



INTERVIEW WITH JACKSON BURNSIDE

Jackson Burnside will be responsible for the design and planning of the Schooner Bay Commons and Island Hall. Mr. Burnside is a prolific creative force and a cultural icon in the Bahamas. He has a degree from the Graduate School of Fine Arts at the University of Pennsylvania and studied with renowned American architect, Louis I. Kahn, who was responsible for acclaimed architecture and design projects around the world. Burnside was the first Bahamian Senior Architect for the Bahamas Ministry of Works and is currently Principal of his own architecture, planning and design firm: Jackson Burnside Limited. Mr. Burnside is the recipient of the Distinguished Citizens Award from the Bahamas Chamber of Commerce and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Bahamas Home and Builders Association. He is host of the radio talk show, Junkanoo Talks, and Chairman Emeritus of the 'One Family' Junkanoo group. He is also an artist, an educator and a father. We recently sat down with the inimitable Mr.



Burnside to get his thoughts on Schooner Bay, the architectural heritage of the Bahamas, and much more.

How did you get your start in architecture? What were some early milestones in your career?

I had kind of a roundabout way of getting there. I always thought I was going to be a doctor, and I went to Lincoln University in Pennsylvania to study biology and mathematics. In the summer of 1968 I took a physics course at Temple University in Philadelphia and ran into a guy who was going to study architecture. We got to talking and he said, "You know, I think you'd really enjoy architecture." He told me that The University of Pennsylvania had the best architecture program, so that's where I went for graduate school. I didn't have a clue what I was getting myself into, but after a year or two I became fully immersed in the subject. I was really fascinated by it.



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I ended up being selected to study with Louis I. Kahn, though at the time I didn't even realize who he was. I later found out that he was probably the most important American architect of that era. Later, TIME Magazine did a story on him, and as people began to connect me to him I realized that I was really getting a special experience. I worked for Mr. Kahn as a Design Assistant for approximately three years until he died. Then I went to London and worked with the firm, Arup Associates, a division of the famed Ove Arup & Partners. With these firms I worked on projects in England, Bangladesh, Iran, Israel and the United States. Projects I was privileged to work on included the School of British Art and British Studies at Yale University, the Graduate Theological Union Library at Berkeley in California, and the Mellon School of Engineering in Tel Aviv, Israel. Then I came back to the Bahamas, where I've been a partner in two architectural firms and served in a number of academic and cultural capacities both here and abroad.

Tell us a little bit about your architectural style. Is there a particular aesthetic that people generally associate with your work?

I like to think of my style as "the architecture of common sense." It grows out of my understanding of the heritage of the Bahamas and the principles that are a part of our ancestral legacy. The early settlers came into the Bahamas and where there was rock they built rock houses and where there was timber they built timber houses. Simple as that. They used the materials that were available to them and they responded to the conditions they were faced with. They knew they had to build strong to be able to resist the weather, but they also knew that 90% of the time the weather was good and the sun was hot. So they oriented their buildings toward the morning sun, which was pleasant, and tried to shade out the afternoon sun. They built near trees to create shade and cooling

for the buildings. They built their timber floors up off the ground so that the breeze could blow under them and de-humidify the buildings. They opened up their roofs with dormers and vents and windows so that the air blowing through would evaporate the heat accumulated in the roof cavity. So they understood these principles and through their regular application our culture developed the architectural style that is reflected in my work today. I study these timeless principles and apply them with new technologies, new materials and modern methods of construction to address the same needs for comfort and shelter ... because those needs don't change.

So function inspires form in your architecture?

Oh, definitely. Form comes from the process of satisfying a purpose. You must work hard to understand the purpose of everything you design, even if it's just a detail. We start with the question "why?" in order to identify the purpose. Then we ask ourselves "what?" "What is it we are going to do to satisfy this purpose?" So we start to think about materials and methods of construction and then a concept is born. After you answer "why?" and "what?" you must finally ask yourself "how?" This is the point where the concept evolves into a design. There are many ways to skin the cat, and we have to examine the ways to decide which is the most appropriate solution to satisfy the function or the purpose. We always want to end with whatever form makes the most sense for our function.

Can architecture be an expression of a cultural purpose? Specifically, how does Bahamian architecture express Bahamian culture?

