A Report On
A NEW HOME FOR THE NEW ENGLAND MUSEUM
OF NATURAL HISTORY

by
Frank J. Barrett

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And the members of the staffs of the various museums in Greater Boston.
Dear Sir:

As a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, I herewith submit this thesis entitled, "A New Home for the New England Museum of Natural History."

Respectfully,

Frank J. Barrett
A NEW HOME FOR
THE NEW ENGLAND MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

INTRODUCTION

During the past few years there has been an ever increasing movement in regards to the display of objects intended for public inspection and study. New ideas for attracting and enlightening the common man have become more and more evident, due perhaps to the marked success of the two American World's Fairs of 1933 and 1939 and the Paris Fair of 1937, along with an ever increasing desire in this country to make available to the ordinary citizen, no matter how humble and unlettered he may be, an attractive and prompt means for acquiring knowledge while at the same time deriving a certain amount of pleasure and relaxation from the usual daily routine.

The primary purpose of the 19th century museum was accumulation. The 20th century museum adds classification to this function. The architectural expression of the 19th century museum was monumental and ornate with a minimum of consideration for the objects to be displayed. The 20th century museum is functional and conceived for the display of the collections. The function of the museum of the past was simply preservation, is now education, and tends to become popularization. Museography has two distinct parts:
one purely objective, preservation; the other subjective and constantly undergoing many changing influences, presentation. For the first it is possible to establish fixed rules progressively and scientifically: eliminate risks of fire and robbery and assure safe physical conditions for the collections, (fitting heat and humidity by air-conditioning, safety from insects for wood, cloth, and mounted animals, and from rust for metals). For the second, also, certain principles can be established in so far as the comfort of the visitor is concerned: a convenient easy plan, lighting which eliminates glare and reflections, avoidance of physical fatigue through bending and psychological fatigue from monotony. Consideration must also be given to the wide range in the variety of the people using the museum. The ideal solution is one which can satisfy every type of person from the research student to the man in the street.
OBJECTIVE

From observations of my own I have concluded that most museums of natural history are far less used than they should be; that they do not make much impression on the lives and intellect of those who frequent them; and that unless a new spirit of "museum showmanship" soon becomes evident in their arrangement and organization, they will be entirely neglected save for the connoisseur, patrons, and student. Unless a museum can attract the general public as well as the intelligentsia, it no longer has a justifiable reason to exist in a democratic country, because a museum is intended only secondarily to preserve objects and to catalogue them; its function is primarily to reveal the meaning and the value of natural life to the public.

This New Museum of Natural History should be something the people of Boston and all New England would use and in using would find pleasure and educational value therein. It should be what the men, women, and children of the entire community would welcome and use to add interest to their lives. To build an expensive home, a palace, a temple, or any grandiose structure on the conventional lines of so-called museum architecture is, so it seems to me, a foolish, wasteful, antiquated thing to do, a thing entirely contrary to the ideal of modern American community life, still more to American educational practice and modern museum ideas. Vast sums have
been spent on great marble halls, many of which are beautiful in a cold, death-like way, but a brief study of these museums and of the use made of them in adding to the pleasure, to the broadening and enlightening and to the definite education of their respective communities, has convinced me that they are among the least effective products of community enterprise that America has brought forth. In short, they have shown themselves to be collections housed in marble tombs, and little more; gratifying to a few, awesome to a few, tiresome to many, and helpful to almost none.

Fortunately today there is a movement afield which is not directed to the erection of Greek and Renaissance facades and is not concerned with the construction behind the facades of a few grand courts and galleries. Its galleries or work and study rooms are not invested with that ancient and ghastly fetish, at top light, - something which one may properly hope to escape when he enters a modern building. Neither is there that "museum" atmosphere about the whole thing which is depressing and numbing to the sensitive visitor in direct ratio to the self-conscious grandeur and refinement of the architectural container housing the great collections.

