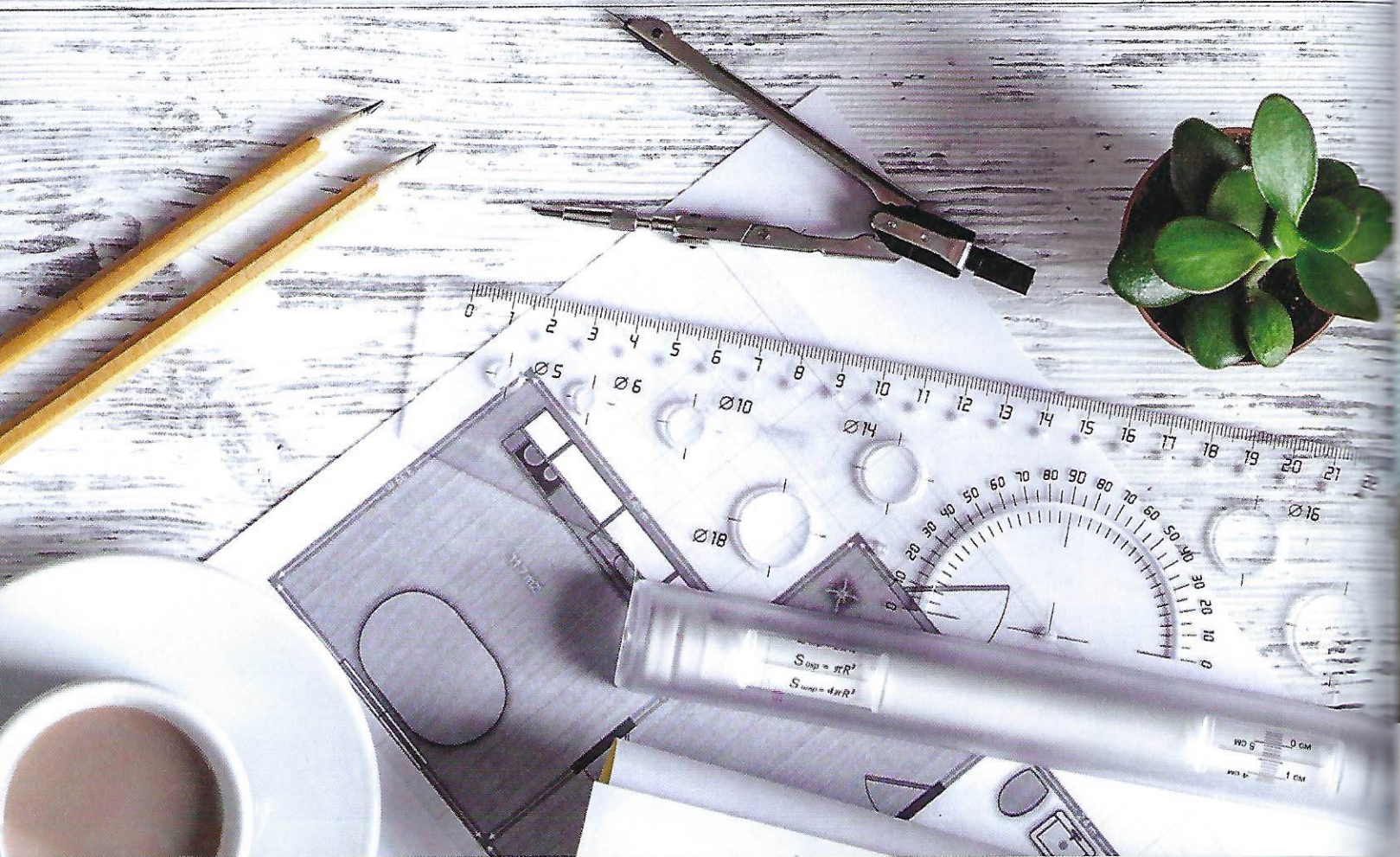


# Grateful for a Legacy of Designing

BY LAURA LEATHERS

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL BARRETT

These well-known architects are fortunate to be following in the footsteps of their fathers and grandfathers.

