



THE ARCHITECTURAL ARCHIVES  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

JOHN A. BOWER, SR. COLLECTION

John A. Bower, 1901-1988

A Finding Aid for  
Architectural Drawings and Photographs, 1928-1979  
in  
The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania

## Archival Description

### Descriptive Summary

- Title:            Architectural Drawings and Photographs, 1928-1979
- Coll. ID:        001
- Creator:        John A. Bower, 1901-1988, architect
- Extent:         223 architectural drawings; 162 photoprints; 128 slides
- Repository:    The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania
- Abstract:       The Collection comprises architectural drawings, blueprints, photographic prints and slides documenting fifty-six buildings and projects spanning the years 1928-1979.
- Indexes:        This collection is included in the Philadelphia Architects and Buildings Project, a searchable database of architectural research materials related to architects and architecture in Philadelphia and the surrounding regions:  
<http://www.philadelphiabuildings.org>
- Cataloging:    Collection-level records for materials in the Architectural Archives may be found in RLIN Eureka, the union catalogue of members of the Research Libraries Group. The record number for this collection is PAUP00-A0.

## **Biographical/Historical Sketch**

John Arnold Bower was born in Chicago and graduated from Parker Technical High School there. He began his architectural education at the Armour Institute of Technology, where he attended night classes, in addition to working as a draftsman in several Chicago firms. He came to Philadelphia in 1922 to study at the University of Pennsylvania, completing his B.Arch. in 1926. He taught rendering part-time at Penn while still a student and won the Arthur Spayd Brooke Memorial Prize gold medal in his senior year. He was offered a fellowship for a master's degree but chose instead to begin working immediately after graduation. Between 1926 and 1928 he worked for Thomas, Martin & Kirkpatrick and George Lovatt, Sr. Between roughly 1928 and 1942 Bower worked in partnership first with both Harold Carswell (another veteran of Lovatt's practice), and Dominique Berninger (Carswell, Berninger and Bower), and then with Berninger alone (Berninger and Bower). Bower served in the U.S. Air Force during World War II, and returned to independent practice in 1946. He headed his own firm until his retirement in 1982.

The main body of Bower's work was residential, although his practice included a range of building types. Bower also completed several restoration projects for Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia.

## **Scope and Content Note**

The John A. Bower Collection comprises architectural drawings, blueprints, photographic prints and slides documenting fifty-six buildings and projects spanning the years 1928-1979. Holdings for the Collection include 223 architectural drawings, 162 photographs, and 128 slides. The collection does not include office or project files, specifications or clippings. Over forty of the projects represented in the collection are for houses built in the Philadelphia region. Additional works include church and commercial projects, as well as Bower's 1953 design for the Montgomery County Historical Society. A complete list of Bower's projects, completed in February 1970 by the architect, is found at call # 001.60.

The collection is arranged in four series, according to the type and storage requirements of materials. The first three series are arranged in chronological order by project. Each project is associated with a job number assigned by Bower's office, if available. A project for which the job number is unknown is indicated by "xxx."

- I Architectural drawings and oversized materials.
- II Photographic prints.
- III Slides.
- IV Additional materials.

A full index to projects represented in this collection is found in Appendix A.

**Access Points for Indexing (Controlled Vocabulary)**

Bower, John A. (John Arnold), 1901-1988.  
Carswell, Harold Thorp, 1886-1940.  
Berninger, Dominique, 1898-  
Carswell, Berninger and Bower  
Berninger and Bower  
Architects--Archives.  
Architectural design--History--20th century--Sources.  
Architectural drawing--United States.  
Architecture, Modern--United States--Designs and plans.  
Architecture, Domestic--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia Region.  
Philadelphia (Pa.)--Buildings, structures, etc--History Sources.  
Genre:  
Architectural drawings--American.  
Photographs.

**Administrative Information**

Restrictions on access: This collection is available for research by appointment only.

Preferred citation: John A. Bower, Sr. Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania.

Acquisition: Gift of John A. Bower, Sr., 1985.

Processing: The collection was processed and the finding aid prepared by William Whitaker, Emily Cooperman, Laura Stroffolino and Nancy Thorne, with the research assistance of Lisa Boettger and Elzio Ciuffardi. Work was substantially completed in 2000, with corrections and additions in 2003.

## Container list

### Series I. Architectural drawings and oversized materials.

Extent: 223 architectural drawings, 8 photographs.

Arrangement: Arranged by project in chronological order.