Instead the objective is a desire for a simple and straightforward building with large and inviting windows assuring plenty of light and air, flexible galleries allowing for the expansion and contraction of the exhibits, easy circulation serving adequately the different needs of both
public and student, generous space for giving public instruction, and adequate work space allowing for the care and maintenance of the collections.
PROGRAM

A NEW HOME FOR

THE NEW ENGLAND MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

Problem:

It is assumed that the trustees of the New England Museum of Natural History, which is the subject of this problem, have decided to abandon the original building on Berkeley Street between Boylston and Newbury Streets and seek new quarters in a more suitable location further out of the business center. Since the middle of the last century the museum has occupied this building, which besides being structurally antiquated is now no longer large enough to properly shelter all the various activities of a present-day museum. The site chosen is in the uptown section of the city of Boston known as the Fenway, which is fast becoming a sort of civic and educational center with several museums already located there as well as many schools, both private and public. The area is well serviced by bus and electric car lines (especially with the completion of the Huntington Avenue Subway) and is easily reached by automobile from all points outside the city.

Elements:

The building is to include the following elements, which have been grouped under five general headings: (A) Administration, (B) General Public Exhibition Space, (C) Semi-Public, (D) Service, (E) Social, and are as follows:
(A) Administration:

1. Reception Room
2. General Office
3. Curator
   (a) Office for Secretary
   (b) Private Office for Curator (Director)
   (c) Private Office for Assistant Curator (Director)
4. Bursar
   (a) Office for Secretary
   (b) Private Office (including vault)
5. Private Offices
   (a) Director of Education
   (b) Director of Publicity
   (c) Director of Membership
6. Board Room

(B) General Public:

1. Entrance Hall
   (a) Receptionist
   (b) Space for selling souvenirs, post cards, etc.
   (c) Check Room
   (d) Dressing Rooms and Toilets
2. Main Galleries
   (a) Zoology
   (b) Geology
   (c) Botany
   (d) Anthropology and Ethnology
   (e) Temporary Exhibits
   (f) Outside Exhibits

(C) Semi-Public

1. Library
   (a) Adults' Reading Room
   (b) Children's Reading Room
   (c) Outdoor Reading Terrace
   (d) Stock Room
   (e) Rooms or Space for Photographs, Slides, etc.
1. Library Continued
   (f) Librarian's Private Office
   (g) Work Room
   (h) Storage

2. Galleries for Research and Study

3. Two Small Lecture Rooms

4. Class Rooms

5. Private Studies and Offices for Heads of Each Department

6. Research Rooms and Laboratories

7. Photography Room

(D) Service:
1. Loading
2. Receiving
3. Storing (Temporary)
4. Work Rooms
   (a) Mounting
   (b) Painting
   (c) Carpentry
   (d) Supplies
5. Superintendent's Office
   (a) Stenographer
   (b) Waiting Room

6. Employees
   (a) Lockers
   (b) Rest Rooms
   (c) Toilets and Showers

(E) Social:
1. Lunch Room
   (a) Kitchen
   (b) Private Dining Room
2. Lounge
(E) Social Continued:

3. Club Rooms

(a) Adults
(b) Children
First of all it was assumed that it would be beneficial to have the museum building located on a plot of ground which could be so developed as to advantageously isolate the building from noise, and dust; the hurly-burly of life, so to speak, of the city. Not only is there a psychological reason but there is also a practical reason for this isolation. Noise, of course, tends to distract the visitor and student from their observations and thus defeats the whole program on which the museum is founded. The constant flow of traffic close to a museum would not only give off offensive fumes and distracting noise, but also might under unusual conditions set up vibrations which could be harmful to the exhibits.

Fortunately the site assumed is large enough to provide for this desired isolation. It also possesses a sluggish meandering stream of water prosaically known to Bostonians by the name of Muddy River. To many people this would at first appear to be a detriment to the site, but upon more careful consideration it offers an opportunity to provide for a very special feature, which makes use of the water both to enhance the beauty of the building and give the feeling of seclusion conducive to study. Most of the galleries and study rooms have been placed on the water side of the building with this thought in mind.

The general architectural plan of a museum depends upon
the program established which in turn is governed obviously by the type of museum in question (in this case a natural history museum) and the general conception one may have of a museum. The modern conception reconciles the three ideas of proper setting, research, and popular education, by means of special galleries for the outstanding exhibits, special rooms open to scholars and students for documentary pieces (specimens), lecture rooms, work rooms, professors' offices, libraries, etc. This distinction between the functions of general public appreciation and scholastic research demands:

1. The separation of the collection into two divisions, one for the general public, the other for students.
2. That the study collection be as comprehensible as possible and be arranged to facilitate research and comparison.
3. That the public galleries be arranged so that: (a) a visitor may see a limited number of objects; (b) every object is displayed in congenial surroundings; (c) the visitor's attention is attracted to each object; (d) his interest is held; (e) he is not fatigued because of monotony of the setting.

