Detail of the terra cotta frieze by sculptor Caspar Bubel, which surrounds the full, 1,200-foot-long perimeter of the National Building Museum.

Photo: © Maxwell MacKenzie
ARCHITECTURE IS THE UNIVERSAL ART, and construction the universal craft. Virtually all of humankind ultimately shares in the creation of the built environment in some way, whether by fabricating a rudimentary shelter or by developing a commercial office complex. The National Building Museum, then, is arguably the universal museum, dedicated to promoting a better understanding of the physical world that we create for ourselves, in all of its aspects.

Toward that end, the Museum pursues a rigorous schedule of exhibitions, education programs, and publications that appeal to people of diverse ages and backgrounds. During the 2005 fiscal year, which ran from October 1, 2004 through September 30, 2005, the Museum opened five new exhibitions, presented a series of informal, rotating exhibits in a special “Building Learners” gallery, and conducted hundreds of lectures, symposia, youth programs, and family festivals. A total of 329,705 visitors came to the Museum during the year, a majority of them from outside the Washington metropolitan area, and many of them from foreign countries. In addition, our website attracted a record-breaking 1,171,249 unique visitors, nearly double the number for the previous year. Once again, press coverage of Museum activities was voluminous, with newspaper, magazine, radio, and television stories about our exhibitions and programs reaching a potential audience of literally hundreds of millions of people.

The year was a strong one not only in programmatic terms, but also financially. The Museum’s total income during fiscal year 2005 was nearly $8.2 million, up 12 percent over that of the previous year. Contributed income remained the most important component of the institution’s revenue, amounting to over $4.5 million, reflecting a 17 percent increase over 2004. The popular and well-regarded Museum Shop continued to do well financially, bringing in more than $1 million in revenue.

As this exciting and successful fiscal year at the Museum was drawing to a close, we were shocked and saddened to learn of the devastation wreaked by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita on the Gulf Coast. Like the terrorist attacks of September 2001, these natural disasters served as tragic reminders of the deep emotional resonance with which buildings and communities are often imbued. In the aftermath of the hurricanes, the Museum began organizing an ongoing series of public programs to address the impact of the disasters on the built environment. This initiative continues, as does the Museum’s commitment to serve as the nation’s premier forum for the discussion of ideas and information about all facets of the world we build.

As always, we are grateful for the support of the many people, companies, and organizations that have made the Museum’s work possible. We encourage your involvement in our exciting upcoming activities and look forward to welcoming you back to the Museum frequently.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Schwenker Brody
Chair

Chase W. Rynd
President and Executive Director
Exhibitions

From the urban history of Washington, D.C., to the domestic culture of Japan, and from obscure drawing tools to avant garde designs for public spaces, the National Building Museum’s exhibitions for fiscal year 2005 spanned a broad range of subjects. Five new exhibitions opened during the year, while an additional gallery space was devoted to rotating shows based on the Museum’s youth programs. All told, these exhibitions offered something for everyone, from children to professionals in the design and building industries.

“Original drawings by Thomas Jefferson, Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Frank Gehry provide a rare and intimate view of America’s icons at work.”

— from an article in The Washington Post by Linda Hales regarding the exhibition Tools of the Imagination
Washington: Symbol and City

Opened October 9, 2004

The city of Washington is strongly associated not only with political power, but also with the American ideals of democracy and freedom. This heavy symbolic burden is nobly borne by the magnificent monuments that occupy the National Mall and other prominent sites throughout the capital. At the same time, however, Washington is a living, working community, where residents go about their daily business like so many other Americans. It is thus a city of dichotomies, of contrasts, and often, of conflicts, many of which are expressed—often clearly but sometimes quite subtly—in works of architecture and urban design.

Washington: Symbol and City is a long-term exhibition that examines the overlapping histories of the capital as an international icon and as a constantly evolving metropolis. Although based in part on a previous show of the same name that the Museum organized and presented from 1991 to 2001, the current exhibition offers a completely new treatment of the subject matter.

