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Cover Image
Quarry Visitor Center, view from beneath ramp, ca. 1958.
(Photo by Art Hupy, courtesy of Richard Hein.)

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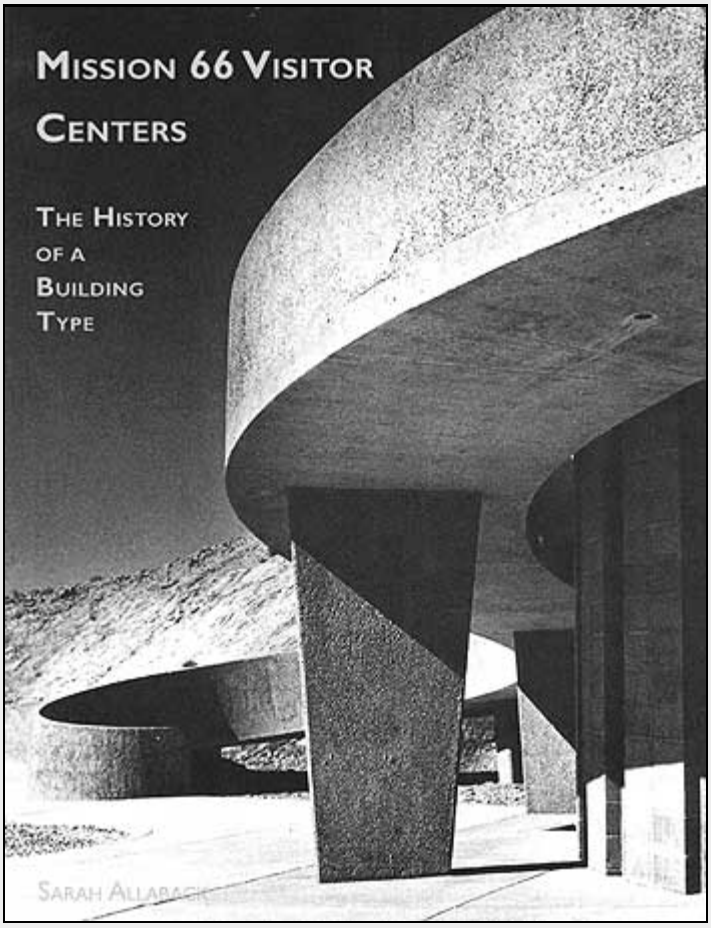
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MISSION 66 VISITOR CENTERS

The History of a Building Type

Sarah Allaback, Ph.D.

U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Cultural Resources Stewardship and Partnerships
Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program
Washington, D.C.

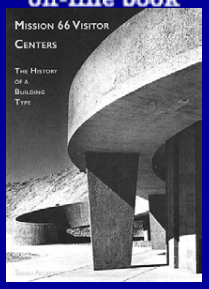
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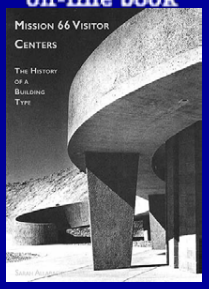
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The American Heritage Center, Laramie, Wyoming; The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia; Denver Service Center, Technical Information Center and library, Lakewood, Colorado; National Park Service History Collection, Harpers Ferry Center and photo archives, Harpers Ferry, West Virginia; MGA Partners files, Philadelphia; National Archives, College Park, Maryland; park archives, Dinosaur National Monument, Jensen, Utah; park archives, Gettysburg National Military Park, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania; park archives, Petrified Forest National Park, Apache County, Arizona; park archives and library, Rocky Mountain National Park, Estes Park, Colorado; park archives, Wright Brothers National Memorial; park archives, Wupatki National Monument, Flagstaff, Arizona; Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program files, Washington, D. C.; Park Service Headquarters, Flagstaff, Arizona; Fort Raleigh Headquarters, Manteo, North Carolina; Regional National Archives, Philadelphia; Rocky Mountain Regional Office files, Lakewood, Colorado; Outer Banks History Center, Manteo, North Carolina; Taliesin Associated Architects library, Scottsdale, Arizona; Western History Center, Denver Public Library; park archives, Zion National Park, Utah. The Denver Public Library also provided invaluable support through its interlibrary loan service.

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Introduction

The Origins of Mission 66

In 1949, Newton Drury, director of the National Park Service, described the parks as "victims of the war." [1] Neglected since the New Deal era improvements of the 1930s, the national parks were in desperate need of funds for basic maintenance, not to mention protection from an increasing number of visitors. Between 1931 and 1948, total visits to the national park system jumped from about 3,500,000 to almost 30,000,000, but park facilities remained essentially as they were before the war. Without immediate improvements, the parks risked losing the "nature" that attracted people to them. Already, the floor of Yosemite Valley had become a parking lot littered with cars, tents, and refuse. Brilliant Pool, a popular thermal feature at Yellowstone, looked like a trash pit. Drury realized that new, modern facilities could help conserve park land by limiting public impact on fragile natural areas. But the necessary improvements required significantly larger appropriations from Congress. Throughout his tenure, Drury remained unable to obtain the necessary federal support for his program. [2]

As Drury worried about "the dilemma of our parks," and basic methods of sustaining them, he also participated in planning a major architectural event: the competition for the design of the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in St. Louis. Conceived during Franklin Delano Roosevelt's administration, the memorial project lagged during World War II, but in 1945 the idea was revived and with it the added incentive of providing a symbol of national recovery. The advisor for the design competition, George Howe, was known for his collaboration with William Lescaze on the Philadelphia Saving Fund Society (PSFS) building in Philadelphia, the skyscraper that brought the International Style to mainstream America in 1932. The competition attracted national media attention and submissions from one hundred and seventy-two architects, including Eliel Saarinen, The Architect's Collaborative (founded by Walter Gropius), and sculptor Isamu Noguchi. [3] Fiske Kimball, William Wurster, and Richard Neutra were among the judges who unanimously awarded first prize to the design of Eliel's son, Eero Saarinen. The 630-foot stainless steel arch was a monument to westward expansion, an engineering feat and an icon of modernist architecture. The conception, design, and construction of the gateway extended from the New Deal (the era of Park Service Rustic) to Mission 66, the ten-year park development program founded in 1956. Bolstered by a decade of congressional funding, the Mission 66 program would result in the construction of countless roads and trail systems and thousands of residential, maintenance, and administrative facilities, as well as the beginning of new methods for managing and conserving resources. When the arch was finally dedicated in 1968, Mission 66 had left a legacy of modern architecture in the national parks. [4]

Authorization for the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial was still pending in 1951, the year Conrad Wirth took over as director of the Park Service. Even

more pressing problems of funding for new construction and facility maintenance remained unsolved. Over the next few years, the conditions Drury had described in 1949 would become a subject of public concern, not to mention ridicule. Social critic Bernard DeVoto led the crusade for park improvement with an article in his *Harper's* column, "The Easy Chair," entitled "Let's Close the National Parks," which suggested keeping the parks from the public until funds could be found to maintain them properly. [5] The story caught the attention of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., a longtime park patron, who wrote to President Eisenhower of his concern over this potential "national tragedy." Eisenhower's staff responded with a standard apology, but Rockefeller's letter did cause the President to request a briefing from Secretary of the Interior Douglas McKay on conditions in the parks. [6] As the need for massive "renovation" of the Park Service entered the public forum and reached the President's desk, the Park Service's pressing maintenance problems continued to mount. [7]

During the summer of 1954, Department of the Interior Undersecretary Ralph Tudor began a reorganization of his department that would indirectly result in the Mission 66 program. The leadership hierarchy of each bureau was "realigned" and a Technical Review Section established to coordinate the agencies. This procedure included a board of businessmen that examined Park Service policies in the hope of streamlining the bureaucracy. Issues of western mineral and water rights were of particular concern at the time because of the controversy surrounding the proposed construction of the Echo Park Dam at Dinosaur National Monument. Horace M. Albright, former director of the Park Service, served on an advisory committee for mineral resources. According to historian Elmo Richardson, the reorganization allowed Conrad Wirth to focus attention on the crisis in the Park Service, and its history of "subjective and procedural problems." Once the door was open, Wirth had a captive audience for his improvement program. [8]

Director Wirth's recollection of the birth of Mission 66 is fittingly more dramatic. In *Parks, Politics and the People*, Wirth remembers one "weekend in February, 1955," when he conceived of a comprehensive program to launch the Park Service into the modern age. [9] The brainstorm occurred once Wirth envisioned the Park Service's dilemma through the eyes of a congressman. Rather than submit a yearly budget, as in the past, he would ask for an entire decade of funding, thereby ensuring money for building projects that might last many years. Congressmen who wanted real improvements for the parks in their districts would support increased appropriations for the entire construction period. Armed with a secure budget, the program would generate public support through its missionary status and implied celebration of the Park Service's golden anniversary in 1966. Mission 66 would allow the Park Service to repair and build roads, bridges and trails, hire additional employees, construct new facilities ranging from campsites to administration buildings, improve employee housing, and obtain land for future parks. This effort would require more than 670 million dollars over the next decade. From its birth, Mission 66 was touted as a program to elevate the parks to modern standards of comfort and efficiency, as well as an attempt to conserve natural resources. Wirth immediately organized two committees to work on the Mission 66 program, a steering committee and a Mission 66 committee, with representatives from several branches of the Park Service, many of whom were to devote themselves full-time to the project. Lemuel Garrison put aside his new appointment as chief of conservation and protection to act as chairman of the steering committee. In his memoirs, Garrison captures the energy behind the mission and its fearless

confrontation of park problems; each superintendent was asked to write a list of "everything needed to put 'his' park facilities into immediate condition for managing the current visitor load, while protecting the park itself." [10] They were also to estimate the number of visitors ten years in the future. During this early planning stage, the Mission 66 staff reviewed the history of Park Service development policy and began a pilot study of Mount Rainier National Park, Washington, chosen as typical of parks with a range of problems. From this study, the Mission 66 staff derived a list of priorities for determining park needs, which would also assist the superintendents in their assessments. One result of the project was the creation of park standards throughout the system. Each park was to have a uniform entrance marker listing park resources, a minimum number of employees, paved trails to popular points of interest, and other amenities; visitors could expect the same basic facilities in every park. The Mount Rainier study also led to seven additional pilot studies, a sampling of parks of various types throughout the country. [11]



Figure 1. Mission 66 Committee, 1956 (left to right: Howard Stagner, naturalist; Bob Coates, economist; Jack Dodd, forester; Bill Carnes, landscape architect; Harold Smith, fiscal; Roy Appleman, historian; Ray Freeman, landscape architect).
(Courtesy National Park Service Historic Photograph Collections, Harpers Ferry Center.)

During the course of its research, the planning staff benefited from public and personnel interviews and more general information from a national survey. In April 1955, private funding was obtained for "A Survey of the Public Concerning the National Parks." Audience Research, Inc., polled a national sample of 1,754 American adults to determine the level of knowledge about parks and park-related concerns. Although results indicate an appalling lack of education—twenty-two percent couldn't name a single park—they also confirmed the continued rapid increase in visitation and the general dissatisfaction of those who had made park visits. Over two-thirds of the visitors voiced complaints, the most common of which were overcrowding and the need for overnight accommodations. Of those visitors with suggestions for improvement, eighteen percent desired "more information about the sights to be seen, plaques, printed material, guide maps, lectures, etc." This response, second only to "more facilities for sleeping," demonstrated the public desire for the kinds of interpretive services gathered together in future visitor centers. [12]



Figure 2. Conrad Wirth, second from left, sampling bison and elk meat at the American Pioneer Dinner, 1956. Undersecretary Clarence Davis is on the left and Mrs. Singer and Russell Singer, ex-vice president of the American Automobile Association, are on the right. Photograph by Abbie Rowe.
(Courtesy National Park Service Historic Photograph Collections, Harpers Ferry Center.)

By necessity, Wirth's preliminary planning of the Mission 66 program was geared towards promotion, and, in particular, selling his idea to Congress. Along with the pilot studies, the staff was to produce a basic outline of the program for the Public Service Conference at Great Smoky Mountains on September 18, 1955. Since a future meeting with the President had been confirmed in May, Wirth hoped to reserve "Mission 66" until then, but news of the program leaked out after the conference. In anticipation of the congressional meeting, the staff began work on a promotional booklet and final report. [13] After several dry runs and administrative delays, Wirth introduced Mission 66 to the President and his cabinet on January 27, 1956. The program received immediate approval from the President. The necessary documents for final authorization were signed in early February, and Mission 66 was officially introduced to the public at an American Pioneer Dinner held at the Department of the Interior on February 8th. Highlights of this event included a presentation by Wirth, a Walt Disney movie entitled "Adventure in the National Parks," and the circulation of *Our Heritage*, a promotional booklet. Wirth himself was involved in the minute details of his carefully orchestrated marketing campaign. He personally chose the cover for *Our Heritage*—the Riley family of Williamsburg, Virginia, superimposed over a photograph of the liberty bell. The Rileys represented the ideal American family, the most desirable park visitors.

Having achieved its immediate goals, the Mission 66 organizational staff was disbanded that month. A core group of the original members remained to help direct the ongoing program. [14]

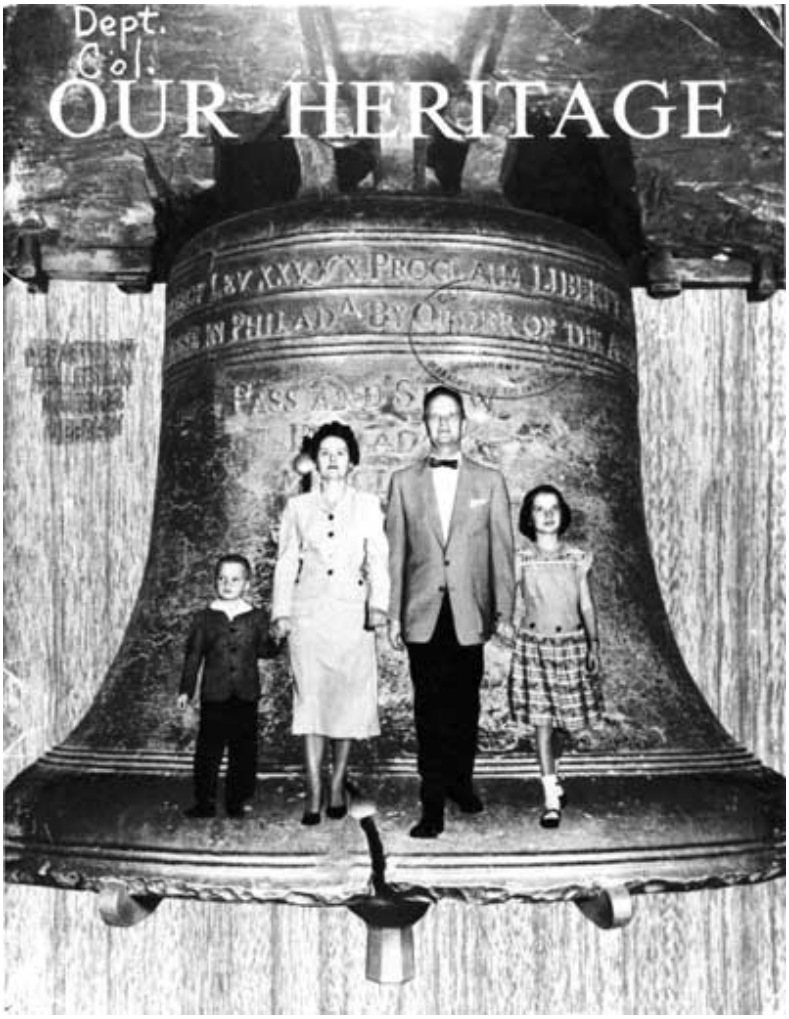


Figure 3. *Our Heritage*, brochure cover, National Park Service, 1955.

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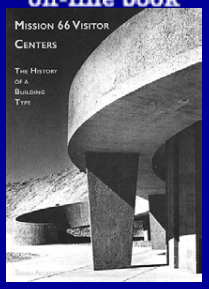
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Mission 66 Visitor Centers

Chapter 1

Quarry Visitor Center

Dinosaur National Monument, Jensen, Utah

Surrounded by the dry, rocky terrain of northwest Colorado and northeast Utah, over two hundred miles from any major city, Dinosaur National Monument is an unlikely location for one of the Park Service's most distinctive modernist buildings. Even before its completion in 1958, the "ultra-modern" Quarry Visitor Center at Dinosaur had become a model of Mission 66 design and achievement. Its glass and steel observation deck, concrete ramp, and cylindrical "tower" suggested scientific inquiry and sheltered working paleontologists.