These requirements should be combined with the following scientific demands:

1. All the possessions of the museum be shown.
2. The collections be arranged in an orderly manner.
3. Everything be shown in the best possible light.
4. All objects be protected against injury from fire, humidity, temperature, light, dust and dirt, vandalism, and theft.

5. The easy rearrangement of the collections to care for their orderly growth.

That the exhibits for the general public and the study collections should be completely separated is fairly evident if the museum is to function properly. The presentation of the two should be completely different. The casual visitor seeks appreciative acquaintance; the student comes for understanding. The former gets most if he is offered but a limited number of the choicest objects, each placed in a harmonious setting that best brings out its special qualities. On the other hand, the specialist should have the same opportunity for unmolested, orderly study as he would have in a library. When he goes to a museum, he knows what he wants and calls upon the curator in charge of the department in which his interests lie. He is not concerned with the exhibits in general. He is concerned only with the quality of the research service offered by the museum.

In the past insufficient study has been given to the best method of showing objects in such a way as to bring out their individual value. This is in great part due to the fact that most of our museum buildings were conceived as inflexible structures. They consisted of a series of galleries divided by immovable natural masonry walls and with the
source of light either skylight or windows, definitely fixed. Not only must the permanent collections be inadequately displayed, but the exhibits never fit. Their arrangement is always a makeshift because they are placed in a building erected generally before there is any collection to be housed. There is no possibility of showing temporary or traveling exhibits to the best advantage. Every museum collection is constantly expanding and changing. A good museum is a growing, living organization—it is never complete. But no matter how progressive its direction or how fine its acquisitions, within an inflexible shell its growth tends to become static. As Clarence Stein recently said, "It is as though a theatrical director with an infinite variety of plays and actors was forced to show them all against the same set with the same fixed lighting. The possibility of arousing different moods or even attracting or holding the attention of his audience would be very slight."

A flexible museum would permit:

1. Arrangement to fit individual requirements of every exhibit.
2. Rearrangement to meet changing requirements.
3. Orderly growth of collections.
4. A certain amount of control over the source of natural as well as artificial light.
5. Experimentation with new methods of display without affecting the permanent structure.
It was felt that the most straightforward and economical solution for the separation of public galleries and study space would be a difference in level, i.e. the placing of one over the other. By means of vertical circulation the visitor, whether student or sightseer, can thus reach his objective direct from the main entrance hall with the least effort. From observations taken at the present museum, it is evident that the rooms most used are the general public galleries. Therefore, in planning this museum, as in planning any other important building, these rooms have been located next to the entrance and on the ground floor. The public can thus enter them with a minimum of walking and effort. The rooms less used have been placed on the upper floors.

The old idea that the main galleries of a museum should be on an upper floor so as to receive top light is no longer valid. The lighting engineers have developed such excellent methods of artificial lighting at moderate cost, and the architect has devised such reliable natural light for lower floors by the use of light admitted by bands of continuous windows, that it is no longer necessary to do violence to the plan and make the most important rooms the most remote.

The auditorium which is also used by the general public has been placed on the ground floor within easy reach of the main entrance hall. In order to give it a distinct expression on the exterior as well as to afford it some
isolation from the main body of the museum so that it can function as a complete unit in itself if so desired, it has been placed at one end of the whole ensemble and connected to it by means of an ample exhibition lobby.

This arrangement of plan adapted itself quite efficiently as it allowed ready segregation of the three activities, exhibiting, studying, and instructing. At the same time the carrying up of the main body of the building to several stories gives a unity to the whole ensemble, the effect being efficient as well as pleasing.
The Entrance Hall:

The entrance hall of the museum serves the functions of orienting the public, of providing space for large groups, and giving the visitor his first impression of the institution. Therefore it has been so placed as to give direct access to the main galleries and auditorium on the first floor, to the elevators and stairs communicating with the study galleries, library, and administration on the upper floors, and to the check room, toilets for both men and women, telephones, and directory. The information desk is a very special feature of this room and has been so located that it controls all circulation through the hall. In order to serve as a meeting place for large groups, the entrance hall has been made fairly large. Anyone who has watched the operation of a museum will notice how crowded the entrance hall becomes when school or club groups of from forty to four hundred persons arrive at the same time.

