

CONSTRUCTION BEGINS MONDAY ALL OBSTACLES OVERCOME AMERICA WILL HAVE
BEAUTIFUL AALTO

CONSTRUCTION
BEGINS MONDAY
ALL OBSTACLES
OVERCOME
AMERICA WILL
HAVE BEAUTIFUL
AALTO

Edited by Hope Svenson

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FOREWORD

This book publishes correspondence between the Finnish architect Alvar Aalto and the monks of Mount Angel Abbey in Oregon, where Aalto designed the abbey's library building. Tracing the back story of the library, it reproduces letters, telegrams, memos, and ephemera from 1963 to the building's completion in 1970. Rather than represent the building or its architect in monographic fashion, this book uses primary documents to chart the course of this architectural commission in order to investigate the social relations and global conditions that made the building possible. The kernel of this project is my use of an epistolary archive to propose an alternative architectural history that investigates a building outside of the conventions of graphic and biographic representation, setting aside formal and typological analysis in favor of a research methodology that focuses on a building's provenance—its origins and its placement in space and time. Attending to a cultural imperative to understand place, this book uses the archive as a starting point to approach the question: Why is there a library designed by Alvar Aalto at a Benedictine monastery in rural Oregon?

The letters situate us squarely in the province of men, specifically within a patriarchal continuum that has produced and reproduced Euro-American culture for centuries. The letter-writers in this narrative of architectural production besides Alvar Aalto are Father Barnabas Reasoner, the library director at Mount Angel Abbey; Erik Vartiainen, a Finnish-American architect and Aalto's U.S. liaison; Vernon DeMars, an architect and urban planner at UC Berkeley, and a personal friend of Aalto's since teaching together at Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the 1940s; and Kaarlo Leppänen, chief architect in the Aalto architectural office in Helsinki. These men, and the varying positions of status and privilege that they represent, propel the narrative toward its culmination, the construction and dedication of the Mount Angel library building.

Centered around the archive of letters, this project ultimately requires a widening orbit of discursive terrain in order to understand the library building beyond master narratives, formal or phenomenological analyses, and center/periphery tropes, all of which serve to reinscribe the customary modes of architectural discourse. The aim of this book is no less than to confront critically the reigning social conditions and infrastructures of power that produce the built environment as we know it. This book seeks to unfold, through the archival case study of the Aalto/Mount Angel letters, how the convergence of global forces of settler colonialism, racial capitalism, and expansionist Catholicism manifested the Mount Angel Abbey library building. The objective here is not to individualize the violence of genocide and dispossession, but rather to begin to unravel the tightly woven tales that are told about manifest destiny, religious authority, and architectural mastery. The narrative arc of the letters transcends the personal and is instead rooted in the deeply embedded western masculine ambitions for possession, for redemption, and for perpetuity.

Alvar
6.5.63
Apr. 6.5.63
23

Mount Angel Abbey
Library
Saint Benedict, Oregon

March 22d, 1963

Mr Alvar Aalto
Munkkiniemi, Rihitie xx,
Helsinki, Finland.

Dear Mr Aalto,

Please accept our congratulations upon your reception of the Gold Medal Award of the A.I.A.

We have been looking for an architect for our new library building. We noticed an article in the Architectural Forum depicting some of your beautiful buildings. We think that you can help us with our problem.

We must build a library of approximately 25,000 square ft. of floor space. It must be centrally located on a mount which is already fast losing its commanding view.

The building must be a statement of 20th century Benedictine Monasticism. Benedictine libraries have been the glory of the order. Our monastery is committed to the training of priests for the Northwestern United States.

We have a real need to express the relavency of 20th century monasticism. Our new library with its planned collection for the future must be a modern building for the future without losing its historical roots in the past.

We would be greatly honored if you would be able to help us with our problem. It is estimated that the cost of this project will be roughly \$500,000.00. We are faced with other architectural problems at present. We are faced with a building program of \$2,000,000. If you would be interested in helping us please let us know.

The project promises to be a very interesting one.

Sincerely,
Father Barnabas
Father Barnabas,
Librarian

Alvar Aalto

**Architect
Munkkiniemi
HELSINKI
Telephone: 48 01 23
Cable: ALVARAA**

May 6, 1963

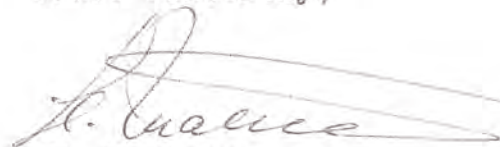
Father Barnabas,
Librarian
Mount Angel Abbey
Saint Benedict
O r e g o n

Dear Father Barnabas:

On behalf of Mr. Alvar Aalto I thank you for your kind letter of March 22, 1963 which reached us only today, due to a month postal strike.

I have forwarded your letter to Mr. Aalto who at present is in the United States.

Yours sincerely,



H. Mattson
Secretary to Mr. Aalto

Alvar Aalto

**Architect
Munkkiniemi
HELSINKI
Telephone: 48 01 23
Cable: ALVARAA**

May 28, 1963

Father Barnabas, Librarian
Mount Angel Abbey
Saint Benedict
O r e g o n

Dear Father Barnabas,

I have now returned from my journey to America and I thank you for your kind letter of March 22, 1963.

I have been thinking over your offer about projecting a new library and, although my time is very limited because of all the official buildings I have under construction, I am very interested in your suggestion as libraries are my favourite projects.

There is still something to notice, first of all the time. What time should the first preliminary project have to be ready and what time do you plan to start the construction?

An other question is my necessary associate among american architects. This last problem could easily be arranged with an architect friend of mine from the States on the West coast or probably a young architect who has been practising in my studio.

Could you please send me a plan of the site and perhaps some photographs of the surroundings.

Yours sincerely,



11

Mount Angel Abbey
Library
Saint Benedict, Oregon

June 5, 1963

Mr Alvar Aalto
Munkkiniemi, Helsinki

Dear Mr Aalto:

Your letter has given us new hope for our library building program. Father Abbot, who has the final word in these matters, is away in the East (Midwest) giving a series of retreats to monastic communities. He will return next week. I will present your letter to him and get his final word on the matter of the date for construction.

I have arranged for some photographs. We will get the air-views this next week.

The location of the building is not yet determined. I have been trying to keep an open mind on the subject in the hope that we might have some professional advice on the matter. We have what has been generally referred to as the most beautiful monastic site in the U.S. The placing of future buildings could easily jeopardize our view or box in the hill top. We are 370 feet above the floor of the valley. We have the Coastal Range to the West and the Cascade range to the East and North. On a clear day we can see four perennially snow covered mountains with Mt Hood, elevation 11,000 ft., in the foreground to the Northeast.

Perhaps you could help us to choose the best site for the library. Both the South and the North side of the hill have possibilities.

I am sure that with your international reputation and the many honors heaped upon you, Father Abbot's first reaction will be that the architectural fee might be beyond us. Would you please give us an indication or general idea of your usual fee?

The bell is ringing for Matins. Please excuse this abrupt closing.

Sincerely,

Fr Barnabas
Fr. Barnabas Reasoner, O.S.B.
Librarian.

15.7.63
Apr. 18. 63

Mount Angel Abbey
Library

Saint Benedict, Oregon

July 9th, 1963

Mr Alvar Aalto
Architect,
Munkkiniemi, Helsinki

Dear Mr Aalto:

It has now been a month since I last wrote to you. You must think that we are rather indifferent about our library building in delaying so long. Monasteries have a sometimes annoying habit of being busy places even in the summer.

I finally have the photographs for which you asked. I did the color printing myself so you must forgive the slight off-color balance. The black and white over views will help you to identify our existing buildings. The small color pictures will show the elevation. The day was not as clear as I had hoped it would be.

When the Abbot returned home I was away. He said to tell you that we would like to begin the project as soon as possible. I think that we should have the building as soon as sound and careful planning will permit. We try to operate more in the spirit of informal family living rather than as a business corporation. This is not always possible of course. In this case, however, we are under no greater immediate pressure than overcrowded library facilities. This is a great disadvantage and detriment to our work.

I must admit that I took these pictures in the hope that you might see great possibilities for a library building in a beautiful natural setting. We don't like pretensions but we do have great hopes for the future as the Catholic Cultural center of the Northwest.

We are under no illusions as to the merit, architecturally, of our present buildings. Our planning too has been somewhat haphazard. We need and desire some master planning for future units. The near future will face us with a new wing to the monastery (at least additional living quarters for the monks) and a separate complete complex of buildings for the High-school unit of the seminary.

We would be very gratified if you could see your way clear to examine the situation personally. If this is not possible we must be content with the next best.

I am inclosing a folder on the Abbey, two B&W photos, four color photos.

Sincerely,

f. Bannabas

Fr Barnabas Reasoner, O.S.B.
Librarian.

Air view East



As of now this seems to me to be the best site. It is near both seminaries. The North view with its four snow covered Mts. is generally considered our best. No decision has been made pending further suggestion of Mr Aalto.

Air view North
(Haze obscures Mts visible on clear day)





Alvar Aalto

**Architect
Munkkiniemi
HELSINKI
Telephone: 480123
Cable: ALVARAA**

August 1st, 1963

Father Barnabas, Librarian
Mount Angel Abbey
Saint Benedict
O r e g o n

Dear Father Barnabas,

Thank you for your kind letter with enclosed folder on the Abbey, two B&W photos and four colorphotos which give me a good picture of the surroundings and of your organisation.

In your previous letter you say that you are afraid that my architectural fee might be too high for you because of the A.I.A. Gold Medal and the many other honors I have received. I would like to tell you that all this will not change my fees regarding a library for the Mount Angel Abbey.

I think a proper fee in the Finnish scale would be the best and I will write you later more exactly about this matter when I return from a short vacation I am going to take now.

I have in my studio an American Architect who has been working with me for a year and who will be returning to the States (Oregon) September next. He could do the supervising of the building as he knows my methods and has my authority.

Continued...

Continued...

I would do the projects here and my "American" assistant would do the supervising and the bureaucratic side of the work.

I will anyhow have to go to U.S.A. because of the building I am doing for the U.N. It will then be easy to make a trip to Oregon for further discussions.

Would you please, for this purpose, send me as soon as possible a program just to give me an idea how you would like to have the library.

I have met many friends of your organisation and have heard much good.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Albert Einstein". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name.

Sept. 10.10.63

Mount Angel Abbey
Library
Saint Benedict, Oregon

September 23d, 1963

Mr Alvar Aalto
Munkkiniemi, Helsinki
Finland

Dear Mr Aalto:

We are inclosing a brief program to give you an idea of what we hope for in our library building. I hope this delay in forwarding this short statement has not caused you any inconvenience.

I have tried to present our needs as concisely as possible. The basis for the square footage estimate has in most cases been taken from professional literature on the subject. Most librarians will admit, however, that the norms they use are rules of thumb rather than ironclad engineering principles. If you have reason to question the estimated square footage requirements we will be happy to explain the rule of thumb involved.

The question of the building site itself is still open. We hope you will be able to help us in this matter. Future buildings will also require some thought if we are to use our location to best advantage.

Thank you for your kind assurance in regard to your fee for the building. We have great need of your talent to do justice to our building site and the magnificent view.

When will you be coming to America again? We look forward to your visit. I'm sure you will not be disappointed with this setting for one of your buildings.

Sincerely,
Father Barnabas
Father Barnabas
Librarian.

Alvar Aalto

**Architect
Munkkiniemi
HELSINKI
Telephone: 480123
Cable: ALVARAA**

October 10, 1963

Father Barnabas,
Librarian
Mount Angel Abbey
Saint Benedict
O r e g o n

Dear Father Barnabas:

On behalf of Mr. Alvar Aalto I thank you for your letter of September 23, 1963 with enclosed program.

Mr. Aalto, who at present is on vacation abroad, has instructed me to tell you that the program was satisfactory and that he will send you a lay-out after he has returned.

Mr. Aalto will then also inform you about his coming to Oregon.

Sincerely yours,



H. Mattson
Secretary to Mr. Aalto

Alvar Aalto

**Architect
Munkkiniemi
HELSINKI
Telephone: 480123
Cable: ALVARAA**

November 11, 1963

Father Barnabas Reasoner O.S.B.
Librarian
Mount Angel Abbey
Saint Benedict, Oregon

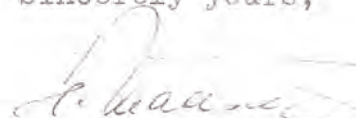
Dear Father Barnabas:

Mr. Aalto has now returned from his vacation and has instructed me to inform you that he is going to do the lay-out which will be sent to you when ready.

After having got your approval Mr. Aalto will inform you about his coming to Oregon.

With kindest regards from Mr. Aalto, I am

sincerely yours,



H. Mattson
Secretary

2/10.2-64

Mount Angel Abbey
Library
Saint Benedict, Oregon

January 20th, 1964

Mr Alvar Aalto
Munkkiniemi, Helsinki
Finland

Dear Mr Aalto,

Building plans are taking shape here at the Abbey. This next statement may amuse you but we must confess that it is the way things happen here. It has been suggested that a fitting time for the announcement of a construction date of the library would be on May 13th of this year in connection with the 75th Anniversary of the opening of the Seminary. This doesn't speak too highly of monastic foresight and planning. In all honesty it does tell you how we operate here at Mt Angel.

The rector has asked me if it would be possible to have a provisional sketch of the library for inclusion in a booklet to be published for the occasion. I told him I would write to you. If this is not possible or gravely inconvenient please do not consider it seriously.

As I understand the procedure, the minimum requirements for the announcement of a construction date would be the following: 1) The acceptance of your layout by the Chapter. (All official acts of the monastery in entering into legal contracts are voted upon when presented by the Abbot.) 2) The formal signing of a legal contract with you. 3) Your estimate of the time required for the completion of the architectural plans. 4) The estimated time for the letting of contracts.

Would it be both feasible and desirable on your part to announce a construction date on the occasion of this anniversary on May 13th? If it is not, we will simply indicate as much to the monks.

You will be pleased to note that the cultural community of the Northwest can hardly believe that we are to have one of your buildings here in the area. To protect you from embarrassment and them from disappointment we have forbidden any official announcement until a formal contract is signed.

I am inclosing a copy of an architectural survey the Abbot contracted to have made. He made it very clear to the firm that it was being employed on a contract basis for a survey and nothing more. He wanted help for the community's thinking about future expansion. Many of us hope that you might help us in our overall program. The monastery will be here for centuries, we hope, and we haven't done very well architectural wise with our building site.

The survey is very sketchy and apparently was not meant to be very accurate in detail. The area treating of the library on page 5 is interesting but not related to our program. Please disregard it. I inclose this survey only to keep you informed of future planning as it might possibly affect the library.

The firm was instructed not to speculate on a library building site. This we have in your hands. I would be less than honest if I didn't say that one of the reasons I'm sending this report is that the possible butchery of future building sites might impress you with the urgency of the need for a guiding hand.

Sincerely,
Fr Barnabas, O.S.B.

Alvar Aalto

**Architect
Munkkiniemi
HELSINKI
Telephone: 480123
Cable: ALVARAA**

February 10, 1964

Father Barnabas, O.S.B.
Librarian
Mount Angel Abbey,
Saint Benedict,
Oregon

Dear Father Barnabas:

On behalf of Mr. Alvar Aalto I thank you for your letter of January 20, 1964.

Mr. Aalto who at present is abroad has instructed me to tell you that when he returns from his winter vacation beginning of March he could send a provisional sketch or bring it with him on his intended journey to America in late April 1964.

Mr. Aalto feels that the sketch would have to be an ideological one describing only ^{the} inner function (inner life) of the library since the site is not as yet determined.

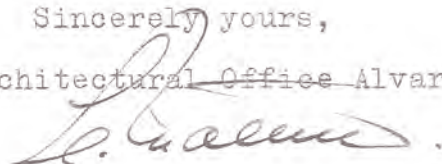
Would you please inform us when you would need the sketch.

Mr. Aalto sends you his best regards.

Looking forward to hearing from you we are

Sincerely yours,

Architectural Office Alvar Aalto



Mount Angel Abbey
Library

Saint Benedict, Oregon

April 7, 1964

Architectural Office
Alvar Aalto
Munkkiniemi
Helsinki/Finland

Dear Mr Aalto:

We were very pleased to receive the last letter your office sent to us. We look forward to seeing the interior sketches of the building.

When you come to America at the end of this month will you plan to come to Mt Angel? We sincerely hope that you can find the time to visit the Abbey. We have a guest and retreat house. You could live here a few days and see the rhythm of monastic life, rest up a bit, and perhaps plan to bring a little architectural rhythm to our master planning. If your wife is coming with you we would be most happy to have her as our guest. We have, as you know from the brochure, facilities for both men and women and married couples. People come for conducted retreats or private retreats. If you have others in your party we will plan to make room for them.

If we could know in advance when you are coming or about when you plan to come we could meet you at the Airport in Portland or at the station in Portland. Transportation out of Portland is not the best on the public systems.

We do hope that you will find time to visit Mt Angel Abbey even if it must be but for a few hours.

Our friends have been inquiring about your coming. If you would be not adverse to the idea, they would be most happy to arrange a speaking engagement at one or the other of the Universities.

If you prefer we could make your visit a very quiet one. Quiet for a public figure, that is. At any rate, I think you will find the monastery surroundings, and the setting, a very peaceful and altogether delightful experience. It will refresh you! I think, also, that it might inspire you with ideas for the library building.

At about what date will you be coming?

Sincerely -- and hopefully,

Father Barnabas
Father Barnabas, O.S.B.
Librarian.

Alvar Aalto

**Architect
Munkkiniemi
HELSINKI
Telephone: 480123
Cable: ALVARAA**

April 22, 1964.

Father Barnabas, O.S.B.
Librarian
Mount Angel Library
Saint Benedict
Oregon

Dear Father Barnabas:

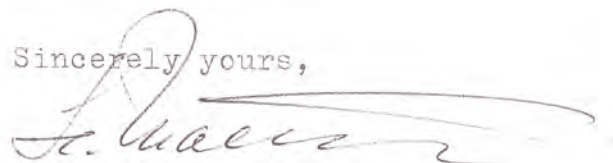
On behalf of Mr. Alvar Aalto I thank you for your kind letter of April 7, 1964.

Unfortunately Mr. Aalto will not be able to come to Oregon during April due to his heavy schedule of work.

The sketch is almost ready and we will send it to you very soon.

Mr. Aalto sends you his best regards.

Sincerely yours,



H. Mattson
Secretary

CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a fast message unless its deferred character is indicated by the proper symbol.

WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

1201 (4-60)

SYMBOLS

DL = Day Letter

NL = Night Letter

LT = International Letter Telegram

The filing time shown in the date line on domestic telegrams is LOCAL TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is LOCAL TIME at point of destination

PRA055

PR CDU103 WUH360 TBZ0787 FDN444 23 PD INTL 1954 MAY 8 AM 9 41

CD HELSINKI VIA ROA 8 1430=

LT FATHER BARNABAS=

LIBRARIAN MOUNT ANGEL ABBEY STBENEDICT(OREGON)=

SENDING YOU MAY 11 BY SPECIAL DELIVERY SEVERAL

LIBRARY PLANS SORRY FOR DELAY=

AALTO OFFICE.

No. 245-2221 To Vancouver
Time Delivered 10:02 am
By [Signature] To Be sent

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

Mount Angel Abbey
Library

Saint Benedict, Oregon

MAY, Friday 29th, 1964

Mr Alvar Aalto
Architectural Office
Munkkiniemi, Helsinki
Finland

Dear Mr Aalto,

We are most pleased with your lay-out. The monks in general are very elated with your work and your design.

The Abbot has asked me to inform you that the Chapter has voted to engage you as our architect. The legal formalities or whatever can be taken care of when you come to Mt Angel. All the monks have expressed great interest in your coming.

The monastic community, as I wrote to you before, acts as one big family. It took us a while to get squared away after the anniversary celebration and the final examinations. Each member of the monastic family is asked to state his opinion. It takes a little while to get major business taken care of this way, but anything affecting permanent changes and the centuries of the future is worth the effort.

There is much enthusiasm in this quarter for your work.

We sincerely hope that you will be able to help us with our future master planning. One of the more pressing problems is the possible future location of a class-room building.

May we now make public that you have been selected to design our building? Our press bureau would like to know if you would consider a local (Portland) T.V. interview? Could we have about six 8" X 10 " glossy photographs of you?

We would like to know how you feel about the publicity? It would be of value to us in many ways and of value to the cultural community. Many friends have been asking us when we are to make the official announcement.

If you prefer to have your arrival here as quiet as possible, I think it can be arranged. We are of course quite anxious to let everyone know of our good fortune. It will help our fund raising.

The community is anxious to begin construction as soon as possible. The financing of the building will not interfere with the construction date. We are now prepared to build. There will be some details of the building to be worked out when you come.

May we hear from you soon concerning the date of your coming to Mt Angel.

Sincerely,

F. Bannister OSB

Mount Angel Abbey
Library
Saint Benedict, Oregon

Spec. 17.6.64

Ref-
26-6-64

June 12th, 1964

Mr Alvar Aalto,
Architect
Funkkiniemi, Helsinki
Finland.

Dear Mr Aalto:

Last Wednesday I visited two of my colleagues. The one is librarian of the University of Oregon, the other is librarian at Oregon State University. I showed them the layout and our specifications. They were both very impressed with the beauty of the building.

They were not so impressed with my listing of spatial requirements. Working independently of each other they were in agreement that my specification of 7,137 sq. ft. for housing 200,000 volumes was in error.

The revised figure is almost double that amount. The exact (and more accurate) figure is 13,333 sq. ft.

I am deeply chagrined that I did not notice this error. I don't know the exact nature of the difficulty this will cause you. I can only imagine what this will do to your design.

The over all square footage of the building will thus be increased to 30,000 square feet.

I hope this mistake doesn't exasperate you too much. You now understand why we need you to build our library.

There is universal anticipation of your coming.

Sincerely,
Father Barnabas, OSB
Father Barnabas, librarian.

Alvar Aalto

**Architect
Munkkiniemi
HELSINKI
Telephone: 480123
Cable: ALVARAA**

June 26, 1964

Father Barnabas, Librarian
Mount Angel Abbey
Saint Benedict

Dear Father Barnabas,

Just many thanks for your letters with the optimistic view on your buildings.

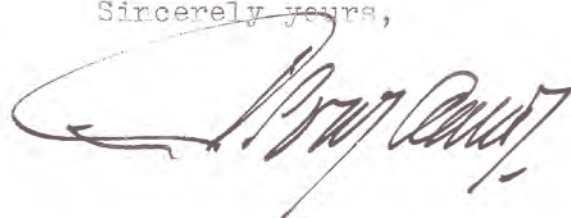
Without being absolutely sure, I think I will have to be in the States about end of July because of my building for the Institute of International Education (United Nations). This probably gives me the opportunity to visit St. Benedict, see the site and discuss the problem.

I have in my office a young American architect from California who has been more than a year with me. He intends to return to America end of this year and could initiate the contact between my office and your construction site. Also I have contact with a prominent architectural firm in Boston who are already doing work with me.

I may comfort you that I had planned the library in accord with my established space requirements, it is fully capable of housing the 200,000 volumes.

I will inform you in due time about my coming to Oregon.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Alvar Aalto', written in a cursive, flowing style.

Apr. 7 64
24-7

July 20th, 1964

Mr Alvar Aalto
Munkkiniemi, Helsinki
Finland.

Dear Mr Aalto:

We were most pleased with your last letter and the note that you would soon be coming to Oregon.

Father Abbot has asked me to be sure to inform you that the Abbey wishes to pay for any expense that you may incur on our behalf.

I was naturally very delighted to hear that the library as you have designed it will have a book capacity of 200,000 volumes.

I sincerely hope that you will be able to remain with us a few days when you come. We are very proud of our scenery here in Oregon. We would like the opportunity to show you some of our beautiful area.

The monks here sincerely hope that you will be able to give us some direction and advice about our further expansion and development.

We are looking forward to your coming with great anticipation.

Sincerely,

Fr Barnabas

Fr Barnabas, O.S.B.
Librarian
Mt Angel Abbey
St Benedict, Oregon

Alvar Aalto

**Architect
Munkkiniemi
HELSINKI
Telephone: 480123
Cable: ALVARAA**

July 24, 1964

Father Barnabas, O.S.B.
Librarian
Mount Angel Abbey
St Benedict, Oregon.

Dear Father Barnabas:

Thank you for your kind letter received yesterday.

I can now inform you that I will be coming to America either end of August or beginning of September and not in July as I wrote you in my previous letter.

The work I have at the United Nations in New York has been postponed a few weeks and as my schedule of work is very heavy I wanted to combine my New York journey with a trip to Oregon instead of doing two different journeys to the States.

I am sorry if you have been disappointed about my not coming to St Benedict till now, but I hope I will be able to come as soon as the finishing touch has been done at New York.

When I come I will have with me the young Finnish-born American architect from California of whom I have told you. He is at present in New York supervising my work there.

We will inform you in due time about our coming to Oregon.

Sincerely yours,



repl. 64.
3-9-

Mount Angel Abbey
Library
Saint Benedict, Oregon

August 26th, 1964

Alvar Aalto
Architect
Munkkiniemi, Helsinki
Finland

Dear Mr Aalto:

As you know the Pacific Northwest is a favorite vacationland in Summer. We hope you will be able to spend some time relaxing a little when you come.

Many of our friends have been asking about your coming. We have told them that they will be informed through the newspapers. Our press people would like some photographs to use with the announcement if this is possible.

Could your secretary send us about six glossy prints for the newspapers?

It's sorry to bother you with such small details, but you do have admirers.

If you do not have objections the TV people would be interested in an interview.

We are anxiously awaiting your arrival.

Sincerely,

Fr Barnabas

Fr Barnabas, O.S.B.
Librarian.

Alvar Aalto

**Architect
Munkkiniemi
HELSINKI
Telephone: 480123
Cable: ALVARAA**

Sept. 3, 1964

Father Barnabas, O.S.B.
Librarian
Mount Angel Abbey
St. Benedict, Oregon

Dear Father Barnabas,

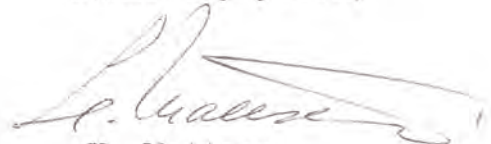
On behalf of Mr. Alvar Aalto I thank you for your letter dated August 26, 1964.

Regarding Mr. Aalto's journey to the United States I can now inform you that the work at the United Nations in New York will be finished end of this month or beginning of October.

We will inform you further about prof. Aalto's and Mr. Vartiainen's coming to Oregon.

With kind regards from Mr. Aalto

Sincerely yours,



H. Mattson
Secretary to Mr. Aalto

October 9, 1964

Father Barnabas, Librarian
Mount Angel Abbey
Saint Benedict, Oregon

Dear Father Barnabas:

Mr. Aalto regrets that he was able to stay only a few days in New York, the Helsinki Center project demands his presence in Finland.

It is also his usual habit that he must know more of the actual physical site, a preparatory idea, before it is meaningful for him to visit and observe. It is with this in mind that he has directed me to write and inform you that I will be visiting home in California October 10th to 17th and would be ready to come to Saint Benedict to obtain the proper maps, materials and information, and discuss the program if this would be appropriate and acceptable to you. I would place a call from California on Tuesday, October 13th for discussion of this matter.

As you know from your previous correspondence from Mr. Aalto, I have been in New York as Mr. Aalto's assistant supervising the project which is now completed.

Mr. Aalto will be back in the United States in a couple of months, at which time he intends to make his personal visit.

Sincerely yours,


Erik T. Vartiainen

DEMARS AND REAY
Architects & Planners

Vernon DeMars, AIA *Architect*
Donald P. Reay, FRIBA *Architect*
John G. Wells *Architect*
Edward J. Bennett *Architect*

October 30, 1964

Erik T. Vartiainen
C/O Albar Aalto
Helsinki, Finland

Re: Mount Angel Abbey Library
File Ref: B 340

Dear Erik:

It was a pleasure to meet you last week when you were here and I hope that we will have the opportunity of working with you on the Mount Angel Abbey Library.

We called Mr. W. K. Graber's office, Building Administrator of Marion County and found that the Mount Angel Abbey is under the County's jurisdiction. They currently use the 1961 edition of the Uniform Building Code, but plan to adopt this 1964 edition with local amendments within the next 30 days. We understand that the only amendments contemplated deal with the height of bedroom windows and will probably not affect your project. However, we will forward a copy of the amendments to you as soon as they are available.

Drawings will have to be approved by both the Building Administrator and the State Fire Marshal before construction can begin. We have written to the Fire Marshal's office for any published standards that they may have.

Codes are always subject to some interpretation and we have found it advisable to review preliminary designs with the agencies having jurisdiction before proceeding with working drawings. It is particularly important to reach agreement on number, placement and type of exits required since this may affect basic planning.

We have also written for copies of the plumbing and electrical codes applicable to the project and will forward them to you when they are available.

Page 2

October 30, 1964

We sent you a copy of Graphic Standards under separate cover and will forward the other information on concrete block and brick necessary as soon as it arrives. I have enclosed a list of current materials prices for the Seattle area that you may find useful. If we can be of help in any other way, please don't hesitate to write.

Sincerely,



John G. Wells

JGW/ag

Encl.

DEMARS AND REAY

Architects & Planners

Vernon DeMars, AIA Architect
Donald P. Reay, FRIBA Architect
John G. Wells Architect

Edward J. Bennett Architect

October 30, 1964

Mr. Ardath Gould, Secretary
Oregon State Board of Architectural Examiners
304 Labor & Industries Building
Salem 10, Oregon

Re: Mount Angel Abbey
File Ref: B 340

Dear Mr. Gould:

We are writing to you on behalf of Mr. Alvar Aalto, a Finnish Architect of international reputation, who has been retained to design a new library for the Mount Angel Abbey, St. Benedict, Oregon.

I believe that Mr. Aalto is not registered in this country, although his works are certainly well known here. Would you please advise us as to the conditions under which Mr. Aalto would be granted registration in Oregon or could obtain permission to be listed as the principal architect on a single project basis.

We understand that the working drawings for this project may be done in this office of which all of the principals are registered in California. We also understand that the structural and mechanical engineering would possibly be done in San Francisco.

Your assistance in this matter will be sincerely appreciated.

Sincerely,

John G. Wells
JGW/ag
cc: Erik Vartianinen

COPY

MURDO D. MORRISON, PRESIDENT
KLAMATH FALLS
EBBA WICKS BROWN, VICE PRESIDENT
ASTORIA
RICHARD W. NORMAN, TREASURER
PORTLAND
NEIL FARNHAM, PORTLAND
JOHN M. AMUNDSON, SPRINGFIELD

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO THE SECRETARY
304 LABOR AND INDUSTRIES BUILDING
SALEM, OREGON 97310



STATE OF OREGON
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
STATE BOARD OF ARCHITECT EXAMINERS
OFFICE OF BOARD
SALEM 97310

RECEIVED
NOV 19 1964
DE MARS & REAY

See State Board minutes w/encs
JW ✓
as VPM
FILE:
B 340

November 18, 1964

Mr. John G. Wells
De Mars and Reay
2161 Shattuck Avenue
Berkeley 4, California

Re: Mt. Angel Abbey Library

Dear Mr. Wells:

Your letter of October 30, 1964 advises that your firm will be doing the working drawings for the Mount Angel Abbey Library building. Oregon law requires that an architect must be registered in Oregon before doing any work in the state, and the architect is required to furnish supervision for the project construction, also.

