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**INDIANAPOLIS, IND.  
NEWS**

— D. 197,305 —  
INDIANAPOLIS METROPOLITAN AREA

OCT 2 1970

**Who's News**

**J. IRWIN MILLER**, chairman of Cummins Engine Co., was elected a senior member of the National Industrial Conference Board for a three-year term. The board was founded in 1916 and serves as an independent study organization on business and industrial matters. It is based in New York. In addition, Miller is a new trustee of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. He has degrees from Yale and Oxford, and is a Butler trustee.

**A. L. CRABLE** is new associate personnel manager for Burger Chef Systems, having been transferred by the parent firm, General Foods, to Indianapolis.

Research & Review Service of America, 1720 E. 38th, has added **MRS. RICHARD BUIS** and **HAROLD J. MOORE** to its staff. Mrs. Buis is an editorial assistant in the special projects department, and Moore is audio-visual assistant in the communications services department.



Elia Saareinen's First Christian Church, 1942, set the precedent for topflight architecture to follow. Note asymmetrical accents of the structure, inspired by a traditional Italian church with bell tower.

## The Athens of the prairie



The Athens of the Prairie is strong on churches. This one, with echoes of antiquity in modernism, was designed by the Chicago firm of Harry Weese. It wraps around a center courtyard.



J. Irwin Miller, diesel tycoon, architect's buff, city builder.

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### Small Indiana city is a meeting place of architectural minds

By Helen Borsick Collins



One of the city's many unusual schools is the W. D. Richards Elementary school (1965) designed by Edward Larrabee Barnes. The playground sculptures are by Constantino Nivola.



The usual procedure for a new post office is to go to a drawer and pick out a blueprint specified for the city's size and needs, to exactly resemble all the others. Miller persuaded the government to let him supply original plans. Roche and Dinkeloo did the honors.

The approach to Columbus, Ind., 40 miles south of Indianapolis, is a dreary sea of prairie.

Its magnificence is sudden, like the springing up of the Cathedral of Chartres in the wheatfields south of Paris.

Only it is not just a single incredibly beautiful structure that amazes the visitor to Columbus, but several dozen buildings by a sort of Who's Who of modern architectural design, plunked down in this midwestern factory town of 27,000.

There's the First Christian Church by Elio Saareinen; an Eero Saareinen church and a bank—the town library by I. M. Pei; the S.O.M. (Myron Goldsmith) newspaper plant; the Kevin Roche-John Dinkeloo post office; the pop-culture Robert Venturi-John Rauch firehouse, the "home for golden agers by The Architects Collaborative of Cambridge; public schools by Gunnar Birkerts, Harry Weese, Edward Larrabee Barnes, John Carl Warnecke, Eliot Noyes, John Johansen.

What's all this architecture doing on the prairie?

The credit belongs in large part to one J. (for Joseph) Irwin Miller, aged 64, graduate of Yale and Oxford Universities and Chairman of the Board of the Cummins Engine Co., manufacturers of diesel engines (designed by the Irwin chauffer, Cleslie Cummins), and of the Irwin Union Bank and Trust Co., both of Columbus.

In addition to being the richest man in Columbus, with personal assets of well over \$100 million, Miller is a fellow of the Yale Corp., trustee of the Ford Foundation and the Museum of Modern Art, a director of the American Telephone and Telegraph Co., past president of the National Council of Churches, a member of various presidential and scientific commissions, and so forth.

On the aesthetic side, Miller plays the violin, a Stradivarius, and indulges a love of good architecture by causing his fellow townspeople, when planning new

buildings, to choose from the top available architectural talents.

For nearly 20 years, the Cummins Engine Foundation has paid the architectural fees, amounting to date to \$2½ million, for all of Columbus' public schools and a number of other public buildings — on condition that the architect be chosen from "a list of at least six first-rate architects prepared and submitted by a disinterested panel" selected by the Cummins Foundation.

The fees are determined by a sliding scale ranging from 2.2% of construction costs for a building costing \$2 million or more to 10.2% for a building costing under \$200,000.

Historically, it was Miller's uncle and namesake, William G. Irwin, and aunt, Lizzie I. Sweeney, who introduced the first major Modern Architecture to Columbus, in 1941.

Having purchased a downtown block as the site for the First Christian Church, they persuaded the congregation to have Elio Saareinen design it. At that, Miller had a hand in already. Elio's son, Eero, and he had been Yale classmates.

Saareinen's design is composed of two strong geometric shapes in a modern version of the Italian church and campanile beside it, with strong asymmetric accents and a grid pattern of stone and brick repeated on church and tower.

Still current and quality as in the early 1940s when it was a great shock to rural Columbus, Elio Saareinen's church has undergone two alterations.