In order to give the visitor an adequate first impression as he enters the hall, the wall immediately facing him as he enters has been left entirely unobstructed by doors or stairs. It can thus be used as a kind of stage on which notable objects may be installed which will be arresting to the visitor and give him an impression of the character of the institution as a whole. The entrances to the galleries and
the stairs have been placed in the corners of the hall, thus leaving the axis free for objects.

The two principal public entrances to the museum have been concentrated in this hall so as to make it easy to control all movements in or out of the building. It is impractical for a museum to have more than one or two entrances. Several entrances greatly complicate the guarding of the collections, make it difficult to guide and direct the public through the galleries, and require duplication of check-rooms, information desks, stairs, elevators, and directories. The two entrances to the building have been kept fairly close to ground level. Monumental flights of steps are not only physical and psychological barriers which the museum visitor must overcome but they are extremely dangerous in case of wind, rain, ice, and snow, or in case of panic where several hundred visitors attempt to leave the building at the same time.

The Galleries:

The galleries intended primarily for the general public are reached directly from the entrance hall, both being on the same level. In planning these galleries no attempt was made to definitely set any one section aside for zoology, geology, etc., but rather the entire space was conceived as a shell into which the museum staff would be able to easily fit the objects for public display. By use of light movable partitions and screens the rooms can very easily be
divided up to meet the requirements of the specimens placed on exhibition. With this factor in mind it was felt desirable to keep the display space as free of columns and other structural supports as possible, thus greatly increasing the flexibility of the area. However, one thing was borne in mind. A natural history collection is composed of both large and small objects; for instance, it might be made up of both dinosaurs and mammals on the one hand, and butterflies and tiny birds on the other. For this reason the ceiling heights in the galleries have been changed at different points in order to keep the display space in scale with the particular exhibition material.

The main gallery, which is primarily intended for the large and impressive specimens, takes up most of the north-east side of the building and is lighted by great windows reaching from floor to ceiling overlooking a lagoon fed by the stream which meanders through the property. In size this room is large enough to adequately house the exhibition material that will be placed within it. At either end and along the side opposite the windows other galleries for the smaller objects have been placed.

To relieve monotony and museum fatigue, changes of direction in circulation have been introduced into the plan. Likewise use has been extensively made of open windows which afford glimpses of the adjacent "Fens" and the picturesque stream. Artificial light has also been introduced not only for practical reasons of display but also to help give
variety and a relief from the ordinary daylight which is used in most of the building.

The regular overhead light so often used despite its faults has been definitely abandoned in this museum and its place taken by side windows and artificial illumination. Light from the simple ordinary skylight has a flat quality which is poor for three-dimensional objects such as sculpture, mounted animals, etc. as projecting forms cast disturbing shadows and modelled surfaces lose their interesting subtleties. With this type of lighting the maximum intensity of light is also on the floor instead of the walls. Such strong floor illumination is not only misdirected, but tends to cause reflections difficult to avoid. The heads of the vertical side windows have been placed high enough to light the upper parts of the walls and thus give the rooms a light airy feeling. So that the visitor can have a view of the outdoor exhibits and landscaping, the sills are well below the eye level. The tiring effect of being enclosed in a building is a common fault of museum design. The relief and rest obtained while pausing to enjoy a view outside is an aid in making the visit more pleasant.

A section has been set aside adjacent to the main entrance hall where temporary exhibits and traveling collections may be shown. This room has been so planned that it can be shut off from the rest of the museum, thus facilitating the arranging of the exhibitions. It is serviced by its own
elevator from the basement directly below in order that the exhibits can be readily changed. Because of its location, it can be easily reached by the public who will come to view the traveling exhibits alone and will not be particularly interested in the permanent displays.

To go through any museum is tiresome. Therefore, it is necessary to provide breathing places, spots where one can sit and rest the mind and body. To take care of this a pleasant courtyard has been introduced into the architectural scheme between the auditorium and the main bulk of the building. Here amid pleasant surroundings a few select outdoor exhibits can be arranged making the courtyard not only a pleasant place for relaxation but also an appropriate secondary approach to the building. On the water side directly beneath the windows of the main gallery provision has been made where certain outdoor exhibits may be viewed while the visitor gets a breath of fresh air.