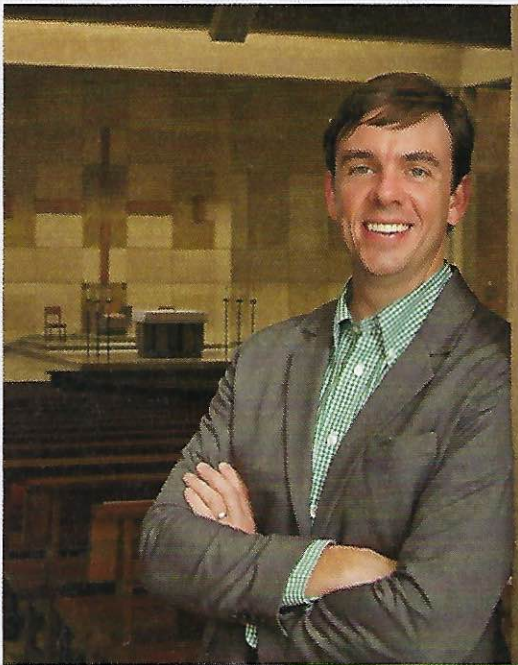


For a *Linked In* post dated June 19, 2015, Angelica Angeli wrote an article entitled "How Four Famous Architects Inspired Their Sons." She states, "A father with a strong and unique personality often inspires his children to follow in his steps. When this strong personality happens to be a passionate and accomplished architect, history has shown that it is common for their children to follow the same path. In doing so, most of them aim to achieve two opposing positions simultaneously; be like their father and not be like their father."

Angelica goes on to mention four famous architecture duos: *The Behnishes*: Gunter and Stefan; *The Peis*: I.M. Ching Chun and Li Chung; *The Davises*: Lewis and Steven; and *The Saarinen*: Ebro and Eliel. Names maybe not too familiar to us; however, we may have heard about or seen the structures they designed. For example, the St. Louis Archway,

the tallest arch in the world, was created by the Saarinen.

Jackson is also home to four well-known architectural firms, each with a rich legacy started by their grandfather or father. With drafting boards, rulers and instruments, their firms have developed and expanded. The clients' needs have come to fruition through their creative, unique designs. An idea originating on paper grows through computer technology and becomes a reality of health care facilities, chapels and churches, corporate headquarters, schools, and so much more. The buildings planned from these firms are functional, beautiful and environmentally friendly. Perusing their websites, you will find their work throughout the metro Jackson area, around the state, and beyond its borders. However, a firm is also about relationships and passing the pencil to the next generation.