The transformation of the monument from a paleontological site to a visitor destination worthy of such attention resulted, in part, from one of the country's bitterest conservation battles. The canyon near the confluence of the Green and Yampa Rivers was the preferred location for a Bureau of Reclamation dam, and had been eyed by the Bureau for inclusion in the Upper Colorado River Basin Project since the 1930s. Legislation passed to expand the monument in 1938 included provisions for future development of water resources. What appeared to be a matter of local water rights in the late 1930s, however, would become a topic of national discussion after World War II. If the value of Dinosaur National Monument lay in its paleontological site—the richest deposit of Jurassic remains ever discovered—its sudden notoriety came from the high canyon walls and rushing rivers that the river development project promised to transform into power, irrigation, and drinking water. The dam controversy touched the heart of the National Park Service by threatening its basic mandate to protect individual parks and the integrity of the entire system. It pitted governmental departments against each other. Even within the Park Service, staff members stood on either side of the issue. The public was equally divided. This was an era in which big water projects such as Hoover Dam were wonders of engineering constructed for public benefit. The importance of preserving scenic beauty didn't make sense to many state residents, who saw the monument as a barren wasteland, or to Mormons, who believed that creating an oasis in the desert was their mission and God's will. At the same time, as many Westerners demanded equal water rights, members of the growing national "wilderness movement" saw the Echo Park Dam development issue as an opportunity to prevent a loss equivalent to that of Yosemite's Hetch-Hetchy Valley. [1]

The Echo Park and Split Mountain Dams appeared a foregone conclusion to many by 1950, when newly appointed Secretary of the Interior Oscar Chapman scheduled hearings to discuss the proposals. Among the monument's supporters was Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., the nation's foremost landscape architect, who warned that the loss of "scenic and inspirational values obtainable by the public" at the monument would be "catastrophically great." [2] Olmsted urged

the Department of the Interior to choose an alternative site, even if it resulted in financial loss. Despite such pleas, Chapman supported the dam. The headline of the January 28 *Salt Lake City Tribune* read "Echo Park Dam Gets Approval." Less than a year later, the Park Service announced plans for a resort-like development at the new Echo Park and produced a sketch of Echo Park Lodge, a vast complex for 500 visitors estimated to cost $2,500,000. Park Service maps indicated the areas that would be flooded and showed the locations of both Split Mountain and Echo Park Dams and reservoirs. [3]

The Park Service may have given up the fight after the Secretary of the Interior's decision, but grassroots conservation groups refused to back down. Media attention had been building since the hearings, and in July 1950, an article by Bernard DeVoto informed over four million *Harper's* readers of a potential tragedy at Echo Park. Rather than appeal to a public sense of environmental responsibility, DeVoto addressed the question of public ownership.

> No one has asked the American people whether or not they want their sovereign rights, and those of their descendants, in their own publicly reserved beauty spots wiped out. Thirty-two million of them visited the National Parks in 1949. More will visit them this year. The attendance will keep on increasing as long as they are worth visiting, but a good many of them will not be worth visiting if engineers are let loose on them. [4]

DeVoto, a native of Utah, helped make the situation a popular issue, and once it reached a national forum new coalitions joined the conservationists. Californians protested that their water was being diverted, while Easterners declared themselves unwilling to pay taxes for western water projects. The campaign to save the canyon was given an additional boost in 1952, when David Brower became president of the Sierra Club. After seeing a film of the river, Brower made the preservation of Dinosaur his personal crusade. The new Sierra Club leader encouraged others to take up the fight by sponsoring river trips, producing his own film, and writing and speaking on behalf of the monument. Brower asked New York publisher Alfred A. Knopf to publish *This is Dinosaur*, a collection of essays by notable wilderness advocates intended to show "what the people would be giving up" if they accepted the dams. [5] Each member of Congress was sent a copy of the book, with a special brochure about the monument sewn into the binding. That Dinosaur was suddenly in the national spotlight is perhaps best illustrated by the 1954 movie, *The Long, Long Trailer*, starring Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz; "Daisy" overloads the newlyweds' double-wide trailer with her favorite souvenir, a very large rock from Dinosaur National Monument.

Finally, in November 1955, Secretary of the Interior Douglas McKay announced that Echo Park would be removed from the Upper Colorado River project. [6] In March, both Houses approved water storage at three sites—nearby Flaming Gorge, Utah; Glen Canyon in Northern Arizona; and Navajo, New Mexico; the inclusion of Curecanti, Colorado, was contingent on further research. The threat of future development at Dinosaur remained, but for the present, the monument would be left alone. The Park Service quickly took advantage of this lull in the controversy to push for the long-awaited in situ visitor center at the now nationally famous site. Mission 66 came to Dinosaur amid this clash of ideals. In part because of the water project publicity, the Park Service chose to construct a monumental modernist building that demonstrated its commitment to the "protection and use" of Dinosaur National Monument. [7]

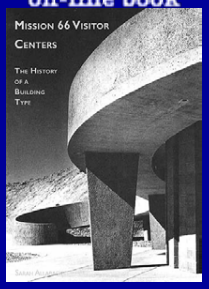
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Chapter 2

Wright Brothers National Memorial Visitor Center

Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina

Although Mission 66 development was considered crucial for public use of national parks, its modern architectural style did not always coincide with social expectations for wilderness parks, battlefields, or desert locations. Park Service and contract architects attempted to conform to the regional landscape, address local traditions, and temper the modernist aesthetic with appropriate materials. If the national parks and monuments posed countless environmental challenges, however, the site of the first successful powered flight offered an ideal context for a modernist building. The wind-swept dunes of Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina, suggested the clean lines of Mission 66 design, and, like the accomplishment it memorialized, the "new" architectural style represented innovation, achievement, and a future improved by technology. During the early 1950s, the Park Service designed an elaborate million-dollar aviation museum for the Wright Brothers National Memorial. Fortunately, funding could not be obtained for the proposed development, which would have overwhelmed the site with a sprawling modern complex. By 1957, the Park Service was ready to finance construction of a different type of facility. A new visitor center would centralize basic visitor services in a simple, compact plan. In accordance with Park Service practice, the modest visitor center would be built close to the "first flight" site, a location allowing visitors to view both the historic flight path and the memorial from the building's windows and exterior terrace. Small in scale and height, the building would not detract from the park landscape. The Wright Brothers Visitor Center was completed in the early years of Mission 66 and quickly became an example of what the development program could accomplish for a small park with limited resources.

The first organized preservation effort at the Wright Brothers site was launched in 1927 by the newly formed Kill Devil Hills Memorial Association. During its early planning stages, the Association imagined a future museum at the site, but a more immediate concern was the construction of an appropriate memorial atop its namesake sand dune. Congress authorized the Kill Devil Hill Monument National Memorial in March 1927, and the cornerstone for the structure was laid during the next year's anniversary celebration. Rodgers and Poor, a New York architectural firm, designed the 60-foot-high Art Deco granite shaft

in 1931-1932. [1] Crowned with a navigational beacon accompanied by its own power house, the tremendous pylon was ornamented by bas-relief wing designs. [2] Kill Devil Hill was not the site of the Wright Brothers' achievement, but the launching point for earlier glider experiments and a location closer to the heavens than the Wrights' primitive airstrip on the flat land north of the dune. When the Wrights set up camp here from 1901-1903, this land was constantly shifting sands. The Quartermaster Corps used sod and other plantings to stabilize the sand hill when the area was still under the jurisdiction of the War Department. [3] In addition, the Kill Devil Hills Association marked the location of the first flight with a commemorative plaque. During the 1930s, plans for the Memorial included a park laid out in the Beaux-Arts tradition, with a formal mall leading to a central garden flanked by symmetrical hangers and parking lots. [4] An airport served as the flat land terminus of the axis, and the Kill Devil Hill memorial as its culmination; six roads radiated out from the monument to the borders of the park. Although this scheme was never implemented, the system of trails and roads constructed by the Park Service in 1933-1936 formed the basis for today's circulation pattern. A brick custodian's residence (1935) and maintenance area (1939) were built south of the hill.

When the monument was planned in the late 1920s, Congressman Lindsay Warren imagined a museum "gathering here the intimate associations," and "implements of conquest." [5] Almost twenty years later, an "appropriate ultra-modern aviation museum" was proposed for Wright Brothers during the effort to obtain the original 1903 plane, but funding was not forthcoming. [6] Such an ambitious construction project began to seem possible in 1951, when the memorial association reorganized as the Kill Devil Hills Memorial Society, and prominent member David Stick established a "Wright Memorial Committee." Stick realized that a museum could only succeed with assistance from the National Park Service, local boosters, and corporate sponsors. Among the committee members recruited for the development campaign were Paul Garber, curator of the National Air Museum in Washington; Ronald Lee, assistant director of the Park Service; and J. Hampton Manning, of the Southeastern Airport Mangers Association in Augusta. In preparation for the first meeting, the Park Service drafted preliminary plans for a museum facility dated February 4, 1952. [7] Regional Director Elbert Cox introduced the project as a "group of buildings of modern form" to be located off the main highway northeast of the monument. The proposed Wright Brothers Memorial Museum included a "court of honor," "Wright brothers exhibit area," "library and reception center," and funnel-shaped "first flight memorial hall" with outdoor terraces facing the view of the first flight marker to the north and Wright memorial marker to the west. The exhibit galleries were to contain "scale models of the various Wright gliders and airplanes, a topographic map of the area at the time of their experiments, scale models of their bicycle shop and wind tunnel, and photographic and other visual exhibits." [8] One wing of the complex housed offices for the museum curator and superintendent, workshop and storage rooms, and a service court. In elevation, the northwest facade is

multiple flat-roofed buildings adjacent the double-height memorial hall, a slightly peak-roofed room with glass and metal walls.

Although it could not provide adequate funding for the museum, the Park Service entered into the planning process in earnest, producing revised plans and specifications in August 1952. Director Wirth looked "forward with enthusiasm to the full realization of the . . . program," and promised that the Park Service would operate and maintain the facility once constructed. [9] He even included cost estimates for the buildings, structures, grounds, exhibits, furnishings, roads, and walks. [10] During the summer, word of a potential commission spread and several regional architects notified Stick of their design services. [11] Despite much effort, however, the committee was unable to raise funds for the million dollar complex, which was originally slated for completion by the fiftieth anniversary. Several smaller goals were achieved in time for the December 1953 celebration: the monument was renamed the Wright Brothers National Memorial, entrance and historical markers established, and reconstructions of the Wrights' living quarters, hanger, and wooden tracks constructed. Though disappointed at the lack of financial backing for the museum, the committee "strongly felt that the original plans for the construction of a Memorial Museum at the scene of the first flight should remain an objective of the Memorial Society." [12] The establishment of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore, also in 1953, may have contributed to their continued optimism.

Four years after the committee's initial attempt to fund an aviation museum, the National Park Service surprised all concerned with an offer to sponsor a scaled-down version of the facility. The committee met in Washington on October 23, 1957, only to learn that funds from the aircraft industry would not be forthcoming. During this meeting, Conrad Wirth outlined his Mission 66 program and revealed that a visitor center at Wright Brothers was included among the proposed construction projects. After further consideration, Wirth promised to make the Wright Brothers facility an immediate objective "by shifting places on the list with one of several battlefield visitor centers planned in advance of the forthcoming Civil War centennial." [13] Just four years earlier, the Park Service had planned a modernist museum for the site on the scale of a Smithsonian, with the free-flowing design of a public building typical of the period. The visitor center of 1957 did not have the aesthetic freedom of a such a museum. For its Mission 66 visitor center, the Park Service sought a smaller, less expensive, more compact structure with distinct components: restrooms (preferably entered from the outside), a lobby, exhibit space, offices, and a room for airplane displays and ranger programs (in place of the standard audio-visual room or auditorium). As designers of the new building, the Park Service chose a new architectural firm based in Philadelphia: Mitchell, Cunningham, Giurgola, Associates, which was soon known as Mitchell/Giurgola, Architects. [14] With its symbolism of innovation, experimentation and evolving genius, the building was an ideal commission for the fledgling firm.

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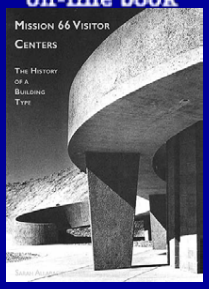
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Chapter 3

Visitor Center and Cyclorama Building

Gettysburg National Military Park, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

The first three days of July 1863 confederate and union soldiers engaged in the bloodiest conflict ever waged on North American soil, a battle that would ultimately determine the outcome of the Civil War. Almost a hundred years later, the National Park Service attempted to provide adequate visitor facilities at the historic Gettysburg Battlefield. The Mission 66 staff had planned buildings for rugged alpine terrain, barren desert expanses, and spectacular canyon edges; Gettysburg National Military Park presented a greater challenge than even the most forbidding wilderness site. The park's physical remains alone—hundreds of monuments, stone walls, and abandoned farm buildings scattered across the landscape—could not recreate an event of such intangible yet dramatic national value.

It was the Park Service's job to help visitors understand the profound significance of this peaceful Pennsylvania countryside. Conrad Wirth, director of the National Park Service, and his fellow Mission 66 planners approved a location for the new visitor center in the midst of the battlefield, where visitors could view the notable topographical features of the Gettysburg campaign. Situated on a slight rise, the site nestled against Ziegler's Grove took advantage of a panoramic view facing the "High Water Mark" of Pickett's famous charge. The visitor center and cyclorama building would fulfill the Mission 66 mandate of "protection and use," by defining visitor areas and educating the public in battlefield etiquette. Richard J. Neutra, a native of Vienna, seemed surprised when the Park Service awarded his Los Angeles architectural firm the commission for a building on this most sacred site. In preparing his design, the renowned modernist architect and philosopher envisioned what future generations might make of the nineteenth-century legacy. He hoped that "the sad memory of an internal and still painful rift could, by the erection of a monumental building group on a battlefield and through its new dedication, commemorate what mankind must preserve as a common aim of harmony." [1]Like the Mission 66 planners and generations of Americans recovering from the world wars, Neutra viewed the cyclorama project as an opportunity to preserve national heritage.

When Neutra and his partner, Robert Alexander, began work on plans for the visitor center in 1958, major aspects of the design had already been determined. In fact, the history of the visitor center's seemingly modernist form, the concrete rotunda, can be traced back to an unusual type of nineteenth-century painting. French painter Paul Dominique Philippoteaux created several colossal cyclorama paintings in the 1880s, each of which measured the height of a two-story building and required mounting within a cylindrical structure for viewing. The cyclorama placed spectators in the center of a circle and completely surrounded them with the landscape and

narrative of another world. The flat painted surface was energized by light, sound and, in some cases, a three-dimensional foreground that included artifacts related to the painted drama. [2] Philippoteaux visited Gettysburg in 1882, and over the next few years he and his assistants completed four versions of the famous battle. The preserved cyclorama, the second in the series, was painted in Paris in 1884. The Congress of Generals and Civil War veterans attended the cyclorama's opening on the twenty-second anniversary of the battle. After display in several locations, the painting was moved to Gettysburg in 1913 and privately owned until its acquisition by the National Park Service in 1941. A tile-covered building on North Cemetery Hill housed the cyclorama, but Superintendent McConaghie planned to move the painting to a better site and eventually to construct a suitable "interpretive center." The prerequisite for the commission was a cylindrical form large enough to contain the 356- by 28-foot canvas. [3]

Like the inspiration for a new cyclorama building, efforts to develop a comprehensive interpretive plan and a central visitor facility preceded the Mission 66 program. During its early years under the jurisdiction of the War Department, the battlefield was without a public museum or on-site exhibits; private guides competed for tourists to lead about the battlefield. [4] The Park Service inherited this system when it took over stewardship of the property in 1933. While the guides provided interpretation, New Deal projects supplied the man-power necessary to build roads and fences, clear land, and plant trees. The CCC helped with basic maintenance and landscaping projects from 1933 to 1942, and Public Works Administration funds covered architectural rehabilitation of selected historic structures classified into fifteen farm groups. In the meantime, the small Park Service staff concentrated on preserving historic properties, acquiring additional land surrounding the battlefield, and discouraging further commercial development in the vicinity. An automobile junk yard, several trash dumps, restaurants, and other modern establishments already compromised the character of the battlefield. [5]



Figure 28. The cyclorama painting was housed in this ceramic tile-covered building on Baltimore Road before it was transferred to the new visitor center. The metal tanks in the background were not part of the Park Service facility.
(Courtesy Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.)