**Auditorium:**

The auditorium having its own lobby, which connects with the main public entrance hall, is used by students, the staff, and the public primarily for illustrated lectures and movies. It will be an excellent feature for the holding of conventions in connection with various natural history organizations. With its own toilets and check rooms it is so placed in the architectural plan that it can function as a self-contained unit completely isolated from the remainder of the building.
This would make its use convenient and economical at night when the rest of the museum would presumably be closed. The necessary dressing and retiring rooms have been placed under the stage and connected to it by a small stairway. At the rear of the auditorium an ample projection booth has been provided.

**Library:**

The library is located on the second level directly over the entrance hall where it is easily accessible to the visitor and student who is interested only in research and book consultation. Plenty of natural light is afforded on either side by large windows which overlook the lagoon on one side and open out onto a reading terrace on the other. This reading terrace would be a delightful place for study during the warm months and would certainly appeal to high school students, university scholars, and others who might find themselves with a good deal of spare time on their hands during their summer vacations. Anybody who needs proof of this has only to look into the courtyard of the Boston Public Library on a summer day to realize how popular this terrace would be. The librarian's desk and office have been so placed that she can control and oversee all traffic and movement within the room. Because natural history museums are endeavoring to encourage appreciation among children of all things pertaining to nature, a small room has been set aside for their exclusive use at the end of the library.
nearest the entrance.

**Study Galleries:**

These are galleries set aside for the use of the student or interested individual who desires to examine and study specimens in a more intimate and less formal setting than is possible in the main public galleries. It should always be kept in mind that when a specialist comes to the museum as a research institution, he knows what he wants to see and calls upon the curator in charge of the department in which his interests lie. The exhibits in the main galleries will be of little use to him. He is concerned only with the quality of the research services offered by the museum. For this reason the study galleries have been located on an upper level away from the main gallery floor, but still within direct reach by elevator and stairway with the main entrance hall.

To reach each study gallery the visitor must first pass through the office of the curator in charge who in this way can have direct control over all specimens under his authority. The main corridor from which these galleries open is intended also to serve as display space and is lined on either side with built-in wall cases artificially lighted, thus providing the passageway with the necessary light. As in the public galleries on the first level as well as with the floors above, flexibility has been considered a matter of the utmost importance and to make it possible the room divisions are non-structural and can be considered as only temporary. The
columns and outside walls alone are fixed; the interior dividing partitions may be changed to suit the needs of the collections within. Adequate freight elevator service is provided for by including a freight elevator and a storage or work room at each end of the building. Toilets for both men and women are found on both this floor and the one above.

**Study and Lecture Rooms:**

The use of the fourth floor level has been divided between space for study and administration. As on the other levels the flexibility of the area is assured by means of non-structural partitions of a temporary type. The area immediately adjacent to the stairs and elevator has been set aside for research and instruction and includes four small study rooms and two larger lecture rooms each seating approximately one hundred people. The location of this study group is convenient for the students of natural history who can reach it from the main entrance hall below, the curators in charge of the departments on the floor directly under, and the members of the administrative staff who will also be lecturers and teachers.

**Administration:**

The administration and working quarters have been located on the fourth floor level at the farther end of the building from the stair and elevator. In this location they are away from all disturbances caused by general public circulation and still are easily accessible to the public,
students, and the museum staff itself. Their location on the same floor as the study rooms and the two lecture halls emphasizes the close contact maintained today in the modern museum between the staff and the scholar. In order to simplify the control of this level as much as possible, a reception room with an attendant has been provided adjacent to the stairway and elevator. It would be the duty of this person not only to greet people on arrival at this floor, but also to direct them and be sure that they are taken care of. In connection with the administration offices a large board room has been provided for meetings of the entire staff. Private directors' offices have been arranged in a group around a large office for general work space.

Social:

As the center of relaxation and around which social activities will be maintained, a group of rooms intended solely for recreation have been set aside on the top floor. The center of the group is the lounge where students, visitors, and members of the museum staff can meet and discuss their problems and enjoy refreshments. By the use of sliding doors a small section can be shut off from the main lounge for small gatherings. Doors open from both the lounge and cafeteria onto a roof terrace which can be used for outdoor dining and lounging in the summer. It was felt that the location of this group of social rooms upon the roof would give a feeling of openness and thus tend to cause
people to relax and feel more comfortable than when there is a sensation of closeness.