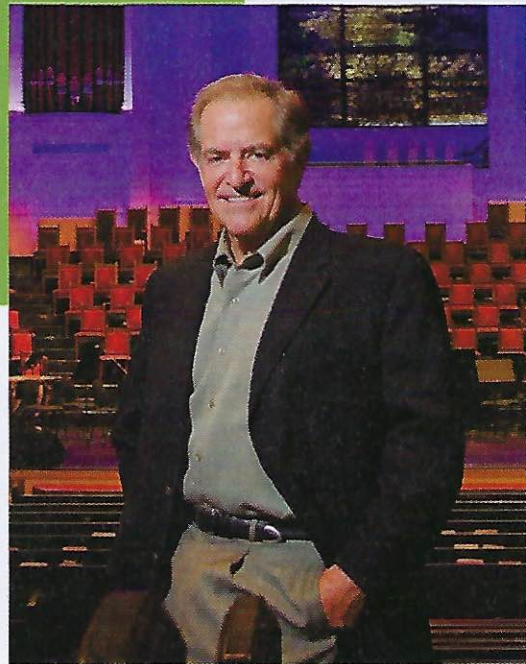
Jack Allin



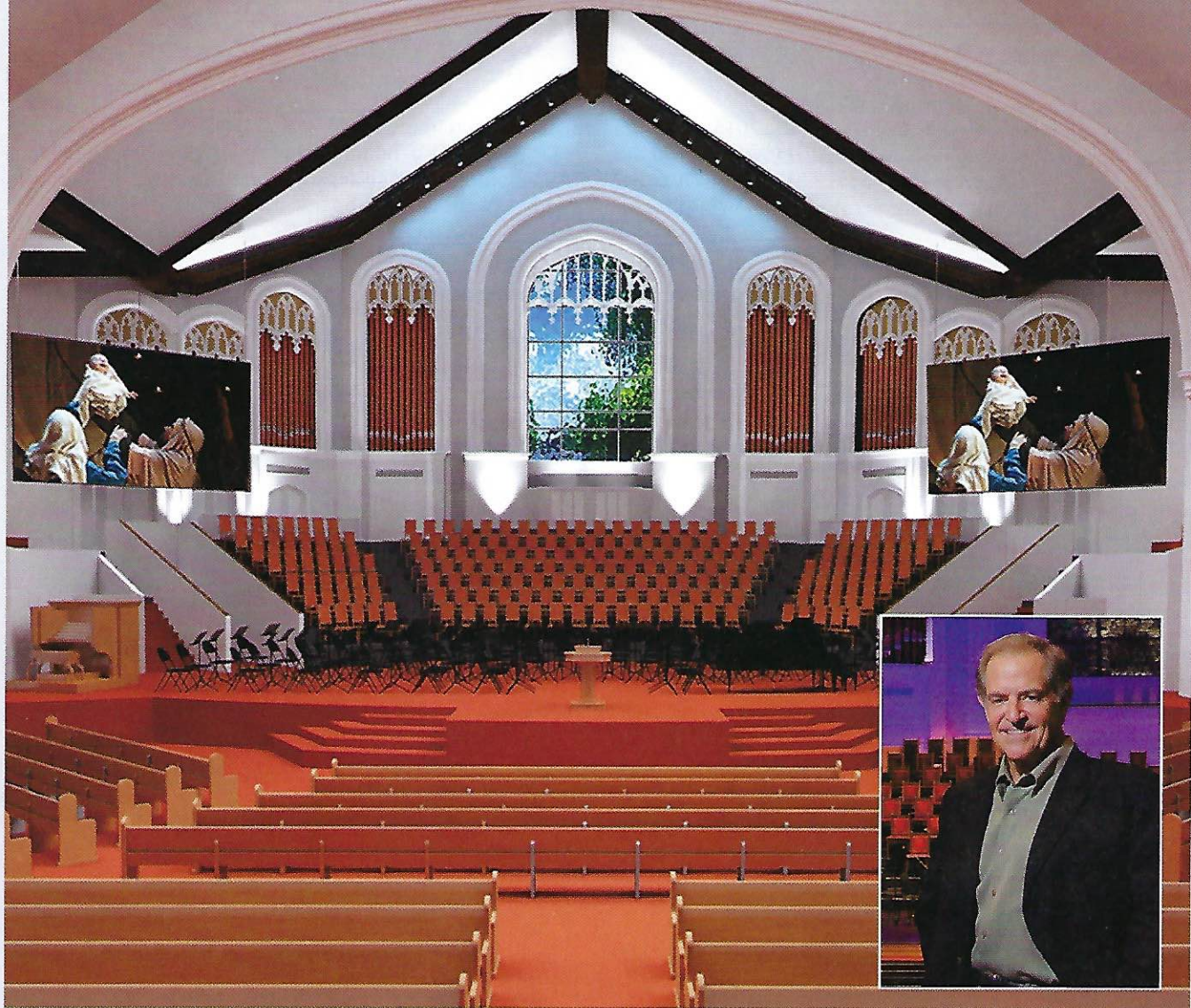
Robert, III, Rob and Mr. Bob Farr



Charles, III, Charles, Sr. and Chuck Barlow



Richard Dean



First Baptist Jackson Sanctuary

## Dean and Dean/Associates Architects

The oldest of the four, Dean and Dean, is celebrating its 70th anniversary this year. Charles H. Dean, Jr., a graduate of Tulane University, started his firm in 1949. His oldest son Richard remembers, "We were drawn to architecture for the same reasons: the ability to draw, a love for drawing and architectural history. He never pressured me to follow in his footsteps, but I wanted to be an architect for as far back as I can remember. When I graduated from architectural school at Auburn University, I wanted to go to Atlanta, but I was expected to return and join his firm. Looking back, I know that was the best decision for me to start my career. We worked well together until he retired in 1977. At that time, I became president and managing principal and have continued in that capacity ever since. In 2008, three principals became shareholders, and together we constitute the third generation of ownership."

