

ARCHITECTURAL RECORD



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COVER:

Russell House, Sarasota, Fla. Ralph S. Twitchell and Paul M. Rudolph, Architects. Color photograph by Joseph Janney Steinmetz

THE RECORD REPORTS 9

 News from the Field 9

 News from Washington. By Ernest Mickel 15

 Construction Cost Indexes 26

 Required Reading 28

 News from Canada. By John Caulfield Smith 136

SPACE AND PEOPLE 69

 By Garrett Eckbo. Condensation of part of a new ARCHITECTURAL RECORD book, *Landscape for Living*, scheduled for publication early in 1950

FOR JOYOUS LIVING AND FIVE CHILDREN 76

 Residence for Mr. and Mrs. Maynard E. Russell, Sarasota, Fla. Ralph S. Twitchell and Paul M. Rudolph, Architects

DESIGNED FOR VACATIONS 85

 Hunting Lodge and Summer Cottage for Mrs. William P. Palmer, Jr., Blue Hill, Maine. Louis Gelders, Architect

PLANNED FOR RESEARCH 88

 Laboratories and Offices for the National Research Corp., Cambridge, Mass. Perry, Shaw and Hepburn, Architects

BUILDING TYPES STUDY NO. 157

SMALL BUSINESS BUILDINGS By Frederic Arden Pauley, Architect

 Introduction 94

 Finance and Real Estate Viewpoint 96

 Location Factors: Decentralization, Zoning, Parking 103

 Planning 106

 Features, Equipment, Materials 110

 Fire Insurance 110

ARCHITECTURAL ENGINEERING
Technical News and Research

AIR CONDITIONING WORKS WITH DESIGN 112

 For Space Utilization, Flexibility, Economy. George L. Dahl, Architects and Engineers