The exhibition begins with a section called “City of Intent,” devoted to the monumental core of Washington, featuring photographs, drawings, historic models, and newly commissioned touchable models that strikingly convey the grandeur for which the city is famous. “Evolving City” examines the neighborhoods, local institutions, and infrastructure that most visitors to the nation’s capital rarely see, but which are just as important in defining the city’s character. Finally, a section on the “Federal Presence” addresses the unique elements of the city that relate to its role as a capital, including embassies, museums, and memorials, as well as sites for protest and national celebration.

For tourists and locals alike, Washington: Symbol and City provides profound insights into the manifold forces that have made the nation’s capital the complex, imposing, and beautiful place that it is today.

Five Friends from Japan: Children in Japan Today

November 4, 2004–February 13, 2005

Five Friends from Japan: Children in Japan Today explored contemporary Japanese architecture and culture through the daily lives of five real-world children. The exhibition began with a replica of a typical Japanese elementary school classroom, which served as the setting for videotaped greetings from the “five friends.” From there, visitors ventured into re-creations of spaces in the children’s own homes, which featured more in-depth video narratives and interactive components, such as a music-listening station, designed to introduce specific aspects of Japanese culture.

Although conceived primarily for young audiences, the exhibition proved thought-provoking for adults. By exploring both the similarities and the differences between Japanese and American domestic environments, the show challenged stereotypes of Asian lifestyles and raised broader questions about what happens to distinct cultural traditions in an age of fluid exchanges of people, projects, and information across regional and national boundaries.

Five Friends from Japan was presented by the National Building Museum in partnership with the National Children’s Museum. Designed by the Capital Children’s Museum and the Children’s Museum, Boston, the exhibition was made possible by the Freeman Foundation and supported by the Association of Children’s Museums. Its presentation at the National Building Museum was made possible in part by The Japan-US Friendship Commission and Weyerhaeuser Company.
OPEN: new designs for public space
January 15–May 15, 2005

Around the world, many longstanding assumptions about the role of public space in communal life are now being reconsidered in the face of heightened security concerns, aging infrastructure, and various economic and social factors. In response to what some see as significant threats to the quality and integrity of the public realm, a number of talented architects and planners have produced ambitious schemes for new open spaces and improvements to existing public places, with an eye toward enhancing and strengthening the communities they serve.

The Van Alen Institute in New York City organized an exhibition called OPEN: new designs for public space, exploring some of these innovative designs. The featured projects included a new urban plaza in Melbourne, Australia, that provides a popular venue for recreation, cultural activities, and public gatherings, as well as a redesign of a faded commercial street in Macon, Georgia, which had fallen into disuse as businesses and residents left for the suburbs. Also featured were two projects in Latin America that served to weave together disparate and neglected neighborhoods through new networks of roads, bicycle paths, and pedestrian corridors.

In presenting this exhibition, the National Building Museum added a section describing several relevant local projects that had been recently proposed or were under construction. These included a new federal office building by architect Moshe Safdie, the design of which strives to address stringent security requirements while reinforcing the public streetscape, and a proposed plaza and collateral structures intended to establish a stronger connection between the currently isolated John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and the adjacent Foggy Bottom neighborhood.

Ellipsograph, made by John Farey, ca. 1813.
Courtesy of David and Renae Thompson

Tools of the Imagination
March 5 - October 10, 2005

Architects practicing today routinely employ sophisticated digital tools to develop and communicate complicated ideas. At the same time, most architects still own various hand drawing instruments, many of which would have been familiar to Thomas Jefferson when he designed Monticello and the original campus of the University of Virginia more than two centuries ago. From simple wooden pencils, to precisely crafted metal instruments such as compasses and ellipsographs, to highly complex computer programs, the tools that architects have used over time to convey their designs are often technologically fascinating and aesthetically intriguing in their own right.

