

The
Tangible
Past
in
Athens, Georgia

Andrews • Brown • Cooper • Doster • Epling
Flynn • Hodgson • Leathers • Marshall
McAlexander • McCommons • Thomas • Warren

Athenians who desired a middle approach to architecture looked again to the University of Georgia faculty. While teaching interior design in the UGA School of Art in the 1960s, Harold Wescott introduced a characteristic style that used walls of glass, natural woods, and floors of poured Italian terrazzo with an exterior carefully blended with its natural setting. With his wife, Helen, he adapted the interior of the newly-acquired President's House on Prince Avenue, inventing ways to use its traditional interior columns to contain air-conditioning ducts and decorating the historic house in the appropriate period. He designed houses at 350 Glenwood Drive for Dr. H. W. Masters, first director of the Georgia Center for Continuing Education; 130 Dellwood Drive in 1958 for Dr. William and Helen Crosby; 230 Meadowview Road for Sam and Fay Welch; and 535 Riverview Road for Norman Wood, a below-street level wooded site which its third owner calls "My mountain vacation house in Five Points" (Interviews with Crosbys and Jerry Nicholson).

Ed Wade, a partner in Kulke and Wade Architects, Augusta, GA designed a number of important Athens houses from 1940 to 1970. He incorporated portions of older houses into several of them: "Chatt's Island" off Plum Nelly Road for David and Sarah Michael in 1940; 215 W. Rutherford Street for Hubert and Nan Owens; 570 Springdale Street for Hugh and Jessie Hodgson in 1941; 350 West Rutherford for Mrs. John White Morton; and 555 Fortson Road for James (Jimmy) and Eleanore Dudley. Wade also designed 324 S. Milledge Avenue for Chi Omega Sorority and the 62-room Holiday Inn that opened in 1960, corner of Wray and Hull Streets (Interviews with Ellen Wilkins, Chad Erwin, Eleanore Dudley, and Ed Benson).



"Chatt's Island," off Plum Nelly Road, was designed in 1940 by Ed Wade for the David Michaels, members of Athens's prominent Michael family. For many years it was the welcoming home of John and Lovat Wilkins, and recently it has been extensively and handsomely refurbished by the Irvin Alhadeffs.

Photograph by Kenneth I. Storey.

Chatt's Island

After the million-dollar fire destroyed the first Michael Brothers department store in downtown Athens in 1921, the firm hired Atlanta architect Neal Reid to design the handsome Renaissance Revival store building completed in 1922. Reid planned handsome walnut interior background panels for the store's display windows.

When David and Sarah Hall Michael decided to build their house on Chatt's Island off Plum Nelly Road, they asked architect Ed Wade to incorporate those walnut panels into the dining room of their house. Ellen Wilkins Wiley, daughter of the second owners, the late John and Lovat Wilkins, has Wade's 1950 architectural drawings that indicate the reuse (Interview, Ellen Wilkins Wiley, 2010).



Chatt's Island was designed for David and Sarah Hall Michael by architect Ed Wade.

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