One, the warm tan brick that originally formed the interior of the sanctuary in a continuation of the building's exterior surface, has been covered with another material and painted white. It now seems cold and faceless. The change was made for acoustical reasons, as the tour guide explains it.

And two, double pity, the walkway in the churchyard that once crossed between two reflecting pools with fountains, inspired by the Bridge of Sighs in Venice, now crosses pools filled with sod, for maintenance reasons. Too many pop cans and candy wrappers landed in the water. Even amazing, Fundamentalist Columbus, Ind., has its problems.

The next building to join the parade of giants, 10 years later, at Miller's instigation, was the Irwin Union Bank and Trust Co., designed in 1953 by Eero Saareinen.

It was a glassy, unbanklike building with shapely white ceiling domes, to be affectionately known as "the brassiere factory."

An addition to the bank this year was designed by Kevin Roche and John Dinkeloo, Saareinen's successors, in keeping with Miller's rule that additions to an existing building be made by the same architect, or in case of his death, his successors.

Shortly after the building of Saareinen's bank, the new Cummins Engine Foundation offered its unique architect: paying proposition to the Columbus schools, and eventually the same was extended to other public institutions.

The setting of an architectural trend led to other major structures without the architectural fee incentive. Another Columbus firm, the Hamilton-Corco Co. (chubby furniture), commis-

sioned a new plant design by Harry Weese, and in 1958 commissioned that architect to build the city's public recreation facility — the Lincoln Center of Columbus — as a gift of the Hamilton Foundation.

Among other Columbus buildings, Weese also designed the clubhouse for the Otter Creek Golf Course, designed by Robert Trent Jones. Course and clubhouse were given to Columbus by the Miller family.

The Miller family, synonymous with Columbus, Ind., consists of J. Irwin Miller and his wife, Xenia, their four children, and Miller's sister, Mrs. Clementine Tangeman of New York.

All are principal clients of the Irwin Management Co., which is a separate firm formed for the family's financial planning and investment operations, real estate development (including Bond Court in Cleveland) and various philanthropies aimed at making Columbus a model city.

The Miller's latest gift to Columbus, currently under construction in the 53-acre downtown re-development section, is a \$3 million enclosed shopping mall, common and courthouse center (Gruen Associates, principal architect Cesar Pelli).

In the center of this lively complex will be an extraordinary 30-foot electrically operated Jean Tinguely sculpture, "Chaos No. 1," built of machine parts picked up around Columbus.

Tinguely built the sculpture last summer in the old Columbus pump house where it waits to be moved to the complex for unveiling.

The pump house, incidentally, has been replaced by a new \$10 million water system. Millions of dollars roll off tongues in Columbus like dimes and nickels.

So the pump house may be converted to a restaurant, or an eye-seeo-hoop. The atmosphere would be great. And Columbus could use one.

The Millers also were donors of the 39-foot "Large Arch" bronze sculpture by Henry Moore, said to be the largest work by him in existence, in front of the Cleo Rogers Memorial Library (I.M. Pei, 1969).

Whereas in some cases Columbus, Ind., the architect's name is more impressive than the character or performance of the building, this is one of the city's truly outstanding structures, perfectly attuned to its function to invite, inspire and provide enrichment.

The \$2½ million needed to design and build the library came from a \$1-million bond issue and, for the rest, largely private donations.

It stands across from Saareinen's church and next to the stately old Irwin family mansion with its Pompeian garden. There is striking ambience in the juxtaposition of these buildings, looking forward and backward to beauty.

Another memorable architectural experience awaits visitors to Columbus on the edge of town, not long ago farm country, in the form of the North Christian Church, designed by Eero Saareinen. It is hexagonal, low, with arena seating, light that streams from an aperture above, and a soaring 195-foot, central-axis spire reaching for heaven.

Saareinen designed this building just before his sudden illness and death in 1961, and never saw it completed. Almo Saareinen came to the dedication and pronounced it his most beautiful work.

Saareinen himself had prophetically said, "I want to solve this design so that, as an architect when I face St. Peter, I am able to say that out of all the buildings I did in my lifetime, one of the best was this little church." Such is the legend.

Harry Weese did the First Baptist Church a year later, in 1965. It is an adaptation of a Norman theme, with steep-pitched, knotty pine roofs, and building elements grouped around an open courtyard.

Another intriguing religious building concept is the design of the Four Seasons Retirement Home (Architects Collaborative, Norman Fletcher) operated by Baptist Homes & Hospitals, Inc.

This completely self-contained retirement community is built around its own chapel.