Tools of the Imagination traced the development of such tools over the past 250 years, presenting archaic devices such as a volutor — a remarkably specialized implement invented to facilitate the drawing of the ornamental scrolls on Ionic column capitals — as well as some of the most current design and drafting software including CATIA and Autodesk Revit. Examples of original drawings, three-dimensional models, and digital renderings helped to convey the vital role that tools have played in helping architects to turn ideas into reality.

Jewish Washington: Scrapbook of an American Community
June 24, 2005 – July 4, 2006

The National Building Museum stands in an area now associated almost exclusively with governmental and institutional buildings. This was not always the case, however — for most of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Judiciary Square area was a diverse residential and commercial neighborhood with a rich ethnic identity. For many decades, in fact, it was one of the centers of Jewish life in Washington.

Jewish Washington: Scrapbook of an American Community was developed by the Jewish Historical Society of Greater Washington to shed light on some of the people and places that have been important in the history not just of one ethnic group, but of the nation’s capital in general. Organized chronologically, the exhibition used 1795 as a starting point, the year in which the city’s first known Jewish resident arrived, and then followed the community’s growth from a population of 200 at the time of the Civil War to more than 200,000 in the metropolitan area today. Photographs, videos, architectural artifacts, and personal mementos illustrated various milestones in the history of both Washington and modern Judaism. The content of this exhibition complemented that of the Museum’s ongoing show, Washington: Symbol and City.
Building Learners Gallery

The Building Learners Gallery provides a venue for the presentation of informal exhibitions based on the Museum’s school, family, and outreach education programs, along with occasional shows addressing other topics of interest to families. In fiscal year 2005, the Museum presented three exhibitions in this gallery.

Origami as Architecture (November 6, 2004 – March 27, 2005) was a showcase for works of origami, the Japanese art of paper folding, as well as architectural origami, a new art form inspired by the traditional technique and focused on the depiction of buildings. The display complemented the Museum’s exhibition Five Friends from Japan: Children in Japan Today.

Kids’ View of the City (May 7 – July 31, 2005) featured projects by local elementary students, who explored their schools’ neighborhoods and created models, drew pictures, took photographs, and wrote stories based on what they observed.

Investigating Where We Live (August 13 – October 9, 2005) presented the results of the Museum’s outreach program of the same name, in which students are taught to use photography as a vehicle for documenting and analyzing their neighborhoods.
Virtual Exhibitions

The National Building Museum’s website, www.nbm.org, features several virtual exhibitions, making some of the institution’s content available to those who cannot visit in person.

Building America was conceived as an exclusively online exhibition, providing a vehicle for Internet users to learn about various themes in the history of American architecture, engineering, and construction. The site allows visitors to view video clips and listen to audio recordings without having to download custom programs, and is accessible directly at www.building-america.org or through the Museum’s main site, www.nbm.org.

Also on the website are two virtual exhibitions developed to complement physical shows that were presented in the Museum’s galleries. Affordable Housing: Designing an American Asset demonstrates that low-cost housing need not be of low quality. It presents numerous examples of affordable developments that have been beautifully and successfully incorporated into existing communities. Another virtual exhibition, Liquid Stone: New Architecture in Concrete, presents nearly three dozen innovative projects from around the world in which the use of concrete is an essential aspect of the design. The site includes a virtual tour of the exhibition galleries, conveying a clear sense of the physical installation at the Museum, which was designed by the firm of Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects.
Traveling Exhibitions and Publications

A number of the exhibitions developed by the National Building Museum have traveled to other institutions around the country. Such tours are an important mechanism for disseminating ideas and information to broader audiences, while building awareness of the Museum and its mission.

During fiscal year 2005, the exhibition Affordable Housing: Designing an American Asset traveled to three venues: the University of Pennsylvania, in Philadelphia (March 19–May 31, 2005); the Museum of History and Industry, in Seattle (June 25–August 28, 2005); and The Lyceum, Partnership for Strong Communities, in Hartford, Connecticut (September 7–October 16, 2005).