The classic Bahamian architecture, such as the stone buildings in Cat Island, were made by people who had very limited access to resources. They had to build in stone and rock because stone and rock were all that



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was available. Then you go further north in the islands of the Bahamas and you find the classic clapboard house. These houses were usually one or two rooms, and their forms evolved as people tried to make use of the resources around them. You had relatively short timbers in those islands – 10-12 feet – so when you pitched the roof your spans were not too wide. This created rooms that were relatively narrow and thin, but part of the reason why they are narrow and thin also is that we want the breeze to blow through them. We didn't have electricity, we didn't have air conditioning, and we wanted them to be comfortable. So we made the walls tall, with high ceilings. We put houses up off the ground. We wanted the breeze to blow under the house and through the house. That demand for ventilation, that purpose, dictated a certain sense of proportion in Bahamian buildings. And those buildings in turn, reflected the way we lived and our culture heritage.

But, architecture is more than just a cultural expression, it is also a link that connects us to other cultures. Bahamian architecture shares features with the architecture of other islands in the Caribbean. It also shares certain features with the architecture of the Carolinas, New England, and the Florida Keys. So architecture links cultures and physically manifests our common needs and experiences. It tells the story of people who may live in different places, but who have shared experiences and have developed similar ways of addressing them.

What is the current state of Bahamian architecture and design?

I think in art and design and heritage, there is a renaissance taking place in the Bahamas that is based on circumstances. We have to find more economical ways of doing things, and we have to be more creative because the demand to make something special with limited resources is upon us again. You know, the early architecture of the

Bahamas was exactly that. Our folks had limited resources and they had to be very creative, so they made medicine out of the bush and they made boats out of the trees. They figured out ways to plaster their buildings, to cool their buildings. They figured out ways to get rid of waste, how to farm and produce food, how to design and make their own clothes. These unique solutions resulted in a rich cultural heritage, special and different in each of our islands. With the limited resources available they were able to make a living in spite of the challenges. And we are being faced with that again. In a lot of ways it's what I find so fascinating about Schooner Bay.

Yes, please tell us how you think Schooner Bay fits into all of this.

Well, Schooner Bay adheres to principles that are timeless, and that is reflected in the planning and design of the community. It's about creating places where people meet people, where relationships are important, where the pedestrian experience is an enjoyable one again. You're not driving by in a car and not speaking. You're encouraged to make connections and to know your neighbors. This is nothing new. It is a basic principle of all the towns and settlements of the Bahamas, and is one reason why Bahamians are known to be so friendly. It's another common sense principle. As a people we have a need for companionship, and it expresses itself in friendliness. In the Bahamas and elsewhere, we created an architecture which allowed that to happen. Houses were built right up to the road, so somebody walking by could lean on the fence and have a conversation with you without shouting. This made sense then and it makes sense now, and that is understood at Schooner Bay.

We're seeing these common sense principles coming back into Bahamian architecture. We're seeing the porch come back. As soon as we could get WTVJ from Miami,



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all of a sudden everybody went inside because we had television. But the porch used to be our family room. We met our neighbors there. That's where we entertained. We sat outside under the tree. You know, we're starting to do that again. We don't need such big houses. We can enjoy ourselves in smaller spaces. And we can understand how to make use of outdoor spaces for living and entertaining. You'll see in our buildings that we like generous porches. We like those spaces that transition from the inside to the outside. We like to have the ability to sit out and to be able to take full advantage of the wind and the breeze and to be air-conditioned by nature. That's a very important part of what we do, and houses at Schooner Bay will also reflect this ethic.

So what exactly is your role at Schooner Bay?

I was first brought in to be involved in the Schooner Bay Institute, which is a think-tank for sustainable development, for design and culture and environmental protection in the region. Then I was asked to take a look

at the Commons and help create the design and plan for that important area. We are now working on the design of the Island Hall, which is a part of the Commons and will be a place where the community of Schooner Bay and South Abaco can meet in a natural kind of way. It will be a gathering place for educational functions, for entertainment functions, for civic functions. We are also designing places where people can stay - people from universities coming to do research or hold seminars, or people coming just for recreation. They can come and stay in an idyllic setting in Schooner Bay and understand what is special and unique about the Abacos.

