

Firm History

Robert Burley studied architecture at Columbia University, where he graduated with honors and the award of a traveling fellowship to Europe, the Middle East, and Africa.

Within a few years of his return to the United States, he joined the firm of Eero Saarinen Associates. Working under Saarinen he was placed in charge of the design teams for the US Embassy in London, the World Health Center Competition in Zurich, and the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial (the Arch) in St. Louis.

Design principals and methodologies developed in the Saarinen Office have strongly influenced the work of The Burley Partnership: careful research and information gathering, understanding the mechanics of how each project must function, the use of three dimensional design models, and a rigorous design development stage.

Early in its history, the Firm was selected as the architect for a Vermont Capital Complex Master Plan. This commission led to a computerized management system for state government operations and space needs, traffic studies, site utilities, historic surveys, site graphics, expansion strategies, and new construction. The Master Plan was up-dated twice over a 15-year period. Projects followed for the Woodstock Inn, UVM Library, Trapp Lodge, and expansion of the Vermont State House.

Membership in the American Institute of Architects has always been an important resource for our office: contacts with other architects and projects, workshops and conferences, and information on current architectural practice. Members of our Firm have served on the AIA Board of Directors, at both the State and National levels.

Burley also sets an example of public outreach: Past chair of the Vermont Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Vice-chair of the National Park System Board, and present Chair of the Architectural Panel for the Restoration of Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest. Members of our Firm continue to participate in community and public-interest activities in Vermont.