"maybe" see our letter of Oct 30

Oregon Law Chapter 671.050 requires that an applicant for registration in the State of Oregon must be a citizen of the United States or have declared intention of becoming a citizen. A copy of the law is enclosed.

Mr. Aalto may be a design consultant to an Architect registered in Oregon, but unless he has become a citizen or declared intent to become a citizen of the United States, this Board cannot grant registration.

Also enclosed is an application form for reciprocal transfer registration, should one of your firm desire to apply.

Very truly yours,

OREGON STATE BOARD OF ARCHITECT EXAMINERS

Ardath Gould

(Mrs.) Ardath Gould, Secretary

68
11/12

Mount Angel Abbey
Library

Saint Benedict, Oregon

November 24th, 1964

Mr Alvar Aalto
Munkkiniemi, Helsinki
Finland.

Dear Mr Aalto,

We were very sorry that you were not able to come to Oregon when you were in New York. We were pleased, though, that Mr Vartiainen was able to visit.

Your coming to Oregon is of great interest to the cultural community. I have received several phone calls from representatives of different groups asking about the time of your visit. I was asked to say a few words about your project here. A small group of architects and friends had dinner while discussing other matters tonight here at the Abbey.

The Dean of Humanities and Fine Arts at Oregon State University, a personal friend of mine, called me again and asked if I would not present to you their request that you address the architects and city planners of Oregon in our auditorium here at the Abbey. They would like the opportunity of hearing about your Helsinki project and of a question and answer session of things architectural.

The University of Oregon and the Oregon State University have offered to cover any lecture fee involved and have asked me to convey this information to you. Invitations would be offered to architects, city planners and students in both fields. Thus your audience would be limited. They understand, of course, and have asked that I assure you that they would not ask this of you if it would interfere in any way with your visit of the site.

If this is not presuming too much upon your time and energy the people of the Northwest would like the opportunity of knowing you and your ideas better. You will find a most receptive and friendly people. It is part of our "old western" heritage. If we may brag a little.

If this idea of an informal meeting and discussion of your present projects meets with your approval could you set a tentative date so that the architects could be put on the alert and invitations sent out?

We here at the Abbey would like to share our good fortune with our friends. We feel that we have placed our beautiful site in the best of hands. Your building here will have a permanent influence upon the future of our monastic community, its scholarly and cultural growth and the impact it will have upon the whole Northwest.

You should have received the survey of the site and three photographs (aerial) which we sent by air-mail last Thursday. I'm sorry that these were so slow in coming. Our surveyor didn't get his work to us any sooner.

Our friends will be calling again soon. Could we hear from you concerning your attitude toward their proposal and a date if this meets with your approval.

Sincerely,
Fr Barnabas
Fr Barnabas, O.S.B.
Librarian

Alvar Aalto

**Architect
Munkkiniemi
HELSINKI
Telephone: 480123
Cable: ALVARAA**

November 27, 1964

Father Barnabas, O.S.B.
Librarian
Mount Angel Abbey
St. Benedict, Oregon

Dear Father Barnabas:

Thank you for the fine photographs and the indispensable contour-map of the hillside.

The whole office has been very busy with the Helsinki Center project which was officially presented to the City this week. Naturally Mr. Aalto has been totally involved in this and now he is in New York for the official dedication of the building there at which time he will also receive an honorary degree from Columbia University.

So consequently we have not had time to discuss the library and will not be able to do so until Mr. Aalto's return from the States and Europe. Mr. Aalto will be on the West Coast in mid-March for several weeks and intends to visit you then and look over the terrain.

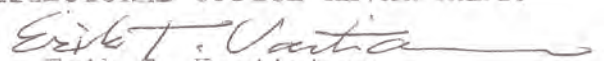
We do urge you to continue mapping the whole terrain; we would be interested in the contours of the other hillside.

The office of DeMars and Reay in Berkeley, California, has been contacted (perhaps they have already corresponded with you) but no official arrangement has as yet been made.

Further information will be forwarded as soon as the occasion arises.

Sincerely yours,

ARCHITECTURAL OFFICE ALVAR AALTO


Erik T. Vartiainen
Architect

December 1, 1964

Mr. John G. Wells
c/o DeMars and Reay,
2161 Shattuck Avenue,
B e r k e l e y, Cal.

Dear John:

I thank you for your letter of October 30, 1964. Thanks also for the copy of Architectural Graphic Standards and the package of various material on masonry construction; all arrived without damage.

The whole office force has been involved with the Helsinki center plan which has now been officially presented to the City. At the moment Mr. Aalto is in New York for the dedication of the building there. We have not had time to discuss the library project as yet, consequently the project is ^{very}~~vey~~ much "up in the air".

I hope soon to be able to inform you in more concrete terms.

Sincerely,

DE MARS AND ^{WELLS}~~REAY~~
Architects & Planners

Vernon DeMars, AIA Architect
Donald P. Reay, FRIBA Architect
John G. Wells Architect
Edward J. Bennett Architect

December 7, 1964

Erik T. Vartiainen
C/O Alvar Aalto, Architect
Munkkiniemi
Helsinki, Finland

Re: Mount Angel Abbey Library
File ref: B 340

Dear Erik:

Thank you for your letter of December 1. I'm glad that you received the books that we sent in good condition and I hope that you find them useful.

I have enclosed a copy of the Oregon Plumbing Code for your reference as well as a copy of Mrs. Gould's reply to my inquiry about professional registration in Oregon. It's too bad that Oregon doesn't have a reciprocal transfer arrangement for foreign Architects.

Please let us know if there is anything else that we can be of help on.

Sincerely,



John G. Wells

JGW/ag

Encls.

Alvar Aalto

**Architect
Munkkiniemi
HELSINKI
Telephone: 480123
Cable: ALVARAA**

December 11, 1964

Father Barnabas O.S.B.
Librarian
Mount Angel Abbey
St. Benedict, Oregon

Dear Father Barnabas:

Something had been overlooked during my recent visit. This the fact that prints of drawings of the existing buildings would be a great help in determining relationships and in the making of a scale model of the hillside.

If no drawings are available, we would like to know the heights of the existing buildings.

Although I can fairly well judge the sizes of the buildings from the excellent photographs, exact dimensions are naturally desirable.

Sincerely yours,
ARCHITECTURAL OFFICE ALVAR AALTO

Erik T. Vartiainen
Erik T. Vartiainen

R.S. Season's Greetings

Mount Angel Abbey
Library

Saint Benedict, Oregon

December 22d, 1964

Alvar Aalto
Architect
Munkkiniemi, Helsinki

Dear Mr Aalto,

We are inclosing a rough sketch with building elevations as asked by Mr Vartiainen.

It was pleasant speaking to you on the telephone. I hope that everything is going well with your civic center project.

We are anxiously awaiting further developments on our library building and the date of your coming.

May we extend to you our sincerest good wishes for success in your projects and a Merry Christmas!

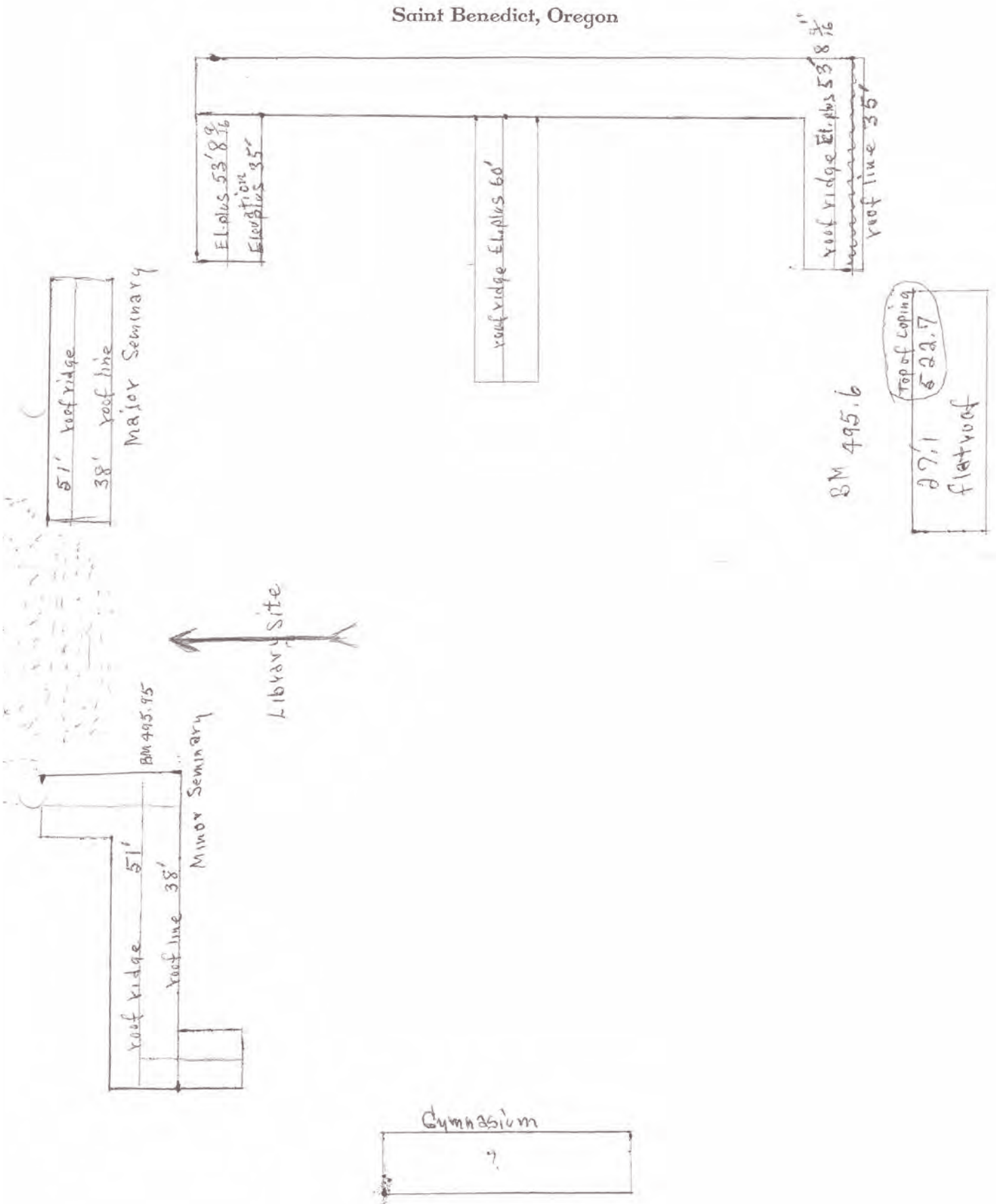
Sincerely,

Fr Barnabas, O.S.B.

fr Barnabas

Mount Angel Abbey Library

Saint Benedict, Oregon



repl-
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Mount Angel Abbey
Library
Saint Benedict, Oregon

January 18th, 1965

Alvar Aalto
Architect
Munkkiniemi, Helsinki

Dear Mr Aalto:

Father Abbot has again asked me if there has been any word from you about the time of your coming and the expected date of the building plans.

There had been a real desire for action on the library but now there is a note of urgency.

Early this month the monks accepted the proposal of the Bishop of Boise, Idaho, to make a foundation in his diocese. This means that a new monastery will be formed. Monks will be sent from here.

This, as you can imagine, is a major undertaking involving man-power and money.

The monks had hoped that we would be much farther advanced in our library building program at this time. We have been ready to build since 1963.

Father Abbot is now a little concerned that we move with all possible haste with our building project. There is a second foundation, a monastic community in Mexico, to which we are somewhat committed.

Both of these projects are creating pressures upon the community. In a sense our library project should be well advanced before we take final action on these foundations.

I have explained to the Abbot and community that you were committed to your other projects. The Abbot has announced that he will not take action on the foundations until Spring. I have told him that you will be here in late Winter or Spring.

I sincerely hope that we will be able to begin construction at least by January of next year. The monks would be most happy to hear that it could begin sooner.

We are happy with our good fortune in having you as our architect. We are no longer worried about the beauty of ^{the} site and what could possibly happen to it in the wrong hands.

When may we expect the new design and when will you be arriving? We are looking forward to your visit. It will be an historic day in Oregon and a great day for the cultural community of the Northwest.

Again may we congratulate you on your work at the UN in New York.

Sincerely,

Fx Barnabas

Answered

with 1st revisions repeated
Feb. 5th day of receipt
for answer see letter Feb. 5th placed with
Bldg plan revisions etc.

Alvar Aalto

Architect
Munkkiniemi
HELSINKI
Telephone: 480123
Cable: ALVARAA

February 2, 1965

Father Barnabas O.S.B.
Librarian
Mount Angel Abbey
St. Benedict,
Oregon

Dear Father Barnabas:

Thank you for your letter of January 18th, 1965

We can inform you that Mr. Aalto will visit you in March, either mid-month prior to the Charter Day Exercises at University of California at Berkeley where he will preside as the main speaker and receive an honorary degree or immediately after that before his voyage to Japan.

Presently the library is going through careful revisions stage due to the changes to the program brought about in our discussion and due also to our knowledge of the actual slope of the hillside. Also the square footage must be reduced, all this involves quite the further planning. Of course you realize that in order to get down to the 25,000 Sq.ft. range we really cannot allow a square foot per 15 vol. for the projected 200,000 volumes.

Another matter: is the office of circulation Librarian the the office we thought could be located by the control or is this office an additional requirement?

As for Mr. Aalto's speaking and TV appearances etc., these we must yet discuss after Mr. Aalto's return from his winter holidays.

Sincerely yours,
ARCHITECTURAL OFFICE ALVAR AALTO
Erik T. Vartiainen
Erik T. Vartiainen

2010
A 2/65

Mount Angel Abbey
Library
Saint Benedict, Oregon

February 5th, 1965

Architectural Office Alvar Aalto
Mr Erik T. Vartiainen
Munkkiniemi, Helsinki
Finland

Dear Mr Vartiainen:

We received your letter this morning. We have passed the word along that Mr Aalto will be coming in Mid-March or thereabouts. We would like to know the exact day of his coming in order that the Universities may make arrangements for his address to the Architects and City Planners of the area.

We talked to Mr Aalto by phone when he was in New York. He agreed to talk to these people who have asked about work and projects, ideas etc. The lecture will be here at the Abbey. The invitations etc. will be taken care of by the Universities of Oregon and Oregon State. They will need to know the date in order to notify the people.

We are happy to hear that the building is going through a careful revision. I am aware that in order to gain the required square footage per 15 volumes per sq. ft. the building will have to be somewhat larger, that is, closer to 30,000 sq. ft. In our discussion I thought that we both agreed that this would need to be done.

We mentioned that the microfilm reading and storage originally listed as 300 sq.ft. needed to be increased to 600 sq. ft. The microfilm laboratory listed as 300 sq. ft. needed to be increased to 600 sq. ft. The stack area for 200,000 volumes requires not the 7,137 sq.ft. originally listed but 13,333 sq.ft.

These requirements are rules of thumb rather than exact measurements. If Mr Aalto has good reason for modifying these requirements while keeping the same ease of access, so much the better.

In response to your question about the circulation librarian's office. This, it was suggested, could be located to the right of the control desk on the plan. It was in the original program at 100 sq. ft. It was suggested that this be increased to 225 sq. ft.

I am inclosing a sheet listing revised spatial requirements. This is a copy of the original with figures revised as above. With sincere personal regards and the hope that you may be able to accompany Mr Aalto when he comes,

Sincerely,
Fr Barnabas
Fr Barnabas, O.S.B.

Give our sincere regards to Mr Aalto. May God speed him in our direction.

Mount Angel Abbey Library

Saint Benedict, Oregon

February 5th, 1965

First revised spatial requirements. Additions for stack area, microfilm processing and storage, office of circulation librarian.

Book collection of 200,000 volumes.	13,333 sq.ft.
Seating. Carrells. Closed. 8 at 88 sq.ft. 1 double for seminar 880	
" " 30 at 30 "	900
" Open 40 at 25 "	1900
At tables 82 at 25 "	2050
	4830 sq.ft.
Rare Book Room. Lecture-Seminar. Seating 100	2,000 sq.ft.
Cataloging Room. 5 people. 5,000 volumes.	1,342 sq.ft.
Receiving Room. 5,000 volumes. 2 people. Storage.	1,042 "
Benedictina and local history room. Seat 8	800 "
Staff room	400 "
Bindery	1,500 "
Office of Librarian	225 "
Office of Circulation librarian	225 "
Office of Secretary to librarian (formerly typing room space)	150 "
Microfilm reading and storage	600 "
Microfilm laboratory. Camera and photoduplication	600 "
Browsing room. Informal, casual reading area	400 "
Lavatories. 2 staff 1 monks 2 public	410 "
Public catalog. 16 60 drawer cabinets plus 6 times the area.	636 "
Vertical file space.	636 "
Janitor closets with sink on each floor	?
Foyer. Display area	?
Elevator.	?
Stairway.	?
Corridor.	?
Building will be heated from central plant.	28,529 sq.ft.

These requirements represent an increase of 6,921 sq. ft. to the original.

Stack area originally 7,137 , now estimated at additional 6,196. sq.ft.

Circulation librarian's office originally 100 sq.ft. now est. 225.sq.ft.

Microfilm reading and storage originally estimated at 300 now 600 sq.ft.

Microfilm processing and laboratory originally estimated 300 now 600 sq.ft.

Alvar Aalto

**Architect
Munkkiniemi
HELSINKI
Telephone: 480123
Cable: ALVARAA**

February 17, 1965

Father Barnabas O.S.B.
Librarian
Mount Angel Abbey
St. Benedict

Dear Father Barnabas:

Thanks for your recent letter, it served to confirm the revisions with which we had already proceeded.

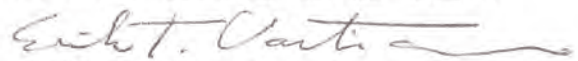
We must say that Mr. Aalto has not as yet indicated to us any exact word of his plans, thus we cannot give you an exact date at the moment. We hope that when he returns at the end of this month from his winter holidays his U.S. travel itinerary can be set. The Charter Day at Berkeley has been changed to March 26, Mr. Aalto would come prior to that. We will inform you of the exact date as soon as it is decided here.

Another thing. It would be a good idea if you would obtain a print from the architect of the Retreat and Guest House showing the typical wall section. From this I could give Mr. Aalto an example of the type of construction used there. Of course we would not necessarily use the exact same construction method.

We send you our best regards,

Sincerely yours,

ARCHITECTURAL OFFICE ALVAR AALTO


Erik T. Vartiainen

Post- och telegraf



Post- ja lennätinlaitos

Post- och telegrafverket



ja lennätinlaitos

Lähetetään minne lähetin kannan

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LENNÄTILÄ
TELEFONALAIKKA
HÄLI - 10/05

Appl.
3.7.65
LT
ALVARAA HELSINKI

Alvaraa T. 480123
Prof. Alvar Aalto
Arkkitehtitoimisto
Tiilimäki 20 X

PLEASE LET US KNOW THE DATE OF YOUR ARRIVAL HERE THE AIA THE
UNIVERSITIES AND FRIENDS OF MT ANGEL ABBY NEED THIS ADVANCE
INFORMATION AT YOUR EARLIEST CONVENIENCE

FATHER BARNABAS MT ANGEL ABBEY ST PENEDICT OREGON TF8452221

117 Repsäläinen

COLL LT TF8452221

1965 III 3 10:01

SOITETTU
TELEFONERAT

ra - Telegram

Sähkösanoma - Telegram

Sähkösanoma - Telegram

Sähkösanoma - Teleg

CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a fast message unless its deferred character is indicated by the proper symbol.

WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

(38) • 1201 (4-60)

SYMBOLS

DL = Day Letter
NL = Night Letter
LT = International Letter Telegram

The filing time shown in the date line on domestic telegrams is LOCAL TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is LOCAL TIME at point of destination

PRA200 0B409

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1965 MAR 3 PM 9 09

VIA RCA 3 1715=

LT FATHER BARNABAS CARE

MOUNT ANGEL ABBEY STBENEDICT (ORG)=

RE YOUR TELEGRAM SORRY TO INFORM MR AALTO TO UNDERGO EXTENDED MEDICAL TREATMENTS MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO COME STOP DEFINITE INFO FOLLOWS REGARDS=

VARTIAINEN=(

4. no. *845-2221 Akhey*
5. Time Department *820/4*
6. By *B* To *M*

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

CLASS OF SERVICE

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WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

(12) 1201 (4-60)

SYMBOLS

DL=Day Letter

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CARE MOUNT ANGELABBAY SBENEDICT (ORG)=

BECAUSE OF LONG MEDICAL TREATMENTS LARGE OVERSEAS TRAVELLING
IMPOSSIBLE NOW STOP LETTER FOLLOWS=

ALVAR AALTO=

845-222
Abbey
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Inkel

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

Mount Angel Abbey
Library
Saint Benedict, Oregon

March 16th, 1965

Mr Alvar Aalto
Munkkiniemi, Helsinki
Finland.

Dear Mr Aalto:

I should have written to you before this time. Living keeps one so busy and interested that there seems to be little time for anything but that which is at hand.

We received your telegram this morning announcing that your prolonged medical treatment makes it impossible for you to travel overseas.

We are naturally very disappointed. This is a purely selfish reaction on our part. We are sincerely concerned for you and are happy that you are taking steps to preserve your good health.

I will ask Father Abbot to request the prayers of the Monks that God may grant you many more years of creative activity. God must have a very special place in his heart for those who make it their business to understand the principles of beauty which He has laid down. Man has done so much to disfigure and squander the beauty God has brought to our lives. One who loves beauty, searches for its principles and exercises loving care and reverence in those things he fashions must find himself very close at times to the Eternal Beauty Who has placed His imprint upon all He has created.

May God preserve you many years that you may design buildings which have reverence for a landscape and excite reverence in the beholder.

Be assured of our best wishes for a speedy recovery. I hope for your sake that Finland is as gloriously beautiful these days as is our own Northwest. We have been having one of the most beautiful Springtimes on record. All the shrubs and flowers have burst forth in full bloom this last week.

Please extend our greetings to Erik.

Sincerely,
Fr Barnabas
Fr Barnabas, O.S.B.

Mount Angel Abbey
Library
Saint Benedict, Oregon

April 7th, 1965

Mr Erik Vartianen
Architectural Offices
Alvar Aalto
Munkkiniemi, Helsinki
Finland

Dear Erik,

I hope that Mr Aalto is improving. There was much interest in his coming. Pietro Belluschi's new building is quite interesting. His concept of the need for "lebensraum" in the adjoining external area of the new Equitable building is refreshing for an office building.

Many interesting things are going on building wise in Portland.

The community here is starting to put on the pressure for some sign of action on our library building. As you may have heard we have announced two new foundations, one in Idaho and one in Mexico. These places too are in need of attention.

We have hopes that the library building will be well underway before these other activities have to be scrutinized. Our library project is holding up the works.

What shall I tell them about approximate construction date? About how long will it take to get the building ready for bids once the final plans are squared away?

Once the monks have some definite idea about this project they can better lay plans for the foundation time table. Our library quarters continue to shrink by the day.

Give our kindest regards to Mr Aalto and tell him that we still have hopes of seeing him when he improves.

Sincerely,
Fr Barnabas
Fr Barnabas, O.S.B.

Mount Angel Abbey
Library

Saint Benedict, Oregon

April 27th, 1965

Mr Erik Vartianen
Architectural Office
Alvar Aalto
Helsinki

Dear Erik,

There is great unrest here at the Abbey in regard to our building program. Ordinarily we move rather slowly here in matters of major importance. However, a number of things are working together to catapult us into action.

The time for action upon our two foundations is fast approaching. We must take some steps in the very near future to add the new unit to the monastery. The High-School unit must still be considered. The library building stands in the limelight where it has been for the last two years.

There is a genuine concern for Mr Aalto, personally. We hope that he is improving or at least holding his own.

I have been pressed to give some report on the activity on the building plans. We would like very much to have some report on the progress of the plans. In the next few weeks the Abbot will have to give a general report to the community on the overall plans. This will involve the library primarily at this point.

The Abbot has again inquired whether or not Mr Aalto will be interested in planning the other buildings.

Extend to Mr Aalto our sincere good wishes for improvement in his health.

Sincerely,

Fr Barnabas
Fr Barnabas, O.S.B.

Mount Angel Abbey
Library

Saint Benedict, Oregon

May 6, 1965

Mr. Alvar Aalto
Architect
Munkkiniemi, Helsinki
Finland.

Dear Mr. Aalto:

We hope that your health is improved. We are sorry to put you under any additional strain at this time. However, the Father Abbot and many members of the Community have been asking me for some word or possible date upon which we can base our other plans. I have been reminded that, if we are to begin construction in January, the specifications for bids must be in the hands of contractors by October.

I am still not certain and have not assured them that this is possible from the standpoint of the architect. Would you please supply me with some information on this point in order that I may be able to give them an intelligent answer, in order that they may not be deceived in scheduling the future foundations from this date?

Please give my regards to Eric Vartianen.

Sincerely

F. Rosales

PB/g

May 13, 1965

Dear Father Barnabas,

I apologize for not having answered your two letters earlier & had hoped to have definite information on the project but it remains difficult to speculate in concrete terms.

Today your letter to Mr. Adlto arrived. Our secretary, Mrs. Mattson, showed it to me since Mr. Adlto is away in Europe for some much needed rest. I have decided to answer you but in a confidential, personal letter for now. I feel that you should be aware of the somewhat difficult situation here.

Due to Mr. Adlto's medical treatment as well as local trips, I have not been able to discuss the project with him much — also I have been forced to take care of some latest developments of the U.N. project as well as work on Reykjavik House of the North (in which I had worked previously) and extensively on the Hljóðala Student House project. I have worked on the latter ever since my initial arrival to this office. It is nearing completion and the work simply had to be done or construction would have been delayed. All this work is now finished — I am back to our library full time.

After the initial revisions were made we found that the book collection area could not be decreased further than approx. 15,300 sq. ft. The nature of the fan shape with its required circulation space as well as the sensitive distance & proximity of the "second floor" to the stepping/reading area below are factors

that effect (this situation). Should the area still be decreased the scheme would have to be changed.

Once, a while ago, Mr. Dalto had asked me to inquire of your present financial status; that is, could you take on a building of some 30,000 sq. ft. If not, the project would be revised.

My, as well as yours to be sure, ardent desire is to effect a design which has been thoroughly studied, carefully executed in all the main details. To achieve this we naturally need the close personal direction of Mr. Dalto. Since he has had to cancel all trips of distant nature for a while, the bulk of the detailing should be done here then quickly revised and re-drawn on the west coast into effective working drawings.

Referring to a couple of recent library projects of similar size, I would have to say that it will take a full year before construction could start.

So be it - within a couple of weeks we will send the revised plans (slightly over size as they are) and elevations (I hope hopefully) for your viewing and comments. Also I hope to have a more definite schedule by then as well as some comments from Mr. Dalto.

[May 10, 1963]

Personally I feel that Mr. Calto's present physical condition is such that he does not wish to undertake any further distant projects that would require occasional travel. I doubt that he would want to tackle the design of the other buildings at the Abbey & tho he would surely advise on the over-all, general plan. This I will again bring up in our future discussion.

Now, could you give me a bit of information on the future adjoining classrooms building that was to be planned with the library, was it not to be for approx. 300 students? What is to be the capacity of the lecture hall? and what was the number and capacity of the class rooms.

And lastly, I did receive the drawing of the Retreat House but unfortunately, it does not show what I had in mind. Rather than an engineering construction drawing, I had intended that the section be a comprehensive architectural sort showing the brick facing, insulation, etc as well as the concrete frame, i.e. a picture of the basic materials used in the wall construction. Could such be still obtained?

I thank you for your concern for Mr. Calto - I am sure he will be improved after his present rest.

Regards

Sincerely yours,

Bill Clinton

**Mount Angel Abbey
Library
Saint Benedict, Oregon**

June 8th, 1965

Erik Vartiainen
% Alvar Aalto
Munkkiniemi, Helsinki
Finland

Dear Erik:

We received your letter and were very happy to hear that our plans are progressing.

I have searched in vain for an architectural drawing such as you mention showing construction material, brick, concrete and insulation. The engineering drawing is apparently the only plan which is preserved. I think you have in mind a detail drawing of material and juxtaposition of parts. I'm unable to locate anything resembling this type of drawing.

You have inquired about our financial ability to handle a building of 30,000 sq. ft. Finances are difficult for everyone. This is somewhat relative, however. We know that we need this space. It would be useless to build the library without the required space. Our financial difficulty will not be with this building. We are worried about the next few buildings. This library will of course affect our ability to begin at once on the buildings needed for the new foundation. Yes, we are financially able to handle this, with reservations about its encroachment on the overall program for the future. The primary consideration now is time and need. Until this library building is standing and all the bills are in we will not be able to intelligently proceed with the other plans.

Father Abbot is away now. He will return in about ten days. I'm sure that his first question will be about the arrival of the plans. I told him last week that they should be on hand any day.

I have delayed sending this letter in order that I might include the general, rough outline of the program for the classroom building.

For the present the community will be content to know that Mr Aalto is content and confident that from the standpoint of design and harmony with the site, a classroom building will fit in this or that area proximate to the library building without detriment to the site or the buildings.

Give our best regards to Mr Aalto.

Sincerely,

Fa Benedict OSB

Mount Angel Abbey Library Saint Benedict, Oregon

Class Room Specifications , June 8, 1965
in sq. ft.

President's Office	270	
Secretary office for two secretaries	324	
Registrar's office	180	
Registrar's walk-in vault	90	
Poyer	1260	
Student lounge	1860	
Faculty lounge with kitchen and bedroom	720	
Women's lounge	120	
Counselor's office (two such) total:	360	
Faculty offices (eight such)	8 x 180 each	
Student activities office	270	
Student activities workroom	720	
Auditorium of 600	18000	
Large lecture room with sloping floor for 100 students	5000 ?	1000
Audio-visual annex to lecture Rm	200	
Materials Center for:		
projectors		
duplicating equipment & supplies		
classroom supplies		
office storage		
curriculum library & lab	1260	
Music classroom	1260	
Language Laboratory for 25 students	1200	600
Biology Laboratory	2100	1500
Physics Laboratory	2100	1500
College classroom for 50 students	1750	1000
College classroom for 30 "	1200	600
College classroom for 20 "	1000	400
Theology classroom for 30 students	1200	600
Theology classroom for 20 students	1000	400
Theology classroom for 15 students	1000	300
Four music listening rooms Total	192	

Note: We do not envisage music practice rooms in the classroom building, for this would create a lot of noise in the building which would in turn have to be controlled.

Alvar Aalto

**Architect
Munkkiniemi
HELSINKI
Telephone: 480123
Cable: ALVARAA**

July 2, 1965

Father Barnabas, Librarian
Mount Angel Abbey
St. Benedict
O r e g o n

Dear Father Barnabas:

We have received your letter with the class Room Specifications.

From our brief discussion of the Class Room building it was imagined by us to be much smaller, a mere lecture hall and a couple of small class rooms. The specifications came as a surprise to us, the total of over 45.000 sq. ft. makes for a building mass larger than the library itself. This will mean that we must give much more consideration to the class room building and its sighting into the hillside. We had not thought in terms of a building mass of such scale, it is possible that we find it too large to accompany the library.

We have not had the opportunity to discuss this with Mr. Aalto as yet but he will be back from the summer place next week. The results of the discussion as well as the subsequent drawings should then follow in a few weeks.