From their crowded rooms on the second floor of the Gettysburg Post Office, park administrators dreamed of a central facility to house the valuable cyclorama, new offices, and services for visitors. Throughout the 1940s, representatives from the regional office wrestled with the choice of a building site appropriate for the painting. Roy E. Appleman, the regional supervisor of historic sites, favored "the site off Hancock Avenue adjacent the Angle," which was "almost exactly on the spot from which the cyclorama was painted." As Appleman argued, "From here the most can be comprehended by the visitor if he is unable to go elsewhere." [6] The Hancock Avenue location was not only perfectly sited for imagining the events of the battle, but also a convenient distance from the National Cemetery and an ideal gathering place for tours. For the next four years, the Park Service would engage in careful planning and debate, weighing the importance of satisfactory visitor facilities against its commitment to protect the battlefield.

Although the Park Service had been actively working to preserve and restore the battlefield since its acquisition, all prospective sites for the new cyclorama complex were located within the park boundaries. Even as he recognized that, "a building of this size is of course an intrusion on any part of the field," Superintendent J. Walter Coleman favored the location on Hancock Avenue closest to Philippoteaux's perspective in the painting. [7] Park Historian Frederick Tilberg attempted to save certain parts of the battlefield and rejected several potential sites, including a location near the Angle that he considered "an objectionable intrusion upon historic ground." And yet, neither Tilberg nor his colleagues saw any contradiction in constructing a modern building on the battlefield they were mandated to preserve. The Ziegler's Grove site offered too many advantages. From this prominent prospect, the building would enjoy a spectacular view of the battlefield, serve as a beacon for visitors coming in from Highway 15, and stand within walking distance of the museum, the National Cemetery, and Meade's Headquarters. A facility amid the battlefield's ruins and monuments could provide unparalleled service to the visiting public. Tilberg wrote up a prospectus describing the benefits of the location, the very spot Mission 66 planners would remember when the new facility finally received adequate funding ten years later. [8]

While the wartime debate over the future site waged on, Park Service architects drafted plans for a "cyclorama-museum-administration building" to replace the old facility on the west side of Baltimore Road. Several proposals were completed over the next few months, each siting the building in the "High Water Mark Area" near Ziegler's Grove between Taneytown Road and Hancock Avenue. Five extant preliminary drawings suggest that Park Service architects struggled with the project's programmatic requirements: a vast circular space for the painting, offices, a museum, a lobby, maintenance rooms, and storage areas. All of the proposals chose to house the cyclorama painting in a separate room, but the shape of this space varied. The earliest drawing in this series presents the painting within a cylindrical dome and uses the entrance lobby as a corridor to attach a rectangular administration building. The second scheme houses the cyclorama in an heptagonal building, a form that allowed the administrative spaces to share the interior walls of a more compact facility. Another alternative returns to the cylinder for the painting, but locates administrative facilities in a two-story cubic building directly in front of the main building. At this point, architects appear to have developed composite designs from their preliminary drafts. One shows a dome encircled by a heptagonal observation deck and entered through an

exterior administrative wing. The final extant scheme returns to the heptagonal form but groups all administrative functions in a ground floor below the cyclorama.

All of these preliminary design proposals show buildings that would have been considered modern. Except for severe strip or rectangular windows, they are without significant ornamentation. [9] Although the cyclorama structures varied in size and architectural style, they shared a similar location. The new facility would stand across the street from the previous cyclorama building and just a few feet from a 75-foot-tall steel observation tower. As the superintendent realized, the Ziegler's Grove site allowed an acceptable replication of the panoramic view depicted in Philippoteaux's masterpiece. When the painting was declared a national historic object by the Acting Secretary of the Interior in 1945, the building project received further incentive. Restoration of the painting by Richard Panzironi and Carlo Ciampaglia, a $10,000 project approved by Congress, was another step towards obtaining an appropriate facility. [10] According to Acting Director Arthur E. Demaray, "as a result of the cleaning and stabilization work, the preservation of the Cyclorama is now assured if funds to erect a modern building to house this important work of art become available reasonably soon." [11] Funding was not immediately forthcoming but, as a "sketch of proposed Cyclorama Building to replace structure on Baltimore Street" illustrates, planning for the museum continued into the 1950s.

The Mission 66 program enabled the Park Service to produce more detailed plans of the facility it had envisioned at Gettysburg for over a decade. The location of the visitor center was a top priority in the fall of 1956. Edward S. Zimmer, chief of the EODC, visited Gettysburg with Park Service engineer Moran and landscape architects Hanson and Peetz to "discuss location sites for the proposed visitor center" with the superintendent. [12] This "reconnaissance" trip preceded the office's plans for a preliminary visitor center design drafted in February 1957. Located at Cemetery Ridge, south of Ziegler's Grove, the building stood at the edge of the trees between the Meade Statue and Meade's Headquarters. A path led from the parking lot to the cylindrical concrete building. Although the frame was reinforced architectural concrete, the exterior of the cyclorama featured "insulated metal curtain walls and anodized aluminum perforated screen." Concrete ribs tapered down from the roof to the ground, dividing the metal screen into thirty sections. The lower floor offices and visitor facilities were differentiated by "an insulated metal curtain wall and glass." Inside, the first floor was divided into a series of pie-shaped wedges around the central core, the location of restrooms and mechanical spaces. From the lobby, visitors could enter the adjacent auditorium and exhibit rooms or proceed up the ramp wrapping around the central core to view the cyclorama painting on the second floor. A revolving platform took them on a tour of the painted battle scene. Interior walls were to be covered in wood paneling and plaster and the floors in terrazzo and vinyl. The drawings show the visitor center building enclosed within a square paved courtyard surrounded by low stone walls of a random masonry pattern. A path at the far western edge of the site leads to a viewing platform overlooking the battlefield. This square, reinforced concrete structure stands along the path leading from the visitor center to the Meade Statue.

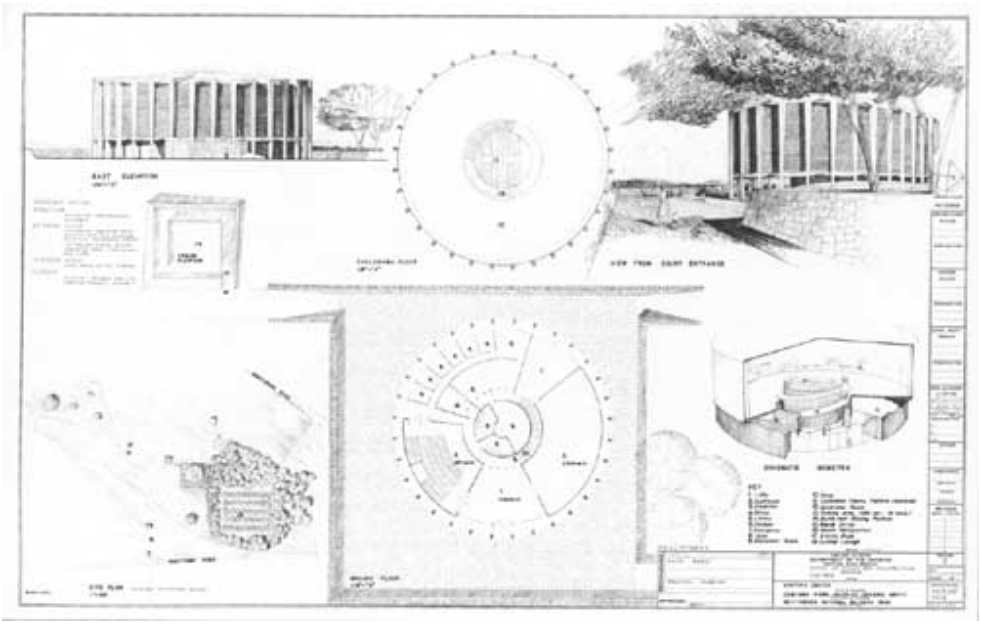


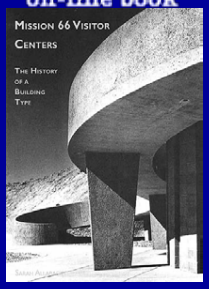
Figure 29. Park Service architects produced this preliminary drawing for a visitor center at Cemetery Ridge, south of Ziegler's Grove, in February 1957. The firm of Neutra and Alexander was hired the next year.
(Courtesy National Park Service Technical Information Center, Denver Service Center.)
(click on image for larger size)

Whether Neutra and Alexander saw the Park Service drawings is unknown, but it was standard practice for the design offices to share such preliminary plans with their contract architects. [13] Perhaps more importantly, Mission 66 planners clearly articulated their general philosophy toward park sites, and such requirements became an essential aspect of the architects' program. The Mission 66 prospectus for Gettysburg was explicit about the "means to an end": the "preservation of the battlefield and its interpretation by more effective and modern means, each tempered with the dignity so necessary in presenting the area as a memorial, will contribute materially to the experience to be gained here." [14] Neutra and Alexander's design for the new visitor center would have to meet the criteria of both a sacred monument and a utilitarian public facility.

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Chapter 4

Painted Desert Community

Petrified Forest National Park, Apache County, Arizona

The Mission 66 program brought improvements to national parks throughout the country, most often in the form of "master plans" designed around existing facilities or additions to older buildings. At Petrified Forest National Park in Apache County, Arizona, Mission 66 planners found a clean slate upon which to design a new Park Service headquarters complete with visitor, administrative, maintenance, and residential facilities. When planning began in 1956, the park contained an assortment of buildings—cabins, privately owned concessions, and adobe structures designed by Park Service architects—but these were concentrated along the highway and on mesas overlooking the Painted Desert. The new headquarters would sit alone on a barren site about three-quarters of a mile away. Park Service architects had already drafted plans for a modern administrative complex accompanied by a separate residential development of single-family homes.

Even more exceptional than this opportunity to create a community from scratch was the Park Service's choice of Richard Neutra and Robert Alexander as its designers. The Los Angeles architectural firm had an international reputation for minimalist modern buildings. By hiring Neutra and Alexander to design both the Gettysburg Visitor Center and the Painted Desert Community, Mission 66 planners not only demonstrated faith in modern architecture, but also an unprecedented willingness to experiment with its purest manifestation. The Painted Desert Community Neutra and Alexander envisioned in 1958, with its dense urban center and adjacent "International Style" row housing, was a shocking departure from the standard Mission 66 layout, not to mention the residential neighborhoods envisioned by the client. According to Neutra and Alexander, the flat-roofed, steel and glass buildings addressed the Park Service's tradition of harmonizing with the landscape and regional history through subtle elements, such as low silhouettes, "desert" color, and native plantings. [1] The Park Service would ultimately accept the streamlined visitor center and unfamiliar row housing, but not without questioning aspects of the design and its relationship to park values.



Figure 42. The site of the proposed Painted Desert Community, Painted Desert, Apache County, Arizona, ca. 1958.
(Courtesy National Park Service Technical Information Center, Denver Service Center.)

Petrified Forest became a national monument in 1906, a decade before the Park Service was established, but substantial development did not begin until highways were constructed during the 1920s. The completion of Route 66 brought tourists to the north end of the monument, where Highway 180 began its winding path through the Painted Desert and into the Petrified Forest. In anticipation of automobile tourists, entrepreneurs built a trading post for travelers on the rim of the Painted Desert and a store in the Rainbow Forest at the extreme south end of the park. Major Park Service construction first occurred during the 1930s, when the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) began improving park facilities. Led by designer Lyle E. Bennett, the CCC rebuilt the hotel and constructed several ranger residences. The new "pueblo-style" Painted Desert Inn featured carved timbers, tin lighting fixtures, and concrete floors decorated with traditional Native American patterns. Poised on the edge of the canyon rim, the Painted Desert Inn offered visitors spectacular views of the desert, a restaurant, curios, and limited accommodations. [2] This regional example of Park Service Rustic, "inspired by the dwellings of the Pueblo Indians," was mirrored in the employee residences built across the street. These were the types of buildings visitors expected to find in a national park. [3]

The Park Service was still struggling to revive itself after the war during the late 1940s, when designs were submitted for a modern building at Meteor Crater, a privately owned land feature about fifty miles west of Petrified Forest. Prominent architects including Frank Lloyd Wright submitted designs for a museum at the edge of the 570-foot-deep crater. [4] The commission went to Philip Johnson, co-organizer of the 1932 International Style exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art and, more recently, architect of the "glass house" (1949) in New Caanan, Connecticut. [5] Johnson's work must have seemed fittingly futuristic to his clients at Meteor Crater. The national interest in space exploration would skyrocket after the success of Sputnik, inspiring many architects to imagine the ramifications of space travel and its impact on design. In his writings of the 1950s, Neutra considered the global effects of "planetary traffic, transport and industrialization," as well as the aesthetic challenge presented by the lunar landscape, a place without cultural history. [6] Mission 66 architecture reflected this contemporary obsession

with technological progress.

Although only a short distance from Petrified Forest, Meteor Crater was worlds away in terms of its "park" landscape. The local staff planning for Mission 66 improvement during the mid-fifties had to contend with the monument's former CCC buildings and a motley assortment of souvenir stores and restaurants including Jacob's Trading Post, Olson Curio, and Charles "Indian" Miller's Lion Farm/Painted Desert Park. The Mission 66 plan would not only clear the area of private concessioners, but also create new facilities and improve the road system. The proposal for Petrified Forest included "major development of a Visitor Center, picnic facilities, residential and utility area and location of headquarters in the Painted Desert section near U. S. 66 Highway." [7] By locating the new visitor center and headquarters on the "new Route 66," (now I-40) rather than at the south end, the park defined the modern motorist's experience. Visitors could stop at the center for a rest from the interstate or drive the loop road through the park to Highway 180 and back to I-40. Plans for an interchange into the park from the improved highway became a priority for the new headquarters scheme.

Before the Painted Desert project gained momentum, Park Service planners focused on Mission 66 work in Rainbow Forest at the south end of the park. Improvements would include a museum addition, store, and picnic grounds. Early proposals for enlarging the museum were produced by in-house architects in the summer of 1957. After considering a streamlined, concrete block building with a glass enclosed viewing terrace, the park approved a much simpler scheme by Regional Architect Kenneth Saunders. This 2,400-square-foot "addition to the visitor center" was under construction in October 1958 and completed by January of the next year. [8]

Mission 66 visitor centers were intended to function as "the hub of the park," but at Petrified Forest aspirations for the new headquarters building were even higher. Correspondence from Assistant Director Stratton indicates that in its early planning stages the Painted Desert Community was envisioned as a place where visitors could learn about all the national parks and their shared "National Park concept." [9] According to a fact sheet compiled by the park for newspaper reporters attending the dedication ceremony, the new building would "serve as an Information Center for all of the areas comprising the Park System, the first of its kind designed for this purpose, in the United States." [10] In preparation for this comprehensive new headquarters, the Park Service sent its own designers and planners to Petrified Forest before securing the services of contract architects. In October 1956, Paul Thomas and Glenn Hendrix, landscape architects from the WODC, and Jerome C. Miller, regional landscape architect, met at the park to discuss the part Mission 66 would play in the next master plan. [11] By August 1957, the park had approved an in-house "proposed layout" for the headquarters area. [12] The visitor center and parking for one hundred cars was located off Route 66, with twenty-three units of employee housing grouped around a looping access road some distance from the public facility. The segregation of housing from the visitor center and administrative complex, a primary objective in this scheme, involved building additional roads through the monument. Residences were two- and three-bedroom houses constructed of wood framing and pumice block. In elevation, these are one-story, rectangular buildings with simple, modernist lines—a deliberate departure from traditional Park Service housing. [13]

Over the winter, the Park Service continued to refine its plan for the Painted Desert. Architect Cecil Doty produced sketches for the park's preliminary master plan in February 1958. [14] Doty's sketches show the general layout of the community, with a separate apartment building and dormitory accompanying the visitor center. As in the earlier scheme, the residences are organized in an oval shape around an access road, though in this case much closer to the main complex. Shortly after approval of this plan, the Park Service reconsidered its design of the Painted Desert Community. Dissatisfaction with the proposal may have occurred as a result of a visit from Thomas Vint, chief of design and construction, and Assistant Regional Director Harthon L. Bill. [15] Vint and Bill met with representatives of the Fred Harvey Company on April 6. A few weeks later, the Superintendent and Regional Architect Kenneth M. Saunders traveled to the WODC to discuss the Painted Desert development. At this time, "preliminary talks were held with an Architect-Engineering firm." Shortly after, on April 20, Richard Neutra and Robert Alexander visited the park "to obtain the feel of the area and to discuss proposed work." [16] The next month, the architects discussed their preliminary plans with Conrad Wirth, director of the Park Service. Wirth was not impressed by the residential housing arrangement, which he thought more suited to a crowded urban area than the Painted Desert's endless expanse. According to Vint, Neutra showed little reaction to the criticism and, "although he took notes, he did not explain to us whether they were for the purpose of changing the plans to meet the Director's wishes or for the purpose of developing arguments in support of the plans he has presented." [17] The housing as built suggests the latter.