PREVENTING CONDENSATION IN DWELLINGS 115

MOUNTAIN INN BUILT WITH PLASTICS 119

TIME-SAVER STANDARDS . . . Heating Systems for Houses 120

 Part IV: Cast Iron Baseboard Heating Systems. By William J. McGuinness

PRODUCTS . . . for Better Building 124

MANUFACTURERS' LITERATURE 132

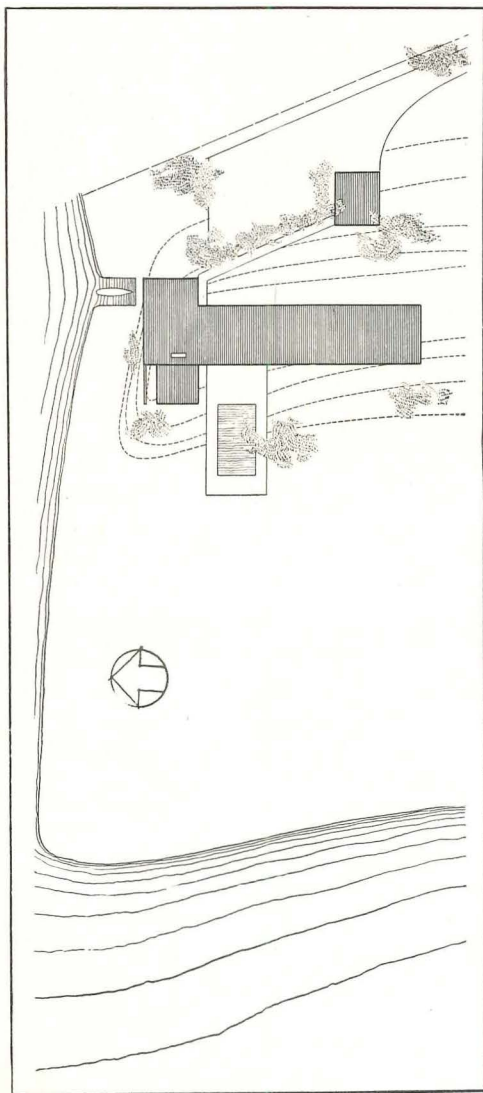
FOR JOYOUS LIVING
AND FIVE CHILDREN

Ralph S. Twitchell and Paul M. Rudolph, Architects



Ezra Stoller Photos





Residence for Mr. and Mrs. Maynard E. Russell

Sarasota, Florida

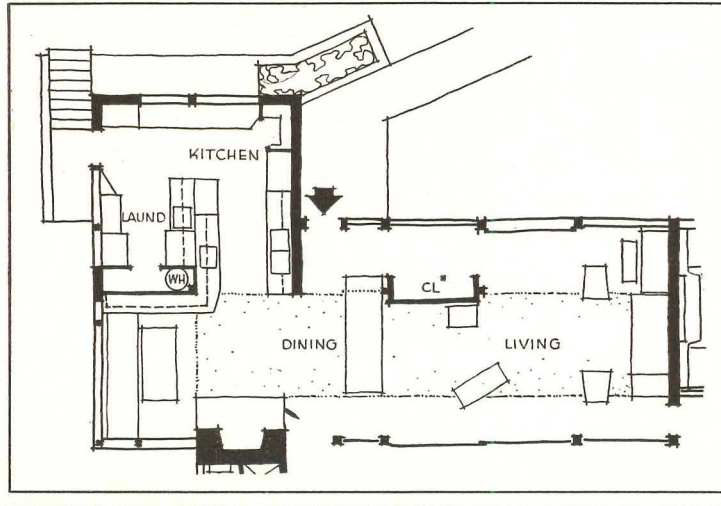
ONE could use all of the familiar words of modern architecture to describe this house, but they all seem too cold. Something like "functional design for living" is too flat a phrase to describe the bubbling joy of five small children in this house, or the cordial family harmony so positively fostered by this plan.

Take for example the site development (at the left). The combination of pool, house and boat landing proclaims a scheme of living in which fun and sports take precedence over formal pretentiousness. And the house settles under the trees comfortably and without self-consciousness.

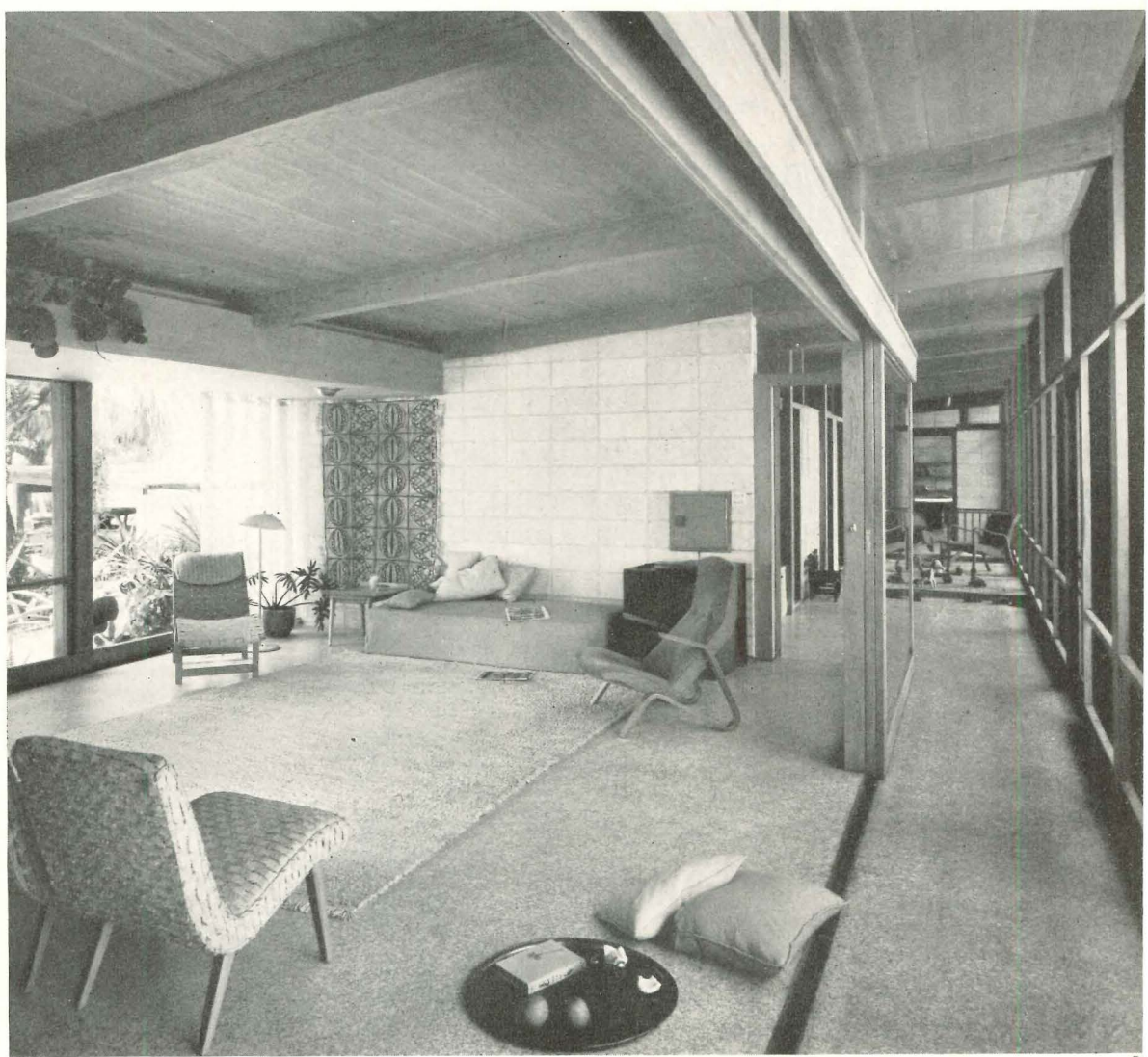
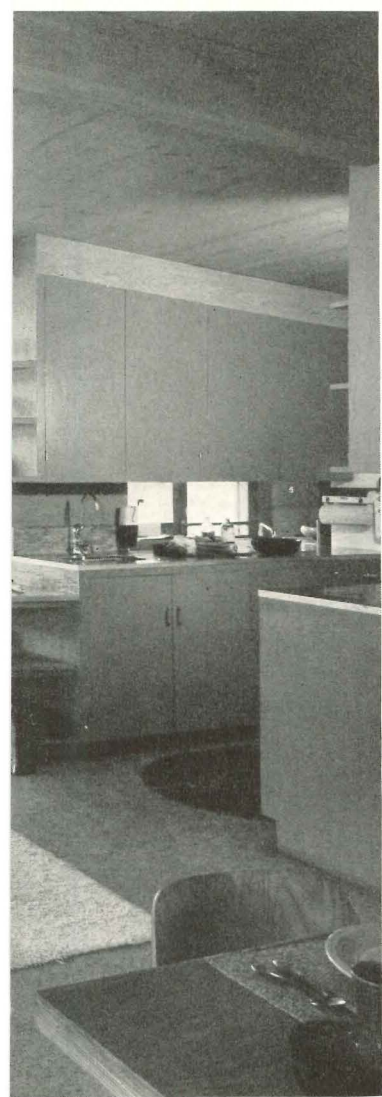
Or take the family living areas shown on the next two pages. This is as thoughtful an arrangement of space as has been seen in many a year. Here again the planning vocabulary is too cold. The kitchen-dining space combination bespeaks not only utility and informality, but a hearty family gathering at mealtime. The living room, though not at all stiff in itself, nevertheless carries a suggestion of more orderly gatherings. One of the architects casually referred to the dining room as the "winter living room," and explained that the more open living room might seem chilly in cold weather, but the subtle differences between the two rooms are not mere matters of climatic temperature. And one ventures the opinion that as the children grow older these temperamental aspects of the two rooms will be more and more appreciated. Also, when the parents tire of the record-player they may either banish the children to the lanai, or retire themselves to the quiet of the study, which is just behind the dining room fireplace.