Sincerely yours,

ARCHITECTURAL OFFICE ALVAR AALTO



Erik T. Vartiainen

Mount Angel Abbey
Library
Saint Benedict, Oregon

July 18th, 1965

Erik T. Vartiainen
Office of Alvar Aalto
Munkkiniemi, Helsinki
Finland

Dear Erik,

Thank you for your letter of July 2d. It was awaiting me when I returned from Detroit where I attended the Library Building Plans Institute of the American Library Association. Many new library buildings were discussed. Mistakes made, new ideas of merit were discussed and plans were submitted by librarians and their architects. It is always a worthwhile experience.

The Abbot has instructed me to suggest to Mr Aalto that if the major portions of the lecture hall cause too many difficulties in the Classroom building, particularly in its relationship to the library building and its location, we could possibly re-evaluate the necessity for the auditorium in the building. There is some strong misgiving in the Abbots mind concerning this lecture hall for 600 people.

Father Abbot is having second thoughts about the advisability of converting the present gymnasium into a lecture hall or auditorium and planning a new gymnasium in an athletics activity area, possibly on the south side to the west of the present building. This thinking is receiving professional guidance. It has not as yet jelled. A major survey is underway of the area on the southwest side of the hill where we scouted the possibility of a Preparatory unit. The surveyor is expected tomorrow, Monday July 19th.

At the present time it is our understanding that Mr Aalto will definitely plan and design our Library Building. He will possibly design a classroom building. He will in any event outline the location of this classroom building. The north side of the hill where the library is to be built is not to be taken into consideration by any other professional architects. This is the area of greatest importance to us. We need Mr Aalto's help most urgently here.

There is a feeling of doubt and uncertainty among the monks here about effective action on the library building. There is no doubt whatever that this building must be constructed at the earliest possible date. Our planning for the next three to five years is subject to fluctuation. The library building is not. The library plans will not be gathering dust. Funds do not need to be collected. When we contacted Mr Aalto in 1963 we were ready to build within weeks of the arrival of plans. The delay in effective action has now forced the community to begin intensive planning of the building program for the next seven to ten years without a definite picture of the library and classroom building in their relation to our finances/building dates.

The monks are concerned that this building is not now under construction. Please inform Mr Aalto that his visit to the Abbey was not intended as a long range or short range financial promotion. It was intended as a cultural refreshment for the area, and the monks. Our building plans are shown to the University people not by way of passing any official tests or red-tape but solely as a friendly gesture and professional functional advisement for the service expected of a building according to local needs. I have had the feeling or understanding that Mr Aalto was under the impression that first, we were financially unable to begin at once. This is false. Secondly, that our checking with professional librarians at the universities had something to do with

Mount Angel Abbey Library

Saint Benedict, Oregon

page 2

legal right to proceed with the building. This is false. We are not legally connected or in any way subject to supervision of the state in regard to the library. The state building code does, however, apply to our buildings which are open to the public. This, as I understand it, has to do with certain engineering specifications and fire codes.

In my first letters to Mr Aalto I indicated that we proceed as a family here in the monastery. We don't have hard and fast target dates with penalties etc. We have a preference for deliberate and thoughtful action taking the time we need.

We are now in a rather painful need for solving our problems. The shortage of library facilities is seriously affecting our effectiveness. The delay in the building is also causing painful problems in classroom shortages which cannot be solved until the library situation is definitely determined.

I think that the uncertainty of effective action and an action date is causing the most unrest. I cannot expect the monks to seriously depend upon a few weeks delay to be indeed a few weeks. I cannot honestly reassure them that this will be true.

We need Mr Aalto's help. Our site must have an architect worthy of its magnificent site. We are desperately in need of a building designed with imagination and appreciation for the landscape. It would be a lasting shame to ruin one of nature's most beautiful monastic sites for want of a great architect.

Please extend our sincere good wishes to Mr Aalto. He has our continued prayers for his good health. We still hope that he will be able to personally visit the site.

Fr Basualbas, OSB
Librarian

DEMARS AND REAY

Architects & Planners

Vernon DeMars, AIA Architect
Donald P. Reay, FRIBA Architect
John G. Wells Architect
Edward J. Bennett Architect

August 25, 1965

Mr. Alvar Aalto
Munkkiniemi
Helsinki, Finland

Dear Alvar:

It has been all too many years since we have talked or had a drink together. (Wasn't the last time at Lock Ober's in Boston?) More than once we've missed each other by a few days - in New York, Stockholm, London.

But then I've kept track of you thru Fritz Gutheim, publications, etc. and have followed your work with continuing admiration. For my part, I am busy with things that you would enjoy (as concepts anyway.) A Student Center that we've worked on for 8 years now, center-city housing and 2 new towns - one of them for 100,000.

My colleagues on the latter projects will both be in Helsinki in the next few days or weeks, to see among other things, Tapiola, for obvious reasons related to our own projects.

Lawrence Halprin is a Landscape Architect - (in my opinion the Landscape Architect in the U. S.) awarded a special medal by the A.I.A. two years ago for his distinguished practice and wide influence. He was one of Tommy Church's young men in San Francisco. You must have met Tommy thru Bill Wurster when he was making Landscape Architecture an important creative force in the west.

Now, I really feel that Lawrence Halprin has left the master behind. He's done a fine book on the urban environment: "CITIES". It has many photos from our Student Center, a thing we worked on together.

Halprin will be in Helsinki on August 29th thru the 31st and is now staying at Hotel Ryberg, Drottninggaten 53 in Stockholm. It is because I know you would enjoy meeting him that I write you. I am hoping now that you are not in Italy - but for your sake, may you go there soon.

My other colleague on the new towns is Lawrence Livingston, Jr. a City Planner, who will be in Helsinki on September 28th thru October 1st. It is possible you already know him. He was a student in City Planning at M.I.T. during "our" time together there in 1948 when he was already a graduate law student.

Mr. Alvar Aalto
August 25, 1965
Page 2.

He is one of the few private City Planning practitioners in the country and has done numerous plans for towns and cities, large and small, in the west.

The three of us came together to plan a town called "Waipio" on Oahu in the Hawaiian Islands, where the Chinese population has put the word "HUI" into common use for a business syndicate or for such a combination such as ours: a City Planner, an Architect and a Landscape Architect. I hope it will be possible and convenient for you to meet two members of the HUI this fall. For the third member, I hope it will not be too long in the future*.

All best regards,



Vernon DeMars

VDM:sw

cc: Lawrence Halprin w/encl.
Lawrence Livingston, Jr. w/encl.

*Can't we persuade you to come here in 1966 during the inaugural year of the new building that we have done for the College of Environmental Design which, you may know, includes the departments of Architecture, City Planning, Landscape Architecture and Design. The building has been named Wurster Hall in honor of Bill and in Grateful Memory of Catherine.

Posti- ja
Post- och telegrafverket
Posti- ja
Posti- ja
Post- och telegrafverket

K/W

9.30 jälk.

ARKKITEHTITOIMISTO
Alvar Aalto

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LENNÄTIN
TELEGRAFEN
Hki - Hfors

J. Korpimäki
SOITTEEN
TELEGRAMMAT

Alvaraa T. 480123
Prof. Alvar Aalto
Arkkitehtitoimisto
Tililinjassa

1965 VIII 31 07:06

ALVARAA MUNKKINTIE 20 KI X

1965 VIII 31 09:43

DEAR MR AALTO THE SCHOOL YEAR BEGINS ON WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER
FIRST. FATHER ABBOT REQUESTS INFORMATION ON DATE FOR PRESENTATION
OF LIBRARY PLANS TO THE MONKS EARLIEST POSSIBLE. CONSTRUCTION
IS MOST IMPORTANT. DELETE LECTURE HALL FROM CONSIDERATION IN
CLASSROOM BUILDING

FATER BARNABAS MT ANGEL ABBEY ST BENEDICT OREGON

ma - Telegram
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CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a fast message unless its deferred character is indicated by the proper symbol.

WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

(55) 4-60

SYMBOLS

DL = Day Letter

NL = Night Letter

LT = International Letter Telegram

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FATHER BARNABAS=

MOUNT ANGEL ABBEY STBENEDICT (ORG)=

1965 SEP 1 PM 12 17

MR AALTO WOOD BE PLEASED PRESENT PERSONALLY LIBRARY
PLANS AND DISCUSS PROBLEMS CONFIRMED BUT WILL NOT BE
ABLE TO VISIT UNTIL LATE NOVEMBER BEST GREETINGS FROM
MR AALTO=

SECRETARY=

845-3221
to Alby
13

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

**Mount Angel Abbey
Library**

Saint Benedict, Oregon

October 21, 1965

Alvar Aalto
Munkkiniemi
Helsinki, Finland.

Dear Mr. Aalto:

Father Abbot and the whole Community are most happy that you will be personally presenting the plans for the library at the end of next month.

We are gratified to hear that your health now permits you to travel. We sincerely hope that you will be able to spend a few days with us.

Would it be possible for you to give us the date, time and place of your arrival? Father Abbot and others are in demand as speakers in different parts of the country and they want very much to keep their schedules free for your visit here. It will be a great occasion for Mt. Angel Abbey.

If there is anything we can do to make your visit here more enjoyable please let us know.

Sincerely

F. V. Bandras, O.S.B.

Alvar Aalto

**Architect
Munkkiniemi
HELSINKI
Telephone: 480123
Cable: ALVARAA**

November 12, 1965

Father Barnabas, Librarian
Mount Angel Abbey
St. Benedict
Oregon

Dear Father Barnabas:

Enclosed are two photographs of Mr. Aalto. We prefer the smaller, more informal one; you will agree.

We would also recommend that you set down in a letter to us the material we discussed on the phone (as well as any further information), it was difficult to hear everything clearly.

We send our greetings.

Yours sincerely,
ARCHITECTURAL OFFICE ALVAR AALTO

Erity. Vasto

**Mount Angel Abbey
Library
Saint Benedict, Oregon**

November 23d

Mr Erik Vartiainen
Studio Alvar Aalto
Munkkiniemi, Helsinki
Finland.

Dear Eric,

As per your note attached to the photo you sent I am noting the important points of our telephone conversation.

First of all there is the note of great urgency! A New York firm under contract to us in connection with other future buildings development has informed us that a great amount of money is dependent upon the earliest possible presentation date of the library plans and a speedy construction date.

They are not satisfied with the answers I have been able to give them. The Abbot has asked that we do everything possible to have the plans before the end of November. After my conversation with you I called Mr Aalto in Florence. He assured me that we would hear from him by cable or phone by the 16th. I called again to Florence to find that Mr Aalto was not well. He said that he would dictate a letter and contact his office, that we would hear from him by Monday. Today it is Wednesday.

I am very sorry to cause Mr Aalto any more pressure or anxiety. I sincerely hope that his condition is not serious or getting worse.

In regard to your question about the service road to the kitchen and utilities at the monastery side entrance, presently occupying part of the building site, I said that if in Mr Aalto's opinion the approach from another road would have major esthetic advantages we would be interested.

I think you should know that there will be a certain hesitation to accepting any major road which would allow the area behind the monastery to be open to any but tradesmen or delivery trucks. We have a feeling about tourists or visitors invading the private area behind or surrounding the Abbey garden in the area of the East water-tower. This is not to say that it couldn't be done. I am simply stating the feeling about the privacy in the back garden. This might be of value to you in your planning.

There is the great pressure for the "by the end of November" deadline for presentation. Tell Mr Aalto that we are not normally a high pressure organization, nor are we difficult to work with. We look forward to Mr Aalto's coming with the warmest anticipation. I think he will find it not too nerve-racking or physically strenuous.

I hope you will be able to accompany him. It will be a real lark if you can. Thanks for your personal help with this all out effort.

I hope all went well with the presentation of the 22d.

Sincerely,
Father Parnabas O.S.B.
Father Parnabas, O.S.B.

CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a fast message unless its deferred character is indicated by the proper symbol.

WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

1201 (4-00)

SYMBOLS

DL = Day Letter

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LT FATHER BARNABAS LIBERARIAN MOUNT
ANGEL ABBEY STBENEDICT (ORG)=

PROFESSOR AALTO INSTRUCTED TO INFORM HE WILL NOT BE ABLE
TO VISIT UNTIL SPRING STOP WILL REVUE PROSPECT MONDAY
SEND CONST STOP DRAWINGS ETC AFTER=

ALVARAA.

527-2183
845-2221

CM

Adve
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THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

Dear Father Barnabas,

Again an unofficial letter. You should be presently receiving a set of drawings of the "new" library project for your looking over. If you find some drastic aspect let me know immediately. In a few days we will ship you a gloss print set for presentation with a written explanation as well as a perspective included. Mr. Datto will not be able to undertake such a long journey until coming spring. I expect we will be there for approx. 6 months in detailing the building and then proceed to the West Coast for completing the drawings according to local systems - so const. date should be 10 mos. - 1 year. As we proceed with the project here I expect several finishes

changes to take place - but the overall scheme will be as shown.

We have recommended that the classroom building be placed elsewhere, most likely the opposite slope - it is just too crowded on this same slope.

Also the service traffic could have to circle the hill top - but this we are still exploring as we study the more detailed inting. I am now free of all other projects and expect another American to join us, so together we shall speed up the library project, and two architects will be working with us to refine the project.

I would still like to construction section of the Priest House Bldg. the architects should have me to help as determine the local construction - Finnish construction is quite unique.

Yours Sincerely

Comments on Mount Angel Abbey Library Plans by Alvar Aalto, dated
20 December 1965

1. The subject plan is quite successful in carrying out the "Statement of Program". The arrangement of space and the footage assigned to the various functions accords closely with the program.
2. The concept of a "reading well" descending from the main floor to the lower floor in two stages is an unusual one. It offers interesting possibilities from an aesthetic point of view and may be very appropriate in this particular situation. Functionally, it is wasteful of space in that this treatment provides only half the usable space which could be achieved by having two full floor levels. I realize that the staff at the control point will be able to exercise visual supervision over virtually the entire public area of the building. Is this kind of supervision an important consideration in this library in view of its special clientele? I feel I must call attention to the "reading well" even though it does offer intriguing possibilities and the decision appears to have been made.
3. The Vertical arrangement of "receiving, bindery, and cataloging" is good. It places these related activities together with good vertical communication by lift. The librarian's and the secretary's office are well placed although both are of somewhat unusual shape. Judicious placement of furniture, office equipment, etc., can probably be used to reduce the long, narrow look.
4. The entrance, lobby, and display area leading to the control point are satisfactory.
5. Is the control point to function as the point where books are to be charged out? If so, will the volume of traffic and accompanying noise be disturbing to the readers seated below? The control point requires further detailed study in terms of the activities which will be performed there. Where will books be returned? What provision for charging tubs? Shelving for books being discharged?
6. What about a reference center for service to users? Or is the staff at the control point scheduled to assist readers in their use of the card catalog and reference books? Should there not be a desk for a reference librarian, preferably adjacent

to the card catalog and to the "reference collection"? If this reference function can be served from the control point, a possible location for the "reference collection" would be the long wall extending some 100 ft. at approximately a 45 degree angle from ~~the~~ near the control point.

7. The concept and placement of the lounge-browsing area is good.
8. The placement of the microfilm laboratory on the lower floor is good. Similarly, the microfilm library on the main floor.
9. The area labelled "vertical file" is something of a puzzler. Usually vertical files are rather heavily used and require the service of a staff member. In this isolated location, this might be difficult. In any case, it would be advisable to eliminate the fixed wall dividing the vertical file room from the reading area in order to provide greater flexibility. A satisfactory divider can be achieved by the use of standard height shelving with a back panel.
10. It is realized this is a preliminary drawing as far as the placement of shelving is concerned. It should be clearly understood, however, that standard free-standing steel shelving is to be used. This comes in multiples of three foot sections and will require placement accordingly.
11. The lower floor shows "closed carrels". This requires study. They could be extremely unattractive lined up and extending above the lower window line. What kind of "closed carrels" are contemplated?
12. "Open carrels" shown for the main floor are presumably to be the free-standing type. With the present window line a person seated at a carrel desk would not be able to look out of the window. This seems too bad in view of the scenery. The three groups of four carrels each extending into the reading area seems to clutter up the area.
13. Windows. Reference has been made to windows in the two preceding items. Actually, the only place where a standing person could see directly through a window would be at the top of the steps leading from the entrance lobby, or by looking downward at an angle from the control point through the window of the lower floor. Persons seated on the two ~~xxxx~~ levels in the "reading Well" could look through the window of the lower floor. Perhaps there is an artistic implication here - one looks straight

across while standing in the lobby, up to the sky from the control point or main floor, or down through the lower floor window from the control point or the "two reading well" levels. Would it not be possible to increase fenestration, to take advantage of the view and natural light?

14. What are the pyramidal openings in the roof line? Skylights?
15. Are three stairwells necessary? They seem wasteful of space. Could not adequate vertical mobility be achieved by eliminating one stair and moving the remaining two toward the center of the building?
16. The possibility of using carpeting as floor covering in major public areas should be considered. Although the initial cost is higher, maintenance is lower. Another consideration is the noise reduction factor in carpeting.
17. In the basement it would seem wise to excavate back to the line coming down from the end of the control point. In view of the existing slope this would not require much additional excavation and it would provide more space for future expansion of book storage. Library buildings are never large enough!

Carl W. Hintz,
Library Consultant
19 February 1966

COPY

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Posti- ja lennätinlaitos

Post- och telegrafverket



Posti- ja lennätinlaitos

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LT

ALVARAA ALVAR AALTO MUNKKINIEMI HELSINKI

Alvaraa T. 480123
Prof. Alvar Aalto
Arkkitehtitoimisto
Tiilikmäki 20 Hki 33 X

LENNÄTIN TELEGRAFEN Hki - Hfors

1966 1 18 12:05

DELIGHTED WITH NEW LAYOUT MAGNIFICENT CAN WE BEGIN CONSTRUCTION

IN SPRING WHERE DO YOU PROPOSE CLASSROOM BUILDING SEATTLE FIRM

CAMPUS PLANNERS TO ASSIST ROAD ROUTE HASTE NOW URGENT

FATHER BARNABAS MT ANGEL ABBEY ST BENEDICT OREGON

CFM LT

agram

Sähkösanoma - Telegram

Sähkösanoma - Telegram

Sähkösanoma - Telegram

Sähkösanoma

Alvar Aalto

**Architect
Munkkiniemi
HELSINKI
Telephone: 480123
Cable: ALVARAA**

January 29, 1966

Father Barnabas, Librarian
Mount Angel Abbey
St. Bebedict
O r e g o n

Dear Father Barnabas:

We acknowledge receipt of your telegram informing us that the project is suitable to you.

We shall now procede to prepare the "american style" working drawings here in the office and by June I should arrive to the West Coast with the drawings for consultations and subsequent additions and revisals to said drawings. Construction would then begin after due bidding time. After the initial preparatory work on the coast Mr. and Mrs. Aalto would make their visit.

We would now like to make official contact with the firm of Demars, Hardison and Wells of Berkeley, California to engage them as our consulting architects; in this we ask for your agreement.

Sincerely yours,

ARCHITECTURAL OFFICE ALVAR AALTO


Erik T. Vartiainen

**Mount Angel Abbey
Library
Saint Benedict, Oregon**

February 3d, 1966

Mr Erik T. Vartiainen
Architectural Office of Alvar Aalto
Munkkiniemi,
Helsinki, Finland.

Dear Erik,

I presented your letter to Father Abbot. He agrees that you should proceed with all possible haste with the working drawings and affiliation with the American firm.

Our Library Consultant is Carl Hiltz from the University of Oregon. I mentioned him to you. He has since been designated Director of Libraries of the Oregon State System of Higher Education. He has been studying the layout and I am momentarily expecting a phone call from him to determine the time of our going over the plans with him.

I think you have done a brilliant layout.

At this time the current second thoughts and reactions to the plans are these:

1) The proposed alternate route or access to the service area of the kitchen is under serious study. It seems likely that Beck and Associates, Planning Counsellors from Seattle, will present a suggestion with cost estimates of a road around and below the library. What proposals they may make will be given serious consideration. Who can say what they may come up with. Our building schedules are now critical. The pressure here for speed is now intense. It is close to panic. This firm has been employed by the New York Development firm which is now completing its organization of a Board of Directors etc., etc., There is currently an eight million dollar expansion on the boards. This is a ten year program which may likely be completed in five. Part of this panic is laid at my doorstep.

I believe in Mr Aalto, as do most of the community. The three year delay in our building program has come at a most critical time, however. I have no regrets. This Aalto building will be worth it. This is the greatest tribute we can pay to Mr Aalto.

Things are getting out of hand, however, in the rush to plan the addition to the monastery, the separate complete Prep School unit, Gymnasium, etc., etc., There is a unit to be done in Idaho, one in Mexico. No architect has as yet been engaged to design these units. Beck and Associates of Seattle is also an architectural firm, however.

My greatest hope was that Mr Aalto would have been interested in this over all project. The great pressure of his work and his failing health seem to have ruled out this possibility.

The Seattle firm is now engaged to study the need, program the buildings and determine the sites. The placing of the Classroom building is a source of agitation to them. They are in an awkward position in the over all program. As yet the Classroom building site remains in the hands of Mr Aalto. There is question whether Mr Aalto plans to consider this problem. It was an imposition on our part. He has never agreed to it. But we have asked him and, I think, cannot honorably place the question in other hands until we have heard from him on this point.

I, personally, think that if Mr Aalto were to visit the Abbey within the next few weeks

**Mount Angel Abbey
Library
Saint Benedict, Oregon**

he could clear up much confusion and, planning wise, recover the ball for a more beautiful and magnificent Mt Angel Abbey.

This Seattle firm is an excellent one. Do not misunderstand me. The two associates who have been here off and on are closely and highly connected with many professional organizations. One is past president of the Seattle AIA, the other has been the author of many of the building codes in Seattle, Chairman of the City Planning Commission, Urban renewal, etc., etc., One of the library buildings in Seattle was recently finished by Morse. The man is good. He has imagination and sensitivity. He is, however, no Alvar Aalto.

2) The second point brought up in regard to the building is the possibility of a windbreaker directly in front of the main entrance. This faces directly into winds of up to seventy miles an hour not infrequently. Doors have been torn from their hinges. The seminary doors are constantly being readjusted and reset because of the vicious wind. The double door we have been told is not a completely adequate answer. If it is possible, design wise, something could be worked out to serve as a buffer or shelter immediately in front of the entrance.

3) It has been suggested, and I agree, that the basement area might be extended back to include the additional space directly under the extension of the lower floor. That is, the basement area might have the same dimensions as the floor above without the wing area. This could provide additional future expansion without greatly expanded cost.

4) the lavatory for monks could be eliminated.

I am including a photo of a development sketch for the High-school unit.

Sincerely,
Fr Barnabas
Fr Barnabas, O.S.B.

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Alvaraa T. 480123
Prof. Alvar Aalto
Arkkitehtitoimisto

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ERIC VARTIANEN CARE ALVARAA HELSINKI Tiilimäki 20 Hki 33 X

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LETTER SHOULD ARRIVE TODAY PLEASE SEND GLOSS AND EXPLANATION

PLAN SUGGEST IMMEDIATE CONTACT DEMARS REGARD ROAD NEED

ARCHITECTURAL REPRESENTATIVE FRIENDLY AALTO ANTICIPATE CONFUSION

AND UNCERTAINTY.

FATHER BARNABAS

COLL AALTO

February 10, 1966

Mr. John G. Wells
Demars and Wells
2161 Shattuk Avenue,
B e r k e l e y 4,
California

Dear John:

The Oregon project has now suddenly become very timely - we have sent the project drawings to Mt. Angel Abbey.

Father Barnabas, the librarian there, has asked us to contact you immediately - he seems to need moral support on behalf of the project, according to a telegram from him he anticipates confusion and uncertainty at the Abbey and needs the support of our collaborateur.

The present project naturally will undergo refinements as it is developed further in larger scale but in the main the project will remain as shown.

According to Father Barnabas our recommendation of diverting the general service traffic (the library is served directly as shown) around the abbey and entering from the "rear", so to speak, will meet some opposing aims. We had found maintaining of the exist road impossible and forcing the road out ^{beyond} the library equally unsatisfying - the attempt is to free the library proper into the "secluded nature" of the hillside among the trees without the disturbance (psychological and physical) of directly adjacent traffic.

Could you, then, contact Father Barnabas at the Abbey and get the complete picture of the road situation as well as of the state of the whole project.

Cont.....

Cont.....

No action has been taken by this office on the general planning of the Abbey area. Mr. Aalto has now been again asked by Fr. Barnabas to dwell in the matter. But we now find that a local Seattle firm has carried the planning as far as a birds-eye perspective of their proposed buildings for the new high-school campus adjacent to the Abbey. This means that Mr. Aalto would find himself in a touchy situation if he were to step in and give over all design directives which would likely be contrary to what has already been presented by local competent responsible architects.

We would appreciate if the sent under-separate-cover project plans were checked by you in terms of building code requirements and for any practical recommendations that you might entertain. Perhaps one of your engineering consultants could look over the plans for a preliminary survey of the structural needs (concrete frame with exterior in brick) - the larger scale plans would be sent as soon as they are ready here.

A set of working drawings prepared by your office for some project of equal scope would be welcome to guide us in setting up our drawings here. The intent being that we prepare the working drawings as far as possible here under Mr. Aalto's guidance and then I would arrive there for a review of the drawings and all the subsequent revisions and additions. From then we would proceed in the usual manner into bidding and finally into the construction.

Finally, we found the classroom building (which was later introduced by the Abbey) to be downright impossible to locate on the same hillside as our library and recommended its placement on the opposite hillside across from the minor seminary and adjacent to the gymnasium.

With regards

Sincerely,

ARCHITECTURAL OFFICE ALVAR AALTO

Erik T. Vartiainen
Architect

**Mount Angel Abbey
Library
Saint Benedict, Oregon**

February 17th, 1966

Erik Vartiainen
Architectural Office Alvar Aalto
Munkkiniemi, Helsinki
Finland.

Dear Erik,

I received a telephone call from Demars on Tuesday. I am flying down to Berkeley tomorrow morning for a personal visit and a filling in on our problem here.

"We have succeeded in getting across our point of a hands-off policy in regard to the location of the library and the roadway. The route you suggest will I think prove unacceptable at this time. We will have to figure or plan to provide a reasonable "temporary" route around the lower side of the building. Our whole road structure will be reviewed by this planning group. If our building is on its way there will be no difficulty or a relatively little difficulty from that quarter. There are a few loud voices of continual protest. I suppose that this can be expected whatever location would be chosen.

Our chief complaint and at the bottom of all dissatisfaction has been the delay and postponement. Please note this carefully, Eric, we don't have much leeway in further delay or postponement. I have told the community that you would appear here in June with the plans. For the sake of the building I hope that there will be no more postponement.

Our consultant has outlined a few items of which you must take note. They are desirable from the standpoint of good library practice.

1. First of all is the question of standard steel shelving. For the sake of mobility and interchangeability when this is required the shelving must be standard three foot units. The standard steel shelving is fitted to take wood end panels. When in position with wood panels a careful observer has to look twice to distinguish. Wood shelving is not excluded but it must be in standard units.
2. A question has been raised in regard to the carrells (closed). Could these carrells have at least a "port-hole" view of the valley. Would this destroy the effectiveness of design.
3. The center stairs could be eliminated if the stair on the East side were moved toward the center or end of the first bay, opposite the non-wall backed carrells.

There are many questions we have in regard to the feasibility of certain minor changes. These have to be weighed against principles of design. We do not expect nor do we want in any way to interfere with those things which the architect says must be for the sake of integrity of design. These principles we respect. In between there are areas which might be clarified.

4. These questions and the interpretation of the building could best be done in a personal meeting. Would it be possible for you to come to the Abbey? If you cannot do so, it might be better for the success of the building and its speedy completion for me to come to Helsinki.

By all means proceed with the detailing of the building. We are too far behind now.

Mount Angel Abbey
Library
Saint Benedict, Oregon

There is no question about our building or about our architect. The question has been one of possible interference with the resultant explosion which might follow.

We have now headed this off in the bud. Further delay and postponement would most certainly prove disastrous, however.

I was notified of the letter from the Planning Consultants. I saw that letter. These people now have taken note of the fact that they are to consider the library built and in the location indicated in Mr Aalto's plan. They are not to consider the road as such until that phase of their planning which includes the overall road system.

The politics among second guessers is the same everywhere. These number has increased with the delay.

Sincerely,
Fr Barnabas O.S.B.
Fr Barnabas.O.S.B.

Alvar Aalto

**Architect
Munkkiniemi
HELSINKI
Telephone: 480123
Cable: ALVARAA**

February 17, 1966.

Father Barnabas, Librarian
Mount Angel Abbey
St. Benedict

Dear Father Barnabas:

Having conferred with Mr. Aalto on the question of over-all planning of the Mount Angel Abbey area, I can inform you that he would be willing to act as a consultant but that naturally he would do so only if he were collaborating with a firm of stature which he knew personally, with which he is familiar - a natural would of course be Demars and Wells. But the matter we question is how the local firm is involved in this planning - we do not wish to place Mr. Aalto, nor the local firm, in a difficult position if Mr. Aalto were to now step in and give planning directives that would likely conflict with those already presented by the local competent architects.

We would, after we find out the exact situation, and if it is agreeable with you, contact Demars and Wells to discuss if they would be willing to undertake the work with us.

In any case we prefer to handle only the library building here; and still recommend placing the classroom building on the opposite hillside near the Gymnasium. And further we would like to see a plan of the area with the proposed high school buildings - we find the aerial perspective deceptive in scale and appearance - as such it would tend to greatly influence the placement of our classroom building.

We have contacted Demars and Wells on your behalf, also the gloss prints, with your recommended minor changes with which we certainly are in agreement, included, will arrive in a few days.

Sincerely yours,

ARCHITECTURAL OFFICE ALVAR AALTO


Erik T. Vartiainen
Architect

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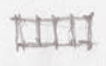


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ERIK VARTIAINEN ALVARAA HELSINKI

Alvaraa T. 480123
Prof. Alvar Aalto
Arkkitehtitoimisto
Tiilimäki 20 Hki 33 X



WILL ARRIVE HELSINKI TO DISCUSS PLANS WEDNESDAY

FATHER BARNABAS MT ANGELY ABBEY

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CLASS OF SERVICE

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WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

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SYMBOLS

DL = Day Letter

NL = Night Letter

LT = International Letter Telegram

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LIBRARIAN ANGEL ABBEY BENEDEKT OREGON=

PROFESSOR AALTO IS AWAY WILL BE IN HELSINKI END OF THIS MONTH BEST COME THEN WILL INFORM FATHER=

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THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

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ALVARAA ERIK VARTIAINEN MUNKIEMINI HELSINKI

SCHEDULED MEETINGS TURN ON CONFERENCE WITH YOU ARRIVE 1030

PM WEDNESDAY

FATHER BARNABAS

COLL AT 1030

Post- och telegrafverket



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Sähkösanoma

It has been a long cold winter in Finland. Spring is now beginning. The thaw is on.

On February 17 a letter arrived from Aalto's office informing us that DeMars and Wells of Berkeley had been contacted as associates for our library building project. Shortly thereafter I received a call from Vernon DeMars. There seemed to be a few difficulties and uncertainties in this association. (They were prudently and cautiously examining the situation.) We, too, as you know were privately discussing the delay, roadway, building site, our frustration, the development planners, etc., etc.,. Father Abbot then gave me permission to confer with DeMars and Wells in Berkeley.

It was not clear to DeMars exactly how the building plans would progress through the engineering stage and how the building supervision would be handled from their office on our building budget. Their office would consider a building of this size as requiring a three day a week inspection.

Mr. DeMars and Mr. Wells went over the prospect with me and charted a possible temporary solution to the road problem. We wanted a feasible temporary route around the site until further planning could develop a permanent road situation. It was beginning to look like a difficulty which might further delay the building of the library.