It appears that Neutra and Alexander began "developing arguments" to support their plans almost immediately. In a brochure entitled "Homes for National Park Service Families on a Wind-Swept Desert," the architects used diagrams, drawings, and text to sell their project, focusing on the special needs of Park Service families and the unique desert site. The community plan included provisions for storage—considered essential for the typical itinerant family—visitors, and social events which usually involved the entire community. The wind-swept aspect of the site was the driving force behind the design. The low profile, compact plan, and private courtyards resulted from wind "known to blast the paint off of exposed automobiles." Since the treeless site lacked visual privacy, the concrete walled patios offered the only opportunity for private green space. Neutra and Alexander addressed Park Service concerns even more explicitly in a discussion of "the dream home in everyone's mind . . . the separate, isolated cottage in the midst of un-touched nature." Although the architects themselves shared this dream of individual homes surrounded by trees, they explained that such an idyllic situation is impossible in most densely populated residential areas. The Painted Desert had the unusual luxury of space, but no foliage to maintain visual privacy. According to the architects, "the vast space around the house would be a menace impossible to maintain, and utility costs would be staggering." Rather than adapting the typical single-family home, Neutra and Alexander favored the Native American method of building a compound of dwellings surrounded by sheltering walls. The Puerco Mesa village became the model for the Painted Desert Community. The architects imagined private homes not only sheltered from the elements, but from the noise and intrusion of neighbors; residents would even enjoy privacy at night without drawing the blinds. The overall plan of the community incorporated larger "oasis" spaces between the rows of houses that served as wind blocks, sound barriers, and sheltered play areas.

Neutra and Alexander also addressed reservations the Park Service entertained regarding the visitor center. The visitor would approach a "cool, shaded, green oasis," where he or she could rest surrounded by services: the concessioner's shop, restaurant, and administration building. Conrad Wirth had advised the separation of Park Service and concessioner facilities, but the architects suggested that the concession and administration buildings share an entrance area "so that one will 'feed' the other." Concession and maintenance walls would be blank in order to focus attention on the lobby entrance, as Wirth desired. In closing, the architects presented the Painted Desert "village" as a microcosm of a city zoned into residential, commercial, recreation, and industrial areas, including apartments, school, civic center, and "parking for visitors from everywhere." [18]

The week before Christmas 1958, WODC Chief Sanford J. Hill and Park Service architect Charles Sigler met at Neutra and Alexander's office to discuss revisions in the plans. After receiving the architects' preliminary designs, the park had developed an alternative layout which relocated major buildings. [19] During this conference, the new plan was reevaluated and in the end, "everyone was pleased to return to the original plan with the Administration-Orientation Building on the right and adjacent to the National Park Service Utility Area while Fred Harvey's store-restaurant was placed to the left and adjacent to their storage building and apartments." [20] Despite this consensus, the Park Service's decision to significantly reduce the square footage of most buildings couldn't have pleased Neutra and Alexander. [21] Although correspondence indicates a good working relationship between client and architects, the firm was obviously inconvenienced by the Park Service's work schedule. According to the regional director, the superintendent and his staff had also "become quite discouraged due to these unavoidable delays." [22] Recent cuts in funding and, finally, the removal of the "package project" from the 1960 fiscal year budget, forced the Park Service to delay construction on all of its contracts—from roads and parking to utilities and buildings. In February 1959, the Director declared that after the architects completed their preliminary drawings, these should be shelved until construction funds were available. [23] Major buildings in "the program of 1958," including the $180,000 administration/orientation facility, were now slated for completion during the 1961 fiscal year. In his report of the meeting to the regional director, Hill revealed that the park had decided not to inform the concessioners of the year delay in construction until after preliminary drawings were approved. The anticipated years of waiting for building to begin "terribly disappointed" both Superintendent Fred Fagergren and the contract architects, who had hoped to start preparation of the working drawings immediately. [24]

Neutra and Alexander had several projects on the drawing boards when they accepted the commission for the Painted Desert Community. The firm was in the midst of designing buildings for St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland; additions to the Museum of Natural History in Dayton, Ohio; the Gettysburg Visitor Center; and plans for the Ferro Chemical Company in Bedford, Ohio; to name a few. Neutra biographer Thomas S. Hines has singled out the St. John's buildings as precedents for the work at Painted Desert. This campus design gathered together several buildings with different functions—classrooms, an auditorium, laboratories, a planetarium—in a compatible arrangement around an open court. The modern brick and flagstone complex stood in close proximity to venerated seventeenth-century buildings. In true modernist fashion, Neutra explained his designs through

abstract principles suited to the architectural style; the building attempted "to grasp and express this faith in values that transcend mere historic or modish relativities" through pure form. [25] Like lines in a Shakespearean drama that still ring true today, Neutra hoped to capture a timeless essence. The buildings appear to have been well received by both college officials and the architectural press. According to Hines, poor maintenance subsequently compromised the architects' achievement at St. Johns. A similar fate, exacerbated by faulty construction, would befall the buildings at Painted Desert. [26]

In choosing Neutra and Alexander as architects of the Painted Desert Community and the visitor center at Gettysburg, the Park Service fully accepted modern architecture as appropriate for the Mission 66 program. Other architects hired before and after this firm—Anshen and Allen and Taliesin Associated Architects—worked in the modern style but also designed buildings with "rustic" associations and centered social spaces around domestic features such as fireplaces. For Neutra, architecture could only express the modern age, with its exciting opportunities for efficient contemporary living. Not that Neutra ignored a client's desires; to the contrary, he spent a great deal of time and effort consulting with future residents. But the clients who hired Neutra and Alexander usually preferred the clean lines, bare surfaces, sun-filled rooms, and efficiency of modern design. Although infused with Mission 66 zeal, the National Park Service came equipped with a tradition of environmentally sensitive buildings. It would require all of Neutra's philosophical skill to communicate the appropriateness of the Painted Desert Community.

In the design and construction of the Painted Desert Community, architect and client would deal with the contradictions of decades of modern architecture in microcosm. The Park Service was wary of Neutra's radical row housing. However, when it came to details, Neutra and Alexander pushed the Park Service to consider every aesthetic choice, its associations and the sum of the parts. For example, in response to pictures of sample masonry patterns for the plaza wall submitted by the park, Neutra and Alexander replied that the example was "far too machine-made in appearance to be appropriate." [27] They suggested cutting the stone at the top and bottom, rather than sawing it, to create a less regular pattern. Even more significant, the architects gave an historical precedent for their choice, citing a *National Geographic* article on the pueblo restoration at Mesa Verde as a good model for laying up the irregular stone veneer. The photographs of cliffs at Wetherill Mesa show intricate pueblo ruins left behind by thirteenth-century American Indians. As he paged through *National Geographic*, Neutra could hardly have failed to miss an article about the Society's new headquarters in Washington, D.C., the "serene and timeless" structure designed by Edward Durell Stone. According to the architect, the building was "a blend of the National Geographic Society's dignified traditions and the finest modern technological refinements." During the early 1960s, modern architecture was promoted as both respectful of the past and reaching forward to meet the future. [28]

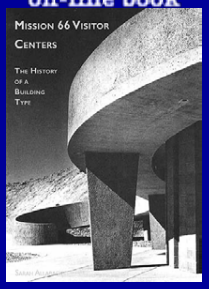
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Mission 66 Visitor Centers

Chapter 5

Administration Building (Headquarters; Beaver Meadows Visitor Center)

Rocky Mountain National Park, Estes Park, Colorado

On Friday July 16, 1965, Rocky Mountain National Park celebrated its fiftieth anniversary with the dedication of the Alpine Visitor Center at Fall River Pass, the first Mission 66 visitor center constructed in the park. [1] The location of the building was more impressive than its architecture. Visitors climbed Trail Ridge Road, the country's highest continuous highway, and were suddenly confronted with a modern visitor center in the forbidding tundra landscape 11,796 feet above sea level. Built of stone and concrete, with a shingled gabled roof and log beams, the simple building featured a glassed-in viewing area overlooking Chapin Creek and the Mummy Range. After the grand opening celebration, participants traveled back down the road and gathered at Beaver Meadows for an afternoon ground-breaking ceremony. The site was a meadow just up the hill from the utility area along the new road to the Beaver Meadows entrance station. George B. Hartzog, Jr., director of the National Park Service, local dignitaries, and Charles Gordon Lee of Taliesin Associated Architects witnessed Colorado Congressman Wayne Aspinall dig a few shovelfuls of dirt in honor of the future Administration Building. [2] Although Mission 66 officially concluded the next year, the development campaign it inspired continued until the end of the decade at Rocky Mountain with the construction of the Administration Building, commonly known as the Headquarters (1965-1967) at Beaver Meadows and the West Side Administration Building (1967-1968, later Kawuneeche Visitor Center) near Grand Lake. Together, these visitor centers represent the culmination of a decade of planning and designing modern visitor facilities. As one of the final buildings by a private firm, the Headquarters demonstrates the Park Service's continued eagerness to experiment with modern architecture in the parks and to engage in risky collaboration with well-known modernist designers. The Park Service commissioned Taliesin Associated Architects, Ltd., to design the Headquarters at Beaver Meadows, knowing that these devoted followers of Frank Lloyd Wright could only design an exceptional building.

Rocky Mountain drafted its Mission 66 planning prospectus in 1956 amid the excitement of a 320-acre park boundary extension and news of a new eastern approach road. [3] President Eisenhower authorized the addition to the eastern park boundary in

June. The two-and-a-third mile approach road, a project first conceived in 1932, connected State Highway 262 with Trail Ridge Road, traversing an area known as Beaver Meadows. According to this plan, the new visitor center would be located on undeveloped land in Lone Pine Meadow just below the turnoff for Moraine Park. Park Service designers envisioned a "principal visitor center" adjacent the new road with facilities for both visitors and staff. The building was to house interpretive exhibits, an enclosed, glassed-in observation porch, and the information/orientation services currently handled at the entrance station. Indoor and outdoor auditoriums would supplement the museum interpretation. The cost of the new visitor center was estimated at $200,000. [4] This initial Mission 66 development proposal also included provisions for the expansion of a one-room facility at Fall River Pass jointly owned by a concessioner and the park. Thousands of people stopped in this area every day, but the building could only accommodate thirty at most. A new facility would provide concessions and interpretation relevant to the alpine setting. On the west side, similar services would be offered at "Grand Lake Visitor Center." Trailers equipped with information and exhibits were stationed at Rainbow Curve on Trail Ridge Road and Lake Granby Overlook off Highway 34 to determine the value of permanent visitor facilities in these areas. [5]

By 1958, planners were considering several alternatives for park development, all of which anticipated major changes in roads and traffic patterns around the eastern entrance. One possibility was a visitor center at Deer Ridge near the convergence of Highways 34 and 36. Since the Beaver Meadows entrance and the Fall River entrance guarded these primary access roads into the park, a visitor center between the two would serve the greatest number of visitors. However, because the chosen site included several inholdings, such as the Schubert family's popular Deer Ridge Chalet, acquisition of the property before the conclusion of Mission 66 was doubtful. A description of the proposed building mentioned standard visitor center components: a lobby, exhibit space, and audio-visual room. Significant architectural features included an elevated penthouse and viewing terraces, both of which related to the interpretation of glacial geology. In this scenario, the park headquarters building was to be located near the utility area, south of High Drive, and devoted exclusively to park administration. In the interim before the Deer Ridge Visitor Center was completed, visitor services could be offered from a nearby auditorium building. Although this plan was not adopted, efforts to acquire the desired property were eventually successful. [6]

A more expedient alternative, considering the land ownership situation, was the construction of a visitor center building at Lone Pine, the site suggested two years earlier. This proposal described a 10,200-square-foot building for visitor facilities, which included an optional auditorium and naturalist's operating headquarters and workshop. A headquarters for administrative functions was planned about a mile down the road. At this time, planners imagined the administration building in conjunction with the utility area and distinct from anything having to do with visitors or interpretation.

This "master plan development outline" was reviewed by Lyle Bennett, WODC architect, and recommended by Chief of Design and Construction Thomas Vint in 1958. During the master planning process, the park was also considering a visitor center at the Grand Lake entrance. In April 1958, Cecil Doty submitted a prototypical Mission 66 design for what would later become known as both the West Side and Kawuneeche Visitor Center. The most prominent feature of the proposed wood frame building was a flagstone porch; the restrooms on the left side of the building extended to the edge of the porch, while an administration wing on the right was flush to the lobby entrance. Porch flagstones continued inside the lobby. Directly behind the lobby was an audio-visual room and to the left, an exhibit room. The visitor center constructed nearly ten years later would only resemble Doty's drawing in its adherence to programmatic requirements. [7]

The new eastern approach road opened in 1959 but the Thompson River entrance remained in use until 1960, when the Bear Lake cut-off was completed and the old entrance closed. Park planners predicted that the new entrance would result in increased use of the Moraine Museum, a former lodge constructed in the early 1920s. The museum's centralized site was viewed as more important than the rustic building, which could "be razed and replaced by a modern, fireproof structure with space-heating for all-year operation if required." In its place, the park envisioned a two-room exhibit facility, an overlook porch equipped with audio-visual equipment, a lobby and information desk, restrooms, and a few small offices. Although the Moraine Museum was spared, as Mission 66 planning progressed, the Park Service increased efforts to acquire inholdings, remove old buildings, and restore the natural landscape as much as possible. Between 1958 and 1962, the park purchased Fern Lake, Bear Lake, and Spragues Lodges; two private "guest ranches," the Fall River Lodge in Horseshoe Park and the Brinwood Hotel in Moraine Park; and the Stead Ranch at Moraine Park, site of the Deer Ridge Chalet. [8] The buildings were demolished in the name of wilderness conservation, but many Estes Park residents and seasonal visitors lamented the loss of favorite vacation resorts. To complicate matters, the park's environmental preservation efforts were carried out just a few years after a controversial new ski facility opened at Hidden Valley. In light of the effort to remove private development and thereby enhance the natural surroundings, the Park Service ski concession was questioned by both locals and environmentalists.

While other parks upgraded concessioner facilities inside their boundaries, Rocky Mountain was able to take advantage of its proximity to Estes Park for visitor accommodations and most services. This close relationship between the park and the town dated back to the park's founding in 1915, when a rented downtown building became the first headquarters. In 1921, the Estes Park Women's Club resolved to loan a parcel of land in town to the park, and once an act of Congress passed the bill, a superintendent's office was constructed on the city lot about three miles from the park boundary. [9] During the Mission 66 development and planning process, maintaining good relations with

the town was of considerable importance. Superintendent Granville Liles understood that the design of the new visitor center should reflect the close ties between the park and the community of Estes Park.