**Services:**

In a modern museum there is a constant flow of objects as well as people. Temporary exhibits and circulating exhibits come and go. Even the permanent collection is no longer frozen for all time. Material from study and storage reserves is used to change the display of exhibits periodically. Unless the services of a museum building are effectively organized to take care of the various currents of flow, there is bound to be inefficiency, loss of valuable objects, need of a larger staff, slowing up of movement, and at all times complete stagnation.

All the services for this problem have been located in the basement where they are out of the way while at the same time they are convenient and connections between them and the rooms above direct and easy. Because of economy and protection a museum should have as few entrances as possible; all the service entrances for materials, specimens, and employees have been grouped together directly under the control of the superintendent. By locating this service entrance at one end of the building, a flow of traffic was logically established under the entire museum to which elevators connect at various points with the floors above.

This group of services is composed of the following units:
(a) Receiving

The functions of this room are two: (1) Receiving and disposing, i.e. checking all containers and objects on arrival and departure from the museum; (2) unpacking and packing. To minimize transportation inside the building this room has been centrally located and also is easily reached by the delivery road. A freight elevator and service stairway connect it with all the floors above.

(b) Superintendent:

The superintendent is in charge of the care, maintenance, and protection of the building and its contents. By placing his office next to the only service entrance and the receiving room he is able to keep a close eye on all incoming and outgoing objects until they are either put in safe storage or placed in the galleries above.

(c) Recording and Assembling:

All objects as soon as they are unpacked are usually moved to this room where they are recorded. Here also all the different sections of an exhibit are put together before being placed in the circulating storage room or taken to the galleries above.

(d) Circulating Storage:
To take care of traveling collections after they have been taken from the galleries and before being sent on to another museum it is necessary to set aside a room for their storage. This room is located near the freight elevator connecting with the temporary gallery making changes from it to the storage room easy and efficient.

(e) Permanent Storage:

As are all the other store rooms, this is a fireproof, damp-proof, dust-proof, air-conditioned place for permanent storage. It is accessible to the receiving room and to all the service elevators.

(f) Shops:

Workshops serve both for the manufacture, repair, and maintenance of equipment such as showcases, as well as for the repair and maintenance of exhibition objects. For convenience in management, the shops have been brought together under one of the wings in a place where they will receive plenty of natural light. These shops will consist of areas set aside for carpentry, painting, mounting, modelling, photographic service, and adequate space for storage of supplies.

(g) Employees:

All service employees will check in and out at the service entrance. This is a safety precaution. Most museum thefts are "inside jobs". In order that employees can go as directly as possible to their lockers and wash rooms after
entering and before leaving, their rest rooms have been placed near the entrance and within easy control of the super-
intendent.

Construction:

The entire plan has been carefully considered from the point of view of simple construction consisting of steel columns and steel beams or trusses, depending on what the span might require as in the case of the main exhibition room and auditorium. The floors are all of reinforced concrete as are the foundations below grade. On the exterior the curtain walls are of brick and marble in combination with huge areas of glass.

Elevations:

An attempt has been made to let the elevations follow as naturally as possible from the plan of the building within and all affectation and sham have been scrupulously avoided. The museum character of the first floors is expressed on the exterior by blank walls and series of huge windows while the offices, study rooms, etc. on the upper level are lighted by regularly spaced windows. The exterior relies on the application of beautiful materials frankly applied to the facade with a few huge panels of bas relief about the entrance and other focal points to give appropriate character and necessary enrichment. All this decoration has been kept near the ground where it can be seen easily by the human eye and fully appreciated.
CONCLUSION

It is possible today to build a museum building suitable to the needs of the institution it is to house. To spend space and money on monumental halls, which are unusable, staircases, which no one mounts, and solid partitions, which have no structural necessity, - in fact to build a house in an old style when a new one is clearly needed - is not to have learned what is required and to have missed the most obvious lesson of museum planning.

I have conceived this building primarily as a flexible setting for objects of interest and instruction and an attempt has been made to work out circulation so that at no time during a tour of the building would the visitor lose sight of his purpose in being there. At every turn he would find himself face to face with something of interest and not confronted with dead classical niches, columns, and open, empty, monumental doorways. Ideally displayed in a suitable architectural container the contents of a museum offer to the visitor information, instruction, and recreation - the elements indispensable to adult education.
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