I explained the function of the different areas of the plan in terms of our library needs. I explained the relationship we have, to a limited contract basis, with Beck and Morse on our planning. I discussed our feeling about the prolonged delay in this building project.

DeMars is an old friend and admirer of Alvar Aalto. They shared an office at M.I.T. They have a mutual respect for the ability and completed work each has done. (The profession agrees with this judgement. Both have won many awards.)

Mr. DeMars' pedigree and pictures of his buildings have now been in the Fathers' Recreation Room for a week.

Mr. Aalto's suggestion that our classroom building be placed on the South side of the hill opposite the Minor Seminary building seemed to disregard our thinking about a possible future expansion on the Southwest side and the work of future campus development planners. The endless delay and the postponement of our project over the last three years has caused us, shall we say, to lose a little of our good humor and enthusiasm. Since the proposed roadway in back of the monastery violated a long expressed feeling about our East side privacy, this too required discussion.

Mr. DeMars suggested that the squeaky wheel gets the grease with Mr. Aalto. He also indicated that Mr. Aalto reacts to people and personal contact. He is a warm personality with concern for persons rather than things.

Upon my return from Berkeley, Father Abbot agreed that I should take our problems to Helsinki and do what I could to expedite the project, clarify the situation in regard to campus planning, and in general find out more about the plans.

I departed from Portland Airport on March 8 and returned on March 13. The round trip with expenses cost slightly less than \$1,000.

Mr. Aalto was not in Helsinki when I arrived. I knew this before I left. His office suggested that I come at a later time when Mr. Aalto returned and would then notify me. More delay! Mr. Aalto is most gracious, he considered flying back to Helsinki, but his doctor, who has as much difficulty seeing Aalto as we do, insisted that he stay where he was in Switzerland. A meeting was arranged in Zurich, Mr. Aalto came into the city, the Sabena Airlines arranged my return ticket through Zurich without extra cost and I thus had a conference with Mr. Aalto.

Aalto had arranged for my reception in Helsinki and my stay. I was the guest of his office. His office staff was most generous with its time. All the people there were most interested in our project. They gave me the impression that they were very proud of their "Oregon project".

I was met at the Airport by Eric Vartiainen, whom I had once met at the airport in Portland when he came here. Mr. Aalto sent his private car with his own chauffeur to meet me. I arrived at 11:30 p.m. March 9.

Eric has been in charge of the details of our building from the beginning. Mr. Aalto says that Eric will come with the plans in June and will personally supervise the construction for him. He will work with DeMars on the engineering. He will be with the building all the way.

Mr. Aalto is in his 69th year. He is in good physical health his doctor tells him. His doctor, however, insists that he take longer periods of complete rest. He looks terribly tired. His friends say he is. His hands tremble noticeably at times. His doctor, he told me, says that he may have fifteen years yet if he takes care of himself. "First I rest, and then I die" he said for the benefit of Mrs. Aalto. Apparently she is on the side of the doctor.

He has about thirty people working in his atelier or studio. He has about thirty projects under way. There are twelve buildings in the construction stage. These buildings are spread over many countries.

There is no doubt whatever that Mr. Aalto is most interested in his Oregon Project. I was told that libraries are his pets. He expressed his great interest; he speaks with enthusiasm of his coming. He mentioned that libraries and the place of libraries in our civilization remains constant. Other activities and buildings planned for activities have a changing role, the function and place of a library remains constant. Mr. Aalto's most recently completed building is a library at Rovaniemi on the Arctic Circle. He has two libraries approaching the construction stage, his Oregon Library and the library for the Finnish Technical Institute. The latter is for his Alma Mater. He has been in charge of the completely new campus plan at Otaniemi, a suburb of Helsinki. (See the article or clipping "University Building by a Master Hand" taken from Architectural Record of April '65) He recently completed a library at Seinajoki. (See page 169, L'opera di Alvar Aalto. Milano, Edizioni di Comunita, 1965.)

Mr. Aalto has recently refused to accept other libraries as projects until these two are finished. The reason he gives is interesting. One of the people in his studio having a difficulty might ask the others how they are solving certain problems. He would then copy a solution designed for another problem and the institution would be cheated in not having a solution organically worked out to suit its own peculiar needs.

Aalto is somewhat pleased that international critics are in wonderment about his distant Oregon project. He mentioned again what a magnificent location we have. He said that there was never any doubt about which side of the hill our library should be placed.

upon. "It belongs there" and he made a spreading gesture with his hand. At dinner following our discussion he told Mrs. Aalto, Leonardo Mosso, professor of architecture at the University of Bologna, Mr. Ott, professor at the University of Zurich, that a friend of his from Montreal had told him that the only true gentlemen in America were the Benedictines.

Mr. Aalto expressed his pleasure that I had brought greetings from Father Abbot and community and from his personal friend Vernon DeMars. He stated that Mr. DeMars is a very competent designer whom he respects. He went on to say that as soon as his doctor will permit, he and Mrs. Aalto will be coming. (Mrs. Aalto you will remember is also a licensed, working architect. I gather from his staff that she is also mid-wife to many projects, diplomat and representative between doctor and Aalto, staff and Aalto. She is a very warm, genuine person. She assured me that they would come. She was very genuinely sorry about the many delays and difficulties. The many problems and extraordinary events have been very trying. Things seem to be settling down to normal again. Mrs. Aalto or "Madame Aalto", as Mr. Aalto calls her, is very self-effacing. She remains or tries to remain in the background. All decisions are his.)

HELSINKI

In Mr. Aalto's studio there is a model of the two seminaries and the library building. I took pictures of this model. In due time I will get them developed and in the Fathers' Recreation Room. I was shown a later set of plans than the one sent to us. There were actually very few changes. The circulation librarian's office was moved to the right hand side of the control area near the browsing room. Certain areas are being re-studied.

We discussed at length the problems of the library building, roadway difficulties, our aversion to a road behind the monastery, our concept of the separation of College, Theology and High School. From this discussion the limitations of our building site and our concept of our school organization became somewhat clearer to Mr. Aalto's staff. I again assured them that the over-all planning would not affect the library site chosen by Mr. Aalto. I expressed Father Abbot's doubts about the placement of the classroom building in the light of our thinking about areas for different units of our school.

Mr. Aalto's office chief is a Kaarlo Leppanen. Eric Vartiainen works directly under him. Eric is assisted in this project by John Ridgewell, an English architect. Since the beginning of the year Eric has been giving his full time to our project. He will continue to do so until the building is finished. Everything is subject to Mr. Aalto's review at every major decision. As the building progresses Mr. Aalto more closely supervises its growth. He has at the beginning given a sketch of its major features and design.

The office staff respect our feeling of privacy on the East side or behind the monastery. They agree that this is as it should be. They all agree in principle that the "academic" side on the North should be quiet side. Mr. Leppanen was very frustrated that having such a potential quiet area for our academic buildings we should cut the landscape in precisely this area. "What is more important, the library or da milk"? After reviewing the different possibilities of access to the elevated kitchen area, the steepness of the grade from the North side, the feeling of privacy on the back or East side, he agreed that perhaps "da milk" was more important.

This placement of the library and the classroom was finally outlined, subject of course to Mr. Aalto's review. The library building will be moved in toward the hill almost to the point of the sidewalk. It will be closer to the sidewalk than the Major and not so far as the Minor. The classroom building will be in line with the press building and behind the Minor seminary.

There will be an overhang on the library building serving as a covered walkway between the two buildings and from the point of design pulling the two buildings together. The Church and the seminaries plus library will then take on a new visual relationship.

There will be a terrace around the building for an ambulatory. This will be followed out in design with careful attention to shrubbery to preserve continuity of the hillside by hiding the dividing thrust of the line of the road. They were much concerned about the feeling or aesthetic sense of the quiet area and involvement with the landscape spread out below.

The site and the magnificent view are elements of primary importance in the placement of the building. They would have preferred to place the building slightly out and on the hillside for the sake of involvement in the landscape. The quiet, natural landscape unbroken by the thrust of a roadway figures in their thinking.

I mentioned that comments had been made that the most beautiful aspect of the building will not be prominent since it is on the North side. They were pleased that we liked the architecture. They then added that the outside was because of the inside. It is the interior beauty of the space they are controlling which gives form to the outside.

The idea of a "view" for a visiting motorist, or a crow's nest type of vantage point from the top of the building met with looks of incomprehension. The architecture invites and directs one to explore the beauties of the site. The ambulatory will direct one to the relationship of architecture and site. The viewer will then experience personal involvement in the quiet natural landscape and panorama.

This is how Aalto approaches the problem, and his thinking about the space in the building. A person entering the library will (on a clear day) see the most majestic elements of our view framed in the picture window of the browsing room. This will include the valley below and the Cascade Range crowned with Mt. Hood. Proceeding from this point, a person will enter a pleasant controlled space with an emphasis on quiet and disengagement.

As Mr. Aalto says, he is always in the agony of doubt and uncertainty until he sees the final product, until he sees, "if it works."

There will be windows in the closed carrells. The closed carrells will be worked organically into the periphery or outside wall area. They did not understand that these closed carrells would have ceilings closed as well as closed wall.

OBSERVATIONS AND IMPRESSIONS (personal)

I do not propose to set myself up as an architectural critic. I do propose to give my impressions of a few Aalto buildings I visited. If they sound like the same think you will have to judge their merits according to my precaution here given.

Finland in the long cold winter is overcast and much like Oregon in its dark, dour days. Mr. Aalto has long been concerned with keeping his buildings light and cheerful. The circular designs on the plans are skylights. The tipped roof line on the North side is a light scoop around the perimeter of the top floor. It is a cheerful experience to enter an Aalto building on a gloomy day. The light on the perimeter gives an atmosphere of light, a feeling of coming-into-the-light not a going out of it. The central part of the building has this same effect through the round overhead porthole. It adds a dimension of interest to usually dead space. There is an element of wonderment in the charm of an Aalto interior.

A person wonders how he accomplishes so much with so little. Part of the secret seems to lie in the wedding of function and design achieved by making the function be the design.

There is a sense of friendly, playful atmosphere, but an atmosphere which is somehow classical at the same time.

In addition to a number of Helsinki buildings of Mr. Aalto, I visited one of his most recently completed buildings. It is a library at Rovaniemi. The library is larger than our proposed building. I have some pictures of this which I will place in the recreation room when I finish them. I have some colored transparencies which will allow you to judge for yourself.

The building is magnificent in its interiors. From the standpoint of library administration I do not understand its staff areas. Its "people" area is visually apparent and visually superb. Our fast growing population would dictate that a public library such as this have more mobility. We think in terms of larger and larger. Europeans think in terms of now...and then, perhaps. (I was in Europe for the greater part of eight whole days, you know)

The librarian at Rovaniemi told an interesting anecdote. The Russian delegation came to inspect the newest library in Lapland. The Finnish state building code requires bomb shelters to house the people who might at any time be in the building. The Russian delegation wanted to know "whatever are you doing with a bomb shelter? There will never be any need for such a thing."!

The newest of the buildings of Aalto in Helsinki are the Concert hall, Student Residence, Thermo-technical Laboratory, and the Student Center. The three latter are in connection with the Finnish Technical Institute project. Mr. Aalto won the competition in his design for the whole campus layout. He is personally doing some of the key buildings.

A review in retrospect of Mr. Aalto's work will appear shortly in the Architectural Forum. Eric Vartiainen is the author of the article.

Cardinal Lercaro has asked Mr. Aalto to design a new church in Bologna. It will be the first church in Bologna according to the principles and spirit of the new liturgical constitution. The Cardinal made a big thing of this. Mr. Aalto was much impressed with the "Aalto Day" in Bologna. Civic officials, prelates, etc. He was so impressed that he apparently considered all lesser officials of the Church as monsignors. I was duly invested with the title when introduced to his friends.

TO SUM UP

Eric will be here in June with the plans. Following presentation of these plans, Eric will proceed to Berkeley where he will guide them through the engineering at the firm of DeMars and Wells. Before the engineering is too far advanced but advanced far enough for accurate estimate of building costs, these will be presented to us. Bids will be let locally. Eric will supervise the building construction.

The Aaltos will be here as soon as his doctor will authorize travel. His office thinks in terms of a time following Eric's visit. Mr. Aalto will be here several times according to the way his office envisions it. It is his usual procedure. I think the provision "if his health permits" might be in order.

In his present projects, Mr. Aalto's work is spread from the Arctic Circle to Bagdad, through Finland, Sweden, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Lebanon and America. Building at a distance is difficult. For Aalto it is not unusual. Mr. DeMars comments that part of Aalto's great reputation is that he gets buildings completed.

The latest book on Mr. Aalto will be found in the Recreation Room.

DE MARS AND WELLS

ARCHITECTS • 2161 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, California 94704, Phone 841-7190

March 9, 1966

Mr. Alvar Aalto, Architect
Munkkiniemi
Helsinki, Finland

Re: Mount Angel Abbey

File ref: B 340

Dear Alvar:

I assume that Father Barnabas has now been with you for a few days and that most of the problems regarding your Mt. Angel library have been reviewed.

Perhaps he has told you that we had some moments of doubt as to whether an architect closer to the scene, say in Portland, Oregon, might not have served you better as your local contact.

We have concluded, however, that if you and the Monastery both wish it, we are willing and anxious to see the job through for you.

To this end, we have tried below to provide you with some interim information that may be helpful for discussion with Father Barnabas while he is there with you in Finland.

1. Architectural and Engineering Responsibility

It would appear that the architects and engineers of record must be registered in Oregon, must sign the plans, and will be held legally responsible for the safety and adequacy of the building design. The State of Oregon seems particularly strict in this regard.

Laws governing the practice of architecture in Oregon further require that all drawings and specifications be prepared by or under the personal supervision of an architect with Oregon registration and require that a registered architect provide on-site supervision of construction while the building is being built. (See Par. 671.090, Sub-par. 7, Oregon Administrative Rules)

In spite of all this, we will do our best to make your design intent a reality. I know that this is not the first time that you have had to deal with this problem. (I seem to remember a certain "snake" at M.I.T.)

We will apply for Oregon registration and will plan to retain structural and mechanical engineers from the San Francisco Bay area. We

Vernon DeMars, FAIA **Architect**
John G. Wells, AIA **Architect**

Edward J. Bennett **Architect**
Jack T. Sidener **Architect**
Robert D. Hill

Mr. Alvar Aalto

March 9, 1966

think that proper supervision can be provided either by a resident Clerk of Works plus periodic visits by us and the engineers, or by retaining a local architect to represent us in a limited way.

2. Architect's Fees

We are in the process of analyzing probable costs for the parts of the work which would appear to be our responsibility. We will get this to you in the next couple of days, but so as not to hold up this letter, we can say this much for now:

In this country a building such as the library would require a fee of between 8% and 9%, which, as you know, includes structural, mechanical, and electrical engineering. This fee is intended to cover the architect's basic services for design, preparation of contract documents (working drawings) and administration of construction for the basic building, but is not intended to cover such items as landscape design or the design of special interior furnishings or extensive built-in equipment, which would command a higher percentage fee. The architect would also receive additional compensation for travel, special consultants or engineers not listed above, the preparation of detailed estimates, reproduction of contract documents and other items spelled out in the standard AIA Form of Agreement, a copy of which is enclosed.

The typical cost to the architect for engineering services included within his basic fee on a project like the library would be:

- a. Structural engineering: 1.6% of the total building construction cost.
- b. Mechanical and electrical engineering: 4% of the cost of mechanical and electrical equipment, which on the library might run roughly 28% to 30% of the total cost of construction, resulting in a cost to the architect of about 1.1% to 1.2% of total construction cost.
- c. There would be other miscellaneous expenses not chargeable to the client that would further reduce the net fee available for architectural work, but it would be conservative to assume that they together with engineering services might total roughly 40% of the fee or roughly 3.2% of construction cost, leaving 4.8% to 5.8% for architectural services.

I don't know whether Finnish architectural fees are higher or lower than ours, but in our next letter we will submit for your consideration the typical breakdown of the architect's fee as used here for the various phases of the work, i.e. schematics, preliminaries, working drawings, and supervision.

Supervision must be conducted from here, and since legal requirements almost require the working drawings to be produced here, we are likely to end up with the lion's share of the available fee. I think you may

March 9, 1966

need to add to the phases of the work that you handle in whole or in part an amount that will make the undertaking worth your while and then see if this keeps the totals at a figure acceptable to all.

3. Project Budget and Building Construction Cost

At some point I'm sure that the client will want to set up a budget for the project covering all costs including site work, building construction, fixed and movable equipment, furnishings, landscaping, architectural and engineering fees, surveys and soils reports, the cost of testing and inspection during the construction period, and a reserve for contingencies. To cover the possibility that we may group these costs under different categories than you are accustomed to, we have included an outline of project cost that you may find useful in your discussions with the client as to how much he should budget for building construction and what items are included under that category.

We have also enclosed a very rough estimate of building construction cost and a start at listing building equipment costs based on your sketches dated 2 October 1966. The estimate is very approximate due to lack of complete information but does give a crude indication of costs assuming a bid time of January 1967. Note that we have not included a figure for site development, landscaping or utility extensions. As soon as enough information is available, an estimate should be prepared covering that work as outlined on the enclosed work sheet.

4. Schedule and Timing

a. Schematic Phase:

As soon as you have a viable scheme that you and the client are more or less happy with, we should have structural and mechanical engineers here review it and develop schematic, structural and mechanical systems which can then be sent to you for incorporation and/or revision. We would propose making a code check for fire exit requirements at that time. In fact, we should probably give your present sketches a preliminary review and send our basic comments regarding exit requirements within the coming week.

b. After you have received and evaluated our engineers' sketch schemes and after making the necessary adjustments back and forth, you may wish to start the preparation of a set of design development documents at the scale of the final working drawings, say 1/8" = 1'-0". These could be started in your office so that the design ideas could be developed under your guidance, but they should be completed here, possibly by someone like Vartiainen from your office, so that code and engineering problems could be finally resolved.

We understand that at that time you would come here to give the design development documents your final review before working drawings are started.

March 9, 1966

Possibly you could let us know how much time you will require to complete schematics and the first part of the design development phase. You should allow 2 to 3 months for completion of the design development drawings in our office plus the time required for your review here.

c. Preparation of Contract Documents (Working Drawings):

This phase of the operation would have to be done here possibly with Vartiainen from your office helping us to faithfully develop all your design ideas as you would like to have them. At some point just prior to sending these drawings out to contractors for final bidding, they should be reviewed by you for one last time, possibly by mailing them to you or possibly by sending Vartiainen back to Finland with them.

We would expect working drawings to take about 6 months, to which you should add the time required for your review.

d. Bidding and Construction:

We should allow 4 to 5 weeks for bidding plus another 4 weeks or so for the owner to prepare, execute and record a contract. Construction will probably take from 12 to 16 months additional.

There! It does sound complicated, doesn't it. Did you have any less trouble with the Russians? Well, it will be worth it, just to get you to visit us. The Livingstons, Larry and Joanne, consider their visit with you the high point of their trip last year. He is all ready to join with me in planning your night life in San Francisco this June.

In the meantime we look forward eagerly to being involved with you in a most interesting project.

With very best regards,



Vernon De Mars

ITEMS FROM KONFERENCE WITH FR. BARNABAS

1. Move the building closer up the hillside.
2. Provide for reserve book storage (1 000 vols.)
 - could be directly below control, acces by stairs.
3. Possible lock-out place on roof
 - stairs up.
4. Chair storage for lecture hall.

MEASUREMENTS OF THE OREGON LIBRARY

Area as usable interior space.

(Area of interior walls, duct space and columns
subtracted from overall area inside external walls)

Main floor	21,300 sq.ft.
Lower floor	10,500 sq.ft.
Basement floor	<u>4,200 sq.ft.</u>
T o t a l	36.000 sq.ft.

Cubic area

(To external face of exterior walls, includes
interior walls, ducts and columns)

T o t a l	714,600 cu.ft.
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SCHEDULE

Munkkiniemi:

- a) schematic (1/200) - mid-JUNE
presentation at Mt. Angel
- b) design development - first part
1/100 mid-AUGUST

Berkeley:

- c) complete design - mid-NOVEMBER
development
- d) working drawings(1/100) - mid-MAY '67
- e) bidding and construction - mid-JULY to mid-JANUARY '68

OREGON LIBRARY DESCRIPTION

Basically the building is divided into three sectors: the public, the staff and the library-proper, each according to its separate function.

The public function (benedictina and the rare book lecture hall) is placed directly off the lobby to the right of entry. The rest of the building can be closed off while these spaces entertain special occasions, if so desired. These two rooms would be "totally" designed by Mr. Aalto including the furniture, the lighting fixtures and other interior materials. The skylights in the lecture hall can be covered to allow for the use of projector etc.

On the left of the entry are the various staff functions on two levels. These have a separate entry and an isolated stair connecting the two levels and the basement level, while a service lift also operates between all three levels. Care would be taken to sound insulate the bindery from the other staff area.

The library-proper is placed directly on axis of entry. The fan shape reaches out from the hillside freeing the space from the strict order of the other sectors, this order being reflected on the inner facade which acts as a boundary of sorts along the "academic walk" between the seminaries, the slope allows the utilization of three floors for the library-proper. The basement floor would not be finished construction and as such serve only as storage space until the needs call for the library to expand.

The famed view is not totally neglected, the lounge area offers an unobstructed view. Those not inside the library can partake of the view from the wind-sheltered view deck. The carrels themselves have a high window from which can be looked out.

The structure of the building will be in reinforced concrete, the exterior faced in a local stone material which would be in harmony with the stone of the existing buildings.

A covered walk would connect the library and both seminary buildings and possibly continue connecting all the buildings facing the walk around the hilltop.

Mount Angel Abbey
Library

Saint Benedict, Oregon

March 29th, 1966

Eric Vartiainen
Alvar Aalto Studio
20 Tilimaki,
Munkkiemini
Helsinki, Finland

Dear Eric,

By this time you must be wondering if I made it home. I've been running in fast short circles. Much had to be done, work caught up, etc., etc.,

Before I proceed farther, let me again thank you heartily for all your efforts to make my stay a very interesting and profitable one. I sincerely appreciate all you have done. Please convey my gratitude to Mr Leppanen, Mr Slangus, and to Hector Amorosi. I will never forget our dinner at the Savoy, our trip to Rovaniemi or my coon skin cap borrowed for the occasion. Please mention this fact to Mr Slangus.

Don't forget my coverlet. Tell Kris hello, and thanks loads for her effort above and beyond the call of duty.

When I left you I proceeded to Hamburg and Amsterdam. Everything went according to schedule. I had to leave Amsterdam at 8:30 the next morning. I arrived in Zurich about 10:30. I had a leisurely lunch and looked around the old part of the city for a few enjoyable hours.

I dropped into the Eden O Lac hotel about 4:30 in order to leave word for Mr Aalto that I was in the city and would keep my appointment at 6:00. As I was leaving the Aalto's came in. I tried to excuse myself, telling them that I would come back later when they were organized but they insisted that I stay. I had a very pleasant visit with Mr Aalto while Mrs Aalto took care of those things that women take care of.

Our discussion ranged from my reception in Helsinki, through my visits to his buildings and my Rovaniemi impressions. Mr Aalto again expressed his confidence in your work and the judgement of Mr Leppanen. I told him that I had promised not to talk shop or go into details with him. I expressed our concern that he take care of himself and get properly rested up. I also explained that you had been giving me the bad habit of Cognac and coffee. We had a couple of these together and then were joined by Mrs Aalto. Leonardo Mosso arrived on the scene from Bologna. Mr Aalto then went into conference with him. They insisted that I join them for dinner at a later hour.

At dinner we had a very pleasant time. Mr Aalto assured me that he was pleased with his Oregon project and that as soon as the doctor would permit he would make the trip with Mrs Aalto. He again said that you would be coming with the plans in June, and that you would supervise construction for him. He again expressed full confidence in DeMars. Mr Ott arrived at dinner. I had to catch a plane at 10:30 so I excused myself and Mr Ott drove me to the depot where I had my bag. I proceeded to London without incident, spent a short night at a hotel and was on hand for the Pan Am. polar route at 12:00. This was cancelled and instead of flying to Seattle I ended up at Chicago a la T.W.A. I was able to make a connection with Northwest Orient in about an hour so I was home about 8:30 p.m. Pacific Standard Time having left London at 12:30.

DeMars and Wells arrived on Saturday. Carl Hintz was here from the University of Oregon. We went over the plans. I filled them in on what Mr Aalto had said. They were very

**Mount Angel Abbey
Library
Saint Benedict, Oregon**

relieved I think, to know that you would take care of the supervision, and that you would be on hand in their office immediately after the presentation of the plans in June.

We had a typical winter gale while they were here. I think that they were impressed with the weather element. We went over the site. Mr DeMars took pictures from the different vantage points, from the Windows of the two seminaries etc. I think he was a little surprised at the clump of trees, three large fir off the Major Seminary. These trees will, I think, have to go when the building moves in. I think that this will not cause too much difficulty. In the severe storm we had a few years ago many of the trees we have here were severely weakened. Some of them fell in a much less severe storm some months ago. They broke off about fifteen feet up. We have removed some of our most beautiful trees in the Abbey garden because of the danger that they would fall on the buildings. We are accustomed to the idea that some of these old landmarks have to go.

I think Carl Hintz sensed some difficulty in this regard. When He left the last thing he told me was that I should make sure that those trees went. I think that many of the men would feel a little uneasy about a large investment being jeopardized by these trees.

I mentioned to Vernon DeMars that you would seek some teaching post during the time of the construction. He said that he would write to one of his former associates at the U. of C. I think this man is now dean, at the U. of O.

This about covers everything that comes to mind. Thanks again for the wonderful time in Helsinki.

Fr. Rooney OSB

I will speak to Mr Gilkey about a word for you with the powers at U.of O.

**Mount Angel Abbey
Library
Saint Benedict, Oregon**

April 4th, 1966

Dear Mr Aalto,

It hardly seems possible to me that several weeks have now passed since I had dinner with you and Mrs Aalto in Zurich. There have been many things requiring attention in the library.

I wish to sincerely thank you and Mrs Aalto for the most enjoyable dinner. It was a new and delightful experience for me in so many ways. Thank you for your hospitality to me in Zurich and also for the many arrangements you made for my stay in Helsinki.

I have many good pictures in 35 millimeter color and some large prints of the library in Rovaniemi. I will send some of these prints along under separate cover.

I have promised Mrs Aalto that I would send one of the large "monastic studies" which I am doing. It might prove interesting to you.

You should be receiving or should have received a little gift of some of our Oregon nuts. They are a local product. I will long remember our Cognac and coffee at Eden O Lac.

I hope that you make progress in your ability to learn to play. Our landscape is now very beautiful in Oregon. The shrubs are out in force. The flowering crab and the purple plum, daffodils, crocus, etc., are magnificent in color.

I hope that when you come to Oregon you will allow some time in your schedule to have a leisurely look around the countryside.

Thanks again for your very considerate hospitality.

Sincerely,

Fy Barnabas OSB

April 15, 1966

Father Barnabas, Librarian
Mount Angel Abbey
St. Benedict
Oregon

Dear Father Barnabas,

Thank you for recent visit in Helsinki,
I am pleased that it was a successful one.
It was a great pleasure for Madame Aalto and me
to meet and chat with you in Zurich, we are
relieved to hear that your return trip passed
without undue complications.

We would extend our many thanks for the delicious
gift package, it was enthusiastically received by
the whole family.

A letter dealing with the technical matters of our
project shall arrive later.

Sincerely yours,

J. A.

May 13, 1966

Mr. Vernon DeMars
Architect,
2161 Shattuck Avenue
B e r k e l e y

Dear Colleague,

Thanks to you for the lengthy, informative letter, I have planned to arrange our project so that the design development documents would be carried as far to completion as possible here. Structural - mechanical matters we would keep flexible for finalization there, anyhow our plans would be sent in advance to your engineers.

Due to the many difficulties involved in such long distance affairs, my only possibility is to turn directly to the client in regards to the architectural fee.

For the part of the work done here in Helsinki I shall bill the Abbey in the amount of \$ 24.000, which falls within the standards of the Finnish architectural fee system. Beyond this amount I have ^{no} in further claims; of course my travels are separate expenses.

As concerns the interior matters of the project, I am ready to do the lighting fixtures and furnishings if this were desired by the Abbey; this naturally at separate expense.

After the work here Mr. Vartiainen would arrive with the document drawings in August, and so to say, transfer on to your service until the completion of the project.

At an appropriate time, perhaps as you suggested at the completion of the document drawings there, I would make a trip to you on the West Coast.

May I ask if you find this plan agreeable and can we proceed in this manner?

Yours,

Helsinki, May 16

Dear father Barnabas,

Once again an absolutely unofficial letter prior to one which will be sent by Mr. Aalto. To tell you that the library has gone through a few minor changes - I still feel that the open carrels could be around the outer edge of the "reading well" since you really do need the max. of book space on that main floor - the control area could be raised a bit for better view over the carrels. The project is now so scheduled that I will stay with it here until we carry the design development stage (1/2 scale) to its maximum completion here under Mr. Aalto's guidance - I fear his health will

not allow him many trips
to the States — it will be
August at least before the
Vdgy. is far enough to take on
to Mr. DeMars. However the
final $\frac{1}{16}$ scale drawing will
be shipped to you in June and
can be presented — now I
would not be there unless
you insist — then I should
make the trip back & forth
and get back here to continue
the design development stage —
but I think the project could
be presented without my
presence. I think of utmost
concern is the fact that this
is an actual Vdgy. and must

be developed to its utmost
here under his direction - if
the design development stage
is far enough along then the
working drawings stage can
proceed without much of a
hitch. Mr. Clath is now
for a few weeks vacation in
Italy - after he returns he
will review the project and
it can be sent to you.

And further, what color
is your favorite Stallion
Kin, wants to know so she
can choose the color of the

Blanket ?
"

with best regards,
Erik

P.S. Can the reserve book
storage be immediately below the
control with staff access ?

Will send you copies of the
project for comment prior to
~~the~~ mid-June presentation
package.

Mount Angel Abbey
Library
Saint Benedict, Oregon

June 6th, 1966

Dear Erik,

I have deliberately postponed the answering of your letter of the 16th of May. I discussed the matter briefly with the Abbot before one of his many departures.

He made no definite decision on the matter at the time but indicated his willingness to agree with whatever decision I should make. I think that the decision might prove more important than either of us realize fully.

I have subsequently discussed the matter with him. We both now agree that it is of the greatest importance that you personally make the presentation. There are a number of reasons for this.

The most important reason is that which I expressed to you in Helsinki. The community has been informed that this is the way it would be. From the standpoint of Mr Aalto's honor and reputation and from the standpoint of the dignity of the monastic community here we cannot again ask them to await further development before having an opportunity to enter into discussion with an official representative of Mr Aalto's office.

We have established the point of Mr Aalto's office carrying through his design and projects. It would be imprudent to say the least to cast doubt upon the efficiency and reliability of his organization.

There are certain matters connected with the final authorization of a relatively exact amount of building costs. A preliminary discussion with a representative of the firm in terms of generally estimated costs and possible alternatives in regard to ways of keeping the project within the amount of acceptable budgeting could forestall future delays.

Both parties in this project will come to a better preliminary understanding of what is envisioned. We will both know what to expect in terms of general reaction to the project at this point.

We have never had a preliminary presentation formally made. The community has never had an opportunity to ask questions about points of major interest, design, material envisioned etc. There are certain things they will perhaps want to know in regard to building relationships, conceptions of Mr Aalto about our overall building complex in terms of the design of his building etc. I think courtesy demands that we give them an opportunity to ask these questions before they are presented with the planned and engineered project. It may sound like a formality but in light of the three years this project has been underway I think we owe them this consideration.