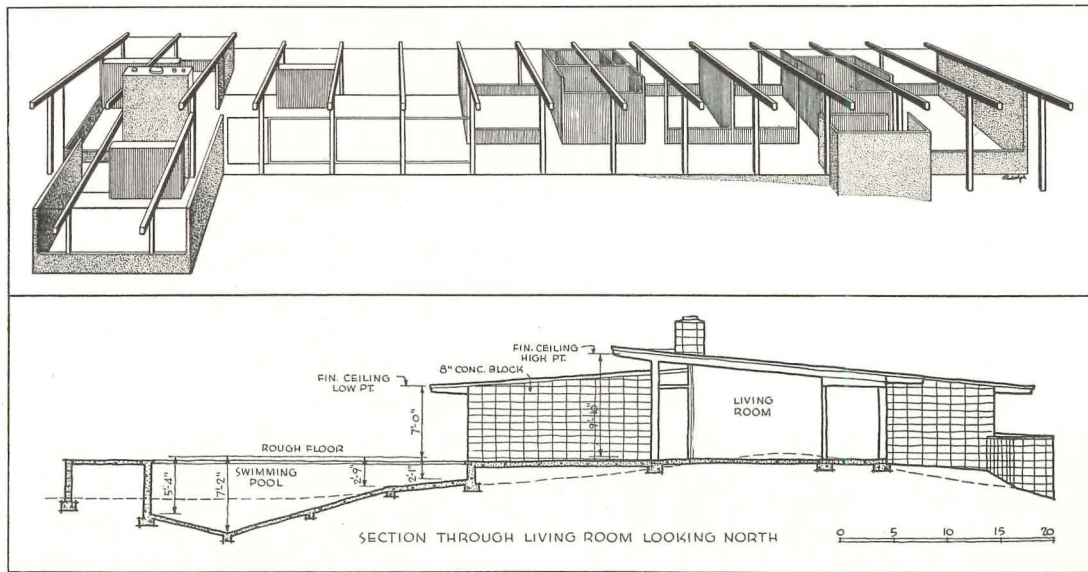
The lanai (photo, page 80; plan, page 81) is an open, screened, widened bedroom corridor which is really a children's activity pavilion with scope for indoor rolling stock. There is, incidentally, a true children's garage on the lower level just under the kitchen, the real parking place for outdoor rolling stock (it may be seen in the photo on the front cover).