Also in 2005, the National Building Museum and ULI—the Urban Land Institute co-published a book based on the Affordable Housing exhibition. The book is available through the National Building Museum shop and other sources.

The traveling version and associated tour of Affordable Housing: Designing an American Asset were made possible by generous grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Fannie Mae Foundation, and the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®.
Collection

The National Building Museum’s permanent collection comprises more than 110,000 items, including photographs, original drawings, and three-dimensional artifacts such as material samples, tools, and building remnants. The collection supports specific Museum exhibitions, and is accessible to scholarly researchers by appointment.

Among the most significant items in the collection are elements from buildings that are either listed on the National Register of Historic Places or designated as National Historic Landmarks, including a portion of the stamped sheet metal façade from an addition to the Z.C.M.I. department store in Salt Lake City, and a copper dormer surround from the former Andrew Carnegie Mansion in New York. Other important items include the extraordinary archives of the Wurts Brothers and the Stewart Brothers architectural photography firms, along with drawings from the Northwestern Terra Cotta Company, which produced material for thousands of commercial and public structures in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.
Lectures, tours, hands-on demonstrations, and other educational activities expand upon the issues raised in the National Building Museum’s exhibitions and address a wide range of other mission-related topics. During fiscal year 2005, a total of 71,297 adults and children participated in education programs at the Museum.

“[The students] are extremely bright. They just kind of gradually blossomed. It is like opening the floodgates to use their creative skills.”

— Daniel Shapiro, volunteer mentor for CityVision program
Spotlight on Design

Spotlight on Design is the Museum’s most popular lecture series, attracting distinguished architects, landscape architects, and other designers from around the globe. Lecturers in fiscal year 2005 included Charles Gwathmey of New York, Enrique Norten of Mexico City, landscape architect Walter Hood of Oakland, California, and local architect Robert M. Gurney, who has received many prestigious awards for his residential projects. One extraordinary program in the series involved three of the partners in the firm Polshek Partnership, providing unusual insights into the nature of their collaborative practice.

The 2005 Spotlight on Design series was sponsored by Lafarge North America, the leading building materials company in the United States and Canada.

Building for the 21st Century

Building for the 21st Century is a lunchtime lecture series examining emerging construction technologies and techniques, with an emphasis on economy and energy-efficiency. The roster of programs for the 2005 fiscal year included a presentation on Swedish and Japanese innovations in prefabricated housing, and a lecture by the principals of KieranTimberlake Associates, an architecture firm known for its research into, and application of, new building materials and methods.

The 2005 Building for the 21st Century series was sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy.
A large audience assembles in the Great Hall to hear one of the Museum’s lecture programs. Photo by F.T. Eyre

Craig B. Smith, author of How the Great Pyramid Was Built, pictured at the site of his subject. Photo courtesy of the author

**Smart Growth**

The Smart Growth lectures explore development strategies aimed at enhancing the quality of life in American cities and suburbs while also protecting the natural environment. Among the speakers for fiscal year 2005 was Dhiru Thadani, an architect and planner who discussed the integration of college buildings and campuses into their host communities, to the mutual benefit of “town” and “gown.”

The Smart Growth series for fiscal year 2005 was presented in association with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Smart Growth Network.

**D.C. Builds**

The D.C. Builds lecture series examines design, planning, and public policy issues in Washington and the surrounding region. Programs in fiscal year 2005 included a discussion of managed growth in the Washington metropolitan area and a presentation about the vast and complicated Woodrow Wilson Bridge project, now under construction over the Potomac River.

The D.C. Builds lecture series for fiscal year 2005 was supported by Forest City Washington.

**Other Lectures and Seminars**

In addition to the ongoing series described above, the Museum frequently presents “one-off” public programs addressing historical topics and contemporary issues. Examples from the past fiscal year include a lecture by the author of Louis I. Kahn: Building Art, Building Science, who traced the master architect’s influence on the “high-tech” school in the 1970s and ’80s, and a revealing presentation about the rivalry between the great Italian Renaissance architects Gianlorenzo Bernini and Francesco Borromini, whose brilliant designs transformed the character of Rome. Also offered were a lecture by an engineer who has used sophisticated computer technologies to investigate the construction of the Great Pyramid at Giza, and an astonishing presentation by Chris Luebkeman, director of global foresight and innovation for the engineering firm of ARUP, who encouraged the audience to imagine exciting new possibilities for the future of design and construction.