During the first four years of Mission 66, Rocky Mountain spent over three million dollars on improvements, but had seemingly little to show for it; a large portion of the budget went towards "invisible" repairs, such as updating sewage and water systems. The summer of 1960 brought the first Mission 66 structure, the Beaver Meadows Entrance Station, as well as enlarged campgrounds at Endovalley and Glacier Basin, complete with "lecture amphitheaters." [10] Road repairs, turn-outs, and additional roads were under construction. But the featured visitor centers existed only on paper, as Park Service architects and planners continued to discuss visitor circulation, building location, and other issues crucial to the park's preservation and use.

The earliest extant graphic representation of the proposed east side "Administration and Visitor Orientation Building" is a November 1962 site plan by the Midwest Regional Office. [11] The drawing shows a building shaped like an angular polywog, its head to the west and crooked tail behind. Visitor parking is located on the south side, visitors entered the "head" of the building, and employee parking is provided in the rear adjacent to a central service yard. Because the road separates the new building from the utility area, the scheme did not allow efficient traffic flow. In an effort to remedy this problem, the office drafted a revised plan with a bridge over the entrance road linking the visitor center, to the south, with an administration building on the north side. The next month, a third scheme reunited the two functions in a U-shaped plan south of the entrance road, the side adjacent the utility area. The lobby and auditorium were located at the front and formed the widest section, with narrower central and eastern administration wings. Parking was divided—visitors in front of the building and employees on the east side. During this preliminary design phase, Cecil Doty drew elevations and plans for his version of the future administration building. [12]

Although the "pre-preliminary designs" Doty produced in February 1963 hardly resemble the final building, they anticipate several of its main qualities. The entrance facade of Doty's Administration Building features a single-story office wing, with a double-height auditorium and lobby on one end balanced by the south wall of an additional two-story office wing on the other. Employee parking is on the west side, and from this vantage point, the building appears to be two stories. Visitor services are located in the east end of the building, a segregation of visitor center and administrative functions that foreshadows Taliesin's treatment of visitor and employee use. On the exterior of his administration building, Doty imagined "cement block, stucco and precast panels with heavy exposed aggregate." The office windows were a seemingly continuous strip of glass with thin metal mullions spaced every four feet, and roofs were flat. The Doty scheme was dominated by its extensive office wing and might have seemed equally

appropriate in either an industrial or wilderness park.

The park and WODC were not willing to accept Doty's plans without exploring additional possibilities for the new building. In April 1963, a Park Service architect named Roberson produced an "advance study plan for review and adjustment." This simple line drawing shows the first and second floors, and, in general outline, resembles the "polywog" plan of two months earlier. A partition separates the audio-visual auditorium from a lobby and exhibit space which together form roughly an oval shape. The administrative offices are arranged on either side of a corridor that emerges from the rear of the lobby. This 110-foot wing is joined to a 96-foot wing angled slightly towards the front of the building. Although the drawing is crude and the plan awkward, the general organization of spaces and hierarchy of services foreshadow those of the constructed building. During this time the facility came to be known as the administration or administration-orientation building (in the Headquarters area), perhaps to distinguish it from previous schemes involving two separate buildings. [13]

Park Service personnel were still discussing the building's location in February 1964. That summer, William Wesley Peters and Edmund Thomas Casey of Taliesin Associated Architects visited the park to examine potential sites. [14] According to Casey, the firm was contacted by Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall regarding design of a future Rocky Mountain Park headquarters. [15] The basic programmatic requirements were outlined by Superintendent Liles, and Taliesin was asked for advice regarding the building site. As resident landscape architect Richard Strait recalls, the park staff had focused the search for an appropriate visitor center site on Horseshoe Park or Deer Ridge, the site of the controversial private lodge and cabins. [16] Both sites posed circulation problems, however, and the cramped spaces were considered inadequate. Strait and the park planners preferred a building on the north side of the road, which would provide better traffic flow. When Casey arrived, the choice had been narrowed down to two locations, the one ultimately selected and another about a mile further into the park on the north side of the road. The latter site was finally rejected as less conveniently situated in relation to the residential area, and therefore a potential source of traffic problems. At the lower hillside site, the architects could envision a better segregation of visitors and administrative facilities. Although Strait and the park staff were not eager to build "on the wrong side of the road," they agreed that this was the best solution considering the many issues involved. In combination with the building's unusual design, these early planning studies gave rise to rumors that the two-story south facade, as eventually built, had been originally designed to face north. In fact, the building was designed and built specifically for the hillside site it occupies. [17]

During these early discussions, Casey remembers the superintendent's eagerness to improve the relationship between the park and the town of Estes Park. The superintendent hoped that a new headquarters closer to town might reduce some of the tension caused by the park's policy toward inholdings. As primary

representative of the client, Liles not only influenced the location of the building, but also the development of its program. His hope that the auditorium might be used for city council meetings and other civic events materialized in the form of a larger theater space that included a cozy fireplace. In September 1964, the *Estes Park Trail* announced that, after five years of planning, the park had finally chosen a site for the building "such that it will serve visitors of the Estes Park area without requiring them to enter the National Park itself." [18] Rocky Mountain was one of the few parks that chose to build a Mission 66 visitor center outside its official entrance, enabling visitors to use the building without passing through a gate or paying a fee.

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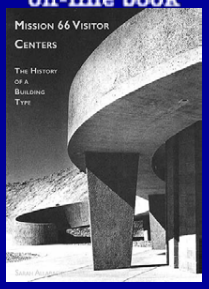
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Mission 66 Visitor Centers

Chapter 6

Cecil Doty and the Mission 66 Visitor Center

The five visitor centers featured in this study are exceptional, both because they were designed by notable architectural firms and because they make up less than five percent of the facilities constructed for visitors during the Mission 66 program. From 1956 to 1966, the Park Service commissioned over one hundred new visitor centers and additions to existing museum buildings. Local contract architects were responsible for some of the designs, but the bulk of the work went to Park Service architects. Foremost among these in productivity was Cecil Doty, an architect from Oklahoma trained in the traditional Park Service Rustic style of design. [1] Along with a handful of his colleagues, Doty made the transition from the rustic—adobe or alpine depending on the natural and historical setting—to a modernist style stripped of such obvious associations with regional context. According to Doty, this shift from the old to the new architecture was entirely natural; he was simply doing his job under new parameters and within a changing social and political climate. While most of the selected contract architects were trained in an elite tradition of architecture as art, Doty was educated in architectural engineering at a manual arts school and spent almost his entire career working in the parks. When Doty designed modernist buildings, he did so within the Park Service tradition from which Mission 66 evolved. His buildings were not icons of modern architecture, nor were they typically among the buildings that are known for their Mission 66 character. Doty's designs were modest and utilitarian. As if in response to Director Wirth's greatest aspiration for his construction program—the creation of structures subordinate to the park landscape—Doty designed many unremarkable buildings. And yet, while much of the contract architects' work appears dated, Doty's buildings often achieve a kind of timelessness. Perhaps most important to the Park Service, his designs are sensitive to the site and historical context without being cheap rustic imitations or modernistic spectacles. The significance of the Mission 66 visitor center can only be evaluated after a closer look at the work of Cecil Doty.

In 1954 the Park Service reorganized the design and construction component of its four regional offices into two centralized facilities: the Eastern Office of Design and Construction (EODC) in Philadelphia overseen by Edward S. Zimmer and the Western Office (WODC) in San Francisco supervised by Sanford J. Hill. Although Director Wirth had yet to launch the Mission 66 program, this concentration of forces assumed the need for

massive physical improvements and the organization necessary to execute a far-reaching construction program. The responsibilities of the respective offices included supervising the preparation of master plans and construction projects, conducting surveys and research, and preparing building plans and specifications. [2] These duties would not change with Mission 66, the planning of which began in earnest during the spring of 1956, but they would be magnified many times over. Such an influx of design work demanded that the Park Service hire contract architects from the private sector. This policy of hiring outsiders was not new. During both World Wars, the federal government called upon modern architects, many of whom were recent European immigrants, to help design wartime housing. The New Deal programs that had done so much for the parks during the 1930s and 1940s relied heavily on the expertise of private architects, designers, and craftsmen. As supervisor of the Civilian Conservation Corps state parks program, Conrad Wirth had firsthand experience with such successful partnerships. The CCC programs not only established the Park Service's reputation for well-built rustic style buildings, but also set a precedent for collaboration on such projects. A chief architect might sketch a design, and then pass it on to his staff to refine and embellish. For Wirth and many of his most trusted employees, the Mission 66 approach recalled the CCC effort. [3]

The new program's contract policies were outlined in a memorandum to the Park Service field offices in March 1956, explaining that superintendents were responsible for determining which projects would be completed by contractors and which by day labor. In general, it was "the policy of the Department and the Service to accomplish as much construction work by contract as is possible. It expedites the obligation of funds and assures completion of projects within the amounts available. Day labor is to be used only in exceptional cases where contracting is not practical." [4] Members of the design and construction offices had been forewarned of such changes in procedure. During their conference at Great Smoky Mountains (April 1955), they had discussed the Mission 66 program and immediately issued several statements and recommendations based on general consensus. The Park Service design offices voiced their "wholehearted support" for the program, which would obviously expand their role in park architecture and planning. In anticipation of Mission 66, they suggested that Wirth prepare a construction schedule by region to guide them in gathering data and developing surveys necessary for such extensive design work. The offices of design and construction also deemed themselves best equipped to create plans and specifications for construction projects and to prepare the preliminary drawings for all buildings. Professional private offices could then produce construction drawings on a contract by contract basis. It was recommended that the two regional offices be granted "contract authority to negotiate with professional firms in private practice, of recognized ability." [5] According to this arrangement, Park Service architects were entirely responsible for design concepts, while contractors merely performed the routine work of drafting working drawings. In practice, the relationship with contract architects would vary according to project, but it would

usually involve some collaboration with Park Service colleagues.

That construction projects were underway by mid-summer is indicated by a communication from Director Wirth admonishing superintendents and regional directors for expanding their projects beyond the established limits. Evidently, some supervisors were using up emergency funds in the first contract, leaving little margin for over-runs or contingencies. Even more potentially devastating was the fact that unauthorized adjustments in contracts were affecting the planning schedule, which was established two years in advance. A single misjudgment could start "a chain reaction," and necessitate the revision of the entire schedule. [6] Field offices were to required to submit change orders and other cost overruns to the regional director for approval.

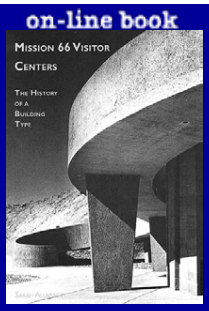
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Mission 66 in Retrospect

Nearly thirty years after their design, Cecil Doty singled out three visitor centers he disliked Chaco Canyon, Grand Teton and Yellowstone and declared he "would never do them again." [1] Doty attributed these failures to the lack of available funds. In a general way, the entire Mission 66 program could be excused on this basis, since the goal was to build as many visitor centers for as low cost as possible. The "assembly-line" mentality could hardly be avoided. Despite this built-in deficiency, Doty designed a wide variety of visitor centers throughout the western region and consistently devised creative ways of working on a tight budget. The three visitor centers he dreaded to repeat only became problematic after additional demands were made without sufficient means.



Figure 87. Gettysburg Cyclorama and Visitor Center in 1962. Richard Neutra and Robert Alexander, architects.
(Courtesy Lawrence S. Williams, Inc., Photography.)

The Park Service began assessing the Mission 66 program immediately after its completion and was assisted in this respect by the American Institute of Architects, which awarded it the 1970 Citation of an Organization for "its attempts to develop regional character in the visitor centers and also for its

continuing effort to provide excellent design at all levels in our national parks." The *AIA Journal* focused on visitor centers in "Our Park Service Serves Architecture Well," an article praising individual buildings and the design methodology employed throughout Mission 66. The section on the Park Service's criteria for good design explained the rationale behind its choice of the modernist aesthetic for park buildings: "Sometimes areas seem to cry for a design suggesting traditional or regional style. However, to maintain regional or particularly period architecture would result in oddly proportioned boxes covered with pseudo-period gimcracks or reasonably well-proportioned structures stuffed with nonfunctioning activities. The best attack is not to copy styles but to use regional materials and echo forms if possible." [2] Ten years later, in 1976, the Park Service celebrated the 20th anniversary of the launching of Mission 66 with a report of its achievements first in terms of the magnitude of construction, but finally as a program boosting the conservation movement and inspiring the country to develop long-range projects for natural and cultural resource preservation. Park Service Modern architecture symbolized the agency's decision to move forward and develop a broader, more enlightened understanding of its responsibilities as stewards of the nation's parks, monuments and historic sites. [3]

If Mission 66 architecture was novel for the Park Service, the elite architectural profession had largely discounted the principle tenets of modernist design by the late 1960s. The visitor centers featured in this study are all considered modern, but they range from the work of an architect born in 1889 and trained in International Style design, to the early efforts of a firm that would define itself against the abstractions of modernist methodology. The different approaches, philosophies, and results achieved by these architects come together under the umbrella Mission 66, or Park Service Modern, architecture. This decade of patronage provided opportunities for little-known firms and for Park Service architects to experiment with modern design in unique settings and situations. Mission 66 was the last time the federal government championed a development program of this type and at such a scale, and it was also the most socially optimistic architectural effort of the day. In the context of American architectural history, Mission 66 was both old-fashioned and refreshing. The next two decades would bring architectural cynicism that dissolved faith in modernist design.

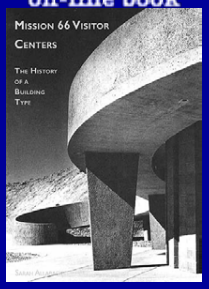
Even as the Mission 66 program concluded, many architects were beginning to reject modernism for its more colorful successor, postmodernism. And as modernism has come to symbolize the failure to achieve social transformation through design, the gleam of its early existence has faded. Modern architecture in the parks has aged particularly poorly. With limited funds from the beginning, park architects designed in a style that requires constant maintenance. Unlike rustic structures, which benefit from a patina of age and wear, modern buildings depend on a crisp, clean aesthetic. A crumbling rustic wall is considered appropriately antiquated, but a deteriorating gypsum panel only appears shabby. "Improvements" are also more likely to damage the spare, modernist style. When smooth, colored tile is covered with industrial carpet and wood paneling tacked over window walls, a spacious, sunny lobby becomes dim and utilitarian. The Park Service recognized the potential problems of maintaining "high quality in aesthetic features" of Mission 66 visitor centers as early as 1958. Lyle Bennett, supervisory architect of the WODC, criticized the parks for the development of "cluttered, inharmonious or otherwise detracting effects" caused by inappropriate interior decor and

furnishings. [4]

In analyzing the Mission 66 effort, it is not only important to consider what was built, but what it was possible to build quickly and efficiently during the 1950s and 1960s. Although comparisons between the Park Service Rustic and Park Service Modern styles are tempting, it is more realistic and historically accurate to think about Mission 66 architecture in relation to changes in the architectural profession. The prohibitive expenses of materials and labor after the war did not permit a return to New Deal methods of construction. As Doty realized, "when the CCC and all that labor ended, getting stone was out of the question." [5] Mission 66 architects and planners approached the crisis from a practical point of view and successfully solved the problem. Beginning in the 1950s, the Park Service realized that simple, contemporary facilities would further its tradition of architectural excellence and represent its forward-looking principles. Cheap imitations of the rustic style would only serve as reminders of American society's loss of fine craftsmanship, traditional materials, and regional identity. The Mission 66 program was intended to memorialize its era's achievements greater accessibility, more extensive services, and the convenience of standardization.

The construction of modern buildings in national parks was not a rash decision, nor was it made by a handful of superintendents. Modernism came into the parks with the blessing of its generation, and its inexpensive, easily constructed buildings improved and expanded the Park System at an unprecedented rate. The Mission 66 program standardized visitor services in countless ways that we now take for granted, providing the basic information, visitor facilities, and interpretive programs that remain an essential part of all national parks. Today, our experience of national parks is determined, to a great extent, by the visitor services established around Mission 66 visitor centers. The visitor center is a part of our national culture, not only within the national park system, but within the National Forest Service, in communities eager to attract tourism, and at private sites throughout the country. As a building type, the visitor center may be the National Park Service's most significant contribution to American architecture. The historical value of the original visitor centers should not be underestimated. The Park Service and the public once celebrated Mission 66 as a great achievement and may well look back on it in these terms. If the current generation cannot always appreciate the styles and choices of another era, it should have the foresight to recognize potential historic value. As a leader in the preservation of the nation's history, the Park Service is responsible for ensuring that the best is left for future generations to judge.