Churches are big in Columbus. There are 132 churches, and at last count just

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*Trustee Mention*  
*J. Kevin Miller*  
 CLEVELAND, OHIO  
 PLAIN DEALER  
 D. 410.646—S. 517.385  
 CLEVELAND METROPOLITAN AREA

15 1973

## The Athens of the prairie

Continued from Page 1-E  
 eight saloons, in the town and surrounding Bartholomew County.

Unfortunately, most correspond to the early perma-stone brand of much of the lower and middle income housing, in contrast to the costly grandeur of the new architecture, or for that matter the executive-level neighborhoods inspired primarily by the presence of Miller's companies and Hamilton Cosco and the Arvin Co. (fans, heaters, appliances).

Miller himself lives in a house designed by Eero Saarinen, and the philosophy of his architectural program in Columbus is based on a quote from Winston Churchill, "First we shape our buildings. Then they shape us."

If beautiful buildings do indeed make beautiful people, given time for the assimilation and educational process, Columbus may well become the model city Miller wants it to be.

Meanwhile, it is a living architectural museum, lacking perhaps buildings by Frank Lloyd Wright, Le Corbusier, Louis Sullivan, Mies van der Rohe, Walter Gropius and a few others, but gaining nicely in terms of newer contemporary figures.

The city is growing, physically and intellectually, boasting fewer racial

problems than most and far greater generosity on the part of corporate donors, and looking forward with a strong social conscience.

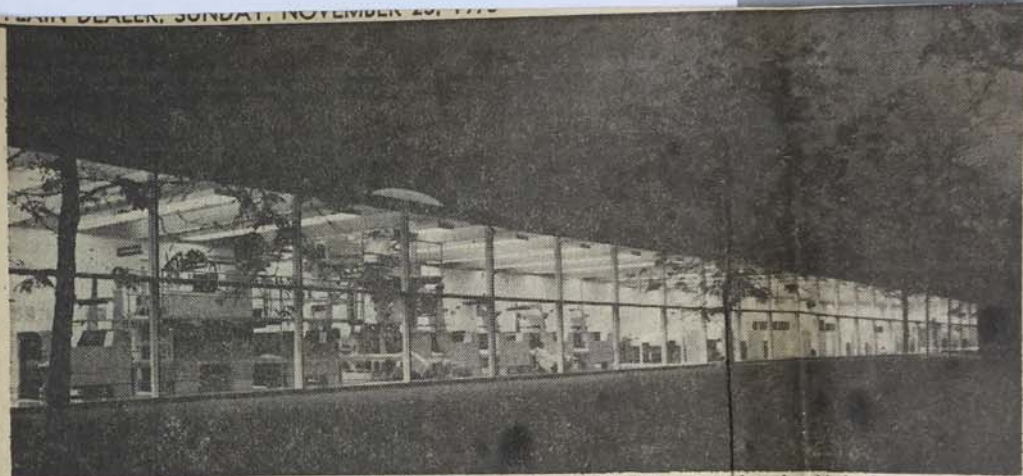
A Visitors' Center has been opened to provide information and guidance for architectural students and tourists; about 10,000 a season.

It is housed in a handsome 19th century pillared brick structure renovated under the leadership of Mrs. Miller, whose hobby is renovating buildings.

One of her prime feats, through the Irwin-Sweeney-Miller Foundation established for the purpose, has been the renovation of the 1974 Bartholomew County Courthouse at Washington and Third Streets. Similar projects are slated.

The pride that Columbus Indianans take in their city — "the Athens of the prairie" — is evidenced by the tour guides who contribute their time to show it to others.

Ours, for a building-to-building tour the day I visited with Jane and architect Jerry Weiss of Cleveland, was Don Arthur, a former Midwest district glove salesman from Kansas City who retired to Columbus to get away from the hurly-burly of the metropolis, and now is busier and happier than ever selling his adopted environs.



The town newspaper, The Republic, circulation 20,000, is prepared and published in an open 1970 glass-and-steel Bauhaus oriented design by Myron Goldsmith of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill.

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 **Irwin Miller**  
INDIANAPOLIS, IND.  
NEWS  
— D. 190,860 —  
INDIANAPOLIS METROPOLITAN AREA

MAY 25 1971

# Irwin Miller Ardent Civic Worker In His City

Although he doesn't live or work in a large city, it would be difficult to find a man better qualified to be chairman of the international Conference on Cities than J. (for Joseph) Irwin Miller of Columbus.

The multimillionaire industrialist is also a banker, patron of the arts, churchman, college trustee, scholar, philanthropist and musician (occasionally).

"I was surprised to be invited to be chairman of the conference since I am not a resident of a big city," Miller commented. "You know, Columbus still is a small town . . . 25,000 to 30,000."