As an example of architectural design the house is quite deserving of all of the words, too — it uses materials appropriately, it has an interesting structural system, it is free and honest and expressive. But surely all these things pale beside the success of the house as a parti for family life. This is no "machine for living"; it is functional architecture, but you must drive the word pretty hard to make "functional" mean as much as it does here.



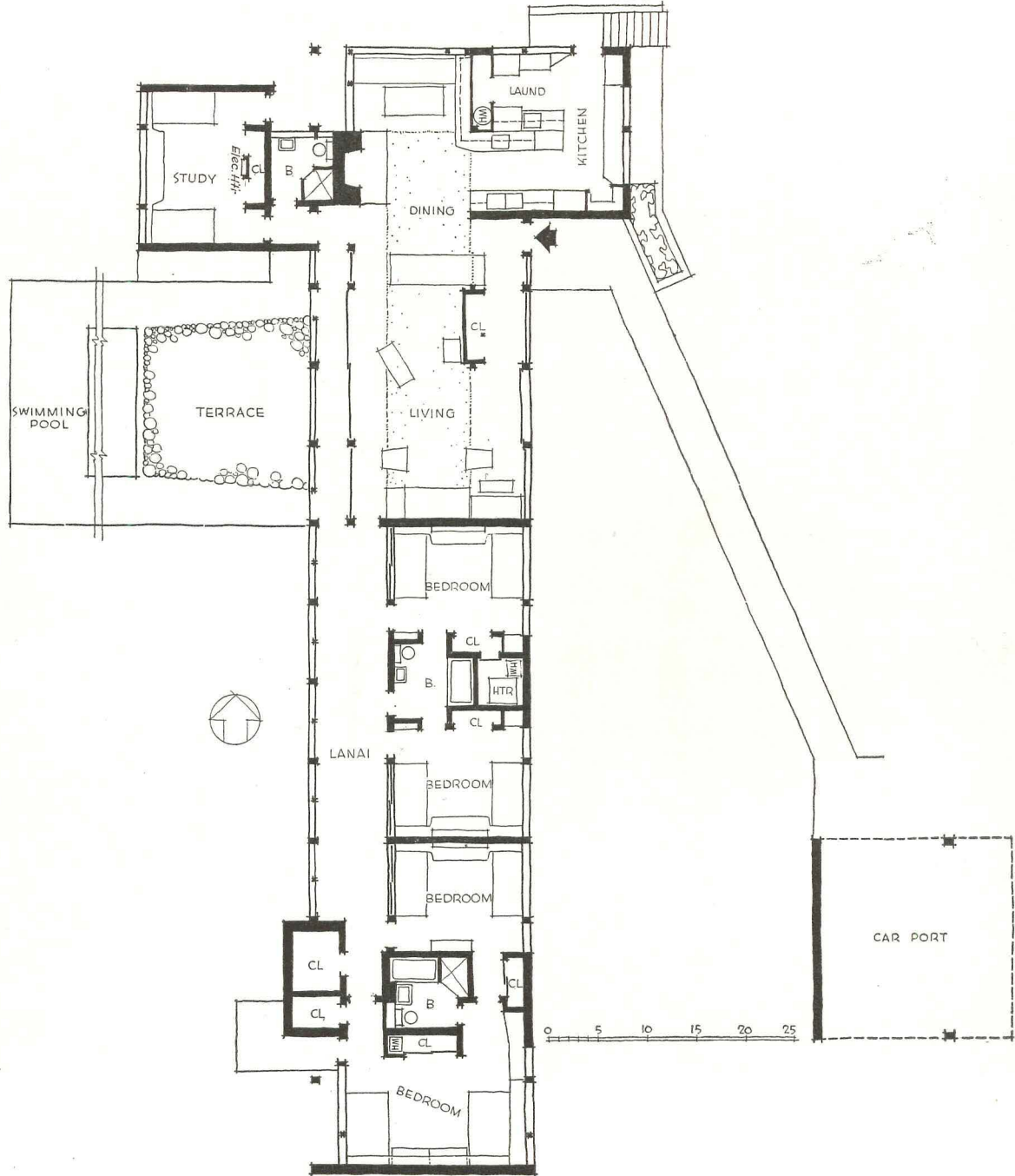
The laundry and kitchen combination is quite good, but its success in efficiency is nothing to the success of the dining room as an invitation at mealtime. Here a father and five children have room, and welcome, for a gathering before, during and after meals, where mother may win help as well as friends. After meals the activity can flow easily into the living room, or beyond to the lanai, or it can burst right on outdoors. The wall (extreme right in the photo strip) is merely screening; living room and bedrooms can be closed against chilly weather with sliding glass doors