In the late '60s early '70s, the father and son duo worked together on a wide variety of projects, most notably the Chapel of Memories at MSU, and numerous renovation projects at First Baptist Church, Jackson. The latter experiences

paved the way for Richard's selection as principal in charge of the 1980's major expansion/renovation at FBCJ. It was arguably the most complex renovation project done in the state (which Richard considers the most significant of his career) along with the Christian Life Center which followed in the early '90s. Over the past two years the firm has been engaged with upgrades to the sanctuary and throughout the facility.

When asked what character trait of his father he would most like to emulate, Richard responded, "Highly respected for his character, integrity, and honesty in his business dealings. I saw him put the client's needs above his gain. I have tried to follow his example and maintain that standard."

Fathers and sons can also be very different. "Mr. Charlie," as he was most often called, was quiet and introverted, an avid reader, an expert chess player (winning numerous trophies from competitions at Tulane and in New Orleans). Richard is outgoing and has always been a sports enthusiast. He actively participated in many sports when younger, and loves to play golf whenever possible.

Currently, the firm employs a talented staff of twenty-three: principals, architects, architectural/interior and graphic designers, construction administrators, business development and administrative staff.

## Barlow Eddy Jenkins, PA

"Number please," asked the phone operator in 1958.

The caller replies, "I'd like Fleetwood 5-8377." The call is connected.

"Barlow's Barbershop." Listening to the caller's request, Clarence Walter Barlow, replies, "You need to speak to someone about some building plans? That would be my son." Placing the phone down, he excuses himself from his customer and walks towards the storage room adjacent to the barbershop. Looking at his son, he states, "You've got a phone call."

It was humble beginnings for Charles Clarence Barlow, Sr., a graduate of Georgia Tech, and his co-partner, Connelly Plunkett. The storage room of his father's barbershop located on Capitol Street in downtown Jackson was not the usual place for an architectural firm. Eventually, they relocated, and it grew into one of the largest firms in Mississippi for more than twenty years. Now, some sixty-one years later, Charles Barlow, Jr. has followed in his father's career path and serves as the chief executive officer of the firm.

Charles, otherwise known as "Chuck," graduated with a Bachelor of Architecture degree from Mississippi State University. Next, he went to work in Boston. After a year, Chuck went overseas to attend graduate school at Cambridge University (1981-1983), with further study at Scroope Terrace. When asked why he returned to Jackson, he stated, "Lots of reasons: Mississippi is my home. It has a very unique and special culture, good-hearted, generous people, and opportunities to be the best place in America to live. I like being a small part of that."