The Museum periodically presents major symposia addressing complex issues in great depth, such as one conducted in cooperation with the Sustainable Buildings Industry Council on “green” building guidelines for home builders, architects, and remodelers. Another symposium about privately developed open spaces was cosponsored by the American Planning Association.
Construction Watch Tours

Construction Watch Tours are an exclusive benefit of Museum membership, providing behind-the-scenes glimpses into the design and construction of major new buildings. During fiscal year 2005, members visited the construction sites of the new Woolly Mammoth Theatre, the Katzen Arts Center at American University, the District of Columbia’s Unified Communications Center, and a 255-unit residential project at the charmingly eclectic National Park Seminary compound in Silver Spring, Maryland, among others. The series also included visits to local architects’ offices, as well as to several buildings undergoing restoration, such as the lavishly elegant Turkish Ambassador’s Residence on Washington’s Embassy Row, and Benjamin Latrobe’s historic basilica in Baltimore.

Films

In anticipation of its upcoming 25th anniversary (celebrated in fiscal year 2006), the Museum organized the first Reel Architecture Film Series, offering 16 movies free of charge during the festival’s opening weekend and then on a series of weekday evenings during the summer of 2005. The films were selected with an eye toward various themes raised in the Museum’s current and past exhibitions—for example, the 1967 comedy classic How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying, in its depiction of the post-World War II corporate office environment, evoked the content of the popular exhibition On the Job: Design and the American Office, which was presented in 2001. Local bands performed before the weekly films, providing entertainment as audience members enjoyed picnic dinners in the Museum’s Great Hall.

The Museum also presented numerous individual films throughout the year on topics ranging from Japanese gardens to the “Government Girls” who moved to Washington during World War II and helped change the character of the city. In conjunction with the annual D.C. Environmental Film Festival, the Museum screened two movies, one of which traced the precarious condition of Venice, Italy, and was followed by a discussion with the filmmakers.
Family Programs

Families constitute an important—and growing—audience for the National Building Museum, which offers numerous family-oriented programs throughout the year. On weekends, for instance, visitors may participate in regularly scheduled interactive “Discovery Cart” demonstrations. Bridging the Gap engages adults and children in a problem-solving exercise to determine which type of bridge structure would be most appropriate to span a given site. Another Discovery Cart, called Arches and Trusses: The Tension Builds, encourages visitors to test the properties of various materials and then to apply what they have learned to build basic structural forms.

Custom family programs offered on weekends during fiscal year 2005 included workshops for creating holiday ornaments depicting prominent Washington buildings, and making “haunted houses” for Halloween. In conjunction with the exhibition Five Friends from Japan: Children in Japan Today, the Museum collaborated with the National Children’s Museum to offer numerous programs, including the Five Friends Family Day celebrating the opening of the exhibition and attracting over 1,300 visitors. Other programs complementing the exhibition were a Japanese New Year’s Celebration, Calligraphy Creations, which explored the artistry of Japanese calligraphy, and Taketombo, a program in which participants created their own flying toys. The Museum also worked with the Washington Ballet to offer Artful Architecture, a day during which 638 family visitors viewed selections from the company’s new Nutcracker ballet and designed architecturally inspired hats.

Several activity booklets, geared toward children ages 6 to 13, are available free to visitors at the Museum information desk. These booklets introduce engineering and architecture concepts using the Museum’s historic home and other Washington landmarks as case studies.

Zoom™ into Engineering Family Festival

The annual Zoom™ into Engineering Family Festival took place in February 2005, attracting 6,966 enthusiastic and inquisitive participants. Visitors had a chance to meet cast members from the popular PBS television series ZOOM™, and took part in numerous hands-on activities designed to enhance their understanding of the many distinct types of work that engineers do.