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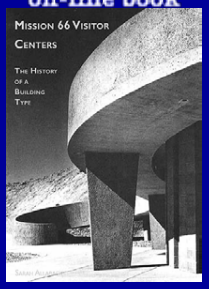
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Mission 66 Visitor Centers

Appendix I

Mission 66 Visitor Centers

Preface to Appendices:

The following list of Mission 66 visitor centers was compiled by examining drawings on microfiche at the Technical Information Center (TIC) in the NPS Denver Service Center, and by comparing records of visitor center construction on file in the NPS History Collection at the Harpers Ferry Center. Regional NPS staff also contributed information. Field checking and further research will be required in order to confirm or amend the information presented in this list. The dates given are typically those found on design and construction drawings and indicate the period in which the building was designed. In some cases another date is given after a slash, indicating the date of the building's dedication. Current park names are used to identify Mission 66 visitor centers rather than the names of the parks at the time of construction.

This list includes visitor centers built as part of the Mission 66 program (1956-1966). The list includes some early examples for which design began before 1956, as well as some buildings that were begun before 1966 but not completed until slightly later. Estimates vary regarding the total number of visitor centers built as part of the Mission 66 program. Annual reports of the secretary of the interior usually mention the visitor centers constructed each year, but publication of the reports ended after 1963. Conrad Wirth and other Mission 66 promoters claimed that about a hundred visitor centers were constructed during the ten-year program (Wirth gave the figure of 114 in his memoirs). A 1965 "museums statement" issued by the NPS notes that new exhibits were prepared for 101 new visitor centers and 40 rehabilitated visitor centers.

But "new construction" of visitor centers sometimes included substantial additions to or renovation of older structures. The visitor center at Vanderbilt Mansion in Hyde Park, New York, for example, was listed in the 1963 annual report as a new visitor center, although it was a rehabilitated historic structure. Some of these buildings were park museums built before World War II. Small buildings known as "secondary visitor centers" were constructed in some parks that were already equipped with at least one main visitor facility. The secondary visitor center at Little Mountain Park on the Natchez Trace Parkway, for example, was no more than a rectangular exhibit space with attached restrooms. Whether or not such secondary visitor centers were included in different counts is unclear.

Visitor center services were provided by buildings called by other names, or known by more than one name. Just prior to the Mission 66 program, museum buildings that incorporated visitor center features (and were later referred to as visitor centers) often were still called museums or museum/administration buildings. Even once the visitor center model (and name) had caught on, its components were frequently incorporated into a central administration building. The "administration building" at Devil's Tower, for example, is essentially a visitor center. The Beaver Meadows Visitor Center at Rocky Mountain is also known as the Headquarters Building. Other names that have been used for visitor centers include "public use building," "public service building," "utility building," "visitor contact station," "visitor center and equipment storage building," and "operations building." Administration or utility buildings with little or no visitor contact services, however, are not included in this list.

All of these factors make it difficult to specify the exact number of Mission 66 visitor centers. The following list sorts out the available documentation to come up with 110 visitor centers (including those that have been demolished or destroyed) and 16 visitor center "additions." Like the other information in this list, however, these numbers should be subject to correction as more in-depth research is done on individual buildings.

Appendix II is a record of drawings by Cecil Doty on microfiche at the Technical Information Center, Denver Service Center. As of 1999, the Center's computer data base does not search by building type or architect. It should be assumed that more Doty drawings remain to be discovered.

Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historical Site; Hodgenville, Kentucky; 1958-1959; Eastern Office of Design & Construction (EODC).

Antietam National Battlefield; Sharpsburg, Maryland; 1961-1962; EODC/William Cramp Scheetz, Jr., Philadelphia.

Arches National Park; Moab, Utah; 1959/1960; Western Office of Design & Construction (WODC)/Doty.

Assateague Island National Seashore; Berlin, Maryland; 1966; NPS Philadelphia Planning & Service Center.

Badlands National Park; Cedar Pass Visitor Center; Interior, South Dakota; 1957-1958/1959; WODC/Doty/Lucas, Craig, Whitwam, Rapid City.

Big Bend National Park; Panther Junction Visitor Center; Texas; 1964-1968; WODC/Doty.

Big Hole National Battlefield; Wisdom, Montana; 1964-1971; NPS San Francisco Design and Construction.

Blue Ridge Parkway; Peaks of Otter Visitor Center; Virginia; 1956-1958; Robert L. Brown, architect, Roanoke.

Booker T. Washington National Monument; Hardy, Virginia; 1964-1965/1966; EODC/Smithey & Boynton, Roanoke.

Bryce Canyon National Park; Utah; 1958/1959; WODC/Cannon and Mullen, Salt Lake City.

Cabrillo National Monument; San Diego, California; 1963-1966/1966; Frank L. Hope & Associates, San Diego/WODC/Doty.

Canyon de Chelly National Monument; Chinle, Arizona; 1963-1964; WODC/Doty.

Cape Cod National Seashore; Salt Pond Visitor Center; Wellfleet, Massachusetts; 1964-1965; EODC/Biderman.

Capitol Reef National Park; Torrey, Utah; 1963-1965/1967; WODC/Doty/Arthur K. Olsen & Associates, Salt Lake City.

Capulin Volcano National Monument (formerly Capulin Mountain); New Mexico; 1962-1963; NPS Southwest Regional Office/Doty.

Chaco Culture National Historical Park; Bloomfield, New Mexico; 1957;1959; WODC/Truman J. Mathews, Santa Fe.

Chickasaw National Recreation Area (formerly Platt); Travertine Nature Center; Oklahoma; 1966-67; NPS San Francisco Planning & Service Center/MacKie & Kamrath, Houston.

Colonial National Historical Park; Yorktown Visitor Center, Virginia; 1956/1957; EODC/Gilboy, Bellante and Clauss, Philadelphia.

Colorado National Monument; Fruita, Colorado; 1960-1963; WODC/Doty.

Coronado National Memorial; Hereford, Arizona; 1959; WODC.

Craters of the Moon National Monument; Arco, Idaho; 1956-1957/1958; WODC/Hurt, Trudell, Capell, San Francisco.

Cumberland Gap National Historical Park; Middlesboro, Kentucky; 1958-1959; EODC.

Curecanti National Recreation Area; Center Point Visitor Center; Gunnison, Colorado; 1965-1968; NPS San Francisco Planning & Service Center/Doty/Anderson, Barker, Rinker.

Death Valley National Park; Furnace Creek Visitor Center; California; 1957-1958/1959; WODC/Doty/Welton Becket & Associates, San Francisco.

Denali National Park and Preserve (formerly Mount McKinley); Eielson Visitor Center; Alaska; 1956-1957/1961; WODC.

Dinosaur National Monument; Quarry Visitor Center; Jensen, Utah; 1956-1957/1958; Anshen and Allen, San Francisco.

Dinosaur National Monument; Headquarters; Artesia, Colorado; 1964-1965; Arthur K. Olsen & Associates, Salt Lake City.

Effigy Mounds National Monument; Harpers Ferry, Iowa; 1958-1959/1961; EODC.

El Morro National Monument; Ramah, New Mexico; 1964-1968; Delong & Zahm Associates, Burlingame.

Everglades National Park; Flamingo Visitor Center; Florida; 1956/1957; EODC/Harry L. Keck, Jr., Coral Gables.

Everglades National Park; Royal Palms Visitor Center; Florida; 1958; EODC.

Everglades National Park; Parachute Key Visitor Center; Florida; 1959-1962; EODC; demolished after damage in Hurricane Andrew in 1992.

Fort Caroline National Memorial; Jacksonville, Florida; 1955-1956/1957; EODC.

Fort Clatsop National Memorial; Astoria, Oregon; 1962-1963; WODC/Jacobberger, Franks & Norman, Portland.

Fort Donelson National Battlefield; Dover, Tennessee; 1960-1962; EODC.

Fort Frederica National Memorial; St. Simons Island, Georgia; 1955-1956/1957; EODC.

Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine; Baltimore, Maryland; 1962-1963; EODC/Biond, Benson, Koury.

Fort Necessity National Battlefield; Farmington, Pennsylvania; 1965/1966.

Fort Pulaski National Monument; Savannah, Georgia; 1962-1963; Levy & Kiley, Savannah/McGinty & Stanley Associates.

Fort Raleigh National Historic Site; Manteo, North Carolina; 1964-1965; EODC.

Fort Union National Monument; Watrous, New Mexico; 1956-1958/1959; WODC/ Doty/Bennett.

Fort Vancouver National Historical Site; Vancouver, Washington; 1960-1962; WODC.

Fredricksburg and Spotsylvania County Battlefields National Military Park; Chancellorsville Visitor Center; Virginia; 1961-1963; EODC.

George Washington Carver National Monument; Diamond, Missouri; 1958-1959/1960; EODC.

George Washington Memorial Parkway; Great Falls Visitor Center; Virginia; 1966; Kent Cooper and Associates, Washington, D.C.

Gettysburg National Military Park; Pennsylvania; 1958-1961/1962; Neutra and Alexander, Los Angeles.

Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument; Silver City, New Mexico; 1965/1967; WODC/Delong & Zahm Associates, Burlingame.

Glacier National Park; Logan Pass Visitor Center; Montana; 1963; WODC/Brinkman & Lenon, Kalispell.

Glacier National Park; St. Mary Visitor Center; Montana; 1964/1966; WODC/Brinkman & Lenon, Kalispell.

Glen Canyon National Recreation Area; Page, Arizona; 1963-1966; WODC/Doty/Bureau of Reclamation Colorado River Storage Project.

Golden Spike National Historic Site; Brigham City, Utah; 1966-1968; NPS San Francisco Design & Construction/Cannon and Mullen, Salt Lake City.

Grand Canyon National Park; South Rim Public Use Building; Arizona; 1954-1955/1957; WODC/Doty.

Grand Teton National Park; Colter Bay Visitor Center; Moose, Wyoming; 1956-1957/1959; WODC/Malone & Hooper, San Francisco.

Grand Teton National Park; Moose Visitor Center, Wyoming; 1957-1958/1959; WODC/Spencer, Ambrose & Lee, San Francisco.

Great Basin National Park (formerly Lehman Caves); Baker, Nevada; 1960-1962; WODC.

Great Sand Dunes National Monument; Mosca, Colorado; 1961; WODC.

Great Smoky Mountains National Park; Sugarlands Visitor Center; Tennessee; 1957-1958/1961; EODC.

Hawaii Volcanoes National Park; Kalapana Visitor Center; 1965-1966; WODC; destroyed by volcanic activity 1989.

Homestead National Monument of America; Beatrice, Nebraska; 1961-1962; WODC/Leo A. Daly & Associates.

Hopewell Culture National Historical Park (formerly Mount City Group); Chilicothe, Ohio; 1959/1960; William Cramp Scheetz, Jr., Philadelphia.

Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site (formerly Hopewell Village); Elverson, Pennsylvania; 1957-1958/1959; EODC.

Horseshoe Bend National Military Park; Daviston, Alabama; 1962-1963; EODC/Biggers & Neal, Opelika, Alabama.

Jamestown National Historic Site; Virginia; 1956/1957; EODC/Gilboy, Bellante and Clauss, Philadelphia.

Jefferson National Expansion Memorial; St. Louis, Missouri; 1960-1965; Eero Saarinen & Associates, Birmingham, Michigan.

Jewell Cave National Monument; Custer, South Dakota; 1966-1969; NPS San Francisco Planning & Service Center/Doty.

Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park; Georgia; 1963-1964; Francis P. Smith & Henry H. Smith, Atlanta.

Lake Mead National Recreation Area; Temple Bar Visitor Center; Nevada; 1961-1962; WODC.

Lake Mead National Recreation Area; Boulder Beach Visitor Center; Nevada; 1966-67; Delong & Zahm Associates, Burlingame.

Mammoth Cave National Park; Kentucky; 1958-1959; Bellante & Clauss, Philadelphia.

Mesa Verde National Park; Navajo Hill Visitor Center, Colorado; 1964-1968; WODC/Joseph & Louise Marlowe, Denver.

Montezuma Castle National Monument; Camp Verde, Arizona; 1957-1959/1960; WODC.

Moores Creek National Battlefield; Currie, North Carolina; 1957-1958/1959; EODC.

Mount Rainier National Park; Ohanapecosh Visitor Center; Washington; 1964; WODC/John M. Morse & Associates, Seattle.

Mount Rainier National Park; Henry M. Jackson Memorial Visitor Center; Washington; 1964-1966/1967; Whimberley, Whisenand, Allison & Tong, Honolulu/McGuire & Muri, Tacoma.

Mount Rushmore National Memorial; Keystone, South Dakota; 1957-1963; WODC/Doty/Harold Spitznagel & Associates, Sioux Falls; demolished in 1994.

Natchez Trace Parkway; Headquarters and Visitor Center; Tupelo, Mississippi; 1960-1963; EODC.

Natural Bridges National Monument; Lake Powell, Utah; 1964-1965/1968; WODC/Doty/Cannon and Mullen, Salt Lake City.

Navajo National Monument; Betatakin Visitor Center; Tonalea, Arizona; 1963-1964; WODC.

Olympic National Park; Hoh River Visitor Center; Washington; 1961-1962; WODC/Doty.

Olympic National Park; Hurricane Ridge Visitor Center; Washington; 1964; WODC.

Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument; Ajo, Arizona; 1956-1957/1958; WODC/Lescher and Mahoney, Phoenix.

Pea Ridge National Military Park; Arkansas; 1962-1963; EODC.

Petersburg National Battlefield; Virginia; 1965-1966/1967; EODC/NPS Philadelphia Planning & Service Center.

Petrified Forest National Park; Painted Desert Community; Arizona; 1959-1962/1963; Neutra and Alexander, Los Angeles.

Pipestone National Monument; Minnesota; 1957/1958; EODC.

Pu'uhonua o Honaunau National Historical Park (formerly City of Refuge); Hawaii; 1966-1967; NPS San Francisco Planning & Service Center.

Rocky Mountain National Park, Alpine Visitor Center; Colorado; 1962-1964/1965; WODC/William C. Muchow & Associates.

Rocky Mountain National Park; Beaver Meadows Headquarters; Estes Park, Colorado; 1964-1967/1967; Taliesin Associated Architects.

Rocky Mountain National Park; Kawuneeche Visitor Center; Grand Lake, Colorado; 1967-1968; WODC.

Russell Cave National Monument; Bridgeport, Alabama; 1962-1963; EODC/Northington Smith & Kranert.

Saratoga National Historical Park; Fraser Hill Visitor Center; Stillwater, New York; 1960/1962; EODC/Benson.

Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks; Lodgepole Visitor Center; California; 1963-1964/1966; Anshen and Allen, San Francisco.

Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks, Grant Grove Visitor Center; California; 1963-1965; WODC/Walter Wagner & Partners.

Shenandoah National Park; Harry F. Byrd Sr. Visitor Center, Big Meadows; Virginia; 1963-1966/1967; EODC.

Sitka National Historical Park; Alaska; 1963-1964/1968; WODC/Doty/John Morse & Associates, Seattle.

Stones River National Battlefield; Murfreesboro, Tennessee; 1961-1963; EODC/Benson.

Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument; Flagstaff, Arizona; 1965/1967; WODC/Doty.

Theodore Roosevelt National Park; Medora, North Dakota; 1958/1959; WODC/Germano Milono, San Francisco.

Timpanogos Cave National Monument; American Fork, Utah; 1961-1963/1965; WODC/Doty/Cannon and Mullen, Salt Lake City; destroyed by fire in 1991.

Tonto National Monument; Roosevelt, Arizona; 1962-1963/1965; WODC/Doty.

Vicksburg National Military Park; Mississippi; 1966-1968; NPS Philadelphia Planning & Service Center.

Virgin Islands National Park; Red Hook Dock & Visitor Reception; St. Thomas; 1961-1962; EODC.

Virgin Islands National Park; Cruz Bay Dock & Visitor Reception; St. John; 1961-1962; EODC.

Whitman Mission National Historic Site; Walla Walla, Washington; 1960-63; WODC.