Call #	Job #	Descriptive Title
001.1	xxx	Tower House, 5 architectural drawings
001.1	121	Matthews House, 3 architectural drawings
001.1	126	Mackinnon House, 3 architectural drawings
001.1	141	Whittlesey House, 2 architectural drawings
001.2	142	Hill House, 12 architectural drawings
001.3	147	Fairacres #1 / Aberly House, 4 architectural drawings
001.3	152	Neff House, 9 architectural drawings
001.4	168	Snellenberg House, 17 architectural drawings
001.5	402	Children's Shop, 3 architectural drawings
001.5	590	Meltzer House and Studio, 2 architectural drawings
001.5	592	Montgomery County Historical Society Building, 7 arch. drawings
001.6	597	Chelf House, 7 architectural drawings
001.6	613	Queen of Peace R. C. Church Elementary School, 10 arch. drawings
001.6	616	Bliss House, 3 architectural drawings
001.6	623	Heisley House, 6 architectural drawings
001.7	655	Church of the New Jerusalem, 28 architectural drawings
001.8	656	Queen of Peace R. C. Church Convent, 5 architectural drawings
001.8	659	Schweiker House, 6 architectural drawings
001.8	664	Abel House, 6 architectural drawings

001.9	666	Independence National Historical Park, Restoration of 408 Locust Street, 15 architectural drawings
001.9	667	Independence National Historical Park, Restoration of 413-415 and 423 Locust Street, 13 architectural drawings; 8 photographs
001.10	677	Restoration of 338 South 4th Street, 9 architectural drawings
001.10	679	Johnsville Reformed Church and Sunday School, 8 arch. drawings
001.10	680	Swedenborg Church Rectory, 6 architectural drawings
001.11	682	Independence National Historical Park, Restoration of 339-341 Walnut Street, 13 architectural drawings
001.11	710	Gamon House, 2 architectural drawings

**Series II. Photographic prints.**

Extent: 154 photoprints.

Arrangement: Arranged by project in chronological order.

Call #	Job #	Descriptive Title
001.12	xxx	Schusslers Seafood Restaurant Alterations, 3 photographs [3 building]
001.13	xxx	Small Brick House, 2 photographs [2 building]
001.14	xxx	Regar House, 2 photographs, [2 building]
001.15	100	Cross House, 5 photographs, [5 building]
001.16	xxx	Monro House, 1 photograph [1 building]
001.17	xxx	Tower House, 17 photographs [17 building]
001.18	121	Matthews House, 1 photograph [1 building]
001.19	122	Chaffee House, 2 photographs [2 building]
001.20	138	Guy-Cooper House, 1 photograph [1 building]
001.21	141	Whittlesey House, 5 photographs, [5 building]
001.22	147	Fairacres #1 / Aberly House, 5 photographs, [2 bldg., 2 drawing, 1 text]

001.23	152	Neff House, 4 photographs [4 building]
001.24	168	Snellenberg House, 2 photographs [2 building]
001.25	174	Lowe House, 4 photographs [4 building]
001.26	245	Wolf House, 1 photograph [1 building]
001.27	254	Deming House, "Kings Oak Farm", 11 photographs [9 bldg., 2 drawing]
001.28	264	Sorrel Horse House/Sorrel Horse Inn Annex, 2 photographs [2 bldg.]
001.29	378	Dress Shop, light fixture and window, 2 photographs [2 decorative arts]
001.30	384	Hano-Newberger House, 8 photographs [8 building]
001.31	402	Children's Shop, 1 photograph [1 construction]
001.32	446	Huntingdon Valley Chapel Rectory, 1 photograph [1 building]
001.33	571	Rebmann House, 1 photograph [1 building]
001.34	574	Pitcairn House, 1 photograph [1 building]
001.35	590	Meltzer House and Studio, 4 photographs [4 building]
001.36	592	Montgomery Co. Historical Society Building, 3 photographs [3 building]
001.37	xxx	Unidentified House 1954, 1 photograph [1 building]
001.38	604	Huntingdon Valley Federal Saving and Loan, 2 photographs [2 building]
001.39	605	Asplundh House, 1 photograph [1 building]
001.40	613	Queen of Peace R. C. Church Elementary School, 3 photographs [1 building, 2 construction]
001.41	616	Bliss House, 2 photographs [2 building]
001.42	623	Heisley House, 5 photographs [5 building]
001.43	647	Gibson House, 1 photograph [1 building]
001.44	654	Scott House, 1 photograph [1 building]
001.45	656	Queen of Peace R. C. Church Convent, 1 photograph [1 building]
001.46	659	Schweiker House, 2 photographs [2 building]