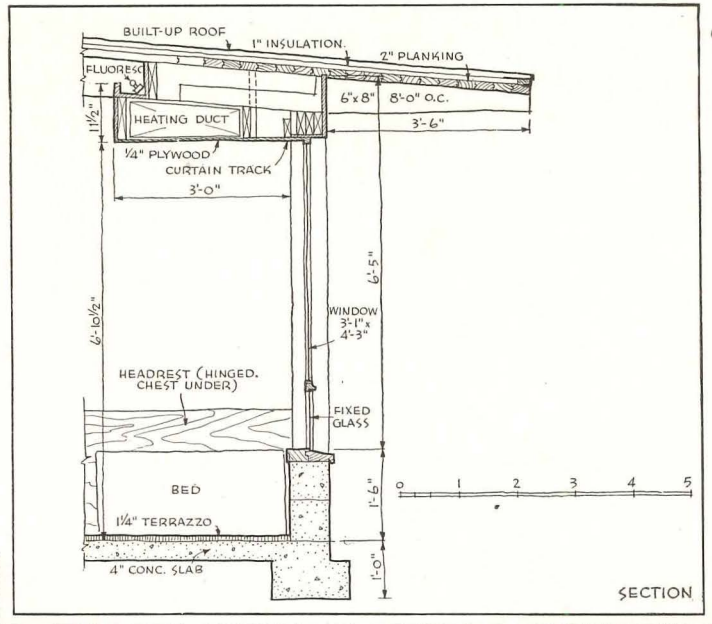




Structural system (upper drawing) is essentially mill construction with 6 by 8 posts and beams, and 2-in. planking roof covered with 1 in. insulation and built-up roofing. Interior columns, also 6 by 8's, run in the line of the bedroom walls; at the living room the system changes to 4 by 6 posts at the glass wall, with other interior posts at the closet. Though the site is an old Indian mound (see section) the land is low and ground water level high; thus house and pool were set at highest point. Not shown on the plan is a play yard for small children under the kitchen window, near boat landing. Under the kitchen at this point is a true garage, not for family cars, but for children's rolling stock. East wall of house is mostly glass, west wall is just insect screening. Masonry walls are all exposed concrete block

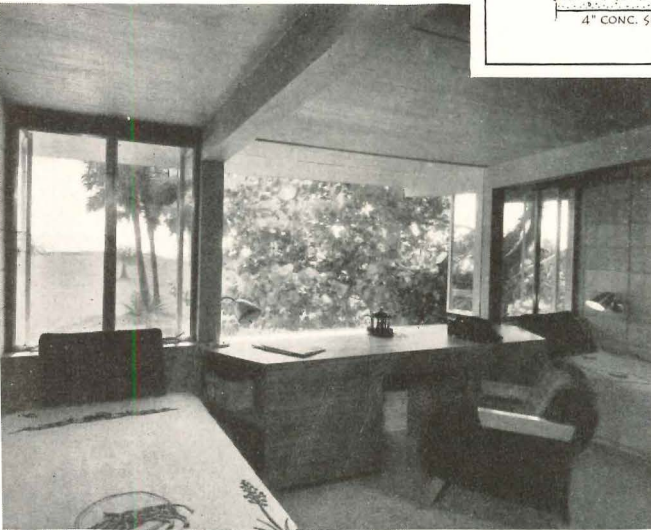
Ezra Stoller Photos





Joseph Janney Steinmetz Photos

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Heating is by forced warm air (see section above) with ducts in an enclosure at the ceiling which is also used for fluorescent lighting cove. Section is at study wall; note in section and in photo just below it the hinged headrest for beds, with chest for covers under headrest. Photo below, left, shows one of children's bedrooms; each child has built-in desk beside his bed. Center view shows east side of house, carport in foreground. Photo on opposite page shows same side, as seen from front entrance