Wright Brothers National Memorial; Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina; 1957-1959/1960; Mitchell/Giurgola.

Wupatki National Monument; Flagstaff, Arizona; 1962-1964/1965; WODC/Doty/Lescher and Mahoney, Phoenix.

Yellowstone National Park; New Canyon Village Visitor Center; Wyoming; 1956-1957/1958; Hurt & Trudell, San Francisco.

Yellowstone National Park; Grant Village Visitor Center; Wyoming; 1965; WODC/Adrian Malone & Associates, Sheridan.

Yosemite National Park; California; 1965-1966/1967; WODC/Spencer, Lee & Busse, San Francisco.

Zion National Park; Oak Creek Visitor Center; Springdale, Utah; 1957-1960/1961; WODC/Doty/Cannon and Mullen, Salt Lake City.

Visitor Center Additions

"Additions" could be very significant construction projects, doubling or tripling the size of a building. Usually they included expansion and remodeling of an older building and the installation of new interpretive and other facilities.

Andrew Johnson National Historical Site, Greeneville, Tennessee; 1956-1957; EODC.

Aztec Ruins National Monument; New Mexico; 1958/1959; WODC.

Carlsbad Caverns National Park; New Mexico; 1953-1958/1959; NPS.

Casa Grande Ruins National Monument; Coolidge, Arizona; 1962-1963; Lescher and Mahoney, Phoenix.

Catoctin Mountain Park; Thurmont, Maryland; 1964; NPS National Capital Parks Design & Construction.

Chiricahua National Monument; Willcox, Arizona; 1962-1963/1965; WODC/Doty.

Fort Davis National Historic Site; Texas; 1964; WODC.

Hawaii Volcanoes National Park; Kilauea Visitor Center; 1965-1966 addition; NPS San Francisco Planning & Service Center.

Joshua Tree National Park; Twentynine Palms, California; 1962-1963/1964; WODC.

Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument (formerly Custer Battlefield); Crow Agency, Montana; 1964-65; Max R. Garcia, San Francisco.

Manassas National Battlefield Park; Virginia; 1962, EODC.

Rock Creek Park; Nature Center; Washington, D.C.; 1958; NPS National Capital Parks Design & Construction.

Saguaro National Park; Tucson, Arizona; 1958-1959; WODC/Bennett.

Tumacacori National Historical Park; Arizona; 1960.

Walnut Canyon National Monument; Flagstaff, Arizona; 1963-1964; WODC/Doty.

Yosemite National Park; Happy Isles Visitor Center, California; 1963; WODC/Doty.

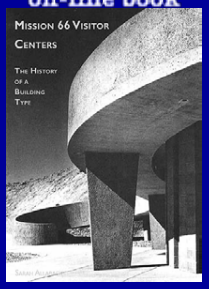
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Appendix II

Preliminary Visitor Center Design Drawings by Cecil Doty

(in the NPS Technical Information Center, Denver Service Center)

Arches National Park; Moab, Utah; 6/1/59, 7/21/59; site plan, floor plan.

Badlands National Park; Cedar Pass Visitor Center; Interior, South Dakota; 2/14/57, 6/25/57, 7/25; site plan, section, elevation.

Big Bend National Park; Panther Junction Visitor Center; Texas; 10/15/64; plan, section, elevation, site plan.

Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area; Yellowtail Dam Site; Fort Smith, Montana; 5/6/64; Bureau of Reclamation; floor plan with site details.

Bryce Canyon National Park; Utah; 9/10/57, 12/13/57, 5/58; plans, elevations.

Cabrillo National Monument; San Diego, California;10/7/63, 1/64; plan, section, elevation, site plan.

Canyon de Chelly National Monument; Chinle, Arizona; 6/64; complete set.

Capitol Reef National Park; Torrey, Utah; 3/20/63; plan, section, elevation, sketch of theater.

Capulin Volcano National Monument (formerly Capulin Mountain); New Mexico; 4/20/62; plan, elevation, section, location.

Casa Grande Ruins National Monument; Coolidge, Arizona; 9/27/62, 2/1/63; addition; plan, section, elevation, location.

Cedar Breaks National Monument; Cedar City, Utah; 8/24/65; unbuilt; plan, section, elevation, location.

Chaco Culture National Historical Park; Bloomfield, New Mexico; 7/56, 10/30/56; plan, section, elevation.

Chickasaw National Recreation Area (formerly Platt); Flower Park Visitor Center; Sulpher, Oklahoma; 1/19/65; unbuilt; plan, section, elevation, location.

Chiricahua National Monument; Willcox, Arizona; 11/8/62; addition; plan, section, elevation, location.

Colorado National Monument; Fruita, Colorado; 5/5/60; plans, section, elevation.

Crater Lake National Park; Oregon; 3/24/58; unbuilt; plan, section, elevation.

Craters of the Moon National Monument; Arco, Idaho; 3/1/56; overall layout with roads and landscape.

Curecanti National Recreation Area; Center Point Visitor Center; Gunnison, Colorado; 4/12/65; plan, section, elevation.

Death Valley National Park; Furnace Creek Visitor Center; California; 4/12/57, 10/25/57; plan, section, elevation.

El Morro National Monument; Ramah, New Mexico; 7/16/63; plans, section, elevation.

Fort Laramie National Historic Site; Wyoming; 2/14/64; unbuilt; plan, elevation.

Fort Union National Monument; Watrous, New Mexico; 7/6/56, 4/15/58; floor plans, elevation.

Glen Canyon National Recreation Area; Dam Site Visitor Center; Page, Arizona; 12/16/63, 1/28/64; plans, elevation, plot plan.

Grand Canyon National Park; South Rim Public Use Building; Arizona; 10/54, 1/55, 2/55; full set; plans, elevations, sections, courtyard plan.

Grand Canyon National Park; Yavapai Point Visitor Center; Arizona; 10/12/65; unbuilt; 12/16/65; plan, section, sketch; two schemes.

Grand Teton National Park; Moose Visitor Center, Wyoming; 8/64; plan, section, elevation.

Great Basin National Park (formerly Lehman Caves); Baker, Nevada; 12/16/60;5/19/61; plans, section, elevation, revised floor plan.

Homestead National Monument of America; Beatrice, Nebraska; 1/26/61; plan, elevation.

Jewell Cave National Monument; Custer, South Dakota; 5/26/66; plan, section, elevation, sketch.

Lassen Volcanic National Park; Southwest Developed Area Visitor Center; Mineral, California; 1/28/62; unbuilt; plan, section, elevation, location.

Lava Beds National Monument; Indian Wells Visitor Center;

Tulelake, California; 5/7/62; unbuilt; plan, elevation, section.

Mesa Verde National Park; Weatheril Mesa Visitor Center; Colorado; 8/6/64; plan, section, location, sketch, cylindrical exhibit space.

Montezuma Castle National Monument; Wells Section Visitor Center; Camp Verde, Arizona; 3/19/58, 8/15/58, 5/59; plan, section, elevation, sketch.

Mount Rainier National Park; Sunrise Visitor Center; Washington; 3/63; unbuilt; plans, location, birds-eye view.

Mount Rainier National Park; Paradise Garage and Visitor Center; Washington; 4/6/56; unbuilt; plans and sketch, visitor use on 4th floor.

Mount Rushmore National Memorial; Keystone, South Dakota; demolished; 8/9/60; plan, location, elevation, section, sketch.

Natural Bridges National Monument; Lake Powell, Utah; 3/12/64; plan, section, elevation, cylindrical lobby/museum.

Navajo National Monument; Betatakin Visitor Center; Tonalea, Arizona; 8/8/62; plan, section, elevation.

Olympic National Park; Hoh River Visitor Center; Washington; complete set; Totem carvings on facade.

Olympic National Park; Hurricane Ridge Visitor Center; Washington; 4/64; plan, section, elevation; funnel-shaped lobby.

Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument; Ajo, Arizona; 4/30/56; plans, section, elevation.

Rocky Mountain National Park; Grand Lake Visitor Center; Estes Park, Colorado; 4/9/58; unbuilt; plans, elevation, site plan.

Sitka National Historical Park; Alaska; 8/27/63, 1/30/64; plan, site plan, section, elevation.

Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument; Flagstaff, Arizona; 3/22/65; plan, section, elevation.

Theodore Roosevelt National Park; Medora, North Dakota; 2/28/58; site plan with construction details.

Timpanogos Cave National Monument; American Fork, Utah; destroyed by fire; 4/18/61; plan, section, elevation, site plan.

Tonto National Monument; Roosevelt, Arizona; 7/3/62, 9/63; 13 sheets; plan, section, elevation; complete set.

Walnut Canyon National Monument; Flagstaff, Arizona; 1963; addition to 1938 building.

Wupatki National Monument; Flagstaff, Arizona; 3/12/62, 4/64;

plan, section, elevation, site plan.

Yellowstone National Park; Mammoth Visitor Center; Wyoming; 4/21/60; unbuilt; plans, elevation, sketch; walkway to dormitory.

Yellowstone National Park; Madison Junction Visitor Center; Wyoming; 1/2/61; unbuilt; plans, section, elevation; sawn shake shingles.

Yosemite National Park; California; 9/2/63; plan, section, elevation, sketch.

Yosemite National Park; Happy Isles Visitor Center, California; addition; 1/18/63; plan, section, elevation, complete set.

Zion National Park; Oak Creek Visitor Center; Springdale, Utah; 11/13/57, 12/29/58; plans, site plan, section, elevation.

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Mission 66 Visitor Centers

Appendix III

Registering Mission 66 Visitor Centers in the National Register of Historic Places

Associated Historic Context

Sarah Allaback, Ph.D., *Mission 66 Visitor Centers: The History of a Building Type* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2000).

Period of Significance

The "Mission 66" program was initiated by the National Park Service in 1956 and was to be completed by the 50th anniversary of the agency in 1966. Earlier planning and development projects, however, set important precedents for the program and determined much of the character of its planning and architectural development. The "public use buildings" at Carlsbad Caverns (beginning in 1953) and at Grand Canyon (beginning in 1954), for example, were important steps in developing the visitor center building type. The Mission 66 era, in the broadest sense, began in 1945, when the postwar phase of park planning and design began at the Park Service.

Conrad L. Wirth, who initiated the program as Park Service director, stepped down in 1964. His successor, George B. Hartzog, Jr., continued Mission 66 and initiated a successor program, "Parkscape," intended to be finished in time for the Yellowstone centennial in 1972. The Mission 66 era therefore did not end in 1966, since this year did not mark a significant termination or change in park planning and design policy. The Parkscape program continued many of the basic assumptions, policies, and architectural style of Mission 66. Change did arrive, but a few years later, as the Park Service planning and design functions were centralized in Denver (1971), environmental laws were enacted and implemented (especially the National Environmental Policy Act in 1969), the Parkscape program ended (1972), and the political context of Park Service leadership changed with the appointment of a politician with no park management experience, Ronald H. Walker, as Park Service director (January 1973). The general period of significance for this historical context therefore includes the years from 1945 to 1972.

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) requires that

properties less than 50 years old possess "exceptional importance" if they are to be determined eligible for the register (Criteria Consideration G). The historical context developed for Mission 66 visitor centers indicates that only those visitor centers that served as early prototypes (1945-1956) or which were part of the original, finite group of Mission 66 visitor centers (1956-1966) potentially possess exceptional importance. The period of significance for any Mission 66 visitor center of exceptional importance should therefore fall within the years 1945-1966. Not all visitor centers dating to this period, however, will possess exceptional importance (see requirements for exceptional importance below).

Associated Property Type: The Visitor Center

During the Mission 66 era, the Park Service built housing, maintenance areas, roads, entrance stations, parking lots, campgrounds, comfort stations, picnic shelters, concessioner buildings, and other park facilities intended to serve park visitors and facilitate park management. This contextual study is associated with one property type of the Mission 66 era: the park visitor center. Other Mission 66 property types besides the visitor center may be identified in the future, but will be associated with an expanded historical context and registration requirements.

Mission 66 planners coined the term "visitor center" to describe a new building type they developed to serve the vastly increased numbers of people (and their cars) who began visiting the national parks following World War II. The visitor center combined old and new building programs, and it was the centerpiece of a new era in planning for visitor services in American national parks. The influence of the visitor center idea was profound. New visitor centers (and the planning ideas behind them) were used in the development or redevelopment of scores of state parks in the United States, as well as nascent national park systems in Europe, Africa, and elsewhere. The original, finite group of Mission 66 visitor centers therefore became prototypes for a new approach to park planning all over the world.

The visitor center typically is a centralized facility that includes multiple visitor and administrative functions within a single architectural floor plan or compound. The use of the word "center" indicated the planners desire to centralize park interpretive and museum displays, new types of interpretive presentations, park administrative offices, restrooms, and various other visitor facilities. Like the contemporary "shopping center," the visitor center made it possible for people to park their cars at a central point, and from there have access to a range of services or attractions. The visitor center facilitated and concentrated public activities, and so helped prevent more random, destructive patterns of use.

The more significant examples of visitor center design contributed to the evolution of the museum, as a building type, as had earlier national park museums of the 1920s and 1930s. Some visitor

center activities and programs, such as administrative offices and museum displays, had been featured in "park village" developments since the early 1920s, although usually in separate buildings. Other program elements, such as interpretive displays, slide shows, and films, were being developed at the time by Park Service interpretive planners and museum staff. The term "interpretation" replaced "education" at the Park Service in the late 1940s, and the new approach was extremely influential on the development of the floor plans, spatial processions, and functional spaces of Mission 66 visitor centers. Theater spaces for new slide shows and 16 mm films soon became standard requirements, as did space for interpretive displays which either replaced or complemented the more familiar exhibit cases of older park museums. The "information" desk (as opposed to interpretive or museum displays) became an essential and central feature of the new facility, and emphasized rapid and efficient dissemination of practical information related to park attractions, visitor safety, and convenience.

The procession (or sequence of spaces) through a visitor center was a particularly important aspect of its design. Increased numbers of visitors required this attention to circulation and visitor "flow," and contemporary modern architectural design also stressed procession as an aspect of planning new buildings. In Mission 66 visitor centers, the spatial procession through the facility often included wide entrances and exits, ramps and inclined planes, an open lobby, easy access to exhibit and auditorium areas, and significant views of natural features or historic sites (either from a terrace or through a window wall) to facilitate interpretive talks.

The siting of visitor centers was determined by new considerations in park master planning that involved the circulation of unprecedented numbers of peoples and cars. The visitor center was an integral part of a new approach to park planning. The new buildings were typically sited in relation to the overall circulation plan of the park, in order to efficiently intercept visitor flow at critical points. The criteria for siting Mission 66 visitor centers therefore differed from the criteria for siting and designing the park villages and museums of the prewar era. In larger parks, new visitor centers were often sited at park entrances, or on park roads "en route" to major destinations in the park. In other cases, visitor centers were sited at a major destination or attraction within the park. In some cultural parks, visitor centers were often sited as close as possible to the landscape or other resource to be interpreted. This implied a certain amount of encroachment on the park landscape, but it was felt that this provided the most powerful means of interpreting a site that otherwise might remain obscure or less than fully appreciated by park visitors.

Although visitor centers typically were sited in relationship to the park's automotive circulation plan, designers explored the potential for visitors to use nearby trails and outdoor spaces once they were out of their cars. Outdoor amphitheaters, roof terraces, and other exterior features all served as functional parts of the visitor center complex. Rest rooms often were designed as separate buildings

adjacent to the visitor center, or at least with separate outdoor entrances. Nearby parking lots and site development were integral to the overall procession into and through the building. Ramps often replaced stairs into and out of the building, and window walls helped break down the division between site and interior space. Short interpretive trails ("nature trails") were often developed to provide an outdoor experience near the visitor center, and outdoor picnic and sitting areas were common as well.

The Mission 66 visitor center remains today as the most architecturally significant expression of the planning and design practices developed by the Park Service during the Mission 66 era.

Associated Architectural Style: "Park Service Modern"

The Mission 66 era visitor center also embodied a distinctive new architectural style that can be described as "Park Service Modern."