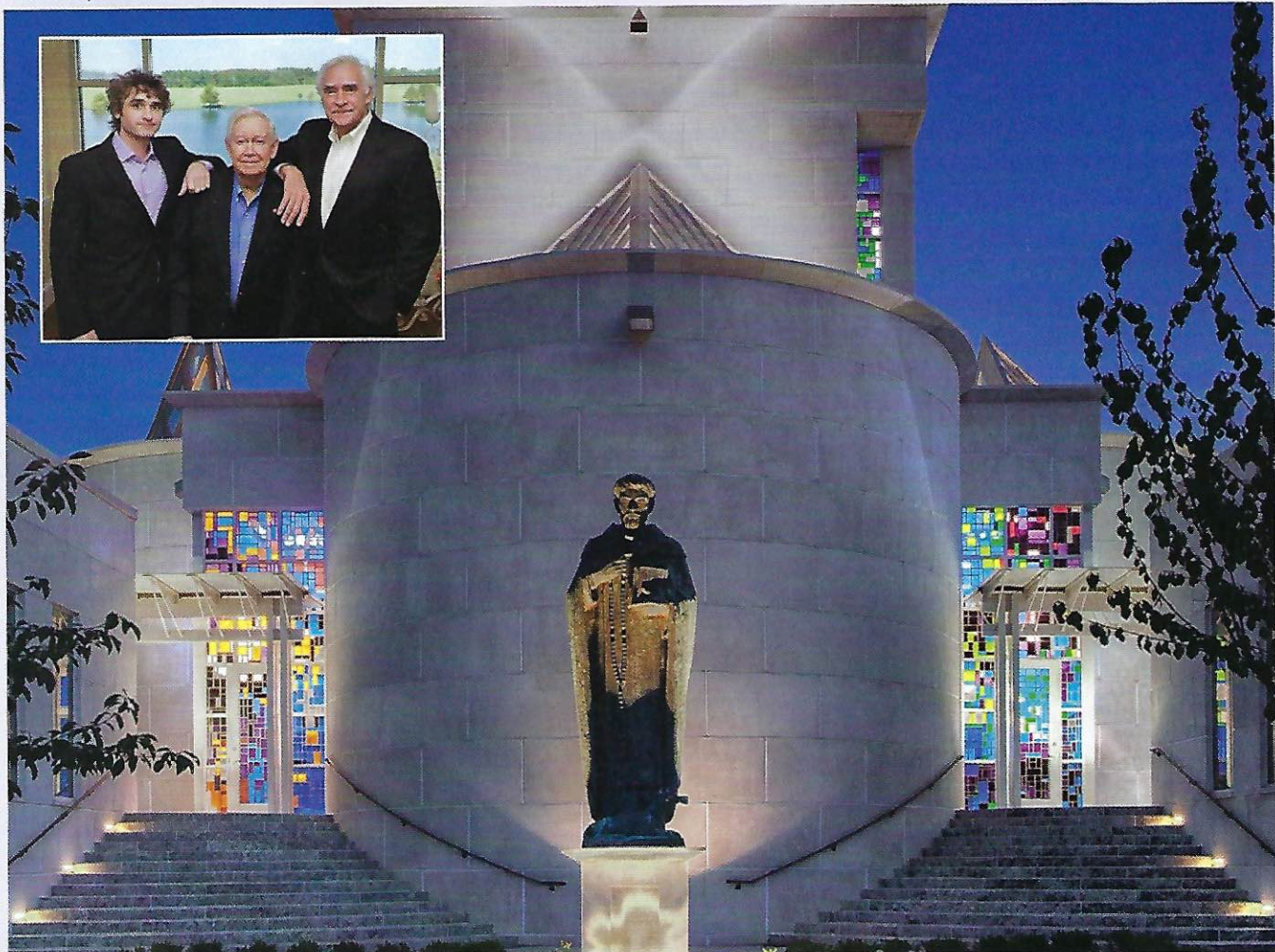
The Chapel at St. Dominic

It is in this culture that Charles, Sr., Chuck, and his son, Charles Barlow, III, have planted their roots, all choosing the same career, yet each offering their own unique and creative gift to a project. Chuck shares that some of the wisest advice he received from his father was regarding his son working with the firm. The words were, "Get out of the way and let him run!" Chuck states, "I'm enjoying the privilege of watching his skills grow and his talent develop. He is emerging in this field. None of us think alike, yet we complement each other."

Chuck continues, "My father has taught me many lessons about personal integrity and how to treat people. He influenced me in many ways, but his view of education is at the forefront. He would tell me life is unpredictable, and you can't anticipate everything that will happen to you. You can lose everything you have, but the one thing no tragic circumstance or person can ever take from you is your education. Part of education is traveling and exposure to places far beyond our home. He felt he owed it to us, making us better people. Those were important lessons. My wife Lena and I traveled extensively with our children. We have shared with them their grandfather's wisdom about many things, but the value of education is at the top of the list. What a gift!"

At the firm's foundation are two phrases. They are "enrich human experience" and "personal involvement." Originating with Charles Sr., the phrases describe his aspirations for his professional practice. Three generations later, they are still the bedrock.

Barlow Eddy Jenkins designed The Chapel at St. Dominics and the Stuart C. Irby Jr. Studios for the MSU College of Architecture, Art and Design, among many others. Both are AIA design award-winning projects.





St. Catherine's Village

## Cooke Douglass Farr Lemons Architects + Engineers PA

In an architectural firm, the principal architects have a reputation of being known as the big boys on the job. This title doesn't happen the moment you graduate from architecture school. It takes countless hours of learning, making numerous drawings, keeping up-to-date with the technology, and building relationships. You also could add the wisdom and guidance of a grandfather and father.

One of the principal architects of the firm known as Cooke Douglass Farr Lemons Architects + Engineers was Robert E. Farr (Mr. Bob), a graduate of the University of Michigan. He, along with engineers, Nelson Douglass PE and William (Bill) Cooke PE, started the firm in 1961. Now 58 years later, Mr. Bob has retired from active involvement in the firm, however, he still enjoys stepping into the office to check on everyone. Today, his son, Robert E. Farr, II, is a principal architect, as well as the president of the firm. And his son, Robert E. Farr, III, is an architect with this firm also. Three generations following the same career path!