We may discover from their reactions that certain changes should be considered before further planning. I think that the major problems are now worked out from the professional librarian's viewpoint. We might get some major insights in terms of the people for whom the library is planned.

This type of reaction can only speed the project to its conclusion. The delay to your work by the personal presentation may prove to be a great saving in time to final clearance of later bugs that may turn up.

Give my regards to Chris. Tell her my favorite stallion color is black with white markings.

Warmest personal regards to you and the staff.

DE MARS AND WELLS

ARCHITECTS • 2161 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, California 94704, Phone 841-7190

207 ml. 6/7/66

June 24, 1966

Mr. Alvar Aalto, Architect
Munkkiniemi
Helsinki, Finland

Re: Mount Angel Abbey
File ref: J 340

Dear Alvar:

The arrangement you suggest in your letter of May 13 for handling our recompense seems generally acceptable to us; that is, you will receive a fixed sum from the client for your efforts. To this will be added your special traveling expenses, etc. The costs for our part of the work would be paid us directly by the client in whatever amount we and the client agree on.

I think we must defer settling our costs, however, until we see the preliminary drawings and with them can negotiate engineering fees, etc.

John Wells and I visited the Abbey to meet with Father Barnabas immediately upon his return from Finland. It was a rainy, windy day -- typical, we were told. I enclose some slides taken on the occasion.

We were initially much concerned with the removal of the large Douglas Fir trees which will be required to accommodate the proposed siting of the library. (See slides #1 - 4) Unfortunately these are the finest trees on the top of the hill. We speculated on possible shifts of the buildings to make it possible to save them. Nothing very satisfactory seemed to emerge as a possibility. I had thought of working them into the northwest notch of the building. This did not quite work with the plan as it is, but in addition, both Father Barnabas and the Abbot showed some concern for building too close to such large, isolated, older trees. They have had one or two blow over in recent history, and they could do considerable damage to a building.

Our conclusion then is that there appears no equally satisfactory alternate site for the library, in spite of all its problems, and the Fathers are resigned to the loss of the trees. It did seem, however, that the library should not be brought too much closer to the main

653100/69

Vernon DeMars, FAIA **Architect**
John G. Wells, AIA **Architect**
Edward J. Bennett **Architect**
Jack T. Sidener **Architect**
Robert D. Hill

Mr. Alvar Aalto
Architect

June 24, 1966
Page 2

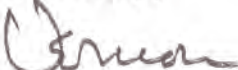
road on top of the hill. i.e. not moved south past the line of the main seminary; otherwise you would lose some of the other trees that show to the right of the Douglas Firs in slide #1. Of course, you must weigh this against other planning and siting problems of the library itself. A move of about 10 feet south would ease somewhat the temporary delivery road solution on the north side of the library, though not very significantly. However, the grade elevation of the road would be well below the library outlook.

Another design consideration is, I think, the desirability of someday completing the covered passageway which has been started from the entrance loggia of the Abbey chapel, the little tile roofed wings with 3 medium arches and 2 slotted openings on each side. (See slide #5). This would make a kind of cloister of the hilltop and would be a most welcome shelter linking the buildings in rainy weather. I think you had some kind of covered connection in mind, but it would be best, of course, if it could link all the main buildings together.

The rough sketch enclosed shows some of the problems discussed. It also reveals that perhaps the entire site development should be reconsidered on top. My dotted cloisters look too far spread and unbalanced. Maybe the roads should be relocated somewhat. Certainly the new building should land in the right place and the other site elements should adjust to it.

My very best regards to you and to Eric whom we will look forward to seeing in the next month or so.

Sincerely,



Vernon DeMars

VDM:kg
Encl.

Alvar Aalto

Architect
Munkkiniemi
HELSINKI
Telephone: 480123
Cable: ALVARAA

July 6, 1966

Father Barnabas, Librarian
Mount Angel Abbey
St. Benedict
OREGON

Dear Father Barnabas,

You will find a set of gloss prints of the project sent under separate cover.

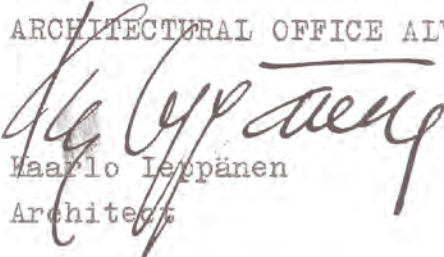
Mr. Aalto regrets that he is not able to travel to The United States at the moment since his time is demanded here in Finland and in Europe and anyhow Mr. Aalto feels that at this stage we should receive answers to our questions as well as other vital information from Mr. DeMars and his engineers and attend to these here, maintaining the discussion of the project by correspondence.

After you would have reviewed and discussed the project there at the Abbey we would gladly answer any questions that might arise and apply the results of your discussion and the information from Mr. DeMars and the engineers to the larger scale drawings which are now underway.

We think this is a satisfactory working method at the moment and trust you would be in agreement.

Sincerely yours,

ARCHITECTURAL OFFICE ALVAR AALTO


Harjo Leppänen
Architect

cc: Mr. Vernon DeMars

E. VARTIANNEN % ALVAR AALTO
HELSINKI 33, FINLAND

PAR AVION

EXPRES
PIKA-EXPRESS

AIR MAIL
SPECIAL DELIVERY



FATHER BARNABAS
MT. ANGEL ABBEY LIBRARY
ST. BENEDICT, OREGON
U. S. A.

Dear Father Barnabas,

Once again I must resort to a strictly confidential letter.

I have presented your letter in detail both to our office chief Leppänen as well as to Mrs. Dalto - and then briefly to Mr. Dalto - but I have been unable to convince them of your need to have a representative of the office there at this moment - I have tried my best - the letters to you and Demars were the outcome of the discussion of the matter here.

I must say I do not understand the thinking here, after all it should be our function to serve the needs of the client! Only thing I can think of is that you try, if you still feel it critical, to write a brief, most direct letter addressed to Mr. Dalto, which then would be conveyed to him by our secretary.

Due to local circumstances, the model of this last phase is only now nearing completion - I thought we could send you photos of it - my original intent had been to bring it along to the presentation that will not now be. The drawings that were sent you could be placed in frames (mat. board - 6" top and sides, 7" wide at bottom) and exhibited. Also a typed explanation will be sent you presently.

Meanwhile we await information from Demars & Wells and I will proceed, after a few days in the country (at relatives), continuously onward in the larger scale.

Kus sends her best,
Sincerely
Erik

95.

You will note that the two lower floors have changed in that we have created additional future expansion & storage space - This would not be finished construction of course - it is a natural to provide for the space since retaining foundation walls will be required in any case - it would be foolish not to use the space. It ~~increased~~ increases the sq. area of the project but I am sure it will be needed for your future expansion since we surely cannot expand outside the present project.

Even if I am in the country I can be reached through our secretary here in case the need arises. Mr. Dalton himself will be in Helsinki on Fri. the 15th.

**Mount Angel Abbey
Library
Saint Benedict, Oregon**

July 29th, 1966

Mr Alvar Aalto,
Tiilimäki 20,
Helsinki 33, Finland

Dear Mr Aalto,

The latest conspectus for the library building is the most beautiful.

I have gone over the layout with our library consultant and he agrees that from the standpoint of function of related areas and overall arrangement it is excellent.

I think that there is no change or revision required. The detailing can proceed.

We were very sorry that Eric was not able to be here in June as we had hoped. I hope that the project can speed forward without further delay. There is much dissatisfaction in some quarters here. The design all recognize as outstanding. They tell me we need a building. Even a poorly designed one is better than nothing. This is the most difficult problem we are now facing.

I have been doing a little preliminary checking on the cuisine and the wine stock situation of some of our better restaurants. We are looking forward to your visit here. I will have to make a few test runs on the coffee and cognac, you know. Just to make sure that it is of the proper quality.

I sincerely hope that your health will not be impaired with the work involved in so many projects. For your sake I wish that our location were not so terribly far away. I remember what you said about long trips and their effect on you. We will try to do what we can to make it as restful as possible.

I am still doing a few things with photography. I have not forgotten the print which I have promised Mrs Aalto. Please give her my regards. She is a very gracious, warm human being. She is my kind of people.

The cultural community is still most interested in our library project. An Aalto building is an event here.

Sincerely,
Fr Barnabas
Fr Barnabas, O.S.B.

DE MARS AND WELLS

ARCHITECTS • 2161 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, California 94704, Phone 841-7190

August 19, 1966

Mr. Kaarlo Leppänen, Architect
The office of Alvar Aalto, Architect
Munkkiniemi, Helsinki
Finland

Project: Mount Angel Abbey Library
File ref: J 340

Dear Mr. Leppänen:

Thank you for your letter of July 6, which I am answering since Vernon has left for vacation. He and I reviewed the plans and your questions together before he left, so my reply contains his ideas and suggestions.

I am going to answer as many of your questions in as much detail as I can now and get this letter off to you. The exact fire exiting requirements will ultimately have to be worked out with the Marion County Building official and Fire Marshal. I am also having our engineers review the plans and as soon as information is available from these inquiries, I will forward it to you. The letters in front of indented paragraphs refer to paragraphs in your letter.

- a) We have never heard further from the Abbey in regard to master planning. The last time we talked to Father Barnabas, we understood that the area on top of the hill and in front of the chapel would be kept as an open space. We understood also that a service road could possibly be built by the Abbey from the main entrance to the kitchen storage receiving area roughly as you have shown it. The major problem with this, of course, is the steepness of the grade from elevation 430 just east of the library to the service yard at elevation 467 and the proximity of the grade to the library.
- b) Vernon doesn't think the building should be moved. As he said in his letter, the two big trees are old and may have to be taken down soon anyway and the smaller ones aren't that important.
- c) The covered walk that you show extending from roughly the minor seminary to the major seminary would certainly be very useful. Perhaps at some time in the future the brick arches at each side of the chapel narthex could be extended to a point roughly in line with the covered walk.

As for fire exiting and building code requirements, we contacted the Marion County Building Administrator and understand that

Vernon DeMars, FAIA **Architect**
John G. Wells, AIA **Architect**

Edward J. Bennett **Architect**
Jack T. Sidener **Architect**
Robert D. Hill

Mount Angel Abbey comes under the jurisdiction of Marion County which plans to adopt the 1964 Uniform Building Code. I believe we send Eric a copy of the 1964 Code, but if you don't have it available, let me know and we will get you another copy. However, the Code is open to considerable interpretation, and we will have to work out everything in detail with the Building Official in Oregon. We thought that we might send some general comments on to you now so that you could be thinking about them, and then when we hear from Oregon next week, we can forward the more specific information.

- d) Assuming that the Building Official and Fire Marshal will assign this a Group "C" occupancy classification and allow 50 square feet per person for computing the occupancy load on the second level, the two stairs that you show from the second level to the main level would be adequate, but they would have to be at least 5 ft. wide, which is the minimum stair width for Group "C" occupancy. We are pretty sure that they will permit the main stairs to be open from the second level to the main level as you show them, but that they won't permit the open stairs to continue on down to the basement level. Hence you will have to consider whether you prefer enclosing the stairs to the basement in the present location, or relocating them some place where they can more conveniently be enclosed. By enclosure the Code means in this case a one hour fire rated enclosure (not glass) containing the stair and all landings and leading -- on the ground level or at some other on-grade level -- to the exterior of the building. No openings are permitted in exit enclosures except doors and openings in exterior walls. Access to the enclosure must be by solid door with a maximum 100 square inches of glass area per door as a vision panel if desired.
- e) We think that the stair in the vestibule containing the elevator might have to be in enclosure from the main level to the second level and are pretty sure that it will have to be in an enclosure between the second level and basement. It would probably ease exit requirements from the second level and basement if there were an exit door from this vestibule to the exterior of the building at the second level. The lecture hall will require two exits separated by at least 1/5 of the room perimeter.

f) and g)

We haven't been able to find any specific requirements for the number of toilets needed in Oregon as yet, but we are researching that point and will keep you informed of our progress. For your immediate use I will list the general requirements of the Uniform Plumbing Code:

Public toilets for office of public building	<u>Water closets</u>	<u>Lavatories</u>	<u>Drinking Fountains</u>
	3 for 36-55 persons	3 for 36-60	1 per 75
	4 for 56-80	4 for 61-90	
	5 for 81-110	5 for 91-125	
Auditoriums	2 for 1-200 persons	2 for 1-200	1 per 100

Note: One water closet may be omitted for each urinal supplied except that the number of urinals may not be reduced below $2/3$ of the number specified.

Rest rooms adjacent to women's toilet rooms are usually considered a desirable feature, but need not be large. Just big enough for a cot if someone should faint.

- g) Again we are checking on Oregon's requirements, but for now California Industrial Code lists the following toilet requirements for staff use:

<u>Persons</u>	<u>Water closets</u>
1 - 15	1
16 - 30	2
31 - 45	3
46 - 60	4
61 - 80	5

One water closet may be omitted for each urinal supplied except that the number of water closets may not be reduced below $2/3$ the required number.

A "quiet" or rest room is generally required for women employees.

- h) The other buildings are done in brick, which is considerably less expensive than stone. We can get samples of brick and stone and send them to you for your selection, but because of the shipping problems, it would be convenient to know what your preferences are so that we could narrow the field a bit.
- i) I will be able to send you our structural and mechanical engineers' comments shortly.

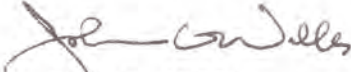
Have you been able to resolve the owner's construction budget and the

Mr. Kaarlo Leppänen, Architect

August 19, 1966
Page 4

estimated construction cost? Unfortunately, we find that on many jobs the owner's budget is quite tight and the project usually has to be revised to meet the money available usually at the detriment of the project. We would strongly advise getting this matter firmed up as early as possible.

Sincerely,



John G. Wells

JGW:kg

cc: Father Barnabas

DE MARS AND WELLS

ARCHITECTS • 2161 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, California 94704, Phone 841-7190

2/10-66

September 28, 1966

Alvar Aalto, Architect
Munkkiniemi
Helsinki, Finland

Dear Alvar:

It was such a great pleasure to see you again and an exciting thing to see your Helsinki buildings "in the flesh" so to speak, and find them to surpass my expectations from their photographs.

I have reported our conversations to Father Barnabas, and we have started to re-examine the program here. My understanding is that the "budget" is still roughly \$1,000,000. I use the quote around "budget" not to be humorous, but to call attention to the fact that other costs--fees, furnishings, site work--may reduce the amount for building construction alone to perhaps \$800,000 plus.

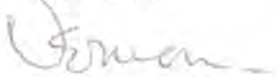
It is evident that the use of economical materials and some simplification of the structural system will not reduce the building cost sufficiently to meet the funds available.

Current plans show a floor area of about 54,000 sq. ft. In view of the budget it is apparent that the scope of the project must be reduced--perhaps to 30,000 sq. ft. of floor area. Major savings could be effected by reducing or eliminating the basement expansion areas. In fact, it may be possible to retain the essential building form and spacial qualities with only a slight shrinking of the main spaces but with drastic reduction of some service areas and provision for expanding them by future construction.

We propose reviewing this line of thinking with Father Barnabas as soon as possible and will let you know what our recommendations are.

My regards to Eric and Keerlo, thanking them for my Tapiola Tour and their cordial hospitality and my thanks to you again for the best smoked reindeer tongue I have ever eaten.

Sincerely,



Vernon DeMars
VDM:kg
cc: Father Barnabas

Vernon DeMars, FAIA Architect
John G. Wells, AIA Architect

Edward J. Bennett Architect
Jack T. Sidener Architect
Robert D. Hill

COPY

DE MARS AND WELLS

ARCHITECTS • 2161 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, California 94704, Phone 841-7190

October 5, 1966

Father Barnabas
Mt. Angel Abbey
St. Benedict, Oregon

Re: Mt. Angel Abbey Library
File: J 340, E 340

Dear Father Barnabas:

We received your letter yesterday containing the programmed areas and have enclosed for your review a tabulation comparing the programmed areas and the areas provided in the scheme dated 6/15/66. You will notice that I have added about 7,725 square feet to the net programmed area to allow for corridors, lobbies, public toilets, janitors' closets and space taken up by walls, partitions and so forth. This is a net programmed to gross area ratio of 0.78 which allocates a little less space to non-programmed uses than does the commonly used ratio of 0.70.

We should probably add a little more space to the reading and stack areas to allow for circulation around the seating units, carrels and so forth. I also wondered about the floor area programmed to accommodate the 200,000 volumes. It works out at 15 volumes per square foot, which seems adequate for a typical stack room layout, but I wonder how it would work out in the fan-shaped space that we have. I suspect that the capacity of the reading and stack space can be increased over that shown by slightly reducing the aisles between ranks. But, as it stands there is 1472 lineal feet of shelving on the main and second levels, which at seven shelves high and seven volumes per foot would accommodate 72,000 volumes.

Assuming that I have interpreted your program properly and that a gross area of 36,500 square feet would accommodate your 200,000 volume collection, we can take a very rough try at the overall project budget, which should be revised and refined several times as more information becomes available.

Vernon DeMars, FAIA *Architect*
John G. Wells, AIA *Architect*

Edward J. Bennett *Architect*
Jack T. Sidener *Architect*
Robert D. Hill

COPY

Father Barnabas
Mt. Angel Abbey

October 5, 1966
Page 2


a) Building construction	36,500 SF @ \$26,00/SF	\$950,000	
b) Built-in equipment			
1. Library shelving for 200,000 volumes @ \$0.40/volume		80,000	
2. Other built-in equipment not included in (a)		40,000	
c) Site development		90,000	
d) Inspection and testing		20,000	\$1,160,000
e) Construction contingency 4% of items (a) through (c)		46,000	
f) Movable furniture and equipment @ \$2.00/SF of net	56,000		
			<u>122,000</u>
Project cost exclusive of architectural and engineering fees			\$1,282,000

From this it seems that the budget is either too low to achieve all of the program objectives, or the figures that I'm using are too high, or perhaps I don't fully understand the objectives. In any event, I think it's pretty certain that the figures I'm using aren't far enough out to allow any hope of getting the building as shown in the 6/15/66 scheme built for \$800,000.

I think that this is the time to look back and take stock of where we are and perhaps re-assess the objectives. Perhaps this could best be achieved by a meeting with you here next week sometime. Would you please call as soon as you return from your vacation so that we can set a date that would be mutually convenient.

Incidentally, we did receive your check; thank you very much. I noticed that you did not return one of the copies of the rate schedule when you returned the letter of agreement, but I trust that you do have a copy for your records, which is all that is necessary.

Best regards,


John G. Wells

JGW:kg
Encl.

cc: A. Aalto

October 20, 1966

Meeting with Father Barnabas, DeMars and Wells

Re: Mt. Angel Abbey Library

File: J 340

Revised Program

A. Reading and Stacks		
1. Stack space	200,000 vols @ 15 vols/SF	13,333
2. Seating	closed carrels 8 @ 88 SF = 704	
	30 @ 30 SF = 900	
	open carrels and table seating 44 @ 25 SF = 1100	<u>2,704</u>
3. Public Catalogue		636
4. Browsing area		400
		<u>17,073</u>
B. Lecture Rooms, etc		
1. 100 seat lecture hall including vault for rare books		2,000
2. Benedictine MA		800
3. Seminar		300
		<u>3,100</u>
C. Special Use Areas		
1. Microfilm library (storage and reading)		600
2. Vertical files		636
		<u>1,236</u>
D. Service Areas:		
1. Cataloguing		750
2. Receiving		500
3. Bindery		750
4. Microfilm lab		300
5. Librarian's office (including secretary)		300
6. Circulation librarian		280
7. Staff room and staff toilets		400
		<u>3,280</u>
	Net Programmed Area	<u>24,689 SF</u>
	Circulation Space, etc. (assumed @ 22% of gross area)	<u>6,964</u>
	Gross Area	<u>31,653 SF</u>

DE MARS AND WELLS

ARCHITECTS • 2161 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, California 94704, Phone 841-7190

October 28, 1966

Kaarlo Leppänen, Architect
The Architectural Office of Alvar Aalto
Munkkiniemi
Helsinki, FINLAND

Re: Mt. Angel Abbey Library
File ref: J 340

Dear Mr. Leppänen:

In response to our letter of October 5th, Father Barnabas met with us in Berkeley on October 20th and we discussed reducing the programmed space to something more in line with the available budget.

We all agree that it is unfortunate to lose the more generous space provided by the most recent scheme, but when it became clear that the budget was fairly inflexible and that the \$1,000,000 would have to cover the cost of construction including site work, built-in equipment, on-site inspection and testing, it became clear that drastic measures would have to be taken. Therefore we proposed a reduction in the program to about 31,700 square feet with the possibility of undeveloped space below of about 8,500 square feet if it can be afforded.

Father Barnabas wanted to review the revised program with his library consultant before sending it on to you. He called this afternoon to say that this has been done and that the smaller spaces will be OK.

I am enclosing Vernon DeMars' rough sketches showing one method of making this reduction, which looks as though it might work out. The budget is very tight according to the figures that I have, so we will have to squeeze everywhere we can, even after reducing the building size to something slightly over 31,000 square feet.

You will observe that the main architectural space has been shrunk only slightly--in fact, we simply traced the outline of the June 15, 1966 plan on the assumption that since it was your design proposal earlier, it might be acceptable again, considering the problem that faces us. We were less happy about shortening the west wing, but will leave that to you for adjustment or some other proposal.

Vernon DeMars, FAIA *Architect*
John G. Wells, AIA *Architect*

Edward J. Bennett *Architect*
Jack T. Sidener *Architect*
Robert D. Hill

Kaarlo Leppänen, Architect
The Architectural Office of Alvar Aalto

October 28, 1966
Page 2

As soon as you send us drawings indicating the changes that you propose to accommodate to the reduced program, we will take a closer look at the structure and at the estimated cost.

Sincerely,



John G. Wells

JGW:kg
Encl.

cc: Erik T. Vartiainen
Father Barnabas

DE MARS AND WELLS

ARCHITECTS • 2161 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, California 94704, Phone 841-7190

November 3, 1966

Kaarlo Leppänen, Architect
The Office of Alvar Aalto
Munkkiniemi
Helsinki, FINLAND

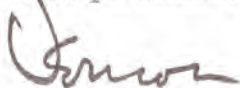
Re: Mt. Angel Abbey Library
File ref: J 340

Dear Kaarlo:

While reviewing the Essen Opera models with you this fall, I mentioned our Theater project in Berkeley. I thought you and Eric would be interested in the enclosed material which I would, of course, like you to show to Mr. Aalto as well. The construction photo was taken last spring before the excavation for the smaller hall (space at lower left) had been started. Construction now is above the third level.

A note on Mt. Angel Abbey: As John said in his letter, in trying to reconcile the budget and the estimated construction cost it has become evident that some major changes in building area will have to be made. Also, from our conversation with Father Barnabas we sense that the Monks are getting quite anxious and that it would be most helpful to him if we could have your general reaction to the problem as soon as possible.


Best personal regards,



Vernon DeMars

VDM:kg
Encl.

Vernon DeMars, FAIA **Architect**
John G. Wells, AIA **Architect**
Edward J. Bennett **Architect**
Jack T. Sidener **Architect**
Robert D. Hill

Maksut-Avgifter	Lähtämistä - För avs.			SÄHKÖSANOMA TELEGRAM		Lähetetty - Avsänd	
	RP W			Vast.ott. nimi Mottaget av sign.		Pvm - Dat 18.12 Klo - Kl 12.30	
	Yhteensä - Summa				Minne - Vart		
Luokka - Klass	Lähtötoimipaikka - Avgångsanstalt	No - Nr	Sanaluku - Ordantal	Jättoaika - Inlämn. tid / Klo Kl.	Nimi - Namn		
Maksunalaiset virkmerk. Avgiftsbelagda tjänsteanom.	Vastaanottaja ja osoite - Adressat och adress				Virka huom. - Tjänsteanom.		
	Father Barnabas Librarian Mount Angel Abbey St. Benedict OREGON				Osoitetoimipaikka - Adressanstalt		
Teksti ja allekirjoitus - Text och underskrift							
Prof. Aalto instructed to inform he will not be able to visit until spring. Will review project monday send const. date drawings etc after							
ALVARAA							
Ei SÄHKOTETA AVTELEGRAFERAS ICKE		Lähtäjän nimi ja osoite - Avsändarens namn och adress					

No 20301 a ASb 100x100 7.63 1102/12

Helsinki 21.12.1966

~~Mr.~~ Vernon DeMars
2161 Shattuck Avenue
B e r k e l e y
CALIFORNIA

Dear Vernon,

Mr. Vartiainen is now returning to his home in California after three years stay at my atelier and he will bring the Oregon project final scheme and present that to you. Because of the long distance separating us I feel that it is fitting to end our involvement in the project now and give you a free hand to continue from here. It is useless for us to attempt to control the working drawings here, your American system is so different from our system. Any changes that are required to meet the demands of American materials and methods are quite acceptable to us.

~~As~~ for my architectural fee, our first suggestion was perhaps too high. Could you discuss this and kindly make a suggestion to me of an appropriate total fee for the work that has been done here. If in the future I should journey there this would naturally be a separate expence.

Yours,

AA

COPY

March 3, 1967

Father Barnabas, O.S.B.
Mt. Angel Abbey
St. Benedict, Oregon

Project: Mt. Angel Abbey Library
File ref: J 340, E 340 ✓

Dear Father Barnabas:

We have reviewed Alvar Aalto's latest schematic drawings for the library and have made another estimate of the probable construction cost. As I'm sure you know, trying to predict the cost of a building at this stage of its development, when relatively little is known about its construction and detailing, is not exactly a precise science. But we have done our best at using a "sharp pencil" as the saying goes and we still find that the estimated cost is substantially over your budget. In fact, very little has happened to make us feel that the building is now less expensive than it was. The gross area has been reduced somewhat, but not as much as we had hoped would be possible. Meanwhile, as we have come to understand the facts better, we have learned that you intend the \$1,000,000 figure to be more of a total project budget than a building construction budget; consequently the net sum available for construction is a little more than \$800,000. And, as time passes, the dollar becomes smaller and smaller, such that a dollar spent on buildings in today's market will buy only about 80 cents worth of construction compared to 5 years ago.

Based on Mr. Aalto's drawings dated 12/10/66 and including the additional items of expense that we understand are to be part of our estimate, such as on-site utilities, surveys, tests, special inspection, the salary of the owner's full-time representative, architectural and engineering costs, and an allowance for contingencies, the project will probably cost \$1,580,000. This figure assumes that we will be ready to take bids in March of 1968 and excludes the cost of library shelving, furniture, landscaping, legal services, insurance and financing.

I'm sure that you can build a typical building to meet or very nearly meet your programmed space requirements within your budget. Our estimate is based on our interpretation of the building shown on the drawings that have been prepared. We don't think the design is in any way an extravagant one, but a great piece of architecture does have certain qualities of space, form, and light that lift it above the ordinary and which in most cases make it cost a bit more than the most expedient solution.

COPY

Father Barnabas, O.S.B.
Mt. Angel Abbey

March 3, 1967
Page 2

We have talked to Erik about the problem and he doesn't know of any way that Aalto's present scheme as such can be reduced to a size that would bring it within the \$1,000,000 budget. That being the case, the alternatives seem to be:

- a) increase the budget to \$1,580,000 or something close to that amount and proceed with the present scheme;
- b) revise the program requirements so that they can be accommodated within a gross area of 24,000 square feet (i.e., the net usable space would have to be reduced to about 18,000 sq. ft.) in order to meet the \$1,000,000 budget and ask Aalto to try another scheme within that area limitation.
- c) A compromise solution between (a) and (b) involving increasing the budget to about \$1,235,000 and reducing the present scheme to 31,000 square feet if Mr. Aalto would agree that the size can be cut by that amount.

I am enclosing comparative costs for the three alternatives and a fourth example, that is, a "typical" building. I am also enclosing as exhibits the data on which we based our estimates for the various alternatives.

When you have had a chance to digest all of this and discuss it with your colleagues, we would appreciate hearing your thoughts, and if you have any questions, be sure to call us.

Best regards,

John G. Wells

JGW:kg { Memo on owner's budget, March 1966
Encl. - { p. 112, Jan/Feb '67 Arch. Forum. Exhibit "A" Comparative Costs for
Alternative Schemes, 3/3/67; Exhibit "B" Development of unit costs, 2/24/67 }

P.S. I am enclosing a copy of a one page article on Aalto from the Architectural Forum.

bcc: A. Aalto w/encl.
E. Vartiainen w/encl.

DE MARS AND WELLS

ARCHITECTS • 2161 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, California 94704, Phone 841-7190

March 10, 1967

Alvar Aalto, Architect
Munkkiniemi
Helsinki, FINLAND

Re: Mt. Angel Abbey Library
File ref: J 340

Dear Alvar:

Erik has just told us of hearing from you and of your plans to be in the U.S. in April. I will speak more of that later in this letter.

I am enclosing the latest estimates which have been sent to Father Barnabas. We have gone to some pains in the past to explain that an architect's estimate is just that: a considered, educated guess. It is based, however, on some previous experience and usually on comparisons with buildings of similar program and scope.

I owe you some explanation of paragraph 3 of our letter of March 3 to Father Barnabas. We have some fear that the Father's library consultant or others (with the best of intentions) may have led him to expect costs per square foot substantially lower than what seems to us must be expected for a building that is something more than a mere storage place for books.

Then, too, when square foot costs are being compared and exchanged, they typically do not include many costs of a finished building: site work, fees, furnishings. It is therefore necessary to be quite precise about what is included in the budget. All this, of course, you know. We have had a little difficulty, however, in pinning down the Abbey on just how much they can spend.

We have just talked to Father Barnabas by telephone after he had received the enclosed material. In summary, his position is as follows:

1. He knows that the building will be more expensive than they at first thought it would be, therefore feels they must limit the area now to 31,000 sq. ft.
2. It is still necessary to provide for expansion space.
3. He still thinks our square foot cost estimates are too high for Oregon. (We have asked him to get us precise data on recent,

Vernon DeMars, FAIA Architect
John G. Wells, AIA Architect

Edward J. Bennett Architect
Jack T. Sidener Architect
Robert D. Hill

Mr. Alvar Aalto, Architect

March 10, 1967
Page 2

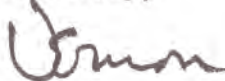
somewhat similar buildings currently being built in the area. If we have been figuring too high, then most of our planning or replanning problems will disappear.)

That is about the story. We will keep you informed.

Now as to your visit. Erik says you would be interested in coming west and getting up to the Abbey. If you would not mind meeting with some students both here and in Oregon, I am sure we can find a way to cover all your expenses to bring you here from the east coast. If you would meet with Bay Area Architects, on whatever terms you prefer--a lecture, seminar, panel discussion, or whatever--I am sure an honorarium can be added to the expenses. Perhaps there is a small exhibition of your work somewhere (either in this country or abroad) that we might bring here to show at the San Francisco Museum of Art during your visit.

Could you let us know the details of your visit and your wishes in this matter. With all best regards and in hopes that your trip to the far west will materialize.

Sincerely,



Vernon DeMars

VDM:kg
Encl.

March 17, 1967

Mr. Vernon DeMars
2161 Shattuck Avenue
B e r k e l e y
CALIFORNIA

Dear Vernon,

Many thanks for your letter and for the other reports I received some days ago.

All designs made for the Mount Angel Abbey are designed to the same standard as the three libraries I have made here during the 3 last years in Finland and the four other libraries I have designed during the last 10 years.