Park Service Modern architecture responded to the new context of post-World War II social, demographic, and economic conditions. American architects had assimilated the influence of European modern architecture by the 1950s, and Park Service architects in turn were influenced by this national trend. Park Service Modern style was an integral part of a broader effort at the Park Service to transform the agency, and the national park system, to meet the exigencies of postwar America. It was during the postwar period that the Park Service adopted the "arrowhead" logo and redesigned agency uniforms. As part of Mission 66, new professional training programs were established and agency personnel was expanded. Major land acquisition led to the development of new kinds of parks, including national recreation areas (such as Glen Canyon, 1958) and national seashores (such as Cape Cod, 1961). Other parks that had been acquired earlier but remained undeveloped, such as Everglades and Big Bend national parks, became showcases of Mission 66 planning and design. In some cases, such as Carlsbad Caverns National Park or Chiricahua National Monument, visitor center "additions" encased or extended older, rustic buildings, effectively transforming them into visitor centers.

In some ways Mission 66 continued traditions of Park Service planning and design; in other ways postwar social conditions, new practices in the construction industry, and the budget policies of the Truman and Eisenhower administrations necessitated new approaches to national park planning and management. Mission 66 planners responded to the tremendously increased demand for outdoor recreation, for example, as well as the increased development of gateway communities outside parks. Above all, the emerging Interstate Highway system forever changed the situation for many national parks, making them less isolated and more visited than ever. In some cases, such as Petrified Forest National Park, the locations of Interstate routes influenced the siting of park visitor centers.

Park Service Modern architectural style responded to all of these

influences, and served an essential role in the Mission 66 program by utilizing efficient methods of construction (including inexpensive building materials) while providing a new, contemporary image for the visitor centers and other buildings. Park Service Modern buildings exploited the functional advantages offered by postwar architectural theory and construction techniques. The larger, more complex programming of the visitor center encouraged architects, especially Cecil Doty (at the NPS Western Office of Design and Construction) to take advantage of free plans (in which different functional spaces overlapped or were only partially divided), flat roofs (as well as other roof types), and other established elements of modern design in order to create spaces in which larger numbers of visitors could circulate easily and locate essential services efficiently. Such planning dictated the use of concrete construction and prefabricated components, and also often featured windows of unusual size, shape, and location. Unusual fenestration, in particular, was a hallmark of contemporary architecture and was often used with great effect in Mission 66 visitor centers to provide generous views of scenic or historic areas. Some buildings, such Cape Cod (Salt Pond) and Colorado National Monument visitor centers, were clearly sited in part to provide important views from within the building or from adjacent outdoor spaces.

These aspects of contemporary modern architecture in the 1950s proved particularly suited to the new programmatic and technical requirements faced by park architects of the era. At the same time, Park Service Modern design built on some precedents of Park Service Rustic design, especially in the use of interior courtyards, plain facades, and exterior masonry veneers. The result was a distinctive new style of park architecture that amounted to a Park Service adaptation of contemporary American modern architecture.

The architectural elevations of Park Service Modern visitor centers were stripped of most overtly decorative or associative elements, and the architects typically employed textured concrete with panels of stone veneer, painted steel columns, and flat roofs with projecting overhangs, terraces, or covered walks. Textured concrete block, or slump block, was a favorite (and relatively inexpensive) material. These formal elements often allowed the sometimes large and complex visitor centers to maintain a low, horizontal profile that remained as unobtrusive as possible. Stone and textured concrete could also take on earth tones that reduced visual contrast with landscape settings. In some cases, such as Big Bend (Panther Junction), Zion (Oak Creek), and Rocky Mountain (Beaver Meadows) visitor centers, buildings were sited on a slope, so that the public arrived on one side of the building and were presented with a single-story elevation, while the rear (service/administrative) side of the structure dropped down to house two levels of offices.

The Park Service Modern style developed by the Park Service during the Mission 66 era soon had a widespread influence on state park design nationwide and national park design internationally. The new architecture reinterpreted the long-standing commitment to "harmonize" architecture with park landscapes, and at its best, it

did harmonize with its setting in a new way. Park Service Modern building could be both more understated and more efficient than Park Service Rustic buildings had been, since the new approach, when successful, provided more program and function for less architectural presence in the park. This was an important innovation, considering that new, relatively massive buildings were considered necessary to meet the demand for public services in the parks during the Mission 66 era.

The new visitor centers also exhibited a consistency in appearance and quality that was the result of the strongly centralized Mission 66 planning program. While the visitor centers were not standardized, they were the result of standard procedures and policies for design and construction. This consistency helped reinforce the strong sense of a national park "system," of which each park was a part. The Mission 66 visitor center became a recognizable point of reference for visitors, who knew what kind of services they could expect at such a facility, in order to begin their visit as pleasantly and efficiently as possible.

Although the new style had its critics from the very beginning, Park Service Modern, as developed by Park Service designers during the Mission 66 era, became as influential and significant in the history of American national and state park management as the Park Service Rustic style had been. The Mission 66 visitor center remains today as the most complete and significant expression of the Park Service Modern style.

Registration Requirements for Mission 66 Visitor Centers

The following requirements for registering Mission 66 visitor centers in the NRHP are given in three levels of increasing exclusivity. The first level (I) describes the requirements for registration for a historically significant visitor center. The second level (II) describes the requirements for determining "exceptional importance" for a building less than 50 years old. The third level (III) describes requirements for determining national significance.

In all cases, National Register Criteria A and C may apply. Criterion A would apply because the property is associated with events (the Mission 66 program as part of the development of the national park system) that made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. Criterion C would apply because the property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; represents the work of a master; or possesses high artistic values. Eligibility under Criterion A relates to significance in one or several of the following areas: Community Planning and Development (park), Conservation, Ethnic Heritage, Entertainment/Recreation, Politics/Government, and Social History. Eligibility under Criterion C relates to significance in one or several of the following areas: Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Community Planning and Development (park).

I. Requirements for Registration

To be considered eligible for listing in the NRHP, 50-year old Mission 66 visitor centers should possess the following characteristics:

1. The visitor center should be one of the important precedents of the Mission 66 program (1945-1956), be one of the visitor centers originally planned and built as part of the Mission 66 program (1956-1966), or as part of the Parkscape program (1966-1972). The property's period of significance should fall within the years 1945-1972.

2. The visitor center should retain most or all of the physical characteristics described in the description of the property type (above). The visitor center should be a centralized facility that includes multiple visitor and administrative functions within a single architectural floor plan or compound. Programming elements should include interpretive displays, space for slide shows and films, visitor contact, restrooms, and other services. The visitor center should be intended to serve the public by interpreting scenery, natural resources, and cultural sites, and should be a major point of visitor arrival, orientation, and service.

3. The visitor center should possess physical integrity to the period of significance. The NRHP requires that the integrity of a property be evident through historic qualities including location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Examples of alterations or remodeling that may impair the historical integrity of a visitor center include (but are not limited to):

    - The addition of a new façade, new entrance wing, or other major exterior alteration that transforms the outward appearance of the building.

    - Complete alteration of entrance and sequence through building, due to the addition of new building wings, entrances, or other major alterations.

    - New roof structure that completely alters exterior appearance of building (such as pitched, raised-seam metal roof replacing original flat roof).

    - Extensive interior remodeling that alters definition of interior spaces, function of spaces, and sequence through spaces.

4. The visitor center should embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction that represent high artistic values. Specifically, the visitor center should be a successful reflection of the principles of "Park Service Modern" style. These include:

    - Building is sited in relation to an overall plan of

"visitor flow" in the park, either near the park entrance, en route to a major park destination, or at a park destination.

- Building design emphasizes plan organization (the design of the floor plans). Floor plan organization allowed segregation of public areas from administrative areas, and also emphasized efficient "visitor flow" through the building itself. A central lobby space is often the arrival point, with trails or other park destinations often accessed as the visitor moves through the building.
- Building's program centralizes numerous park services, including information, interpretation, rest rooms, and administrative offices.
- Building makes use of the formal vocabulary and materials of contemporary (1945-1972) modern architecture, including flat roofs (as well as other types of roofs), window walls (and other unorthodox fenestration), exposed steel supports, concrete and concrete block construction.
- Overlapping functional spaces (free plans) sometimes evident in floor plan. Public areas usually on one level, or on split levels, segregated from administrative areas.
- Integration of interior and exterior public spaces, often separated by windows, window walls, glass doors, or wooden doors with windows.
- Entrances, exits, and other doorways often are wide, providing easy movement for crowds. Entrances often sheltered by porches, ramadas, arcades, etc. Rest rooms often nearby, with separate outdoor entrance.
- Building emphasizes visitor's experience of spatial procession. This sequence of spaces often features ramps, as well as significant views of park landscapes either from terraces or through large windows.
- Siting of visitor center near landscape or attraction to be interpreted sometimes allows interpretive programs to be extended into the visitor center itself.
- Building's elevations create a mostly low-profile, horizontal effect.
- Building "harmonizes" with its setting through horizontality of massing, color and texture of materials. Use of textured concrete, concrete block, and stone veneers in facades often give building generally rough exterior texture, often featuring earth toned colors.

- Building footprint is often ell-shaped, rectangular around a central courtyard, or a variation on these themes.

- Use of naturalistic planting to partially screen building, utility areas, and parking, as well as to repair areas disturbed in construction. Planter boxes often used to define entrances.

- Outdoor spaces and site work, including parking lots, paths, amphitheaters, terraces, and patios often incorporated into visitor center complex.

II. Requirements for Exceptional Importance

For any property achieving significance within the last 50 years, National Register "Criteria Consideration G" requires that the property must be of "exceptional importance" to be considered eligible for registration. To meet this requirement and be eligible for registration, a Mission 66 visitor center less than 50 years old should possess all the characteristics described above, and in addition, the following requirements should be met:

1. The visitor center should be one of the important precedents of the Mission 66 program (1945-1956), or one originally planned and built as part of the Mission 66 program (1956-1966). The property's period of significance should fall within the years 1945-1966.

2. The visitor center should possess substantial physical integrity to the period of significance, 1945-1966. This should be considered a higher standard for integrity than that described for National Register listing of significant resources that have achieved 50 years of age. Sufficient features should be intact to relate the property to the Modern movement in terms of massing, spatial relationships, proportion, pattern of windows, texture of materials, and ornamentation. Characteristics critical in defining the building's artistic merit or exemplary modern design should not be altered. Essential features that should be present for a property to represent its significance include the historic main facade and entry, important public spaces inside the visitor center, and other important interior spaces that define the particular buildings's historic character and use as a visitor center. An addition will not disqualify a resource, if it is compatible with the original building and not opposed to the intention of the original design, and if it does not obscure the qualities for which the building is significant.

3. The visitor center should possess exceptional importance in one or more of the following ways:

    - As an outstanding example of "Park Service Modern" style, as defined above, preferably one published in contemporary architectural journals or the recipient of design awards. Building may also be the subject of

subsequent scholarly evaluations.

- As the work of a regionally, nationally or internationally recognized architect or architectural firm, working for the National Park Service. Such a work must be recognized as an outstanding example of Park Service Modern design through evidence of awards and honors, critical acclaim by the press, and scholarly evaluation. Notable architects are defined as those who received high recognition as leaders in their fields and have received critical acclaim for numerous projects over a period of years in major architectural publications. The work of still-practicing architects is generally not considered eligible because the body of their work is yet to be completed and, therefore, cannot be holistically assessed for historical significance.

- For its demonstration of distinctive programming, planning, or design features that affected the evolution of the visitor center as a building type nationally, regionally, or internationally. Building may have gained special recognition by Mission 66 planners and designers as an important stylistic example or functional prototype for the Mission 66 and Parkscape programs. Building may have served as a stylistic example or functional prototype for visitor center design in state parks, or in other settings, such as arboretums, municipal parks, etc.

- As an essential part of an overall Mission 66 park development plan that had extraordinary importance in the history and development of an individual park. The building may be part of a larger Mission 66 development area which may be a National Register-eligible historic district.

- For association with events and activities that have made an outstanding contribution to the history of local communities or native groups. This may include the incorporation of programmed space for craft production, demonstrations, and other activities. It may also include aspects of the inspiration for the design, such as the Mesa Verde (Farview) Visitor Center, inspired by kiva design.

III. Requirements for National Significance

The "associated historic context," "period of significance," "associated property type," and "associated architectural style" for National Historic Landmark (NHL) nomination of Mission 66 era visitor centers are all the same as described above in Requirements for Registration. In addition, any property achieving national significance within the past 50 years must possess "extraordinary national importance" to qualify as a NHL.

1. To qualify as a NHL, the visitor center should be an outstanding exemplar of Park Service Modern style in one of the following ways:

    - As the work of a nationally or internationally recognized architect or architectural firm, working for the Mission 66 program during the period 1945-1966. Such a work must be recognized as an outstanding example of Park Service Modern design through evidence of national or international awards and honors, critical acclaim by the national or international press, and scholarly evaluation. Notable architects are defined as those who received high recognition as leaders in their fields and have received critical acclaim for numerous projects over a period of years in major architectural publications. The work of still-practicing architects is generally not considered eligible because the body of their work is yet to be completed and, therefore, cannot be holistically assessed for historical significance.

    - As a foremost example of visitor center design by Park Service architects, especially Cecil Doty. To be considered a foremost example, the visitor center should be an outstanding example of "Park Service Modern" style (as defined above), preferably one published in contemporary journals or the recipient of design awards. Building may also be the subject of subsequent scholarly evaluations which demonstrate its outstanding design achievement, high artistic quality, or pivotal influence on the evolution of visitor center design in national parks, state parks, and elsewhere.

    - The visitor center should have substantial physical integrity dating to the period of signficance, 1945-1966. This should be considered a higher standard for integrity than that described above for National Register listing. Sufficient features should be intact to relate the property to the Modern movement in terms of massing, spatial relationships, proportion, pattern of windows, texture of materials, and ornamentation. Characteristics critical in defining the building's artistic merit or exemplary modern design should not be altered. Essential features that should be present for a property to represent its significance include the historic main facade and entry, important public spaces inside the visitor center, and other important interior spaces that define the particular buildings's historic character and use as a visitor center.

For NHL designation, NHL Criteria 1 and 4 would apply. Criteria 1 would apply because the property is associated with events (the Mission 66 program as part of the development of the national park system) that have made a significant contribution to broad national

patterns of American history. Criteria 4 would apply because the property embodies the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen exceptionally valuable for the study of a period, style, or method of construction (Park Service Modern style).

The following NHL Themes would apply:

III. Expressing Cultural Values

5. Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Urban Design

VII. Transforming the Environment

3. Protecting/Preserving the Environment

The following NHL Areas of Significance would apply:

Architecture

Landscape Architecture

Community Planning and Development

Politics/Government

The following NHL Comparative Categories would apply:

XVI. Architecture

XVII. Landscape Architecture

XXXII. Conservation of Natural Resources

XXXIV. Recreation

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Mission 66 Visitor Centers

Appendix IV

Registering Mission 66 Visitor Centers in the National Register of Historic Places

Associated Listings in the National Register of Historic Places

The following Mission 66 era visitor centers have been listed in (or determined eligible for) the National Register of Historic Places.

1. **Rocky Mountain National Park**; Beaver Meadows Headquarters; Estes Park, Colorado; 1964-1967/1967; Taliesin Associated Architects.
   Listed in the National Register on March 18, 1982 as a contributing building in the Rocky Mountain National Park Utility Area Historic District.

2. **Dinosaur National Monument**; Quarry Visitor Center; Jensen, Utah; 1956-1957/1958; Anshen and Allen.
   Listed in the National Register on December 19, 1986, as a contributing building in the national monument.

3. **Gettysburg National Military Park**; Visitor Center and Cyclorama; Pennsylvania; 1958-1961/1962; Neutra and Alexander.
   Determined eligible for the National Register by the Keeper on September 24, 1998.

4. **Wright Brothers National Memorial**; Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina; 1957-1959/1960; Mitchell/Giurgola.
   Listed in the National Register on February 28, 1999, as a contributing building in the national monument district.

5. **Sitka National Historical Park**; Alaska; 1963-1964/1968; NPS WODC/Doty/John Morse & Associates.
   Determined eligible for the National Register by the State Historic Preservation Officer on January 6, 2000.

6. **Cape Cod National Seashore**; Salt Pond Visitor Center; Wellfleet, Massachusetts; 1964-1965; EODC/Biderman.
   Determined eligible for the National Register by the State Historic Preservation Officer on March 10, 2000.

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