Designing a new high school in a community with a magnificent history of pride and tradition was an incredible challenge that involved intense community and committee input. Through the design process, the focus was on a few key design concepts like a high quality learning environment, a technologically advanced infrastructure and attention to program requirements and details. The new campus was also designed to express a serious academic environment using a building image that reflected the quality of the community it serves.

The campus was constructed of timeless and durable materials. While the budget did influence the type of materials used, the quality and level of detailing to give the campus proper scale and aesthetic appeal was also important. Concrete masonry, exposed structural steel, glass and metal roofs make up the majority of the building exteriors. Many practical considerations such as security, use of building after hours, circulation of students and daily operational issues led to the physical layout of building spaces. However, the entire campus is held together by the exterior use of the space and clear organization.

The result is a new high school that will serve as a model for future high school designs. It consists of a 264,000 sf comprehensive high school located on a 57 acre site. The site slopes approximately 80 feet from east to west. Designed to house 2,500 students, the school also includes administration facilities, media center, theatre/performing arts facility, multi-purpose facility, gymnasium, fine arts building and specialized classrooms.

**Architect:**

Robert Hensley, **Principal In Charge**  
Kevin MacQuarrie, **Project Architect**  
WLC Architects, Inc.  
10470 Foothill Blvd., Virginia Dare Tower  
Rancho Cucamonga, California
“Overall, I tried to create an imagery that symbolized the complex role of the police in a city as socially and demographically diverse as Los Angeles today,” explained Clifton P. Allen, AIA and principal in charge of design. The result is a powerful, 40,000 sf Administration Building, 7,700 sf Vehicle Maintenance Building and Staff Parking in a single level below grade structure.

The site is located on Burbank Boulevard adjacent to the Hollywood Freeway, in a primarily residential community. The building is massed to step away from the street and from the residences, allowing the building to blend with the neighborhood. A screen of mature trees provides a buffer from the adjacent residences. The challenge was to keep this building invulnerable to attack while maintaining a high level of aesthetic value under a strict budget restraint. “Concrete masonry gave us a way to articulate the building within a strict budgetary restraint,” said Clifton P. Allen.

In contrast to the defensive appearance of the exterior walls of the secure staff zones, the public areas of the building are treated in an open manner. The two major public areas, of the community room and staff break room, are developed as glass block cylinders which are animated by natural light during the day and become illuminated beacons at night. These crystal pavilions play off against the solemnity of the concrete masonry to create a place which is loved by the police officers who work there and appreciated by the community it serves.
"The precision CMU with its durability, costs and maintainability was the best design solution for the project," explained co-designer George Campos.

Ron Gross, AIA, project architect, noted, “the concrete masonry gave us the flexibility to create details that capture the imagery of baseball as well as Indian and Spanish roots, while presenting the permanence of a public structure.”

The result of this design is a 5,000 seat ballpark featuring four sky boxes, press and broadcast facilities, locker rooms, concessions, offices and a wonderful intimate place for a ball game.

**Architect:**
Ron Gross, AIA, Project Architect
George Campos, Designer
Salerno/Livingston Architects
In Association with HOK
363 Fifth Avenue, Third Floor
San Diego, California
Root Park is a 3/4 acre park originally built in 1917, situated adjacent to San Leandro Creek, residential neighborhoods, the Civic Center, and the commercial heart of downtown San Leandro, California. Root Park was completely redesigned to transform an aging and run-down historic site into a revitalized urban park that opens itself to the previously hidden creekside environment, preserve important historic features, enhance functional use, and connect the Civic Center to the downtown commercial area.

“Concrete masonry segmental retaining wall units were used because of their aesthetic value and flexibility. The client wanted a natural look. The concrete masonry retaining walls also protected the redwood trees and were easy to install. In fact, this project has won two design awards,” said Gary Mason, ASLA, principal in charge.

Until recently, one had limited access to reach the Creek and enjoy the wonders that can be found in this little piece of urban wilderness. Now, thanks to the completed Root Park renovation, everyone can experience the beauty of the Creek as a historical and recreational community asset.

Architect:

Gary Mason, Principal In Charge
Sam Ciofalo, Project Manager
Wolfe Mason/Associates Landscape Architects
2036 Emerson
Berkeley, California
This 2,900 sf chapel with 45 foot high masonry cross and lobby were designed and constructed to join an existing 12,000 sf sanctuary. The chapel, which seats 135 people, is used for daily mass, small weddings and funerals, as well as overflow seating to the main sanctuary.

The exterior CMU walls are a series of curved segments in a sawtooth pattern with stained glass windows between the segments, allowing for northeast window orientation. The sacristy is located on a raised platform at the interior apex of the cross tower adjacent to the raised altar area. A traditional smooth-textured coffered ceiling with indirect lighting provides a dramatic affect and a more voluminous feeling in the space. And the floor plan is linear with center and side aisles following the curve of the existing outer sanctuary wall.

“The existing building we were adding onto was concrete masonry which was exposed. We were able to pick up the same aesthetic value along with the durability and maintenance ease that concrete masonry provides. We couldn’t have pulled off the tower in anything other than concrete masonry.” explains Gary J. Gery, AIA, project architect. “In fact, concrete masonry will be used again with another project – a 17,000 sf church with an 80 foot high tower scheduled to be done this summer.”

Architect:  
Gary J Gery, AIA, Project Architect  
John Booker, AIA, Principal In Charge  
Booker Gery Hickman Architects  
809 Sylvan Ave., Suite 101  
Modesto, California
All projects profiled in this publication have been submitted by Architects and CMACN Members throughout California. If you have a project in which concrete masonry played an integral part of the architectural expression and you would like to submit it to be featured in CMU Profiles in Architecture, send us six colored slides, colored negatives or color photographs and a general project description, so it may be considered as a candidate to be featured in a future publication. CMU Profiles in Architecture is mailed to approximately 4,000 Architects throughout California and is featured on the worldwide web. The architectural firm whose project is chosen, will also receive copies of the issue which features their project, and, in addition, will receive single page copies of their featured project for personal and professional use. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Just a reminder... March is the month the call for entries to the 1998 Concrete Masonry Design Awards are scheduled to be mailed. The awards will be presented on July 17, 1998 at the AIACC Board of Directors.

If you have any questions, feel free to call CMACN at (916) 722-1700.

Concrete Masonry Association of California and Nevada (CMACN) a nonprofit professional organization established in October 1977, is committed to strengthening the masonry industry in California and Nevada by providing:

- Technical information on concrete masonry for design professionals.
- Protect and advance the interests of the concrete masonry industry.
- Develop new and existing markets for concrete masonry products.
- Coordinate members’ efforts in solving common challenges within the masonry industry.

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