And it must be meaningful that you are creating the space that connects the village of Schooner Bay with the larger community of South Abaco.

That is extremely important to me. I am very pleased to be involved with that aspect. I think that so many developments in the Bahamas get imposed from the outside and pay no respect to the settlements that have



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been there for ages. From the cultural wisdom to the food to the knowledge of the local environment, knowledge of the shore and the sea and the reefs, the fishing and the flora and the medicinal plants ... there are many lessons to be learned in these places. Folks can come in from far and wide and enjoy not just the natural beauty of South Abaco, but also really connect to the people of the place, listen to the stories of the elders and discover a depth that is very special.

And the people of Abaco begin to see themselves as being of more value. You know, sometimes our people are made to feel that because they've never been to New York or they didn't come from Montreal, they are somehow less than the visitor who comes in from abroad. Our people may not have the money, but they are rich in other things. They are rich in stories to tell, in information, in their relationship to the land and the spirit of the landscape. It is critical to have a place where that information can be exchanged, and where people who are different can appreciate each other and recognize that they still have a lot in common. So you create this sense of what connects us as humans. For me that is extremely powerful. For me, architecture is more than making buildings, it is also making quality of life for the people who live in and enjoy these places.

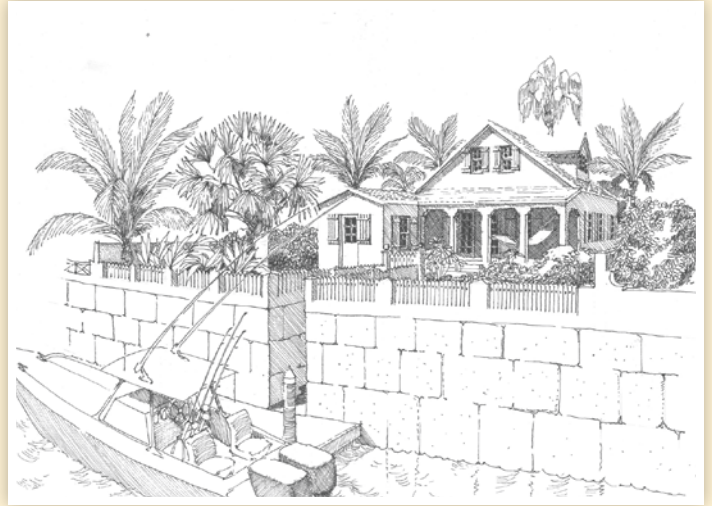
You've had a rich and varied career. What's left for Jackson Burnside?

I'm a young man. I'm 61 years old and still have a lot do. But, I am much more selective with the projects I do now. I am privileged to work in a relatively small studio with younger brilliant Bahamian minds. We want to do things that are very special, and make buildings that begin to show a path to a brighter future for the Bahamas. I'm also very excited by the idea of teaching, and through education I want to show young Bahamians and young designers in the region what makes us so special, and why I think we are rich in our surroundings and our heritage. Our young people must not see themselves as impoverished. As my great-grandmother used to tell my father, if you can see what you're looking at, you'll see that right in your hands is all the wealth you need to make a better world.



HOUSES

As progress continues on the first two houses at Schooner Bay – those of Artist-in-Residence Antonius Roberts and the Byler family, respectively – two more houses have begun to take shape in Block A at the mouth of the harbour. Construction will also begin on an additional 28 residences upon completion of the island infrastructure this summer, and Schooner Bay will have over 30 homes within a year!





SCHOONER BAY MEDEVAC



Schooner Bay's Medevac, operated by Life Flight, is a regional helicopter service designed to provide critical patients rapid access to advanced life support care. Schooner Bay is partnering with Cleveland Clinic Florida, an intensive-care medical facility with 170 of the world's top physicians and specialists, to provide emergency on-demand helicopter transport for sick or injured patients. The clinic's emergency facilities in Weston, Florida, are a 55-minute helicopter flight from Schooner Bay. Schooner Bay will install equipment to connect directly to the emergency care physician at the Cleveland Clinic via telemedicine for an immediate evaluation while awaiting the arrival of the emergency flight. While Schooner Bay's own regional medical clinic and the larger clinic in Marsh Harbour will be equipped to deal with most routine circumstances and procedures, it is comforting to know that comprehensive world-class health care service is less than an hour away in the event of an emergency.