"It was never expected in our family. Everyone was encouraged to follow his or her interests and passion. I saw it as a way to practice a creative endeavor, starting with sorting specification pages to model building. After looking at a career in art, it was clear that architecture offered the things I was looking for: strategy, design, expression, and a sense of fulfillment. I was doing something that mattered," states Robert II.

Upon graduation from the University of Arizona, Robert II returned to the firm because it was expanding, and it was an excellent fit for his development. Reflecting, Robert II says,

"My father gave me latitude and allowed me to develop my style and process. The ability to ask for advice and guidance was paramount in our relationship and development. I began designing from the start; there is no better way to learn than by doing. Additionally, because of the way he worked, we had no real challenges. Dad would let me do anything I thought I could and should; gentle guidance."

Robert III graduated from Southern Methodist University (BBA, BA), University of Mississippi (MBA) and The Georgia Institute of Technology (Masters in Architect). He joined the firm in May 2016. What were some of the reasons Robert III chose this career path? He replied, "Having grown up in an architecture family, being an architect would have been a natural direction. I'm motivated by creative problem-solving but did not want to assume that a career in architecture fulfills that demand. I intentionally set out to explore different avenues. In hindsight, it might have been more straight forward, but I feel my diverse experiences have led me to be a better architect."

"Additionally, following in my father and grandfather's footsteps was not expected. I am very thankful to have been allowed to make my own decisions and come into the profession on my own accord."

And what does Mr. Bob have to say about all of this? "I am very proud to have my son and grandson working for the company that I helped start. It all happened naturally, and I'm happy about the way it turned out."

All three have worked on projects for St. Catherine's Village. It has been a thirty-year effort towards creating a beautiful retirement community. "Recently, we have been honored to expand the services of the village together with Robert III. He has taken on a leadership role in research, design, and execution for the continued development of the village," proudly states Robert II.

## Wier Boerner Allin

Thomas J. Biggs of Jackson, commonly known as Tom, was honored by the American Institute of Architects (AIA) with the rank of "Fellow" at its 1963 convention held in Miami, Florida. A graduate of Georgia Tech, he was a principal in the firm of Biggs, Wier, Chandler, Neal, and Chastain, starting in 1946. His list of accomplishments and service are numerous. He was also very involved in the Mississippi Chapter of AIA, and he served as an adjunct professor at the beginning of the architecture degree program at Mississippi State University.

Some of his work which you might be familiar with is Covenant Presbyterian Church (1963-65); Museum of Art and Russel C. Davis Planetarium (1976-78). He may be best known for his design of St. Richard's Catholic Church (1966-67) at 1242 Lynwood Drive, Jackson. However, and most importantly, he was the grandfather of John M. Allin, III, who goes by the name Jack.

Growing up, Jack recalls fond memories spent with his grandfather. There was a time when Jack had an assignment for his high school Spanish class. Together they spent hours researching designs of Spanish towns. Then they designed and built a model of a Spanish city plaza for the course.

When Jack was an architectural student at Mississippi

State University, he would complete his "easy" project review for his professors. Then he would have his "hard" project review at the end of each semester on his grandfather's chopping. Sadly, Tom died before Jack graduated.

As a child, Jack remembers building elaborate structures out of wooden blocks. His mother has countless photographs of him on the floor with these block structures. He always said he wanted to be an architect.

Today, Jack is a principal with Wier Boerner Allin. He states, "I never knew my grandfather professionally, he was always "my grandfather" although he exuded being an architect. He lived it passionately his entire life. I hope to emulate this trait in my life, as well. Additionally, he had very high expectations of the work his office produced, another quality I hope to carry on."

Many people will use the phrase "like father, like son" when it comes to personality, ways of thinking, or career choices. Jack says when people have compared his work to his grandfather's, he takes it as an extremely high compliment. Furthermore, he often looks at Tom's work for inspiration.

The firm received The Merit Award from the AIA for the renovation and expansion completed for its office building at 2727 Old Canton Road. Another honor was the Sambo Mockbee Membership Award for its design on the Midtown Charter School located in Jackson. ◉

Dudy Noble Field at Mississippi State University