True, Columbus is no metropolis but it is the "Athens of the Prairie." And the man who has been instrumental in making his Southern Indiana home town nationally known for its architecture and culture is as urbane as any American can be.

At the time Miller accepted this key role in the conference, Mayor Richard G. Lugar responded, "Miller's personal witness to the cause of making our cities better places in which to live is recognized internationally by all who care about the future of urban life."

Home base for the 62-year-old board chairman of Cummins Engine Co. and the Irwin Union Bank is an unpretentious building near the corner of 5th and Washington in downtown Columbus.

His office is a pleasant blend of blues and golds but much simpler and more utilitarian



Miller

## Every Job Requires Teamwork, He Finds

than one associates with a man of great wealth. (The Wall Street Journal has estimated his fortune at well over \$100 million.)

There is no marble trim, no baroque fireplace here. But there are books (including a Bible), pictures, flowers and a few mementos about the place.

Miller, who has a yen for blue suits, light blue button-down shirts and blue ties, appears tan, trim and fit. In conversation he is as unassuming as the character of his office would indicate.

He is not the type of rich industrialist who tosses his monetary weight around. Instead of muscle, he prefers a soft approach.

For example, when asked about his numerous and quite notable accomplishments, Miller replied:

"When you operate in this society, you never have the feeling that you do anything by yourself. There is no undertaking that goes on today that does not require active work and co-operation of a whole mess of people.

"So, you see, you are only part of an enterprise. And, there is a lot of satisfaction in not operating on your own but as part of a group that accomplishes something better than any one member can do.

"Take an industrial plant like Cummins. It would be very hard to say who invented

something. It's mostly a team or a group of people, and it would be difficult to say where an idea came from."

In 1967, Esquire magazine was so impressed with Miller it recommended him for the presidency of the United States.

"I was embarrassed. I really didn't know they were going to write it that way.

"Everyone has his own talent, and I never thought that running for an elective position was mine. Some people like to sell insurance and some like to design engines.

"I sort of have the feeling that in today's society you must be a professional at whatever you do. If you are going into politics, it seems those who start early do the best job. I've never seen an amateur in either business or politics who has been effective."

In addition to his own worldwide business activities, Miller is involved in church affairs, governmental commissions, various boards and educational organizations.

In 1960 he was named the first lay president of the National Council of Churches and currently serves on a commission of the World Council of Churches. He also is trustee of Butler University, the Ford Foundation and the Museum of Modern Art and a fellow in the Yale Corp.

Asked if he has slowed down any, Miller replied, "No. One of the problems of a person with outside activity, such as a trustee of a college, let's say, is that at present every job takes twice as much time as it did five years ago.

## Industrialist Modest About Achievements

"Our whole society is in a period of rapid change, so almost any job takes a great deal more time than it used to."

When he does find time for brief leisure, Miller likes to get outdoors—to sail or to play golf. Although he donated the splendid \$1.5 million, 18-hole Otter Creek golf course designed by Robert Trent Jones to the city of Columbus, Miller says he doesn't get out there very often.

About stories describing his ability to play Bach on the violin and read the classics in Latin and Greek, Miller remarked simply, "That's all kind of overdone."

Referring to his city's sobriquet, "Athens of the Prairie," Miller remarked, "I don't think we rate any title at all. It is a good town where people accept responsibility to solve their own problems.

"And I'm proud of the spirit here. A major undertaking right now is the downtown redevelopment involving 12 blocks. It will make a big difference when the downtown again becomes the center of the community. You don't have a community unless there is a central focus.

"Oh, sure, we've had failures," he added. "I think one of our biggest weaknesses in Co-

lumbus is that we have not been able to come up with an adequate supply of middle- and low-cost housing. It's a big gap . . . a major gap, and we're still working at it, trying to find an answer, but we really haven't been successful."

The list of architects who have been responsible for the enviable appearance of Columbus reads like a "Who's Who" of the profession.

The first in a long line of magnificent structures was the new First Christian Church in 1941. One of the most sensational probably is North Christian Church, which Miller attends. It has a 192-foot spire.

It was designed by the late famed Finnish architect, Eero Saarinen, a classmate of Miller's at Yale.

Recently dedicated was the new public library designed by I. M. Pei, architect for the John F. Kennedy Memorial Library at Harvard.

"Nothing has been done in Columbus that requires a lot of money," Miller points out. "Any community can go out and attract good architects for its buildings. They charge the same standard fee.

"I think the only difference in Columbus is that we are making a conscious effort to try to enlist the very best minds we can find anywhere. Ninety per cent of what has been done here, any community can do."

"As for myself, I think a lot of things need doing. I just lend a hand and try to get them done," he added with characteristic modesty.

—Bill Roberts