Oriental character with generously conceived lagoons recalling the grandeur of Spanish parks or of villas of the time of Hadrian.

Kaija and Heikki Siren, Helsinki

Bruckner Hall in Linz

(pages 131-134)

The city of Linz had organized a competition for Austrian architects to which it had also invited the following foreign architects:

Gio Ponti (Italy), Heikki Siren (Finland), S. Woske and Rolf Gutbrodt (Germany).

The competition assignment, aside from the hall proper, involved the landscaping of the grounds in relation to a neighbouring residential district; moreover, traffic problems had to be satisfactorily resolved.

The building itself comprised two concert halls with seating capacities of 1400 and 350 respectively as well as a restaurant seating 120. We are publishing the First Prize project, which award was given to Heikki Siren, a member of our committee of patrons.

His plan is satisfactory both from the point of view of spatial organization and that of town-planning. The building is sealed off against the noise of the street and the city, while its concave elevation opens toward the Danube.

This gives the building a firm orientation, and the jury attached importance to the resultant unity and correspondence to town-planning principles. Also the author of the plan spares the existing stand of trees, thus preserving the park-like aspect of the site. The resolution of the traffic problem is correct. The great apparent simplicity entailed by this type of architecture does not obviate a highly differentiated interplay of volumes on

the interior. The halls have correct proportions and in this way facilitate the resolution of acoustic problems. The restaurant with its successive levels descending to the Danube is very happily conceived and opens on to the park terraces.

The central location of the administrative offices is effective. The architectural elaboration of each building is in keeping with the total conception.

The plan nourishes the hope that a complex will arise that will be worthy of the name of Bruckner (and this imposes high demands) and that will meet all the requirements posed by this exceptional site on the banks of the Danube.

Since Siren employs very simple construction methods, the building costs will be relatively low.