TOWN WATER COLLECTION CISTERN



Construction of a water collection cistern for the town is currently underway in the Commons area at Schooner Bay. Engineers are excavating stones from the one-acre site and lining the limestone basin with an impervious membrane that will retain up to one million gallons of rainwater. The excavated stones will be used to construct the groin at the mouth of the harbour, while excavated sand from the harbour dredging will fill the cistern, serving as a primary filter and water storage medium while preventing evaporation and eliminating the need for roof. Grass will be planted above the sand and the giant cistern will appear to the naked eye as a lush, green

field atop the ridge. Rainwater falling on the 40-acre ridge will be channeled into the cistern and can be extracted for secondary use through a pump and filtration system. The cistern will supplement the residential rooftop collection systems and is an important step towards Schooner Bay's goal of meeting most of the town's water needs through rainwater collection. Later stages will see the construction of a solar-powered reverse-osmosis facility that will make the water suitable for drinking. The water collection cistern should be completed in the next 60 days and will thereafter begin collecting and storing rainwater for town use.



HARBOUR



Schooner Bay's engineers continue to make swift progress on the harbour project, with the placement of the first side-wall panels being the latest milestone. Around 800 concrete panels will be required to bulkhead the entire harbour and island walls. The panels, which are held in place by in situ cast-footing and joined by T-Columns, will be laterally stabilized by backfill, with the sea-water creating a pressure equilibrium that fortifies the perimeter once the harbour is flooded. A naturally high water table in the area is responsible for the very wet sand

encountered as the harbour floor is further excavated, and some 8,000 gallons of water per minute are currently being pumped out of the basin. The excavated sand is then used as a filter and water retainer for Schooner Bay's new million-gallon water cistern. The 800-odd harbour sidewalls have already been cast and harbour excavation is about one-third complete. The project is still on track for completion this summer, when construction on the first island houses is slated to begin.



DUNES



Progress continues on Schooner Bay's comprehensive dune restoration program. Invasive plant species have been removed from the dunescape and are being replaced with soil, sand and organics sourced exclusively onsite. The restoration of the dune at Little Bridge – the crescent lagoon at the southern edge of Schooner Bay – is virtually complete, while work on the secondary dune at Schooner Beach is well underway. Home sites on beach lots will begin an ample distance behind the newly reconstructed dunes, which will protect the beach from erosion and the houses from the elements, as nature intended.





FARM

Schooner Bay's first farmers are beginning to see the fruits - and vegetables - of their labours! And as the first crops in the allotment farms continue to blossom, plant propagation of another type is also occurring onsite. Schooner Bay horticulturalists are combing the coppice for native seeds to use in community-wide landscaping. Seeds of Mahogany, Mastic, Jamaican Dogwood, Sapodilla and Paradise Trees are among the species being gathered and grown on seed trays in the new Schooner Bay nursery. The native saplings will soon be planted along the streetscapes and landscapes of Schooner Bay at an initial rate of 1,000 trees per month.



ALL ABACO AGRICULTURE AND MARINE RESOURCES EXPO

The Schooner Bay Commons and our informal agriculture development consultants, Lucayan Tropical Farms, recently teamed up to participate in the All Abaco Agriculture and Marine Resources Expo in Marsh Harbour. Exhibitors included many local Abaco farmers and food producers, as well as fisherman and crafts people. Our Commons booth drew considerable interest from the crowd and the event was very well attended, an indication of the growing level of interest in local produce in Abaco and an encouraging sign for the island's farmers and fishermen!





SOIL



All buildable lots are currently being covered with two feet of dark, rich topsoil that has been sourced exclusively onsite. The soil has been washed and filtered using groundwater from the harbour project and will prove a rich bedding compound for grass, trees, flowers,

and other organics. The amount and quality of available native topsoil at Schooner Bay is a rarity in the Bahamas and will promote the healthy growth of lush tropical and sub-tropical plant species in the community.