The event was sponsored by The National Engineers Week Foundation with major support provided by IEEE-USA, and additional funding from ASME and B&K.

Festival of the Building Arts

One of the National Building Museum’s most popular ongoing programs is the Festival of the Building Arts, which in 2005 drew 3,265 people, including 348 scouts and their leaders. Children and parents alike enjoyed dozens of activities and demonstrations by master craftspeople, including carpenters, roofers, plumbers, stonemasons, bricklayers, and woodworkers. A perennial favorite, the construction equipment “petting zoo,” allowed kids to clamber into the cabs of earth movers, concrete mixers, and other large vehicles used in major building projects.

The 2005 festival was presented by The Associated General Contractors of America.
School and Summer Programs

Every year the Museum offers interactive, curriculum-based programs for elementary, middle, and high school groups, in which young people take part in activities such as constructing a one-room house in the Great Hall, assembling a geodesic dome, or planning and creating a model city. These programs develop students’ analytical, problem-solving, and teamwork skills as they use the design process to solve building challenges. Participating teachers receive comprehensive resource packets including pre- and post-visit classroom activities, bibliographies, and related reference material. A Teacher Advisory Board, comprising ten public and private school teachers from the Washington area, meets quarterly to offer feedback and guidance on these programs.

During the 2004–05 academic year the Museum offered ten different types of school programs, with a total of 767 individual programs drawing nearly 23,000 students and teachers—a record-setting number reflecting a 10 percent increase over the previous year. Nearly one-fifth of the programs were conducted for groups from Federal Title I schools serving low-income communities.

As part of an effort to expand the reach of its educational activities to a more national audience, the Museum developed the self-contained Bridge Basics Program Kit, based on a program offered in house for many years. The kit is available to teachers across the country, who may conduct the activity independently in their own classrooms.

In addition to school programs, the Museum offered six different summer programs for school-aged children. These hands-on programs focused on teambuilding and cooperation and served 1,929 young people and chaperones through 76 individual programs.

School Programs received generous support from The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, The Clark Charitable Foundation, Clark-Winchcole Foundation, the Construction Industry Round Table, the Bender Foundation, Hattie M. Strong Foundation, Sunrise Foundation, and the Turner Construction Company.
Scout Programs
The Museum offers fun and engaging programs for Cub Scouts and Girl Scouts. These programs also help scouts fulfill many requirements for activity badges. During the 2004-05 academic year, the Museum conducted 74 programs for more than 1,700 scouts and chaperones.

Birthday Parties
Parents seeking a special experience may arrange for birthday parties at the National Building Museum for children ages three to eleven. Museum teachers take the children on an investigative tour of the historic building, lead them through a construction project, and provide space for a birthday celebration. In the 2005 fiscal year, more than 1,400 guests celebrated their birthdays at the Museum.

CityVision
CityVision is a longstanding Museum program that teaches at-risk middle and junior high school students to think creatively and positively about their communities. Each semester, students from public, inner-city middle and junior high schools in the District of Columbia learn urban planning principles in study sessions at the Museum, complemented by organized neighborhood expeditions. The participants identify urban problems, develop design-based solutions, and then present their ideas to an audience of students, teachers, administrators, and family members.

Investigating Where We Live
Investigating Where We Live is an intensive summer program that teaches teenagers to use photography as a tool for documenting and interpreting local urban neighborhoods. In 2005, participants explored the Anacostia area, the Washington Navy Yard, and the New York Avenue corridor. At the conclusion of the documentation phase, the students developed an exhibition of their work, which was presented in the Building Learners Gallery.

Design Apprenticeship Program
The Design Apprenticeship Program, informally known as the DAP Squad, gives teenage students an opportunity to develop their design skills and then to turn their ideas into reality. The focus of the program for fall 2004 was a project complementing the exhibition Five Friends from Japan: Children in Japan Today, while in the spring of 2005, the students pursued a project based on the exhibition Tools of the Imagination.

