

1950. Both these houses illustrate the paramount of practical and unostentatious values in the immediate postwar period, concentrated in B.C. upon reestablishing family and community. Note the captions and text accompanying their publication in *Western Homes and Living* and *Canadian Homes and Gardens*, respectively: "Small House That Acts Big" (1950-51), and "It's Home ... Inside and Out" (1952).¹⁰ Some veterans, including real estate developer Eric Allan, wanted to hire and could afford the services of an architect. An architect could permit "casual, easy living," instead of the stilted conventional pitched-roof suburban boxes, because many architects, Hollingsworth included, felt a sense of mission to provide inexpensive good design, and because land values were cheap. Allan, for example, subdivided the Capilano Highlands district of North Vancouver; there, young professionals could commission their own new house in which to raise a family. They so frequently chose a Neoteric variant that the area came to be dubbed Hollingsworth's "Oak Park."¹¹

The collaboration between Hollingsworth and Allan inspired a fascinating experimental house, erected in 1949 on the downtown parking lot of the Hudson's Bay Company department store (figure 4). Christened the "Sky Bungalow," it offers an intriguing comparison with Marcel Breuer's costlier Museum of Modern Art model house (1949), and with Wright's wood-frame houses, such as that for the Lewis family in Libertyville, Illinois (1940), inspected by Hollingsworth in 1951. Hollingsworth's consciously essential solution to the essential problem of shelter, measuring only some 55 x 18 feet, was built of local brick and wood (on steel supporting beams to conserve the maximum number of parking bays). In structure, spatial organization, and articulation, the Sky Bungalow demonstrated the principles, or principal constituents, of his architectural design and the ethos of what might be termed the Heroic, functionalist phase of postwar Modernism in Canada.¹² Indeed, Hollingsworth realized the "truly indigenous" American domestic architecture Kenneth Reid hoped for in 1944:

In plan they would take full advantage of the opportunity for openness afforded by modern heating, glazing, and structural methods. The interiors would be clean and simple and restful. In them, scientific knowledge of light and color would be applied with intelligent artistry to produce a comfortable background for family life and social activity.... A greater proportion of built-in furniture than in the past would help to increase this sense of order. Outdoor space would be integrated with the life of the family through useable and useful gardens, terraces, and patios, designed for gracious use, not for show.¹³

The living room in the Sky Bungalow was compact, yet rendered spacious by a series of carefully conceived and interrelated design strategies (figure 5). These began with the effective organization of plan and circulation, and continued with the inclusion of long vistas and the interplay of planes to reinforce the space-enhancing penetration of light sources on the vertical and horizontal axes. Those sources were carefully balanced to prevent excess single-direction illumination, usually by the diffusing effect of clerestories. That enfiling of structural opacity was controlled by the focal effect of the brick fireplace, which introduced the visual, and thereby psychological, sensation of functioning behavioral space. Moreover, it contributed to space-saving and ambience with its built-in shelving (with, as elsewhere, oriental artwork). The moulded plywood furniture—Hollingsworth has and continues to design more graceful and usable furniture than—

the books, the prints, and the flowers recall how that generation concurred with Wells Coates: the standardizing functionalism of Modernism would be mitigated by

Figure 4 (far left). F.T. Hollingsworth, architect; The Sky Bungalow, Vancouver, 1949. Aerial view. (F.T. Hollingsworth)

Figure 5 (left). The Sky Bungalow, Vancouver, 1949. The living room. (F.T. Hollingsworth)

Figure 6 (above). The Sky Bungalow, Vancouver, 1949. The dining room. (F.T. Hollingsworth)

¹⁰ December-January 1950-51, 12-14, and January 1952, 17-19, respectively; in 1952, *Canadian Homes and Gardens* also published his Jake Ingram house of 1946 under the caption "They Built for a Good Long Future ... Even today it's as modern as Canadian TV" (September 1952, 26-27).

¹¹ Among many personal testimonies of Hollingsworth's able provision of attractive home environments is that of my colleague Dr. Maureen Ryan, who was brought up in a Neoteric-type house in West Vancouver.

¹² Hollingsworth's success with the Modernist idiom—completing at least 84 houses through his career—calls into question Robin Ward's opinion that the movement gained limited popular support in Vancouver, as quoted in Gordon Fulton's review of Kalman's *A History of Canadian Architecture*, in *SSAC Bulletin* 20, no. 1 (March 1995): 23.

¹³ Kenneth Reid, "The Private House," in Paul Zucker, ed., *New Architecture and City Planning, A Symposium* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1944), 54.