FISHING



Legendary artist and Key West fly-fishing guide Vaughn Cochran was recently in town fishing with Paul Pinder, Director of Fishing Operations for Schooner Bay's Black Fly Bonefish Lodge. Vaughn, himself a partner in

the lodge, landed and released a 13-lb trophy bonefish on the flats by Moore's Island, one of the largest catches to date from Schooner Bay's world-class fishing territory.



TURTLES

Turtle tracks nearly six feet wide were recently found on Schooner Beach. From the size and shape of the tracks, it appears that a giant loggerhead turtle has chosen Schooner Bay for her nesting grounds!





ST. ANDREW'S SCHOOL FIELD TRIP



Sixth grade students from the St. Andrew's School in Nassau recently returned to Schooner Bay for the second consecutive year as part of the class's annual Abaco trip. Highlights of their visit included several green parrot

spottings in the coppice and a tour of the farm allotments to see Schooner Bay's first crops and learn about food sustainability and organic farming.



BAHAMAS NATIONAL TRUST

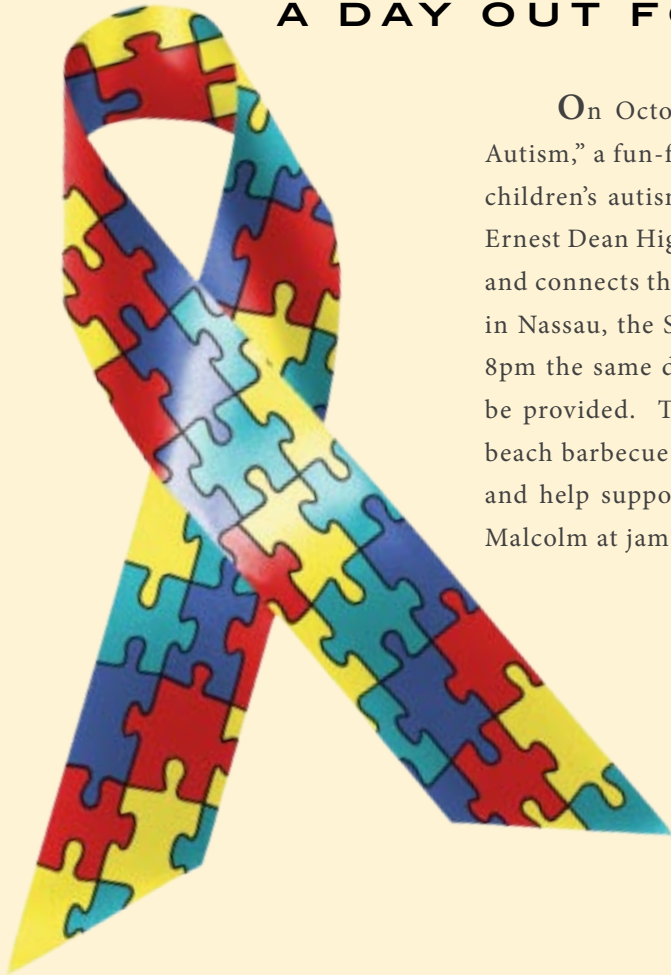


We are pleased to announce that we have made office space at Schooner Bay available to the Bahamas National Trust and they will be moving in shortly. The office space is the precursor to a permanent facility that will house the NGO and serve as base of operations for

their conservation efforts in South Abaco. We expect to see not only BNT staff and wardens, but also visiting scientists and researchers around the new offices. We look forward to working with the National Trust and their wider associations at Schooner Bay.



A DAY OUT FOR AUTISM

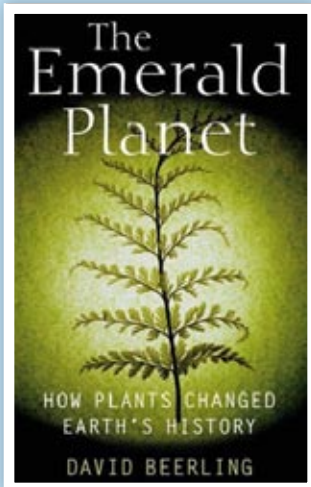


On October 23rd Schooner Bay will be hosting “A Day Out for Autism,” a fun-filled day in South Abaco to raise money and awareness for children’s autism research. Participants can run, bike or walk along the Ernest Dean Highway, which runs through a protected forest of Abaco pine and connects the fishing village of Sandy Point to Schooner Bay. For those in Nassau, the Seawind Ferry will leave Potter’s Cay at 7am and return at 8pm the same day. Complimentary ground transportation in Abaco will be provided. The event finishes in Schooner Bay, where we will host a beach barbecue for all participants. Come spend the day at Schooner Bay and help support a great cause! For more details, please contact James Malcolm at james@lindroth.cc or visit www.schoonerbaybahamas.com.