Outreach Programs received generous support from the Freddie Mac Foundation, The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities and the National Endowment for the Arts, The McGraw-Hill Companies, Mead Family Foundation, Bank of America, Bloomberg, The Beech Street Foundation, The Clark Charitable Foundation, Clark-Winchcole Foundation, Fannie Mae Foundation, the History Channel Save Our History Grant Program, Hearst Endowment for CityVision, the Dimick Foundation, and Forest City Enterprises.
The Vincent Scully Prize

Named after famous architectural historian Vincent J. Scully, the Scully Prize was inaugurated in 1999 to recognize outstanding contributions to the understanding of architecture, planning, preservation, and design through writing, research, or scholarship. The fifth prize was presented in January 2005 to His Highness The Aga Khan, who has devoted much of his life to promoting design excellence, urban revitalization, and historic preservation throughout the Muslim world. The Aga Khan is perhaps best known in architectural circles for his eponymous awards program, which has called attention to projects that simultaneously reflect Muslim culture and accommodate the needs of modern societies. His Highness graciously donated the $25,000 cash prize that accompanies the Scully Prize to several American universities.

The Henry C. Turner Prize for Innovation in Construction Technology

The Turner Prize is presented for outstanding contributions to the advancement of construction technology, and was named after the founder of the Turner Construction Company, which also generously endowed the $25,000 prize. The 2005 award went to the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), in recognition of the organization’s efforts to advance the cause of environment-conscious design through the promulgation of standards and information. The USGBC was the fourth winner of the prize, and the first institutional recipient, following in the footsteps of engineer Leslie Robertson, architect I.M. Pei, and Charles DeBenedittis, director of design and construction at Tishman Speyer Properties.
Visitor Services

Visitors explore the merchandise in the Museum Shop.
Photo by F.T. Eyre

“Never thought I would enjoy a building museum but this has been fascinating and I’ve learned a lot. And this is the best gift shop in town!”

— Anonymous visitor, in Museum comment book
**Museum Shop**

The renowned Museum Shop continues to be one of the most popular stores of its kind in Washington. The shop offers an unparalleled assortment of merchandise, including books on a wide variety of topics, beautifully designed housewares, jewelry, and a range of cleverly conceived toys that challenge children’s imaginations. Special items relating to specific exhibitions complement a core of standard material that draws regular shoppers time and time again. For those unable to visit the shop in person, many items are available online through the Museum website at [www.nbm.org](http://www.nbm.org).

**Website and NBM Online**

Drawing more than one million visitors for the first time in fiscal year 2005, the Museum’s website is an important vehicle for disseminating the content of exhibitions and programs. In addition to general Museum information, online exhibitions, and summaries of lectures, the website offers online registration for public programs and other events, as well as shopping for merchandise from the Museum Shop.

The Museum produces an electronic newsletter called NBM Online, which keeps subscribers up to date on education programs, exhibition openings, new products in the Museum Shop, and other news. NBM Online is currently distributed to more than 15,000 subscribers each month.

**Museum Café**

The Museum’s small café is a popular place for a snack, for lunch, or just a cup of coffee between visits to exhibitions. Patrons enjoy their food and drinks at tables set up in the gloriously spacious Great Hall.

**Volunteers and Interns**

The National Building Museum relies on the efforts of many dedicated volunteers who assist with critical tasks. During fiscal year 2005, volunteer docents led 12,362 people on tours of exhibitions and the building itself. Other volunteers staffed the information desk and registration tables for lectures, assisted in the Museum Shop, and conducted demonstrations for such programs as the Bridging the Gap exercise, in which visitors learn about the principles of bridge construction. A Volunteer Advisory Board assists in evaluating the activities of volunteers and arranging special enrichment activities.