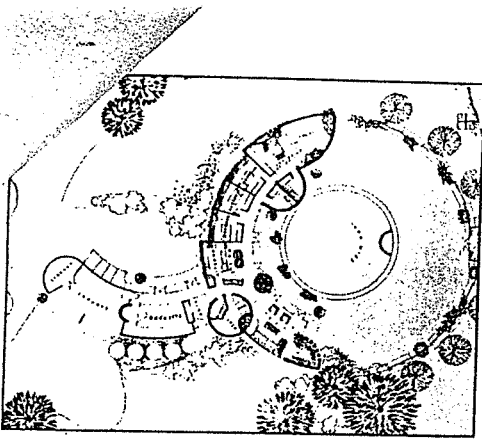


Figure 8 (right). F.T. Hollingsworth, architect; "Residence for Mr. & Mrs. J.M. Moon," Foothills, Alberta, 1979. Presentation drawing. (F.T. Hollingsworth)

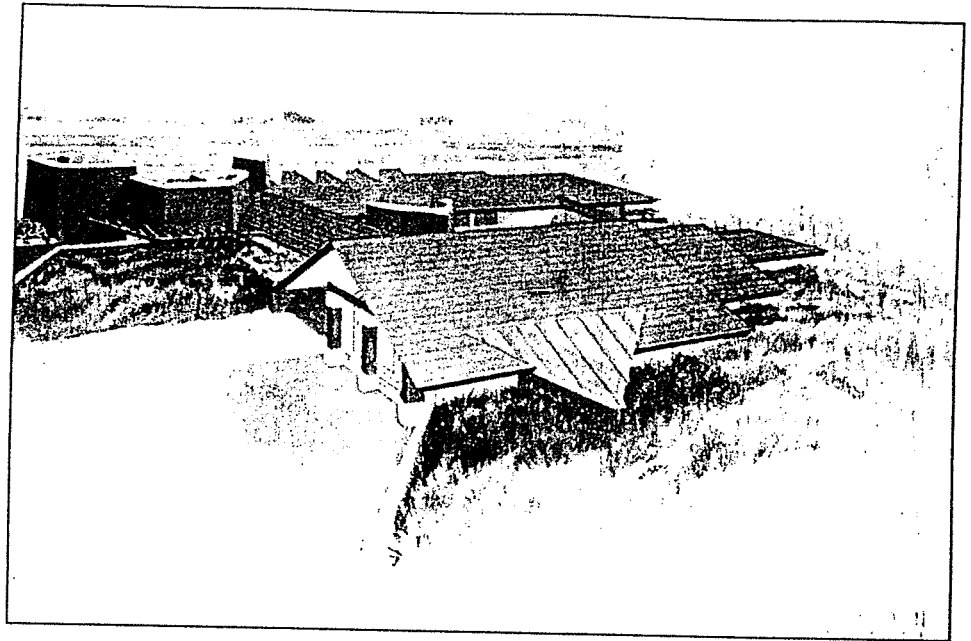


Figure 9 (above). F.T. Hollingsworth, architect; Richard Trethewey house, Abbotsford, B.C., 1960. Site and floor plan. (F.T. Hollingsworth)

the introduction of objects of personal worth.¹⁴ The potential for individuality and variety was further expressed in the dining area, on the other side of the fireplace wall (figure 6 and cover). There, space-vista more than space-wall was apparent in Hollingsworth's optical and psychological exploitation of the pattern and texture of common materials. His ability to manipulate formal volumes so as to render them appropriate for specific activities, as well as evocative both literally and representationally, is alike evinced by turning to the galley kitchen. Herein, even the stainless steel splash guard, refrigerator, and utensils were arranged to perform efficiently, yet also act as aesthetically stimulating visual elements in the internal landscape.

The creative response to mundane factors is an adjunct to Hollingsworth's organic principles, and provides an explanation for the consistent syntax but diverse vocabulary of his subsequent work. The stimulus and constraint imposed by site, client, and budget, has, with increasing sophistication, been integrated with his concern for natural setting and materials, liberated but functionally defining space, and experientially enriching compositional devices. Those inform both the similarities and the differences between two houses he designed for Jack Moon, in 1950 and 1979. The first (figure 7; see page 44) was a flat-roofed, angular post-and-beam house comprised of two diagonally configured square volumes that created a counterpoint to a heavily treed plot in North Vancouver and a more intriguing internal spatial sequence than his conventional Neoteric. The second (figure 8) was an expansive brick and concrete structure with pitched roofs sheltering into the coppiced prairie declivities, completed in a suburb of Calgary. The larger budget for the second house permitted bigger volumes and more elegant ornamentation, nonetheless achieved through a comparable manipulation of form, plane, pattern, and texture.

Equally distinct are two British Columbia houses constructed on flat valley sites for Richard Trethewey, at Abbotsford in 1960 and at Haney in 1987. Their different geometries depended upon differences in program determined by family development. As younger parents in 1960 the Tretheweys wanted a pool. For it, Hollingsworth (then unaware of oriental precedent) inverted the idea of a roof, lining the economical circular excavation with asphalt. Its shape, rather than Wrightian precedent, established the arcs of primary living and sleeping areas, and of secondary parking, playing, and entry zones, with service facilities at their intersection (figure 9). The theme was carried through the interior articulation and decoration with conviction, but without dogmatism. Hollingsworth's adroit variation of homogeneous format and ornamental motifs was particularly effective in the unobtrusively but centrifugally positioned kitchen. It overlooked the play areas and was accessible to the living and entertaining rooms. The appliances and extensive built-in storage units and counter tops were arranged to save space and labour so that it could function as the command centre of the modern servantless family.

The significance of place in making place—that is, a place for people and

¹⁴ From the typescript of an article entitled "Design in Modern Life," dating from about 1937, in the Coates archive, box 6, file 6, Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montréal. Coates predicted that it would soon be "held as unreasonable" to pay to move heavy furniture as to move central heating systems from one house to house, "leaving for the personal touch such portables as textiles, books, clothing, pictures and crockery."