SCHOONER BAY LIBRARY

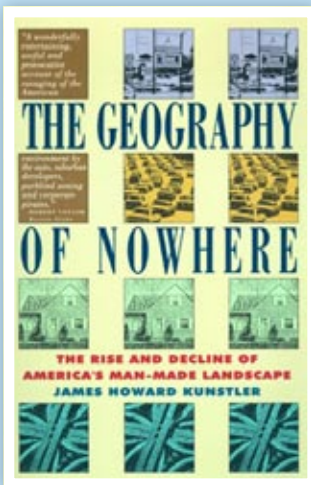
BOOKS



THE EMERALD PLANET: HOW PLANTS CHANGED EARTH'S HISTORY

by David Beerling

Emerald Planet explores the crucial role of plants in some of the key events in the history of the Earth. Beerling examines plants' relation to atmospheric composition and climate change, drawing several astonishing conclusions. Well-written and expansive in the scope of its subject matter, The Emerald Planet is an important study of the shared destinies of nature and humanity.



GEOGRAPHY OF NOWHERE

James Howard Kunstler

Geography of Nowhere explores the effects of urban sprawl, civil planning and the automobile on American society. The book is an attempt to discover how and why suburbia has ceased to be a credible human habitat, and what society might do about it. Kunstler proposes that by reviving civic art and civic life, we will rediscover public virtue and a new vision of the common good. "The future will require us to build better places," Kunstler says, "or the future will belong to other people in other societies." A provocative and highly original work from an outspoken and often hilarious polemicist.



SCHOONER BAY LIBRARY

VIDEO



FOOD, INC.

Feature film directed by Robert Kenner

The current method of raw food production is largely a response to the growth of the fast food industry since the 1950s. The production of food overall has changed more since that time than the several thousand years prior, with major corporations now controlling a large share of global food production. These companies, supported by governments demanding cheap food, are designed to prioritize profit over health and safety, often to disastrous effect. Food, Inc. is a film that will make you stop and think before your next trip to the super-market.



A THOUSAND SUNS

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9pU0fkwL8yA&NR=1>

A Thousand Suns is a short film available online that tells the story of the Gamo Highlands of the African Rift Valley and the unique worldview held by the people of the region. This isolated area has remained remarkably intact both biologically and culturally. It is one of the most densely populated rural regions of Africa yet its people have been farming sustainably for 10,000 years. Shot in Ethiopia, New York and Kenya, the film explores the modern world's untenable sense of separation from and superiority over nature and how the interconnected worldview of the Gamo people is fundamental in achieving long-term sustainability, both in the region and beyond.



SCHOONER BAY LIBRARY
QUOTES

*When we speak of Nature it is wrong to forget that we ourselves are a part of Nature. We ought to view ourselves with the same curiosity and openness with which we study a tree, the sky or a thought, because we too are linked to the entire universe. – **Henri Matisse***

*Trees are poems the earth writes upon the sky,
We fell them down and turn them into paper,
That we may record our emptiness.*
-Kahlil Gibran

*Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe. – **H.G. Wells***

*If you want things to stay as they are, things will have to change. – **Giuseppe Tomasi de Lampedusa***

*Don't lie, don't cheat, don't steal, don't whine, don't complain, don't make excuses; worry about the things you can control, not the things you can't. – **Coach John Wooden***

Two things a man should never be angry at: what he can help, and what he cannot help.
– Thomas Fuller

*What was begun in anger ends in shame. – **Benjamin Franklin***

*But what is happiness except the simple harmony between a man and the life he leads. –**Albert Camus***

*It's not the daily increase, but the daily decrease. Hack away at the inessential. – **Bruce Lee***