I can understand, that the construction and interior costs can often be more expensive on the west-coast compared to the prices here, but I have such a feeling, that it should be a very normal difference.

The libraries I have designed here are now completed, so I have all reasons to say, that the standard is not too high or too low. It is possible to make the total building more simple formed than the libraries here, but the standard is not the same as here then.

I have few days for possible meetings there for the library and for the other things.

Just in a hurry a few words - you will get a more complete letter next week.

Yours,

Alvar Aalto

**Architect
Munkkiniemi
HELSINKI
Telephone: 480123
Cable: ALVARAA**

March 29, 1967

Mr. Erik T. Vartiainen
5107 Primrose Dr.
V e n t u r a
CALIFORNIA

I am writing about this library business in Mount Angel Abbey. From this distance the whole thing looks very unclear, if not to say jus impossible. Obviously is that impossible to continue in this base on ground of my sketches. I don't even insist in any way that the building should be built according to our sketches.

If it is necessary to find a more economical solution I think it is very difficult to do it in this distance. Therefore I suggest that it should be done on the West Coast.

I also think, that it is useless to come there now, because it should require some time to get the solution ready there, not here.

If they insist my consultation in some way or other, the right time to come over there is after the financial thing is all clear in Mount Angel Abbey.

[March 27 1927]

- 2 -

Presently I have not time enough to stay in West Coast or Oregon until the solution is ready there, because the primary sketches has to be done there and it takes time and for that I have not time as I said.

Would you please, in few days if possible, send me an express letter explaining the situation and of course your own opinion, which I think is quite same as mine.

Yours,



P.S.

I will be few days on the East Coast, but my time is so limited that I cannot spend enough working time in West Coast and specially not combine in many conferences. Please inform Father Barnabas about this letter.

Maksut-Avgifter

Lähetämisestä - För avs.	
RP w	
Yhteensä - Summa	



SÄHKÖSANOMA TELEGRAM

Vast.ott. nimi Mottaget av sign.	
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Lähetetty - Avsändt

Pvm - Dat	5/4	Klo - Kl	17.00
Minne - Vart			
Nimi - Namn			

Luokka - Klass	Lähtöaika - Avgångstid	No - Nr	Sanaluokka - Ordantal	Jättoaika - Inlämn. tid	Virkahuom. - Tjänsteanm.
				/ Klo Kl.	

Maksunalaista virkamerk. Avgiftsbelagda tjänsteanm.	Vastaanottaja ja osoite - Adressat och adress	Osoitetoimipaikka - Adressanstalt
	Vernon DeMars 2161 Shattuck Avenue Berkeley, California	

Teksti ja allekirjoitus - Text och underskrift

Any news about Oregon. Please inform us immediately. Mr. Aalto leaving Helsinki for US saturday morning.

ALVARAA

No 20301 1 A55 10000 x 100 7.63 1102/12

EI SÄHKÖTETÄ AVTELEGRAFERAS ICKE	Lähetäjän nimi ja osoite - Avsändarens namn och adress

DE MARS AND WELLS

ARCHITECTS • 2161 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, California 94704, Phone 841-7190

April 5, 1967

Lyrainne University

Alvar Aalto, Architect
Munkkiniemi
Helsinki, Finland

Dear Alvar:

I am sorry this letter is not more "express" and realize it may not even reach you, but since your letter of March 29 (which reached here April 3), we have received additional cost information which makes the situation look much brighter.

I will summarize, then give you the details.

In summary:

1. Erik has reworked the plan sufficient to reduce square footage to 33,000 square feet without altering the concept or spirit of the building.
2. Telephone calls to Oregon architects suggest costs may be somewhat lower than we feared. If so, Father Barnabas thinks the project will go ahead.
3. We all think it imperative that you come out to visit the monastery, even if briefly--that without your visit the whole thing may fall through.

A week ago we had several days of meetings with Father Barnabas. Erik was here, and between them they were able to reduce the total area of the library. Father Barnabas was willing to accept 31,000 square feet, but such a reduction does not appear possible without seriously affecting the program. So 33,000 square feet seems as low as we should go at this time on the basis of your scheme (and we are not even considering any other scheme).

The fan-shaped reading room has been altered only a little. The stairs have been incorporated into the open well between the two floors in order to free floor space for more stacks. (The other scheme was not achieving enough space for the number of volumes required.) There is further modification in the reading well, which I hope you will find acceptable. By having only one step between floors, additional book stacks are accommodated.

Vernon DeMars, FAIA **Architect**
John G. Wells, AIA **Architect**

Edward J. Bennett **Architect**
Jack T. Sidener **Architect**
Robert D. Hill

Alvar Aalto, Architect

April 5, 1967
Page 2

It still allows a token amount of reading positions along the rails as well as the control views into the lower level.

We have been discussing construction costs with the Oregon firm of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill and with Paul Thiry, who has a library currently under construction near Portland. They report costs to be somewhat lower than we feared. We had also cautioned Father Barnabas to include certain contingencies for estimating purposes. These may not be needed.

In short, we are all hoping the project can go ahead as now planned.

Erik and I will go to the Abbey on April 11 to present the current scheme. This date was purposely selected to occur before your expected visit, so the details could be digested by the building committee.

We all feel very strongly that your visit at this time, even if brief, will be necessary to save the project. Father Barnabas has told you of certain dissenting voices at the Abbey over the years. The new Abbot, however, is supporting the project, and that, with your appearance, we feel will bring success.

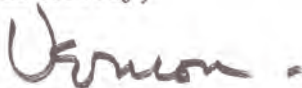
I will send a copy of this letter to the University of Virginia and will include a set of the latest plans with the Virginia letter.

I would hope your plans would have you come to Oregon directly from Virginia, to be at Mt. Angel on Saturday or Sunday the 15th or 16th. I hope, too, that you can swing down to the Bay area on your return. We promise not to tire you out and to have you do only what you would wish.

I think we can discuss your plans by telephone after you arrive in Virginia.

Erik joins me in sending our very best regards.

Sincerely,



Vernon DeMars

VDM:kg

P.S. This letter was ready to be mailed when your wire came. We will now send the original to Virginia and copies to your office in Finland for your records.

Since you will now be in the U.S. as early as Saturday or Sunday, you may be ready to leave on Friday the 14th for Oregon (we sincerely hope). You would be there in less than 3 hours by your watch (5½ hrs. flying time).

I suggest you telephone me here on Monday morning, P.S.T. after you have had a chance to review the plan changes. U.

Post- och telegrafverket

Posti- ja lennätinlaitos

Posti- ja lennätinlaitos

Post- och telegrafverket

Posti- ja lennätinlaitos

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BERKELEY CALIF 41 5 355P PST

ALVARAA Alvaraa T. 480123
 Prof. Alvar Aalto
 Arkkitehtitöimistö
 HELSINKI Tiilimäki 20 Hki 33 X

LENNÄTILAITOS
 TELEGRAFI
 VI IV 6
 03:50

Sähkösanoma - Telegram

Sähkösanoma - Telegram

Sähkösanoma - Telegram

Sähkösanoma

PROSPECT OF PROCEEDING WITH SKEEM GOOD DUE TO REDUCTION OF
 PROGRAMMED AREAS LOWER COST INFORMATION AND POSSIBLE INCREASE
 IN BUDGET STOP YOUR PRESENCE IN OREGON NEXT WEEK VITAL TO SURVIVAL
 OF PROJECT LETTER AND PLANS SENT TO VIRGINIA

VERNON

COLL SKEEM



Po

ZCZC NDF0416 IAZ1494 WBB4784 XU LLA177

Post- och telegrafverket

SFHE HL URNX 037

☒

MOUNT ANGEL ORG 37 6 1115P PST

Posti- ja lennätinlaitos

LT

TF480123 ALVARAA ALAAR AALTO MUNKKINIEMIHELSENKI

SOITETTU
TELEFONERAT

MS Kurma

1957 IV 7 13:13

EXCITEMENT IN WHOLE AREA OVER IMPENDING VISIT COME TO RELAX

AND SEE LOCAL BEAUTY THINK OF PROJECT ONLY BACK IN HELSINKI

OREGON ARCHITECTS DESIRE TO MEET YOU AT ABBEY

FATHER BARNABAS

Post- och telegrafverket

☒

COLL LT TF480123 *oh*

LENNÄTIN
TELEGRAFEN
Helsinki-Hjors

1957 IV 7

12:23


Lato
Alvaraa T. 480123
Prof. Alvar Aalto
Arkkitehtitoimisto
Tiilimäki 20 Hki 33 X

Sähkösanoma - Telegram

Sähkösanoma - Telegram

Sähkösanoma - Telegram

S

Maksut-Avgifter	Lähettemisestä - För avs.	 SÄHKÖSANOMA TELEGRAM			Lähetetty - Avsänd	
	RP w				Vast.ott. nimi Mottaget av sign.	Pvm - Dat 8/4 Klo - Kl 11.00
	Yhteensä - Summa					
	Luokka - Klass	Lähtötoimipaikka - Avgångsanstalt	No - Nr	Sanaluku - Ordantal	Jättoaika - Infömn. tid Klo Kl.	Virkahuom. - Tjänsteom.
	Maksunalaistet virkamerk. Avgiftsbelagda tjänsteom.	Vastaanottaja ja osoite - Adressat och adress				Osoitetoimipaikka - Adressanstalt
		Mr. Vernon DeMARS CALIF 94707				
		2161 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley				
	Teksti ja allekirjoitus - Text och underskrift					
	Probably coming to San Fransisco. Visit to Oregon depending on, if they are ready to pay at least a part of journey and the primary project. Telephoncall from Virginia tuesday wednesday.					
	Alvar					
	Ei SÄHKÖTETÄ AVTELEGRAFERAS ICKE					
	Lähetäjän nimi ja osoite - Avsändarens namn och adress					

No 20301 a A5b 10000 x 100 7,63 1102/12

The Library Committee decided that members of the Mt. Angel Abbey Lay Advisory Board and other interested persons should be invited to a dinner for Mr. Alvar Aalto on Friday evening, April 21, 1967. The following persons were invited and attended:

Guests of honor: Mr. and Mrs. Alvar Aalto

Abbot Damian
Dr. and Mrs. Carl Hintz
Mr. Vernon DeMars
Erik Vartiainen
Mr. Francis Newton --of the Portland Art Museum
Mr. and Mrs Lewis Crutcher
Mr. Howell Appling, Jr. and Mrs. Appling.
Mr. James Hamilton --of the firm of Morse and Beck, Seattle.
Mr. and Mrs. Edward Ebert
Judge and Mrs Felton
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Belding.
Father Albert
Father Bernard
Fater Joseph
Father Gerald
Don Fitzgerald.
Father Barnabas
Father Blaise
Several others were invited by unable to come.

May 8, 1967

Father Barnabas
Mount Angel Abbey
Saint Benedict,
O r e g o n

Dear Father Barnabas,

Many thanks for your kindness in Oregon.

It was really pleasant for us to visit you and to meet you again. Now I know the way to Oregon.

I thank you for your very optimistic and realistic attitude for the design and construction of the library.

It was a pleasure to see the site of the building and the whole atmosphere of Oregon in Mount Angel Abbey.

Let me express Mme Aalto's and my personal gratitude to you.

Sincerely yours,

A.A

P.S.

Many thanks also for the photos you sent us.

Alvar Aalto

**Architect
Munkkiniemi
HELSINKI
Telephone: 480123
Cable: ALVARAA**

May 9, 1967

Father Barnabas
Mount Angel Abbey
Saint Benedict
O r e g o n

Dear Father Barnabas,

I am sending here a bill according to our agreement as cost of travel. It is very difficult to preciside exactly the price of the tickets, because The University of Virginia has paid their part of our journey and the rest is the difference which covers our trip to Oregon.

The payment includes also the costs of our airport-transportations and the part of Mr. Vartiainen's earlier visits for Oregon, which is paid by us.

Sincerely yours,



Aalto \$ 912.
Vartiainen \$ 840.

Encl.: a bill.

Mount Angel Abbey
Library

Saint Benedict, Oregon

June 5, 1967

Alvar Aalto
architect
Munkkiniemi
Helsinki

Dear Mr. Aalto:

We are enclosing a check for traveling expenses and are enclosing your bill. We are still receiving letters from architects and students who attended your lectures.

The cultural community of the area deeply appreciated your courtesy in allowing them to meet you and to hear your ideas about art and architecture.

Needless to say, we deeply appreciated your effort on our behalf. We realize how exhausted you must have been with your long distance traveling and the many public appearances you made. We can only say "thank you".

We are continuing to gather the necessary funds. I am still hopeful that we will be ready to build by the time your plans are ready. There is much interest in the professional architectural magazines. The cultural community is much concerned that this building be promoted and made a reality.

We trust you have not forgotten your promise to again visit us. The weather has been magnificent. The rhododendron have come in their full glory. The birds are back and the valley is in its full glory again.

DeMars and Wells have asked for a larger scale ground survey on a two-foot contour interval. We are making arrangements for this. Plans are going ahead. All is well.

We trust that you and Mrs. Aalto are in good health and that the trip has not left you too exhausted.

If you have not yet received the photograph PROFILE OF A MONK you should receive it shortly.

Thank you for your letter. Father Abbot was also pleased to hear from you.

Fr. Barnabas O.S.B.
Fr. Barnabas, O.S.B.

CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a fast message unless its deferred character is indicated by the proper symbol.

WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

W. P. MARSHALL
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

R. W. McFALL
PRESIDENT

SYMBOLS

DL = Day Letter
NL = Night Letter
LT = International Letter Telegram

The filing time shown in the date line on domestic telegrams is LOCAL TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is LOCAL TIME at point of destination

PRA015 BA163 B CDH608 VIA RCA ZCZC WUB0603 TFZ0265

FDN0093 SB =URNX HL SFHE 023 =HELSINKI 23 26 1430 =
LT =FATHER BARNABAS MOUNT ANGEL ABBEY
S.BENEDICTOREGON =

JUN 27 AM 3:30

MANY BEAUTIFUL THANKS FOR THE PHOTOGRAPH AND THE =CHEQUE
YOU SO KINDLY SENT ME =

ALVAR AALTO =

845-2221. Call after 9am
9250/27 8200/27

Post- och telegrafverket



Posti- ja lennätinlaitos

Post- och telegrafverket

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ALUAR ALLTPO ALVARAA MUNKIEMINIHELFINNKI

Alvaraa T. 480123
Prof. Alvar Aalto
Arkkitehtitoimisto

Tiilikmäki 20 Hki 33 X

231
PITETTU
TELEFONERAT
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Summe

TODAY RECEIVED WORK OF GIFT OF ONEMILLION DOLLARS

LIBRARY TO PROCEED WITH ALL HASTE

FATHER BARNABAS MT ANGEL ABBEY ST BENEDICT

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[Handwritten signature]

NNMM

Sähkösanoma - Telegram
Sähkösanoma - Telegram
Sähkösanoma - Telegram

Alvar Aalto

**Architect
Munkkiniemi
HELSINKI
Telephone: 480123
Cable: ALVARAA**

July 11, 1967

Father Barnabas
Mount Angel Abbey
Saint Benedict
O r e g o n

Dear Father Barnabas,

I received your telegram a few days ago and it made me very glad, because now it is possible to realize the libraryproject.

The gift is as a sign of the remarkable work you have made for the library. I hope the circumstances will remain favorable while continuing the work in your beautiful valley.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Alvar Aalto', written in a cursive, flowing style.

DE MARS AND WELLS

ARCHITECTS • 2161 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, California 94704, Phone 841-7190

July 14, 1967

Alvar Aalto
Munkkiniemi
Helsinki, Finland

Re: MOUNT ANGEL ABBEY LIBRARY; Initial Submittal
of Design Development Stage I Documents.
File: J 340

Dear Alvar,

We are enclosing for your review and comment two sets of Design Development Stage I Documents dated July 12, 1967 including the following:

1. Topographic Survey, dated 14 November 1966, revised 12 July 1967 to show proposed location of the library.
2. Drawings A 1 through A 5; S 1 through S 4; and M 1 through M 3.
3. Outline Description of Work.

We plan to submit these documents, together with an estimate of probable construction cost, to the Client in about three weeks for final approval of our Design Development Stage I work. After the Client approves this work, he may not originate changes without providing extra compensation to cover the cost of revising documents. Therefore, we would appreciate receiving any comments you may have by 1 August 1967.

In the outline description of work, you may notice that allowances will be included in the cost estimate for certain fixtures which will be designed by or selected by you. The design and selection of these fixtures need not be accomplished before completion of this Design Development Stage I work. In fact, such detail design work should be postponed until our cost estimate is complete in case we must reduce the scope or quality of work to meet the budget.

We are all delighted that the financing of the building now seems to be solved by the recent substantial gift to the Abbey. I am also personally pleased with the splendid job that Erik has done in developing the drawings to their present stage.

I am enclosing reprints of the Architectural Forum's June 1967 news release on the library.

Vernon DeMars, FAIA Architect
John G. Wells, AIA Architect

Edward J. Bennett Architect
Jack T. Sidener Architect
Robert D. Hill

Alvar Aalto

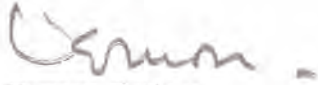
-2-

July 14, 1967

I hope this letter finds you well and completely recovered from your visit to Haight-Ashbury and Telegraph Avenue.

My very best regards to you and Mrs. Aalto.

Sincerely,



Vernon DeMars

VDM:ss

Enclosures

DE MARS AND WELLS

ARCHITECTS • 2161 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, California 94704, Phone 841-7190

12 July 1967
J 340

MOUNT ANGEL ABBEY LIBRARY
St. Benedict Oregon

OUTLINE DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION

In general, this structure comprises a three story library building with a 100 seat meeting room. The first level of the structure is a sealed-off, unfinished space which will be completed some time in the future and used as classroom space or additional library space, as required. The unfinished space has about 8,000 square feet of gross floor area. The second and third levels, which comprise the finished spaces, have about 34,700 square feet of gross floor area. The building is Type II construction and is assumed to be a Group B occupancy located in Fire Zone 3.

- A. Demolition: For estimating purposes, assume existing "Gymnasium Building" and portions of the existing paved road in the vicinity of the proposed construction will be removed under the General Construction Contract.
- B. Structural Work
1. Foundations: Undetermined, until soils investigation is complete. There are indications that concrete caissons might be required.
 2. Exterior walls: Reinforced concrete on level one; reinforced brick masonry on levels two and three. Assume buff colored brick laid in running bond with conventional joints tooled concave. For estimating purposes, assume exposed concrete is mixed with 2 or 3 lbs of dark color per sack of cement and formed with plywood.
 3. Floors: Reinforced concrete flat slabs and beams for suspended slabs; reinforced concrete slabs on grade.
 4. Roof:
 - a. Main library space: steel trusses, beams and metal roof deck.
 - b. Other: steel beams and metal roof deck.
 5. Interior columns:
 - a. Staff areas on level three: steel pipe columns, concealed in partitions.
 - b. Other: reinforced concrete.

Vernon DeMars, FAIA Architect
John G. Wells, AIA Architect

Edward J. Bennett Architect
Jack T. Sldener Architect
Robert D. Hill

C. Architectural Work

1. Exterior finishes will be as follows, unless otherwise noted on drawings:
 - a. Walls:
 - 1) Concrete: light sandblast
 - 2) Brick: silicone water repellent.
 - b. Windows and sloped skylight: aluminum, color anodized medium bronze. Assume Soule 900 series for estimating purposes.
 - c. Dome skylights: standard plastic double dome skylights.
 - d. Doors: Aluminum narrow stile, color anodized medium bronze, with special push-pull designed by Alvar Aalto on lobby doors. See paragraph on "Hardware."
 - e. Roofing:
 - 1) On skylight: zinc-titanium alloy sheet metal, unpainted, standing seam.
 - 2) On entrance canopy: Neoprene-Hypalon roof coating.
 - 3) Other: 20-year built-up roofing, gravel surface.
 - f. Wood slats: clear redwood with stain finish.
2. Interior finishes will be as follows, unless otherwise noted. Concrete and masonry walls will not have bases. Other walls and partitions will have wood bases where carpet occurs; resilient bases where resilient flooring occurs. Wood bases will be light-colored hardwood with transparent finish.
 - a. Level 1 (unoccupied)

Floors: exposed concrete slab on grade
Walls: exposed concrete
Ceilings: exposed structural concrete
 - b. Level 2
 - 1) Stacks and Reading Room:

Floor: carpet
Walls: exposed concrete and brick, painted
Partitions: gypsum wallboard, painted
Ceiling: plaster, smooth finish
Stairs: concrete, with carpeted risers, treads and hardwood handrails.
Wood slats at return air openings: light colored hardwood with transparent finish.

2) Seminar and carrels:

Floor: carpet
Walls: brick, painted
Partitions: gypsum wallboard, painted
Ceiling: suspended gypsum wallboard, painted

3) Toilets:

Floors: ceramic mosaic tile
Wainscots: glazed ceramic wall tile. Assume 4 ft. high, all around.
Partitions: gypsum wallboard, enameled
Ceilings: suspended gypsum wallboard, enameled
Toilet partitions: standard metal toilet partitions, bonderized and enameled, factory finish.

4) Mechanical Room, Transformer Room, Electrical Panel and Janitor's Room:

Floors: concrete, with chemical hardener
Walls and partitions: concrete and gypsum wallboard, enameled
Ceilings: concrete, painted
Equipment: painted

5) Other Rooms:

Floors: vinyl asbestos tile
Walls: gypsum wallboard and concrete, painted
Ceilings: suspended gypsum wallboard, painted.

c. Level 3

1) Stacks and Reading Room:

Same as Level 2, except for lowered wood slat acoustical ceiling over control desk. See floor plan for description of control area ceiling.

2) Lobby:

Floor: 4 x 8 x $\frac{1}{2}$ quarry tile, two color pattern. See floor plan
Walls: brick, painted
Ceiling: 12 x 12 in. acoustical tile, fissured, concealed Z suspension system, fire rated for one hour ceiling-roof assembly, NRC. 70.

3) Microfilm Library, Periodicals Lounge, Circulation Library

Floor: carpet

Walls and partitions: brick and gypsum wallboard, painted

Ceiling: suspended gypsum wallboard, painted.

4) Toilet Rooms:

Same as Level 2.

5) Janitor Closet

Floor: concrete, chemical hardener

Walls and ceilings: gypsum wallboard, enameled

6) Rare Book and Meeting Room

Floor: carpet

Walls: brick, painted

Ceiling: suspended drywall, painted, with wood batten and fiberglass acoustical assembly similar to that over the control desk in the Stacks and Reading Room.

7) All Other Rooms:

Floor: vinyl asbestos tile, except carpet in Librarian and Secretary

Walls: brick and gypsum wallboard, painted

Ceilings: acoustical tile, same as Lobby.

d. Staff Stairs:

Treads, risers, and stringers: resilient, similar to Myco-tread, 1/8 in. thick

Walls and ceilings: gypsum wallboard, painted.

3. Interior Doors and Lights:

a. Doors and lights between Level 3 Lobby and Stacks and Reading Room: color anodized aluminum doors and store front frames matching exterior lobby entrance doors.

b. Doors between Lobby and Rare Book and Meeting Room: solid core, hardwood veneer, with stain and clear finish.

c. All other doors: solid core wood doors, painted.

d. All other interior lights: standard 16 ga. hollow metal frames with welded corners.

4. Hardware: all entrance doors in the Main Lobby and Stacks and Reading Room space shall have special push-pulls designed by Alvar Aalto (the estimate will include an allowance for this special hardware). All other hardware shall be equal to Schlage Heavy Duty D Series. Assume U.S. 10B oil rubbed bronze finish.
5. Built-in Cabinets:
 - a. Main Library Control Desk: W.I.C. premium grade. Hardwood with stain and clear finish.
 - b. Other counters and cabinets: W.I.C. custom grade. Hardwood with stain and clear finish.

D. Heating and Ventilating Work

1. System will be an all air central heating and ventilating system with individually controlled zones for each room or area. Inside design temperature during heating season will be 72F for 20F outside design temperature. A main supply fan and a main return fan shall be located in the Mechanical Room and main plenums may be constructed of drywall partitions. Outside air shall be brought down in a shaft from the roof and exhaust air outlet shall be from a plenum leading from the Mechanical Room. System shall be capable of modulating from minimum outside air during heating season to 100% outside air when full ventilation cycle is desired.
2. Main aspects of air distribution system are outlined on the drawings. In general, supply will be from ceiling diffusers except for perimeter carrels, which will have floor or sill supply outlets. Basically, return will be transferred through building openings to return plenum inlets in Mechanical Room. Toilets, staff and carrel areas will be exhausted to outside. Rare Book Vault will be separately air conditioned and controlled for both temperature and humidity at 72F and 45% RH year-round.
3. Sound attenuation of the air system will be carefully maintained and sound absorbing units shall be installed in the return duct plenum adjacent to the intake. Mechanical vibration of fans and equipment will be isolated by spring isolators and inertia pads.
4. Each individual zone will have a separate hot water heating coil located in the Mechanical Room. The basic heating medium for the system will be low pressure steam supplied from the Abbey main steam plant off the existing distribution system. The existing main steam tunnel is in a 36 x 36 in. concrete steam tunnel running between the existing Monastery boiler house and the Minor

Seminary Building. Since the proposed library will be constructed at the location of this existing steam tunnel, the tunnel, together with the utilities lines contained therein, shall be relocated to avoid the proposed Library Building. Steam to hot water converters and pumping equipment will be provided in the Mechanical Room. Provision will be made for future air conditioning by allowing space for the addition of a main cooling coil in the supply fan plenum and maintaining space for the insulation of refrigeration equipment in the Mechanical Room. A remote cooling tower location will be necessary and a vapor barrier on the supply duct insulation might be necessary for future air conditioning.

E. Plumbing Work

1. First grade commercial type plumbing fixtures and trim to be used throughout. Water closets to be wall mounted with exposed flush valves.
2. Domestic hot water to be generated for mechanical room from central steam.
3. All interior water piping to be type 1 copper, soil and waste piping per code requirements.
4. Wet standpipe system with hose and extinguisher cabinets, and incidental sprinklers from domestic service, shall be provided per requirements of the Uniform Building Code and the local fire marshall. For estimating purposes, Level 1 will not be required to have fire sprinklers.
5. Utility services for water and sanitary and storm sewer shall be extended from site utilities.

F. Electrical Work

1. Estimated Electrical Loads:

Present construction	173 KVA
Future construction	<u>50 KVA</u>

Total: 223 KVA

2. Electrical Distribution within the building will be three phase, 4 wire, 120/208 volt, 60 cycles. Wiring generally will be type TW in conduit concealed in building construction.
3. Lighting: Lighting in the Stack areas will be by means of special fixtures factory mounted and wired on the stacks.. A system of floor ducts will be installed in the Stack areas to which the

stacks may be plugged in, in order to provide maximum flexibility in placement of stacks.* In addition, some general illumination in the stack areas will be provided by means of a cove light mounted along the carrels. The reading areas will be illuminated by means of large ceiling-mounted fluorescent fixtures to provide an intensity of approximately 50 foot-candles.

- a. Lighting in the carrels will be provided by individual incandescent fixtures, wall mounted, with extensible arms.
- b. Lighting in the entrance lobby will be by pendant incandescent fixtures designed by or selected by Aalto. The estimate will include an allowance for the special lighting.
- c. Lighting in the Rare Book Room will also be by special fixtures designed by or selected by Mr. Aalto. The estimate will include an allowance for the special lighting. In addition, supplementary fluorescent lighting will be required to provide intensity of 50 foot-candles when required.
- d. Lighting in offices, bindery, cataloguing, microfilm library, etc., will generally be fluorescent providing an intensity of approximately 80 foot-candles.
- e. Exterior light fixtures over dome skylights will be special fixtures design by or selected by Mr. Aalto. The estimate will include an allowance for the special lighting.

G. Elevator Work

Assume elevator is a standard Dover passenger model with following characteristics:

Capacity: 2,000 lbs.
Speed: 125 feet per minute
Car dimensions: 6 ft 1 in x 3 ft 8 in net inside.
Door operator: Dover model DC-62 single slide with 3 ft clear opening.
Number of stops: 3
Power unit: Model RB-100-20 with silencer and sound isolation couplings. Motor: 20 h.p.

*The stacks, together with the factory mounted light fixtures, are assumed to be furniture and will not be included in the estimate for the General Construction Contract.

H. Landscape Work

1. In general, only lawns and ground cover will be required, with no landscape irrigation except for hose bibbs on building. Assume at least 4 in. topsoil will be required for planted areas.
2. Replace existing lawn on east side of proposed library.
3. Install lawn and some shrubs on south side of proposed library, between existing road and library.
4. Install a slope control ground cover on slopes on north and west sides of proposed library.

RDH:ss

DE MARS AND WELLS

ARCHITECTS • 2161 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, California 94704, Phone 841-7190

F. Sarja

August 11, 1967

Mr. Kaarlo Leppanen, Architect
The Office of Alvar Aalto
Munkkiniemi
Helsinki, Finland

Project: Mount Angel Abbey Library
Saint Benedict, Oregon
File: J 340

Dear Mr. Leppanen:

We hope that our previous shipment of the special issue set of Design Development Stage I Drawings has reached you safely.

We are now sending, under separate cover, drawings F 1 - F 3, which represent a tentative demonstration furniture layout to be used in discussion with the Abbey. Undoubtedly, these are subject to change after talks with Father Barnabas. We would like any comments that you might offer on these.

We are also sending drawings SK 1 - SK 4 which comprise all of the modifications so far made to the Design Development Stage I Drawings. SK 4 depicts the revised layout of the Rare Book Meeting Room and is of most interest to you since this will definitely be a space which will be totally Aalto designed with Mr. Aalto's furniture and lighting fixtures included. Here we would be most anxious to receive your comments and suggestions.

Finally, Erik Vartiainen would like to ask for the following material for our reference:

1. A copy of the drawings for the ceiling of the assembly room in the Detmerode Church.
2. A copy of the drawings for the canopy at Detmerode. (Possibly the total arcade at the walk by the library will now be built as part of the initial contract.)
3. A copy of the details for the stair leading to the sunken reading areas in the Rovaniemi Library.