*	667	Independence National Historical Park, Restoration of 413-415 and 423 Locust Street, 8 photographs mounted on board [8 building] *See 001.9
001.47	668	National Historical Park, Restoration of 339-341-343 Walnut Street, 1 photograph [1 building]
001.48	677	Restoration of 338 South 4th Street, 2 photographs [building]
001.49	679	Johnsville Reformed Church and Sunday School, 2 photographs [2 bldg]
001.50	705	Elliott House, 2 photographs [2 building]
001.51	713	Sky Ranch, 2 photographs [2 building]
001.52	715	Fetter's Mill Square Shops and Apartment, 5 photographs [5 building]
001.53	720	Scott House, 2 photographs [2 building]
001.54	731	Abington Friends Meeting Sunday School Addition, 6 photos [6 bldg]
001.55	761	Kramer House, 3 photographs [building]
001.56	767	Unidentified House, 1 photograph [1 building]
001.57	xxx	Part of the Senior Examination of John A. Bower, 18 photos [18 bldg]

**Series III. Slides.**

Extent: 128 slides.

Arrangement: Arranged by project in chronological order.

Call #	Job #	Descriptive Title
001.58	152	Neff House, 4 slides [4 building]
001.58	590	Meltzer House and Studio, 7 slides [7 building]
001.58	592	Montgomery County Historical Society Building, 4 slides [4 building]
001.58	604	Huntingdon Valley Federal Saving and Loan; 2 slides [2 building]
001.58	616	Bliss House, 14 slides [14 building]
001.58	623	Heisley House, 23 slides [23 building]

001.58	667	Independence National Historical Park, Restoration of 413-415 and 423 Locust Street, 9 slides [8 building, 1 drawing]
001.58	668	National Historical Park, Restoration of 339-341-343 Walnut Street, 14 slides [14 building] Note: includes 8 slides dated 1966 of 343 Walnut Street and houses on 5th Street.
001.58	677	Restoration of 338 South 4th Street, 2 slides [2 building]
001.58	679	Johnsville Reformed Church and Sunday School, 6 slides [5 building, 1 sign]
001.58	705	Elliott House, 5 slides [5 building]
001.58	731	Abington Friends Meeting Sunday School Addition, 26 slides [26 building]
001.58	761	Kramer House, 12 slides [12 building]

**Series IV. Additional Materials.**

Extent: 2 folders.

Call #	Descriptive Title
001.59	Unidentified signed photographic print of a drawing (in a presentation folder), 1 photograph [drawing]
001.60	Miscellaneous papers. Includes complete job list, completed in February 1970 by the architect.

## Appendix A

### Project Index

Note: The numbers to the left indicate job numbers as assigned by Bower's office. A project for which the job number is unknown is indicated by the job number xxx. Projects are by the firm John A. Bower, Architect unless otherwise noted.

- xxx    Schusslers Seafood Restaurant Alterations** (for G.R. Schussler)  
Garrett Road, 69th Street area, Upper Darby, Delaware County, Pennsylvania  
1928  
note: Phillip B. Wallace, photographer  
holdings: 3 photographs [3 building]
- xxx    Small Brick House**  
Cornwell Heights, Pennsylvania  
1928  
holdings: 2 photographs [2 building]
- xxx    Regar House**  
Washington Lane and Barrowdale Road, Rydal, Pennsylvania  
1929  
holdings: 2 photographs [2 building]
- 100    William Cross House**  
Rydal Road, Rydal, Pennsylvania  
1930-1931  
holdings: 5 photographs [5 building]
- xxx    Monro House**  
Rydal Road E. of Susquehanna, Rydal, Pennsylvania  
1930-1931  
holdings: 1 photograph [1 building]
- xxx    "Tower House"** (for Malcolm and Wayne Herkness)  
Rydal Road at Cloverly Lane, Abington Township, Rydal, Pennsylvania  
1932  
holdings: 5 architectural drawings; 17 photographs [17 building]