The Museum also welcomes a number of interns each year, who lend assistance in all departments, supporting curators with exhibition research, helping with membership and marketing campaigns, and assisting with education programs. A total of 185 volunteers and interns provided nearly 11,200 hours of service during the fiscal year.
The National Building Museum is a private, nonprofit institution, and therefore depends on contributions from corporations, individuals, associations, and foundations in order to fund its exhibitions and programs. In fiscal year 2005, contributed income totaled $4,507,294. The Board of Trustees and staff are extremely grateful to all who provided financial support to the Museum during the year.

Development

The 2005 Honor Award gala filled the central court of the Great Hall.

Photo by Alex Lorman
Membership

Members are the backbone of the Museum. Numbering nearly 5,000 at the end of the fiscal year, members enjoy a variety of direct benefits, including discounts in the Museum Shop, invitations to private exhibition viewings, and subscriptions to Blueprints and the monthly Calendar of Events. Individuals who contribute $100 or more annually belong to a special group known as The Builders, whose generosity helps to support vital Museum activities. Corporations and other businesses may join as members of The Professional Circle, which entitles their employees to many individual benefits, in addition to the public recognition that the contributing firm receives.

The Corinthians

The Corinthians are individual and corporate donors who contribute $1,000 or more in unrestricted funds each year. Major gifts such as these are a critical component of the institution’s operating budget. Corinthians enjoy many special opportunities, including invitations to private receptions, use of the Museum’s Corinthian Lounge for small meetings and events, and larger discounts in the Museum Shop. In 2005, a number of Corinthians attended exclusive receptions and dinners with guest speakers such as Tod Williams and Billie Tsien, Charles Gwathmey, and Steven Holl.

The Honor Award

The Honor Award for 2005 was presented to Forest City Enterprises, a national real estate development firm that, impressively, has been run by the same family since its founding in 1921. Forest City was recognized for its long track record of transformative investment in America’s cities, its dedication to sensitive planning and sustainable development, and its commitment to the provision of affordable housing in projects across the country. The award gala drew nearly 900 guests and raised $1 million for the Museum’s education and exhibition programs.

Restricted Funding

Most exhibitions, many education activities, and endowed prizes at the Museum are supported by contributions given expressly for those projects. Such “restricted” funding is an important complement to the operating funds that cover most day-to-day programming. In fiscal year 2005, the Museum raised almost $18 million in restricted funds.

Planned Giving

Planned or estate gifts offer opportunities for Museum members and friends to create a legacy. Detailed information about planned giving is available from the Development Department.
The following donors made gifts or pledges of $100 or more during the 2005 fiscal year (October 1, 2004 through September 30, 2005). While space limitations do not permit listing gifts of less than this amount, the Museum extends its sincere thanks to all donors.
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The Museum’s total revenue for fiscal year 2005 was $8,195,673, a 12 percent increase over 2004. The growth occurred across virtually all of the Museum’s income streams. Contributed revenue and services, which included both restricted and unrestricted gifts and accounted for over half of the museum’s total revenue, totaled $4,507,294, an increase of $736,767. Earned income from the Museum Shop, Great Hall rentals, and other sources totaled $3,688,379, an increase of $134,813.

Expenses for the fiscal year totaled $7,199,004, the vast majority of which went directly toward exhibitions, educational activities, and other programming. The change in net assets between the end of fiscal year 2004 and the end of fiscal year 2005 was $996,669.

The National Building Museum is a nonprofit educational institution as designated under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. This financial report is based on an independently audited financial statement. For a copy of the complete financial statement, please write to: Accounting Department, National Building Museum, 401 F Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001, or call 202.272.2448.

Chase W. Rynd
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National Building Museum
### Statement of Changes in Net Assets

#### Year Ended September 30, 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Unrestricted</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>Permanently Restricted</th>
<th>2005 Total</th>
<th>2004 Total</th>
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<td>683,837</td>
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<td>7,568</td>
<td>996,669</td>
<td>(1,457,238)</td>
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The Great Hall during the Festival of the Building Arts.

Photo by F.T. Eye
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