Vernon DeMars, FAIA Architect
John G. Wells, AIA Architect

Edward J. Bennett Architect
Jack T. Sidener Architect
Robert D. Hill


Mr. Kaarlo Leppanen

-2-

August 11, 1967

4. What diameter are the interior columns in the main library space at Seinajoki? at Rovaniemi?

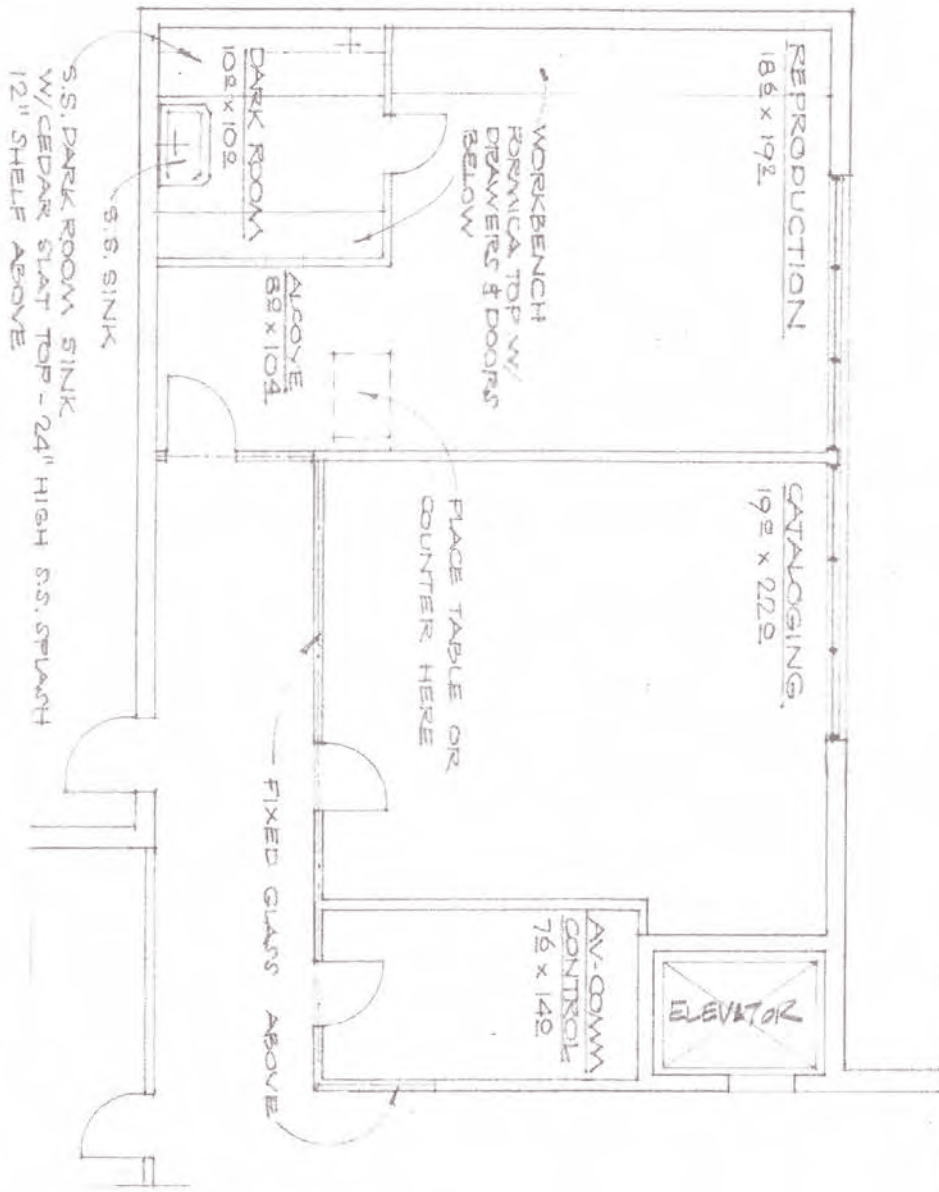
Sincerely yours,



John G. Wells

EV:ss

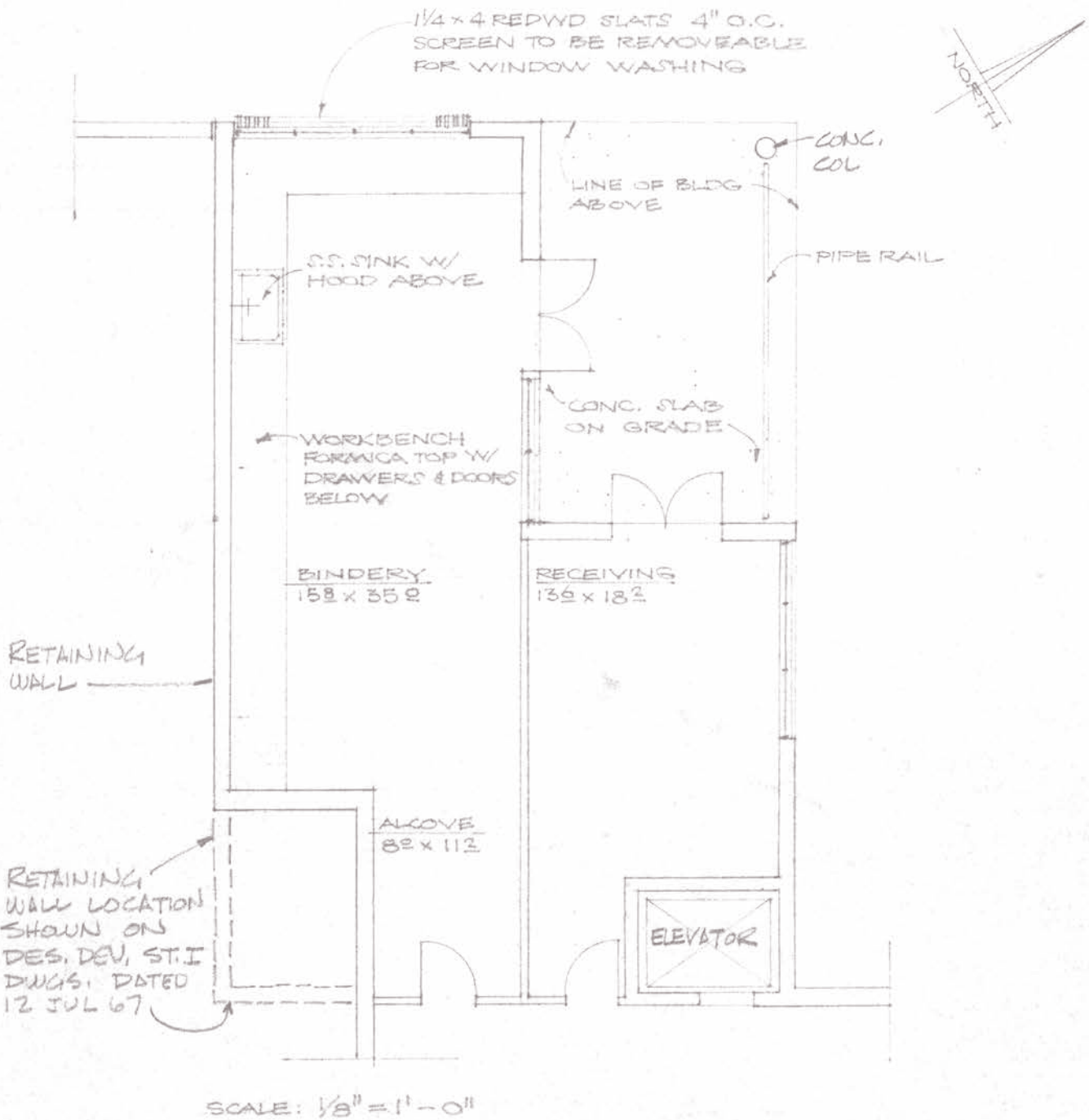
Enclosures



SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

PRINTED
AUG 10 1967

DEMARS & WELLS, ARCHITECTS 2161 SHATTUCK AVE. BERKELEY, CALIF. 94704	MT ANGEL ABBEY LIBRARY ST. BENEDICT, OREGON MODIFICATIONS TO DESIGN DEVELOP- MENT STAGE I DRAWINGS LEVEL 3 STAFF AREA FL. PLAN JOB No. 340	DRAWING NO. SK-1 21 JULY 67
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AUG 10 1967

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PROBABLE LOCATION
OF BOOKSTACKS

FURRED CEIL. HT. 7'-0"

WD. PANEL

JAN.
44 SQ. FT.

WOMEN
56 SQ. FT.

MEN
178 SQ. FT.

ELECT. PANELS
94 SQ. FT.

NORTH

SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

PRINTED

AUG 10 1967

DEMAIRS EWELLS ARCHITECTS
2161 SHATTUCK AVE.
BERKELEY, CALIF. 94704

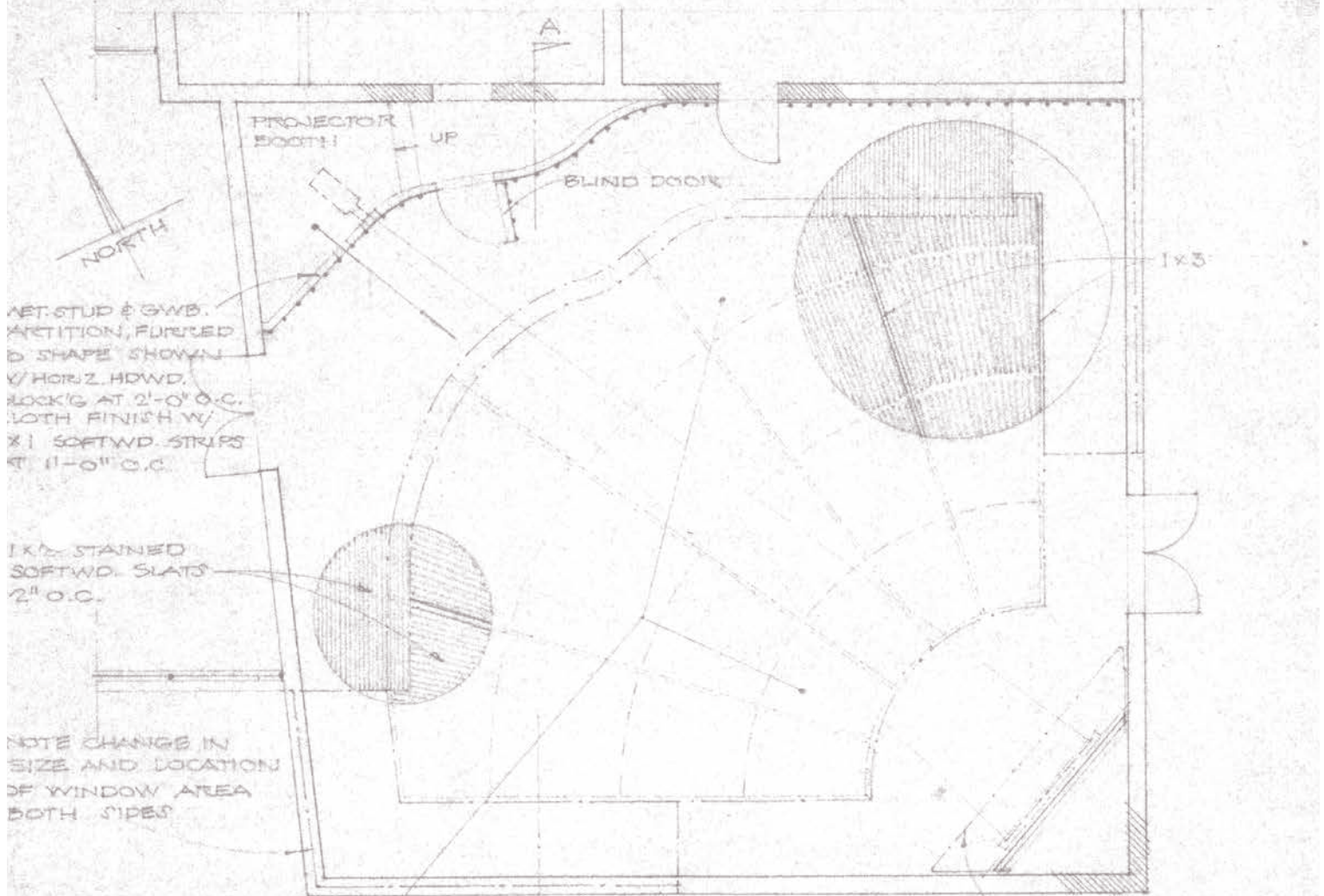
MT. ANGEL ABBEY LIBRARY
ST. BENEDICT, OREGON

DRAWING NO

SK-3

MODIFICATIONS TO DESIGN DEVELOP-
MENT STAGE 1 DRAWINGS
LEVEL 2 TOILETS FL. PLAN
JOB NO 340

1 AUG 67



NET STUD & G.W.B.
PARTITION, FURRED
D SHAPE SHOWN
1/4\"/>

1x2 STAINED
SOFTWOOD SLATS
2\"/>

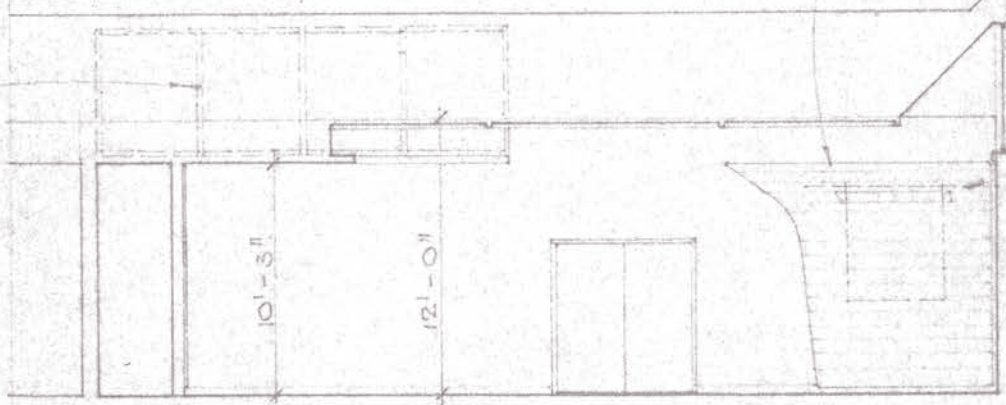
NOTE CHANGE IN
SIZE AND LOCATION
OF WINDOW AREA
BOTH SIDES

IN THIS AREA:
1/2 LB. DENSITY 1\"/>

WINDOW BEYOND

RARE BOOK & MEETING ROOM FLOOR PLAN

BAFFLE BUILT UP
FROM 1x1 SOFTWOOD
SLATS 1\"/>



SECTION A-A

SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

PRINTED

AUG 10 1967

DE MARS & WELLS ARCHITECTS
2161 SHATTUCK AVE.
BERKELEY, CALIF. 94704

MT. ANGEL ABBEY LIBRARY
ST. BENEDICT, OREGON

MODIFICATIONS TO DESIGN DEVELOP-
MENT, STAGE 1 DRAWINGS
LEVEL 3 RARE BOOK & MEETING ROOM
JOB NO 340

DRAWING NO

SK-4

8 AUGUST 67

Mount Angel Abbey
Library

Saint Benedict, Oregon

September 5, 1967.

Mr. Alvar Aalto,
Tiilimäki 20,
Helsinki 33, Finland.

Dear Mr. Aalto:

Thank you for your congratulatory letter. I will treasure it always.

The library is indeed advancing and we have hopes that we may break ground by March or April. Erik was here two weeks ago. He spent a week going over the plans with me and doing the odds and ends of leg work, unraveling the red tape in building codes, etc, etc. We called upon Francis Newton, the Director of the Portland Art Museum in regard to the exhibit area which I had discussed with you.

There still seems to be some uncertainty about the extent of your involvement with the interior design, color and appointments.

I think we have a donor for the furniture of the library. We will know for certain some time after January.

You will be delighted to hear that the World Affairs Council in Portland called me in regard to our co-operation with their "Salute to Scandinavia", scheduled for September 21 to October 8, 1968. You might have heard of this through the Finnish government. The Finnish Council General in San Francisco has indicated to the World Affairs Council that because of the Trade Fair emphasis of Scandinavian products and influence, the Finnish government may sponsor a Scandinavian architectural exhibit. We have offered to provide the hall in which you spoke as an exhibit area. In this Northwest area Alvar Aalto is currently considered the greatest cultural product of Scandinavia. Your building will be under construction at that time. Perhaps it would be possible to have the Alvar Aalto exhibit which was presented at the Palazzo Strozzi exhibit at the Portland Art Museum about the time our library building is christened. This would be a tremendous cultural achievement for our area. According to estimates this dedication will be May to July 1969. If you think something like this might be possible I can start negotiations with the Museum Director in Portland.

When shall we see you again here at Mt. Angel? We are having a very hot dry summer. It has been great in our magnificent Northwest countryside.

Please give our very best regards to Mrs. Aalto, to Carlo Leppanen and your office staff.

Sincerely,

Father Barnabas

Father Barnabas.

DE MARS AND WELLS

ARCHITECTS • 2161 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, California 94704, Phone 841-7190

September 8, 1967

Professor Alvar Aalto
Munkkiniemi
Helsinki, Finland

Dear Alvar,

Word has come through to us that the annual Kraftor (sp?) party has taken place. Erik and I both regret that we were not there since I am now a Kraftor expert, or at least a connoisseur. Had I been more expert, I wouldn't have gone away hungry from my first and only Kraftor party last year in Helsinki. Of course here we have Louisiana prawns which are the same size, more nourishing, and, used as hors d'oeuvres, are inclined to keep you sober. The mystique of Kraftor, as I see it, is that the more you eat (there is so little there) the drunker you get.

Erik has given you the news from Mount Angel. Happily, the news is good. I write of another matter.

I know you are swamped with visitors, so, as an old friend, I have set myself a quota of two recommendations per annum. I do have two friends who will be in Helsinki this fall, and I will write here of the first one.

He is Justin Herman, Director of the Redevelopment Agency of San Francisco, a good friend of mine and Bill Wurster, and the man who masterminded the competition for the Golden Gateway. We naturally think he is a most perceptive person since he not only gave approval to our design, but has chosen to live in one of our houses there. Since I will send him a copy of this letter, I hesitate to describe him here as our local Medici, although he has managed to bring Belluschi and Nervi together on rebuilding San Francisco's cathedral.

Justin's role as patron of designers was reached by way of the law (I believe), but he himself is a designer at heart (I also believe). I submit as evidence his design for the "seal" of the Redevelopment Agency (see enclosed). Perhaps even you will agree with its motto: "Omnes habitare in urbe Sancti Francischi volunt."

Vernon DeMars, FAIA **Architect**
John G. Wells, AIA **Architect**

Edward J. Bennett **Architect**
Jack T. Sidener **Architect**
Robert D. Hill

Professor Alvar Aalto

-2-

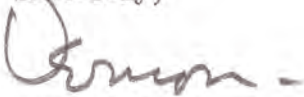
September 8, 1967

Justin has promised that whatever else he improves in San Francisco, he will not improve the Haight-Ashbury.

Cher ami, I hope it will be convenient for you to see Mr. Herman some-time during his visit from October 1st to October 4th. I know that you will find him a kindred soul.

My very best regards to you and Madame Aalto.

Sincerely,



Vernon DeMars

VDM:ss
Enclosure

Mount Angel Abbey

ST. BENEDICT, OREGON 97373

December 28, 1967

Mr. A. Aalto
Helsinki, Finland

Dear Mr. Aalto:

I am a member of Mt. Angel Abbey, for which you designed the library.

I am writing to you to express my view on the library. Since it differs from that of the majority, I know that you will just throw this letter into the waste basket and ignore me. Nevertheless, I feel an obligation to myself to let you know what I think on the subject. I did not express my opinion before, because I never thought that your library would ever reach reality. I had hoped that it would remain, as you so aptly expressed it, a "paper project".

I object not to the library itself, nor to you, nor to the donor; but I do strongly object to the location on the North side of the hilltop. This building in this place will effectively and eternally cut off the magnificent panorama to the north. This panorama, of course, means nothing at all to foreigners like you, nor to californians who have a financial and prestigious interest in the building; but it does mean much to me and to those Oregonians who love Beauty more than Aalto! I was born near the monastery and have spent my whole life there. This view is the most magnificent which can be obtained for many miles around. I do not know why you insist on ruining the view by placing your building there. The monastery owns a thousand acres. Is there no other place to put it?

Sincerely -

Fr. Athanasius Buchholz
Father Athanasius Buchholz

THERE WILL BE A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY WITH THE ARCHITECTS, THE CONTRACTOR AND OUR CONSULTANTS, IN THE RECREATION ROOM ON WEDNESDAY, May 22ND AT 1:30. THE COMMUNITY WILL HAVE ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY OF GETTING THE FACTS FROM THE COMPETENT PEOPLE.

On May 17th, Friday, at 2:00 P.M. Father Abbot and I were in the offices of Reimers and Jolivette in Portland for a three-way telephone conference with members of the firm of DeMars and Wells and Reimers and Jolivette.

The bids on our library project were made known verbally from material received up to noon. The total figure given for the project was \$1,478,330.

The added cost figure over previous estimates was attributed to additional foundation strengthening, a doubling of caissons, and increased structural steel, as per plans shown in Recreation Room. The electrical costs were higher due to tighter specifications in the final plans.

This figure represents an upward escalation of \$109,480 over the \$1,368,850 as reported in the March 11th bulletin. This figure includes \$49,000 contingency or just-in-case cost.

It includes a substantial amount of furniture. This includes fire indicator system, as per Fire Marshall's recommendation, carrell built-in desks and shelves, circulation desk, reading tables at light well stations, installation of stack panels, and light fixtures on existing stacks, sound system in the lecture hall for TV coupling, etc., carpeting and floor covering.

It does not include chairs, tables, cases and some special light fixtures by Aalto, cost estimated at \$30,000 and expected (hoped for) from a potential donor.

The specific dimensions of the building are substantially the same as those indicated on the "Outline description of proposed construction" of July 12th, 1967, posted on the Recreation Room board for several weeks.

The difference is that following the donor's gift and the cost estimates of the unfinished space of "about 8,000 sq. ft." The recommendation was made by the architects and others that this space be included in the finished space. This is called the first level. "The second and third levels, which comprise the finished spaces, have about 34,000 sq.ft. of gross floor area."

This figure gives us 42,000 sq. ft. The relocation of the electronics control center against the south wall on the first level and the enlargement of the cataloging and receiving area brought the total floor space to 44,000 sq.ft.

The square footage cost of basic construction is \$28.88 as against Lewis and Clark's cost of \$26.50 per sq.ft.

The built-in furniture and carrell treatment is costly. The year plus in construction time, as well as the rise in labor cost is a factor.

Oregon is facing a possible 3% sales tax within the next few months. There are rumors of an impending carpenter strike.

If there are questions you wish to ask, if there is information you do not yet have, there will be people competent to provide it on Wednesday at 1:30 in the Recreation Room.

The bidding costs are appended.

Result of Latest Bids Submitted to Reimers & Jolivette on New Library Building, May 17, 1968

Excavation, grading and fill	\$ 13,360.00
Caissons	26,919.00
Vermiculite	10,586.00
Concrete Materials and Forms	254,401.00
Reinforcing Steel	90,335.00
Lumber and Plywood	2,033.00
Millwork	45,023.00
Sash, Entrances, Glass & Glazing	59,685.00
Rough Hardware	1,000.00
Finished Hardware	8,385.00
Masonry work	42,884.00
Roofing, Sheetmetal, Damproofing, Waterproofing	36,768.00
Plastering	35,346.00
Sheetrock and Acoustics	25,415.00
Structural Steel, Decking and Miscellaneous Iron	108,931.00
Transite	841.00
Mechanical	136,025.00
Electrical	128,380.00
Painting	17,000.00
Resilient Floor Covering	8,104.00
Ceramic Tile	3,038.00
Carpet	30,326.00
Bronze Railings	6,811.00
Elevator	21,478.00
Hollow Metal	12,696.00
Toilet Stalls	956.00
Toilet Room Equipment	1,940.00
Miscellaneous Specialties	3,391.00
Insulation, Caulking, etc.	646.00
Clean-up and Hauling	1,500.00
Equipment, Small Tools, Scaffolds and Barricades	3,500.00
Temporary Buildings	1,500.00
Temporary Utilities	1,100.00
Labor Insurances and Social Security	79,177.00
Building Permits	2,300.00
	<hr/>
	\$ 1,221,780.00
Overhead and Profit	50,000.00
	<hr/>
	\$ 1,271,780.00
Construction and Contingency	24,000.00
Surveys	1,000.00
Soil Report	5,900.00
Testing and Inspection	2,000.00
Project Inspection	16,000.00
9% Architectural and Engineering Fees	107,500.00
Aalto Design Fee	18,000.00
Travel	4,100.00
Plan Check	550.00
Printing	1,000.00
Phone	1,500.00
Project Contingency	25,000.00
	<hr/>
	\$ 206,550.00
	<hr/>
	\$ 1,478,330.00

Alvarado

May 25th
'68

~~etc. Building begins~~

Construction begins Monday
May 27th. All obstacles

overcome. America will
have ~~Atto~~ beautiful Atto.
Father Bonabas

Groundbreaking

Mount Angel Abbey Library

St. Benedict, Oregon

June 4, 1968

These groundbreaking ceremonies for the Mount Angel Abbey Library express in action the hopes and prayers of all for mutual understanding, respect and cooperation as a foundation for the construction of a more human world.

"Christians, on pilgrimage toward the heavenly city, should seek and savor the things which are above. This duty in no way decreases, but rather increases the weight of their obligation to work with all men in constructing a more human world."

—Vatican II: "The Church in the Modern World"

PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION of participants by Gerald Frank, *member of the Lay Advisory Board, Mt. Angel Abbey.*

INVOCATION: Rabbi Emanuel Rose, *Congregation of Beth Israel, Portland.*

NOTE ON THE OCCASION: Dr. Ronald V. Caldwell, *First Congregational Church, president of the Portland Council of Churches.*

NOTE ON THE OCCASION: Rt. Rev. Hal Gross, *Suffragan Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Oregon.*

PRAYER: Rt. Rev. Damian Jentges, O.S.B., *Abbot of Mt. Angel Abbey.*

GROUNDBREAKING:

NOTE ON THE OCCASION: Mr. Clay Myers, *Oregon Secretary of State.*

BLESSING: Most Rev. Robert Dwyer, *Archbishop of Portland, Oregon.*

Representing the Catholic Laymen of Oregon: Mr. Howard Vollum, *member of the Lay Advisory Board, Mt. Angel Abbey.*

Representing the Catholic Laywomen of Oregon: Mrs. Bruno Brinati, *Chairman, Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women.*

STATISTICS:

ARCHITECT: Alvar Aalto, *Helsinki, Finland.*

ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS: DeMars and Wells, *Berkeley, California.*

CONTRACTOR: Reimers and Jolivette, *Portland, Oregon.*

LIBRARY CONSULTANT: Dr. Carl Hintz, *Director of Libraries, Oregon State System of Higher Education.*

ELECTRONICS CONSULTANTS: Clyde Charters and Richard Greulich, *Engineers.*

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER: Stephan Medwadowski, *Ph.D.*

MECHANICAL ENGINEERS: O'Kelly and Schoenlank.

SEATING CAPACITY: 200

VOLUME CAPACITY: 300,000

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 44,000

ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE: July, 1969.

Mount Angel Abbey
Library

Saint Benedict, Oregon

June 20, 1968

Mr. Alvar Aalto,
Architect,
Munkkiniemi,
Helsinki, Finland.

Dear Mr. Aalto:

We had a very successful ground-breaking. I am enclosing a program used for that occasion.

We are still involved with site preparation and foundation excavation.

We have negotiated a contract with Reimers and Jolivette, a Portland firm, recommended to us as the very best and one of the oldest construction firms in Portland. Mr. Jolivette has a tremendous personal interest in this building and we have complete confidence of satisfaction for ourselves and you. We have the same building superintendent and building team which worked together to construct Pietro Belluschi's very successful new Equitable Building in Portland.

I am enclosing a library bulletin which provides a break-down of cost of the building.

You will notice the architectural and engineering fee and the design fee. It is our understanding that we owe to you \$8000.00 as the remaining proportion of the \$18,000.00 design fee, to be paid upon completion of the project and that this represents the complete and total project cost for design.

Our contract with Reimers and Jolivette specifies an August 31, 1969 completion date for the building.

Sincerely,

Father Barnabas, O.S.B.
Father Barnabas, O.S.B.

FB/mdj

DE MARS AND WELLS

ARCHITECTS • 2161 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, California 94704, Phone 841-7190

June 25, 1968

Alvar Aalto
Munkkiniemi
Helsinki, Finland

Project: MOUNT ANGEL ABBEY LIBRARY
Saint Benedict, Oregon
File: B 340

Dear Alvar,

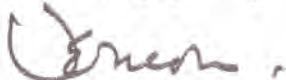
Forgive my long silence--we were swamped getting the theater ready for the grand opening (see enclosed) and Erik, of course, has been more than busy with the library. Now the theater is opened (and closed again, since it was not really finished) and ground has been broken at Mount Angel, where the problems are ones of real building and construction--a healthy stage, you would agree.

Erik tells of the Archbishop at the ground breaking ceremony complaining that they had not fixed up a prayer for him ahead of time to use in his blessing and then, finding that they did not have any holy water ready, said to the whole assembly, "What kind of a monastery is this, anyway? Imagine, no holy water!"

We have some misgivings about the Hawaiian home building proposition, but are investigating further. We have two men recently with our firm located there now and have asked one of them to give us a report on the land developers, and some comment on how the proposal looks from there.

I hope this finds you well. Our best wishes to you and Madame.

Sincerely yours,



Vernon DeMars

VDM:ss
Enclosures

P.S. I find it difficult to discuss the Kennedy tragedy, and have nothing to add to what has been said, but you will appreciate that I could not leave it unmentioned. I know you share with us and understand the import of our loss.

Vernon DeMars, FAIA Architect
John G. Wells, AIA Architect

Edward J. Bennett Architect
Jack T. Sidener Architect
Robert D. Hill

11.7.1968

Father Barnabas, Librarian
Mount Angel Abbey
Saint Benedict / O r e g o n

Dear Father Barnabas,

Thank you for your kind letter from June 20, 1968. I am happy to hear that the work in Oregon continues under good circumstances.

While studying your library bulletin, I noticed that the total-costs of the project does not include the furniture from Finland and this is quite correct.

As you remember, during my visit in Oregon last year, we discussed the architectural fee and the interior fee separated and also that the architectural fee (\$ 18.000:-) does not include the interior design. That is why I am afraid that my fee will raise a little bit, because according to the rules of Finnisch Architects Association, the general architectural fee does not include the interior design. Being a member of the association I naturally must follow their rules because of collegiate reasons, which I think you understand.

The proposed fee does not include travelling expences, copy- and modellcosts, but this is a bagatelle only.

Best regards

Mount Angel Abbey
Library

Saint Benedict, Oregon
97373

December 10, 1969

Mr. Alvar Aalto, Architect,
Munkkiniemi,
Helsinki, Finland.

Dear Mr. Aalto:

We are trying to establish definite confirmation on the part of all participants in the dedication program on May 29, 30, 31st. We are particularly concerned about the 29th.

President Nixon is scheduled to be our speaker. One of our reasons for asking him is that you are Finland's first citizen. The President's presence here will be indirectly honoring Finland. The Finnish Ambassador plans to be here. He will send the Finnish delegate at the U.N. if he cannot come. He mentioned the possibility of the Minister of Education being here.

We shall probably have a cabinet member and many other public figures.

Our program will include Duke Ellington and his orchestra. Mr. Ellington will be presenting music composed by Ann Henry here at Mt. Angel Abbey. You will remember the girl with canes.

On the second day, May 30th, Richard Southern, Oxford's distinguished historian will be our chief speaker.

On May 31st, The Abbot Primate of all Benedictines will be our speaker. He is coming from Rome for the event.

The choral work of Darius Milhaud who dedicated the Psalms of David to one of our monks here at the Abbey, will be performed under the direction of the monk to whom it was dedicated.

Many interesting things are happening. We want to make doubly certain that you and Mrs. Aalto will be here. The furniture and fixtures have arrived. The building is looking positively gorgeous.

Please send us confirmation of your coming for the dedication.

Sincerely,

Father Barnabas
Father Barnabas, O.S.B.