- 121    A. A. Matthews House**  
Winding Way, Media, Pennsylvania  
1936  
Carswell, Berninger and Bower, Architects  
holdings: 3 architectural drawings; 1 photograph [1 building]
- 122    William Chaffee House**  
Winding Way, Media, Pennsylvania  
1936  
holdings: 2 photographs [2 building]
- 126    Mackinnon House**  
East of Washington Lane and North of Newbold Road, Abington, Pennsylvania  
1936  
Carswell, Berninger and Bower, Architects  
holdings: 3 architectural drawings
- 138    Guy - Cooper House**  
Willow Grove, Pennsylvania  
1937  
holdings: 1 photograph [1 building]
- 141    Albert W. Whittlesey House**  
Moredon and Alexander Roads, Abington Township, Meadowbrook, Pennsylvania  
1937  
Berninger and Bower, Architects  
holdings: 2 architectural drawings; 5 photographs [5 building]
- 142    H. N. Hill House**  
3432 Coulter Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
1937  
Berninger and Bower, Architects  
holdings: 17 architectural drawings
- 147    Gustav Aberly House (at Fairacres #1 / Henry Gibson, builder)**  
Washington Lane and Fairacres Road, Rydal, Pennsylvania  
1937  
Berninger and Bower, Architects  
holdings: 4 architectural drawings; 5 photographs [2 building, 2 drawing, 1 text]

- 152     H. Clifton Neff House**  
Hampton Road, Abington Township, Meadowbrook, Pennsylvania  
1937  
Berninger & Bower, Architects  
holdings: 9 architectural drawings; 4 photographs [4 building], 4 slides; [4 building]
- 168     Alfred Snellenberg House**  
Stockton Road, Abington Township, Meadowbrook, Pennsylvania  
1938  
Berninger and Bower, Architects  
holdings: 20 architectural drawings; 2 photographs [2 building]
- 174     C. E. Lowe House alterations**  
Fettersmill Road and Penny Pack Creek, Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania  
1934  
Berninger and Bower, Architects  
holdings: 4 photographs [4 building]
- 245     Wolf House**  
Rydal, Pennsylvania  
1938  
Berninger and Bower, Architects  
holdings: 1 photograph [1 building]
- 254     George Deming House, “Kings Oak Farm”**  
Pine Road, Bethayres, Pennsylvania  
1938  
Berninger and Bower, Architects  
note: [sold to Zach Webb or Zach W. Redd]  
holdings: 11 photographs [9 building, 2 drawing]
- 264     Sorrel Horse House / Sorrel Horse Inn Annex alterations** (for Mr. Elkins)  
2nd Street (Huntingdon) Pike and Byberry Road, Pennsylvania  
ca. 1940  
Berninger and Bower, Architects  
note: demolished 1965  
holdings: 2 photographs [2 building]
- 378     Light Fixture and Window for a Dress Shop**  
York Road, Jenkintown, Pennsylvania  
1938-1939  
holdings: 2 photographs [2 decorative arts]

- 384     Hano - Newberger House**  
Fetersmill Road at Terwood Road, Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania  
1940  
Berninger and Bower, Architects  
holdings: 8 photographs [8 building]
- 402     Children's Shop**  
Jenkintown, Pennsylvania  
ca. 1945  
holdings: 3 architectural drawings; 1 photograph [1 construction]
- 446     Huntingdon Valley Chapel Rectory**  
Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania  
ca. 1947  
holdings: 1 photograph [1 building]
- 571     George B. Rebmann House**  
Rydal, Pennsylvania  
1953  
holdings: 1 photograph [1 building]
- 574     Lachlan Pitcairn House**  
Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania  
1953  
holdings: 1 photograph [1 building]
- 590     Arthur and Paulette Meltzer House and Studio**     (Arthur and Paulette Van R. Meltzer)  
Welsh Road and Washington Lane, Abington Township, Meadowbrook, Pennsylvania  
1952-53  
holdings: 2 architectural drawings; 4 photographs [4 building]; 7 slides [7 building]
- 592     Montgomery County Historical Society Building**  
1654 DeKalb Street, Norristown, Pennsylvania  
1953; 1979 (addition)  
holdings: 15 architectural drawings; 3 photographs [2 building, 1 people]; 4 slides [4 building]
- 597     Gordon Chelf House**  
Phillips Mill Road, Solebury Township, New Hope, Pennsylvania  
1953-1954  
holdings: 7 architectural drawings

