

Sidney Shurcliff 1906-1981



Sidney Shurcliff (AB '27, DES '30), a nationally known Boston landscape architect and planner, died on January 19 at the age of 74. A senior partner in the Cambridge firm of Shurcliff and Merrill, his work during the last half century spanned the whole spectrum of landscape practice. He was involved in landscape planning for Mount Holyoke and Wheaton Colleges and the Universities of Massachusetts and New Hampshire. His firm handled the historic restoration of the grounds of Williamsburg, VA; Sturbridge Village, MA; and Gore Place, Waltham, MA. In the decades following World War II, he was the master planner for over a dozen New England towns, including Dedham, Falmouth, Needham, Stoughton, and Bedford. In Boston, his firm was responsible for many development projects, including the Storrow Embankment along the Charles River basin and the beautification of Lafayette Mall on the Boston Common.

Shurcliff was the first American to serve as president of the International Federation of Landscape Architects and was an associate of the National Academy of Design. In addition, he was a fellow and former vice president of the ASLA; a member of the advisory committee of the Trustees of Reservations; chairman of the Anderson Fund; and president of the Hubbard Educational Trust, which recently gave a grant to the Loeb Library to restore rare books in the landscape architecture collection. He was a former president of the Harvard Travellers Club and of the Boston Society of Landscape Architects.

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OBITUARIES

Sidney N. Shurcliff, at 74; leading landscape architect

By Edgar J. Driscoll Jr.
Globe Staff

Sidney N. Shurcliff, 74, nationally known Boston landscape architect and planner, was killed yesterday when he plunged five floors from his home on Pinckney street, Beacon Hill. He died later at Massachusetts General Hospital.

Mr. Shurcliff was senior partner in the Cambridge firm of Shurcliff and Merrill. His principal works included, as he put it, "every form of landscape architecture from private estates to zoos," but with special emphasis on school, college and university planning and historic restorations.

Over the years he also had been a master planner for such towns as Dedham, Falmouth, Needham, Marion, Mattapoisett, Stoughton and Bedford, as well as towns in New Hampshire and Maine. His firm handled the restoration of the grounds of Williamsburg, Va., the development of the Storrow Embankment along the Charles River basin; the development and planning of Shoppers World, Framingham; and beautification of the Lafayette Mall, Boston Common, to name only a few.

Mr. Shurcliff had been a practicing landscape architect for more than half a century. Civic-minded,

he had served for years as a member and secretary of the Massachusetts Art Commission and as a member of the Boston Art Commission.

He was the first American to serve as president of the International Federation of Landscape Architects, with which he had been involved for more than 25 years.

In addition, he was a member, fellow and former vice president of the American Society of Landscape Architects; a member of the advisory committee of the Trustees of Reservations and the Board of Governors of Gore Place, Waltham; president of the Hubbard Educational Trust and chairman of the Anderson Fund; and former president of the Harvard Travellers Club and of the Boston Society of Landscape Architects.

Mr. Shurcliff was born in Boston. He was a graduate of Noble and Greenough School, Harvard College, Class of 1927, and of the Harvard School of Landscape Architecture.

He leaves his wife, Katherine (Balch); a foster-son, James C. Heigham of Belmont; two brothers, William A. of Cambridge and John R. of Tullahoma, Tenn.; and three sisters, Sarah S. Ingelfinger of Cambridge, Elizabeth S. Lowell of Concord and Alice W. Shurcliff of Ipswich.