Posti- ja lennätinlaitos Posti- ja lennätinlaitos Posti- ja lennätinlaitos Posti- ja lennätinlaitos Posti- ja lennätinlaitos Posti- ja lennätinlaitos Posti- ja lennätinlaitos

ZCZC NDF161 FBG2990 RYC583 PR LLG097

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SFHE HL URNX 056

*Post. Aalto omakirje (ulkomailla)
paluu maahan. tai jostain*

PORTLANDORG 56/54 8 1050A PDT ZK8

1970 9 9 04:21
BRATTIN
HISIN
9/5 0946

LT

TF480123

ALVAR AALTO ALVARAA

Jilimäki 20
MUNKKINIEMIHELSENKI

DEDICATION PLANS OF AALTO BUILDING INCLUDE NATIONAL AND REGIONAL
CELEBRITIES DEDICATION COMMITTEE REQUESTS INFORMATION ON ARRIVAL
TIME PLEASE FORWARD INFORMATION ON WORK IN PROGRESS OF MISTER
AALTO PROJECT HERE IS GORGEOUS UNIVERSALLY ACCLAIMED BUILDING
DEDICATION DATES MAY 29 30 31

FATHER BARNABAS MOUNTANGEL ABBEY SAINT BENEDICTS OREGON 97373

503-845-2221

COL RYC583

TF480123 29 30 31 97373 503-845-2221

a - Telegram Sähkösanoma - Telegram Sähkösanoma - Telegram Sähkösanoma - Telegram Sähkösanoma - Telegram Sähkösanoma - Telegram Sähkösa

Alvar Aalto

Architect
HELSINKI 33
Telephone: 480123
Cable: ALVARAA

May 23, 1970

Father Barnabas, librarian
Mount Angel Abbey Library
S a i n t B e n e d i c t

Dear Father Barnabas,

Thank you for your first information and then for the official invitation to the inauguration of our library.

You don't know how I would be pleased to stay with you on this inauguration ceremony, but I am sorry, it is absolutely impossible.

The last weeks of May and the first weeks of June are very difficult in Finland as well as in Central-Europe for my works. All the final decisions and final conferences on government-level are just in these weeks and my presence in Finland and Central-Europe is absolutely necessary. That means a complete force majeure to travel to the West Coast. I will send you my best wishes for everything concerning the library and I hope you will be kind enough to tell my best greetings to the president of the college and all your colleagues there.

I hope our library will succeed to be a real library according to your wishes and your dreams and in this meaning I send you all my best greetings of the invitation and my hope that the library will work in its functions in the way you have thought.

Best greetings

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Alvar Aalto', written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alvar Aalto
Architect
HELSINKI 33
Telephone: 480123
Cable: ALVARAA

May 25, 1970

Mr. Erik Vartiainen
Mount Angel Abbey Library
S a i n t B e n e d i c t

Dear Erik,

I write two letters because I don't know which is the easiest way to reach you. It will be one letter to you and one to Vernon De Mars.

Let me once more tell you how glad I am of the good critics I have heard, I am deeply grateful to both of you.

There are two things important; a complete photographic material of the library. If the client likes that it'll be published in my next book, which is almost ready. Would you please talk about this thing with the Abbot and Dr. Barnabas. If they react positively, you can arrange a photographer with Vernon. He should take pictures inside and outside the house under your command.

The client has according to our system here to pay the photographic procedure and extra negatives should be sent to my atelier after I've seen the proofseries which could even be in a small scale.

The case number two is the amount of \$ 7.000:- which I already wrote you in my previous letter. I would like to have an answer to this question too.

Case number three is my greetings to both of you, I've already arranged the congratulations to the faculty by a telegram.

Best wishes,





[1970]

POSTI- JA LENNÄTINLAITOS
POST- OCH TELEGRAFVERKET

Sähkösanoma
Telegram

Lähettäjän nimi ja osoite—Avsändarens namn och adress		Maksut—Avgifter Lähetämisestä För avsändning		Vastaanottanut Mottaget av	Lähetysaika—Avsändningstid
					26 / 5 Klo Ki. 14.30
				Lähetänyt Expedierat av	Minne—Vart
		Yhteensä Summa			
Luokka—Klass	Lähtötoimipaikka—Avgångsanstalt	No—Nr	Sanaluku—Ordantal	Jättoaika—Inlämn. tid	Virka huom.—Tjänsteanm.
	Helsinki—Helsingfors			/ Klo Ki.	
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	Mount Angel Abbey Library Saint Benedict, Oregon				

Teksti ja allekirjoitus—Text och underskrift

OUR DEEPEST & RESPECT TO THE ABBOT AND THE WHOLE COMMUNITY OF
BENEDICTINES STOP WE SHOULD LIKE TO BE WITH YOU AT THE CEREMONY
BUT BECAUSE OF FORCE MAJEURE WE SEND OUR WORDS THIS WAY WITH
OUR GREETINGS AND BEST WISHES TO YOU AND YOUR GUESTS

ELISSA AND ALVAR AALTO

737A PDT MAY 26 70 PRA016 MC021
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HELSINKI 54 26 1455

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to 431/25
M. Aalto

LT
MOUNT ANGEL ABBEY LIBRARY SBENEDICTOREGON
OUR DEEPEST RESPECT TO THE ABBOT AND THE WHOLE COMMUNITY OF
BENEDICTINES STOP WE SHOULD LIKE TO BE WITH YOU AT THE CEREMONY
BUT BECAUSE OF FORCE MAJEURE WE SEND OUR WORDS THIS WAY WITH OUR
GREETINGS AND BEST WISHES TO YOU AND YOUR GUESTS
ELISSA AND ALVAR AALTO
COL LT

SF-1201 (RS-69)

Telephone message to Father Barnabas from Mr. Aalto May 28th: 127 28th
"I sincerely desire to come to you. The conditions now with my projects
make it absolutely impossible. In my civic center I have eighteen buildings.
Nine are now completed. These days just now are the most dangerous to my
project. The government is in session. I must prepare, finish and represent
many projects.
Please convey to your brotherhood and guests my sincere apologies but it is
just not possible for me to come at this time. Perhaps later in the fall but not
now. Extend to your Father Abbot and community my sincere good wishes. I
love your imagination and your gentlemanly Benedictine ways. I respect your
order. The main thing is that my building is. Let my building speak to you."

[1570]



POSTI- JA LENNÄTINLAITOS
POST- OCH TELEGRAFVERKET

Sähkösanoma
Telegram

Lähettäjän nimi ja osoite - Avsändarens namn och adress		Maksut - Avgifter Lähetämisestä För avsändning	Vastaanottanut Mottaget av	Lähetyaika - Avsändningstid
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		Vernon De Mars Berkeley, Calif.		

Teksti ja allekirjoitus - Text och underskrift

THANK YOU FOR TELEGRAM STOP YOU KNOW IF THERE HAD BEEN ANY POSSI-
BILITIES I HAD BEEN WITH YOU AT THE CEREMONY STOP SITUATION IS
ABSOLUTELY IMPOSSIBLE STOP PLEASE REPRESENT ME AT THE CEREMONY
AND MY GREETINGS TO ERIK STOP THE MAIN THING IS MY GREETINGS TO
YOU FOR THE EXCELLENT COLLABORATION STOP TELL THE FATHERS ONLY THE
SPRINGTIME PRESSURE ON MANY OF MY WORKS MAKES THE VISIT IMPOSSIBLE
STOP GREETINGS TO THESE GENTLEMAN FACULTY MEMBERS OF THE
BENEDICTINES

ALVARAA

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ALVARAA

HELSINKI(FINLAND)

Alvaraa T. 480123
Prof. Alvar Aalto
Arkkitehtitoimisto
Tiilimäki 20 Hki 33 X

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LENNÄTIN
TELEGRAFIN
Hki-Hfors
1970 V 27
08:09
KOMITETI 1979
TELEGRAMMAT
54/Lehtinen
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Sähkösanoma - Telegram

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YOUR OREGON LIBRARY GREAT SUCCESS DEDICATION IMPORTANT ARCHITECTURAL
EVENT CRITICS HUXTABLE NEWYORK RICHARD SOUTHERN LONDON COMING
STRONGLY URGE YOUR PRESENCE APPRECIATE INCONVENIENCE BUT SINCERELY
HOPE YOUR ATTENDANCE POSSIBLE REGARDS AND BEST WISHES

VERNON DEMARS

COL ALVARAA HUXTABLE DEMARS.

*The Abbot and Benedictine Monks of
Mt. Angel Abbey
Request Your Presence at the Formal
Opening Ceremonies
of the
Mt. Angel Abbey Library
Alvar Aalto, Architect
Mt. Angel Abbey
St. Benedict, Oregon
Friday, May 29, 1970*

*Reception 5:30 p.m.
Black Tie Optional*

Dinner 7:00 p.m.

*Concert 9:00 p.m.
R.S.V.P.*

DE MARS AND WELLS

ARCHITECTS • 2161 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, California 94704, Phone 841-7190

1 June 1970
J 340

Alvar Aalto
Munkkiniemi
Helsinki, FINLAND

Dear Alvar,

Thank you for your letter and telegram--I can understand circumstances preventing you from making the Oregon trip. Erik and I did our best to represent you, but as you have already said, the building speaks for you--and may I say that it does so eloquently! Now finished, it is really stunning.

Let me tell you something of the festive events which are only concluding tonight (Sunday). The good fathers have, with your assistance, put Mount Angel on the map--already a new place of pilgrimage.

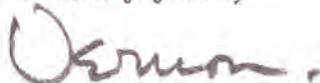
The first event was a champagne reception in the library on Friday evening for several hundred guests, including the Governor of Oregon, members of Congress, the Finnish Ambassador from Washington, and the Consul General from San Francisco, the Abbot Primate of the Benedictine Order from Rome, and many more notables. A banquet followed in the seminary building with an address by the Governor, and then the concert by Duke Ellington in the library, where the acoustics were surprisingly good for such an unplanned use.

Saturday's concert of symphonic music seemed even better, with various members of the large orchestra on both sides of the open well and on the mezzanine level. Much of the audience listened from the lower floor. Mrs. Huxtable, the New York Times critic, was most appreciative, both of your work and of this example. I will try to include her Sunday article from the Times.

The weather at Mount Angel was beautiful, although it had been raining only a day before. Do you think Father Barnabas arranged for this as well? Or perhaps you did, through your connections with the Vatican. All in all, the occasion was a splendid one and all are singing your praises.

We will write again on other terminal matters. Our regards and best wishes for your Helsinki projects.

Sincerely yours,



Vernon DeMars

VDM:ss
Enclosures

Vernon DeMars, FAIA Architect
John G. Wells, AIA Architect

Edward J. Bennett Architect
Robert D. Hill Architect

Alvar Aalto

Architect
HELSINKI 33
Telephone: 480123
Cable: ALVARAA

June 5, 1970

Father Barnabas, librarian
Mount Angel Abbey Library
S a i n t B e n e d i c t

Dear Father Barnabas,

I am so glad that you and your guests are satisfied with my building. I should not say my building, it is Your building. You have personally pressed this building through and it exists because of your intellectual initiative and your personal ambition to have a quality "instrument" in your college and in your hand.

Please, give my best greetings to the Abbot, this highclassed and fine personality and your colleagues.

I am just pressed for a short journey to my buildings where a problem has turned up, so this is only a short letter and its main thing is to say that it is your building.

I'll write later a more complete letter.

Your

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Alvar Aalto', written in a cursive style.

AFTERWORD

The Mount Angel Abbey library is situated in the mid-Willamette Valley, the ancestral home of the Tualatin, Yamhill, Ahantchuyuk, Luckiamute, and Santiam groups of the Kalapuya tribe, as well as the Clackamas and Molalla peoples. In 1855, their homelands, which were already being occupied by French Canadians associated with the Hudson's Bay Company, were appropriated by means of the Willamette Valley Treaty between the tribes and the U.S. government. Having lost 90% of their population to disease, starvation, and malnutrition between the 1780s and 1850s, the tribes were then forcibly removed to the newly established Grand Ronde reservation. The treaty establishing a reservation in exchange for vast acreage was based on the quasi-legal doctrine of land cession, which placed Indigenous historical and ontological relationship to the land within the framework of a foreign, white supremacist, and profit-oriented legal system that empowered its agents to deracinate the Indigenous people from the lands to which they were connected.

Known as Tapalamaho, the timbered butte now called Mount Angel is a sacred site to the Kalapuyan peoples. In his 1851 land survey, white settler Timothy W. Davenport recorded manmade semi-circles of stone atop the butte that served a ceremonial purpose for the area's Indigenous peoples. No visible traces of the stones remain today.

Traveling overland from Ohio and stopping in the Willamette Valley in 1851, Davenport acquired a 320-acre donation land claim and took employment for the U.S. government as a land surveyor of the Oregon Territory. With the Donation Land Claim Act, the federal government gave land in Oregon to white male settlers, effectively sanctioning resource extraction and hastening the displacement and eradication of the Native inhabitants. An ardent anti-slavery activist since his childhood in a Central New York abolitionist household that was a safehouse on the Underground Railroad, Davenport advocated for a "free" Oregon in which chattel slavery would be outlawed. This freedom, however, was contingent on the forced expulsion of Indigenous peoples, the confiscation of their homelands, and their exclusion from the rights of legal citizenship.

Upon achieving statehood in 1859, Oregon's constitution made no provision for slavery but aimed at creating a white utopia by barring African Americans from settling within state boundaries.

Davenport's land survey and corresponding maps were part of the systematic process of land seizure from Native tribes: The objective was to measure and catalogue geological features with particular attention given to resources that could be exploited—such as fertile soil, waterways, timber stands, and potential mining areas. The terrain was partitioned into a cartesian grid that disregarded interconnected ecosystems and watersheds, not to mention the territorial and linguistic divisions of the lands' inhabitants. Cadastral surveying prescribed the notion of earth as a commodity, disavowed Indigenous sovereignty, and enabled the institution of private property rights. By claiming title and expelling Native inhabitants, the government sought to establish its ownership and thus its right to profit by regulating the sale of property to white settlers, corporations, and land speculators.

Although Davenport's sentimentalization of Native life is evidenced in his recollection of his land survey written over fifty years after the fact, it is useful to reproduce his description of Tapalamaho here because it records a settler colonial view of the site where the Aalto library now stands:

In the eastern part of Marion County, Oregon, there stands an isolated and most strikingly regular and beautiful butte some three hundred feet in height and covering nearly a section of land. It was fringed about its base, at the time of which I write, with fir groves, but its side and well-rounded and spacious top were devoid of timber, except a few old and spreading oaks and perhaps a half dozen gigantic firs whose weighty limbs were drooping with age. A meridian section line passes over the middle of this butte and four sections corner near its top. While running this line and establishing these corners in 1851, I observed many semicircular walls of stone enclosing space enough for a comfortable seat and as high as one's shoulders when in a sitting posture, upon cross sticks as high as the knee. And what was the purpose of these stone chairs? I was determined to know, and the older white residents said the Indians made them but for what purpose they could not say. I became a witness to the use, and was particularly impressed with

the fitness for what I saw. Indians from the north and south traveling that way generally camped upon the banks of the Abiqua Creek, a rapid stream of pure, cold water, just issued from the mountains upon the plain. The butte was near, and this they ascended and, taking seats within the stone sanctuaries, communed in silence with the Great Spirit. Bowing the head upon the hands and resting them upon the knees for a few moments, then sitting erect and gazing to the west over the enchanting valley interspersed with meadow, grove and stream; who can tell but they felt as sacred and elevated religious emotion as those who have succeeded them on the butte? The Catholics have purchased it and erected upon its summit an awe-inspiring cathedral, and there upon Mount Angel, as they have named it, the prayers of the religious ascend. The Indians' name for this grand mount, dedicated by them to the service of their God, was "Tap-a-lam-a-ho," signifying in our language, Mount of Communion; the plain to the west, "Chek-ta," signifying beautiful or enchanting.*

While legalized land theft was taking place in the Oregon Territory, Switzerland was in the aftermath of the 1847 Sonderbund War which led to the secularization of state institutions, the closure of Roman Catholic abbeys, and the expulsion of the Jesuits. Engelberg Abbey had been founded in the Swiss-German Alps in 1120, over 500 years after the death of St. Benedict, becoming in the mid-19th century one of several Swiss monasteries seeking colonialist expansion in North America. In the oppressive logics of conquest and domination, the persecution and expatriation of Switzerland's Catholics operates as preordained permission for their genocidal colonization of the Americas. The abbot at Engelberg approved the establishment of a daughter abbey within the territory of the Missouri, Otoe, Iowa, Kansa, Osage, and Kickapoo in 1873, but a power struggle between the founding monks there led Engelberg's abbot to sponsor the foundation of a second American daughter house. The dissenting monks crisscrossed the west, receiving offers of "free land" from regional dioceses as far as southern California and the Dakota Territory, ultimately settling on the Willamette Valley. An 1882 papal bull issued by Pope Leo XIII officially established Mount Angel (an anglicization of Engelberg) as a new Benedictine monastery sanctioned by the Engelberg motherhouse.

The deciding factor for the abbey's location was the promise of land from the archbishop of Portland, Charles John Seghers. A Belgian-born Catholic priest and missionary, Seghers had gained some renown for his zeal in evangelizing widely throughout the Alaska Territory, attempting to forestall Protestant missionaries who were also proselytizing in the territory. Having spent his career engaged in what is now understood to be cultural genocide, he was later shot and killed in an incident with a deranged Catholic layman on the Yukon River. In 1880, Seghers was appointed archbishop of the diocese that included Oregon, Idaho, and Montana, a position that bestowed on him the spurious authority to offer up a promontory forty miles outside of Portland to the Swiss Benedictines. German Catholic settlers were already occupying and farming the immediate area, congregated in resistance to anti-Catholic sentiment among Oregon's Protestant settler majority.



The monks at Mount Angel established the first institutional library in the colonized Pacific Northwest, and by 1962 it held 50,000 books. 1962 was also the first year of the Second Vatican Council's Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, known as Vatican II. Sweeping internal reforms intended to reinvigorate the Church's relevance and modernize its public image led to a transition in Catholic Church design. Modern architecture, newly legitimated by Vatican II, would supplant the towers and spires of traditional ecclesiastical architecture, and prevail stylistically for the rest of the twentieth century throughout the Catholic world. The promise of modernism was its purported universalism, an appealing concept for a Catholic Church seeking preeminence throughout the globe in an increasingly secular age. Vatican II liberalized the Church away from antiquated doctrine, knitting it closer into a hegemonic western culture that was adopting the poetics of modernist form to narrate its dominance. The seductive and transcendent appeal of muscular modern architecture was firmly entrenched by mid-century, with Le Corbusier's La Tourette Dominican priory (1953–61) in France serving as a well-publicized clarion call to Catholic modernism.

Father Barnabas Reasoner, the abbey's first professional librarian, was ambitious in expanding the collection and scope of Mount Angel's library. In his search for a contemporary architect who might

quench the abbey's thirst for cultural capital in a prestigious new library building, Father Barnabas came across the names of Louis Kahn and I.M. Pei, both foreign-born American architects with ascendant careers. He also certainly would have been aware of the recent completion of the Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts at Harvard University, the only building in the U.S. designed by Le Corbusier, and funded by Oregonians Alfred and Helen Carpenter with substantial wealth as major stockholders of IBM. Father Barnabas undoubtedly understood that to attain international prestige, the abbey would need to secure the services of one of the titans of European modernism.

The epistolary record doesn't tell us how he first encountered the architecture of Alvar Aalto, but after midcentury the Finnish architect was widely known throughout the globe. He was considered one of the world's thirteen most important designers per the American Federation of Art's traveling exhibition *Form Givers at Mid-Century* in 1959, and the recipient of the Royal Institute of British Architects' Gold Medal in 1957 and the American Institute of Architects' Gold Medal in 1963. Aalto had particular connections in the San Francisco Bay Area through the influence of William W. Wurster, who had been dean at M.I.T.'s Department of Architecture in the 1940s and at UC Berkeley College of Environmental Design beginning in the 1950s. Wurster was an outspoken champion of the Finnish architect's particular brand of modernism, and was instrumental in bringing Aalto to M.I.T. in the 1940s, where the Finn constructed his first building in the United States, the Baker House Dormitory (1946–49). Wurster's far-reaching influence would be felt on the Mount Angel project, as his younger colleague at Berkeley, Vernon DeMars, was enlisted to the project as its U.S. architect of record.

When Father Barnabas wrote unsolicited to Aalto in 1963, the architect was engaged in, among other projects, the multi-million dollar revitalization of the Helsinki city center, a contribution to the United Nations complex in New York, and Nordic House cultural center in Reykjavik. It was unlikely that a rural Oregon monastery would succeed in claiming him as its architect. In the Aalto office's first letter to the abbey, the architect's secretary, Helga Mattson, blames the inconvenience of a month-long postal workers' strike for the architect's delayed reply. To Father Barnabas' elation, Aalto wrote back two months later, "I am very interested in your suggestion as libraries are my favorite projects."

Architecturally, the Mount Angel library is derivative of the Seinäjoki Library (1960–1965) and Rovaniemi Library (1963–1965), which Aalto was designing at the time that Father Barnabas sent the architect his initial inquiry. All three are designed partially on the model of the panopticon, in which public areas and book stacks fan out from the central circulation desk for maximum visibility by the librarian. The panoptic design is the typological cousin of the theater, which establishes sight lines between a public and the point of spectacle on stage or screen. However, it was first put into use as a method of social control in the architecture of prisons, where the potential of constant surveillance by the warden was a crucial factor in the subjugation of the people incarcerated.

At Mount Angel, the panoptic scheme is mitigated somewhat by Aalto's inclusion of closed study carrels at the perimeter of the plan that are not all visible from the control desk, although current library regulations restrict carrel privileges to Mount Angel's monks and seminarians. The panoptic library, like the prison, presumes dominion over the visible. It privileges the protection of books over the privacy and primacy of bodies: As knowledge is possessed and righteously guarded by the possessors, the acquisition and consumption of this knowledge in the form of scholarship becomes the gateway to inclusion and subjecthood in both the Benedictine monastic tradition and its modern secular counterpart—the liberal humanist tradition. It is no mistake that the panoptic library is sited at a hilltop monastery, a place where the prison-like policies of spatial confinement and gender exclusion are instrumentalized in service of spirituality and transcendence.

The Mount Angel library models the twin strategies of confinement and exclusion that reveal the carceral and colonial origins of our society's institutional regimes. Like its sibling cultural institutions the museum and the university, the library institutionalizes the collection and classification of information and the production of knowledge, upholding embedded systems of possession and privilege. In the western world, libraries have historically represented the colonizers, oppressors, and agents of white patriarchy while employing racist and classist codes and conventions to limit access. Through the 20th century, libraries continued to be sites for the performance of discriminatory cultural values,

even as the onset of the Information Age compelled them to adopt an agenda of public access to knowledge as a token of benevolent humanism in the modern nation-state. As a tool of the state, the library remains a sanctioned space for the civilizing subject to consume and possess knowledge, albeit in a context devoid of the colonized and dehumanized bodies upon whom modernity and the neoliberal social contract are contingent. But when serving its highest function, the library can also be mobilized as a site of community resistance, where the free exchange of valuable knowledge and resources benefits communities invested in resisting white supremacy and hegemonies of power.

Alvar Aalto's legacy has been codified as that of a unique figure in the architectural canon of the 20th century. His rise to prominence in Finland coincided with the construction of a Finnish national identity after the country's declaration of independence from Russia in 1917. Aalto's Nordic approach to the new modernist aesthetic set him apart from the functionalists of continental Europe, slightly older men such as Le Corbusier, Gropius, and Mies van der Rohe. After the Winter War in which Finland was allied with Nazi Germany against the USSR, Aalto took on work more international in scope, which had the effect of bolstering his career while distancing him from the tinge of Finnish nationalism. Extended trips to the United States, the commission to design the Finnish Pavilion at the 1939 New York World's Fair, and a teaching position at M.I.T. in the 1940s internationalized his practice and broadened his influence beyond Europe. His professional partnerships with both his first wife, Aino Marsio-Aalto, and second, Elissa Aalto, are well-documented, although neither received much recognition until relatively recent scholarly efforts to recuperate their respective roles.

As the dominant stylistic doctrines of the postwar years began to splinter in the 1960s, influential architects and critics such as Robert Venturi, Reyner Banham, and Vincent Scully kept Aalto's reputation afloat in those years between postwar rationalism and postmodern reactionism. (The latter would reach a zenith in Oregon with Michael Graves' notorious Portland Building [1980–82]). By 1983, architecture critic Kenneth Frampton cemented Aalto's position as a protagonist of critical regionalism, with a concern for the specificities of site, material and tectonic conditions, and an ethic of the

vernacular. This positioning of Aalto as a master on the periphery of the centers of cultural production, anti-globalizing and anti-colonial, becomes problematized when considered from a perspective that understands the Mount Angel library as an exemplar of the universal application of modernist form and emblematic of a religious-secular partnership to maintain possession of colonized land.

This book recognizes more recent Aalto scholarship that relies less on formal analysis of the buildings and contextualizes him as a cosmopolitan internationalist, adept at statecraft and adaptive to 20th century Europe's shifting geopolitical terrain in order to advance his career. As historical distance extends and the nature of scholarship changes, it proves valuable to situate the architect within different discourses; in the case of Mount Angel, it is imperative to apprehend a more complete acknowledgement of the social and political lineages of place in Oregon. That this complicates Aalto's established legacies perhaps explains, at least in part, why Mount Angel Abbey library is overlooked in much of the Aalto scholarship that has flourished since his death in 1976.

In the eight-year correspondence between Father Barnabas and Aalto, the monk's letters are informed by an unwavering faith in the architect as a savior whose brilliance could be imported to save the Mount Angel hilltop from the eternal ho-hum of mediocre architecture. Father Barnabas was acutely aware that architectural production has a permanence that continually reifies power and possession of territory, inscribing its lasting authority in a place. His belief in the redemptive value of modernist form and the mastery of its singular (male) genius is on full display in the letters, despite the fact that the project was beset with years of technical difficulties and fiscal shortages. In his March 1966 internal progress report, Father Barnabas recounts his visit to Helsinki and his impression that Elissa Aalto had some authority in the Aalto office during her husband's absences, but assures the monks that ultimately "all decisions are his." Aalto's fragile health and his punishing work schedule delayed his promised trips to Oregon for years, and Father Barnabas struggled to strike a balance between compassionate patience and desperate urgency in his letters asking when Aalto would visit the abbey. The long-anticipated site visit finally occurred in April 1967, in what would be the last of the architect's many trips to the U.S. His and Elissa Aalto's face-to-face

meetings with the abbey leaders and local dignitaries revived the project's momentum and precipitated a funding windfall.

Howard Vollum was a founder of the early tech giant Tektronix, an Oregon-based company that successfully produced and marketed oscilloscopes, electronic devices that precisely measure and graphically represent electrical signals. First building cathode-ray oscilloscopes in the 1930s, Vollum served in the Signal Corps during WWII, where he helped develop radar technology for increased accuracy in artillery targeting of enemy aircraft and supply ships. Decorated for his contributions to U.S. military interests, Vollum profited immensely after the war by further developing oscilloscope technology and marketing it for use in the postwar automotive and telecommunications industries. By 1959, Vollum was one of Oregon's wealthiest men, heading a company of 3,000 employees and commanding \$32 million in annual sales, a familiar narrative of success for big tech with origins in the military industrial complex. A Roman Catholic, Vollum became known for his philanthropy, donating tax-deductible millions to the state's cultural, educational, and health care institutions. Tektronix's value was on the ascent after having gone public in 1964, and Vollum's \$1 million donation (the equivalent of nearly \$7.5 million adjusted to inflation in 2021) was the financial injection that enabled the construction of the Mount Angel library.

On May 25, 1968, Father Barnabas sent a telegram to Aalto that said CONSTRUCTION BEGINS MONDAY ALL OBSTACLES OVERCOME AMERICA WILL HAVE BEAUTIFUL AALTO. Ground was broken, and after two years of construction, the building's dedication ceremony took place in 1970.

For the opening festivities, the abbey hired jazz legend Duke Ellington and his orchestra, through the connection of Ann Henry, resident composer at Mount Angel Abbey and friend of Ellington's. Henry was a musician, dancer, choreographer, and composer who by the early 1960s was a well-regarded performer with her own London-based TV production, and had toured with Ellington, Louis Armstrong, and Dizzy Gillespie. Struck by a near-fatal bout of spinal meningitis, Henry was forced to quit much of her work in 1963 and spent the next several years in recovery relearning basic motor skills. A devout convert to Catholicism, she visited Mount Angel Abbey in 1965 and requested

to stay in residence there indefinitely, to live in a retreat house and compose music. In a definitive break from monastic tradition, the abbot admitted her as the abbey's first female African American artist in residence, where she lived for the next ten years. At the dedication ceremony, Ellington and his orchestra premiered a new composition by Henry called "Pockets—It's Amazing When Love Goes on Parade." Father Barnabas referred to her as "the girl with canes" in his 1969 letter to Aalto asking the architect to confirm his presence at the dedication ceremonies. The dedication was a lavish affair with such luminaries as Ellington, the governor of Oregon, the Abbot Primate of the Benedictine Order, the Finnish ambassador to the U.S., and *New York Times* architecture critic Ada Louise Huxtable, among others. However, Alvar Aalto and President Nixon, the two men invited who wielded the most power through their cultural and political status, regretfully declined to attend due to previous engagements.

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Tellingly, it is what goes unsaid in the correspondence between Alvar Aalto, Father Barnabas, and the other operatives of architectural production in this story that provides the richest understanding of the complexities of capital and empire that led to the library's construction. In the letters, we witness the white male bourgeois sphere perform gentility and humanism, and see in painstaking detail the kind of banal administrative litany that implements the continued possession and domination of American lands as a precondition of today's built environment. In between the lines, the letters impart on the part of their writers a presumption of ownership and entitlement ingrained in Eurocentric patriarchy that laid the foundations of the abbey and its library. The constituent forces of settler colonialism, Christian exceptionalism, modernist aesthetic production, and technological determinism further cultivated the terrain and generated the possibility of an Aalto building in Oregon.

While the letters are material evidence of these forces, they simultaneously divulge their own microhistories through the facts of their materiality: Father Barnabas' mimeographed progress reports hint at the internal hierarchies of power at the abbey; Erik Vartiainen's handwritten letters reveal person-to-person contact untraceable by carbon copies; telegrams transmitted urgent messages without the delays of postal systems or time zones; and the

changing appearance of the print output by the end of the eight years presages the dawn of the digital age. Though the material artifacts of the correspondence relay a compelling topical and temporal history of the library building, assembling documents alone is inadequate for fully interpreting the multivalence of our built environments and how they produce and reproduce both subjectivities and structural conditions. Textual analysis of the archive must be partnered with an expanded field of discourse in order to understand the global imbrications of where, when, and why a building is constructed and how culture is produced.

The Mount Angel library building's provenance situates it unmistakably among the lineages of violence within settler colonialism and extractive capitalism. Opposing a facile recourse to presentism, in which actions of the past are judged by the moral standards of today, I am nonetheless presenting the building here as part of an historical perspective that understands oppression and dispossession to be built into the constructed landscape of America. Like much architectural production the result of happenstance and good timing, Mount Angel also must be understood as the product of centuries of deliberate geopolitical maneuvering that precipitated the colonization of the land, its possession by Catholic monks, their importation of a prestigious architect in their quest for cultural capital, and the reliance on a benefactor enriched by the military industrial complex. The continental scope of these concerns, particularized in the case of the Mount Angel library and its archive, calls for a reimagining of the boundaries of architectural history and a reconsideration of its conventional terms of engagement. As part of the material culture of the Pacific Northwest, the Mount Angel Abbey library and its archival paper trail serve as a case study for understanding the built environment as a physical manifestation of the enduring entanglement of the region's political histories and presents. Only by acknowledging the connective histories of place—and by identifying heterodoxies and counter-narratives—can we begin to forge futures that recompose them.

—Hope Svenson, February 2021

*T.W. Davenport, "Recollections of an Indian Agent—III," *The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 8, no. 3 (September 1907): 254–255.

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