- xxx    Unidentified House**  
1954  
holdings: 1 photograph [1 building]
- 604    Huntingdon Valley Federal Saving and Loan**  
2nd Street and Huntingdon Pike, Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania  
1952  
holdings: 2 photographs [2 building]; 2 slides [2 building]
- 605    Edwin Asplundh House**  
Edgeworth (near Pittsburgh), Pennsylvania  
1962  
holdings: 1 photograph [1 building]
- 613    Queen of Peace Roman Catholic Church Elementary School**  
Fitzwatertown Road at North Hills Avenue, Ardsley, Upper Dublin Township, Pennsylvania  
1954-1957  
holdings: 10 architectural drawings; 3 photographs [1 building, 2 construction]
- 616    (Louis G.) Bliss House, South side of**  
Dreshertown Road (0.4 miles east of Camp Hill), Upper Dublin Township, Pennsylvania  
1955  
holdings: 3 architectural drawings; 2 photographs [2 building]; 14 slides [14 building]
- 623    George W. Heisley House**  
Lewis Road (between Woodland & Rydal Roads), Abington Township, Rydal, Pennsylvania  
1955-1956  
holdings: 9 architectural drawings, 5 photographs [5 building]; 23 slides [23 building]
- 647    Henry Gibson House**  
Winter Road, Rydal, Pennsylvania  
1958  
holdings: 1 photograph [1 building]
- 654    Earl Scott House**  
North side of Frazier Road, Rydal, Pennsylvania  
ca. 1957  
holdings: 1 photograph [1 building]

- 655 Church of the New Jerusalem**  
Leroi Street off Reynolds Ave, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania  
1957-1959  
holdings: 28 architectural drawings
- 656 Convent for the Queen of Peace Roman Catholic Church**  
East side of North Hills Ave, Upper Dublin Township, North Hills, Pennsylvania  
1957  
holdings: 5 architectural drawings; 1 photograph [1 building]
- 659 Roy W. Schweiker House**  
West side of Skippack Pike, Worcester Township, Center Point, Pennsylvania  
1958  
holdings: 6 architectural drawings; 2 photographs [2 building]
- 664 Abel House**  
Lot #13 Frazier Road, Abington, Pennsylvania  
1958-59  
holdings: 6 architectural drawings
- 666 Restoration of 408 Locust Street, Independence National Historical Park**  
408 Locust Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
1959-1962  
holdings: 15 architectural drawings
- 667 Restoration of 413-415 and 423 Locust Street, Independence National Historical Park**  
413-415 and 423 Locust Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
1959  
holdings: 13 architectural drawings; 8 photographs [8 building]; 9 slides  
[8 building, 1 drawing]
- 668 Restoration of 339-341-343 Walnut Street, National Historical Park**  
339-341-343 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
(1959)  
holdings: 1 photograph [1 building]; 14 slides [14 building]  
Note: includes 8 slides dated 1966 of 343 Walnut Street and unidentified  
houses on 5th Street.



- 677     Restoration of 338 South 4th Street for David Grossman**  
338 South 4th Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
1961  
holdings: 9 architectural drawings; 2 photographs [building]; 2 slides [2 building]
- 679     Johnsville Reformed Church and Sunday School**  
Newtown Road at Street Road, Warminster Township, Johnsville, Pennsylvania  
1960  
holdings: 8 architectural drawings; 2 photographs [2 building]; 6 slides [5 building, 1 sign]
- 680     Swedenborg Church Rectory**  
Northeast corner of Fettersmill Road and Terwood Road, Lower Moreland Township, PA  
1960  
holdings: 6 architectural drawings
- 682     Restoration of 339-341 Walnut Street, Independence National Historical Park**  
339-341 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
1962-1963  
holdings: 13 architectural drawings
- 705     William Elliott House**  
Jeffersonville, Pennsylvania  
1962  
holdings: 2 photograph [2 building]; 5 slides [5 building]
- 710     Gamon House**  
West side of Saint James Avenue, South of Maple Avenue, Merchantville, New Jersey  
1963  
holdings: 2 architectural drawings
- 713     William Balderston House, "Sky Ranch"**  
Moose, Wyoming  
1954-1983  
holdings: 2 photographs [2 building]
- 715     Fetter's Mill Square Shops and Apartment**  
Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania  
1963  
holdings: 5 photographs [5 building]

- 720    Isadore Scott House**  
Rydal, Pennsylvania  
ca. 1965  
holdings: 2 photographs [2 building]
- 731    Abington Friends Meeting Sunday School Addition**  
(Abington Township, Pennsylvania)  
1966  
holdings: 6 photographs [6 building]; 26 slides [26 building]
- 761    Kramer House**  
Pheasant Road, Meadowbrook, Pennsylvania  
1968-1975  
holdings: 3 photographs [building]; 12 slides [12 building]
- 767    Unidentified House**  
note: Hamilton  
holdings: 1 photograph [1 building]
- xxx    Part of the Senior Examination of John A. Bower**  
miscellaneous sites, Pennsylvania  
[1958 or after]  
note: photographs of miscellaneous projects dated 1952-1958  
holdings: 18 photographs [18 building]