



Designed-to-Engage...Made-to-Last

How important is light to you?



The dark days of winter are upon us. The lack of light is unbearably apparent to many – especially in our modern society where so many of us spend over 90% of our time indoors. As the days begin to get longer, we reflect on the positive benefits of increasing light exposure to everyone's health and performance. Beyond the seasonal cycles and exposure to natural light, learning and performance degraded during COVID in part, because many people were forced to spend time in less-than-optimal indoor spaces. As architects and designers of recreation, education, and housing facilities, among other spaces where people spend a significant amount of time indoors, we're focused on healthy environments of high-performing buildings that can enhance human occupancy.

[Multiple studies](#) have shown that access to natural light and views of nature can improve people's overall happiness, wellbeing, work satisfaction and performance. [Studies have also shown](#) that improved access to full-spectrum lighting in office environments can reduce the incidence of eyestrain, headaches, drowsiness, and absenteeism. Statistically, increases were observed by as much as 54% to 78%, which could impact retention and organizational commitment. This is a logical component of efforts to [bring people back to work](#) and enliven our downtowns.

At BELL, we find opportunities to focus on and optimize sustainable design on behalf of our client's well-being. Along with subject matter experts, wearable devices, occupant surveys, building information modeling (BIM), building management systems (BMS), and increasingly artificial intelligence (AI) are tools available to provide evidence-based data that support iterative design. We perform analyses to evaluate solar orientation, glare, shading, daylighting, and views. This process directly addresses occupants' satisfaction while factoring in energy consumption for climate control and artificial lighting.

However, not all spaces can provide robust access to natural light and views. Design approaches with artificial light, that can mimic the qualities of natural light coinciding with [circadian rhythms](#) are among the strategies worth exploring. These can be paired with access to natural light to help mitigate [seasonal affective disorder \(SAD\)](#), improve sleep patterns, and enhance the overall well-being, even when the season or location is not ideal. In our quest, we weave technology into our projects to provide the optimal indoor environment, the quality of the spaces should positively impact the sleep patterns and ability to focus, a component of overall health of the occupants.

While the gentle winter sun rises higher in the sky, let us all bring more light and compassion into the world. May the light illuminate your hearts and shine in your life every day of the year. And may you all have a happy, resilient, and prosperous New Year.

Thank you for a quarter century of trust and friendship.

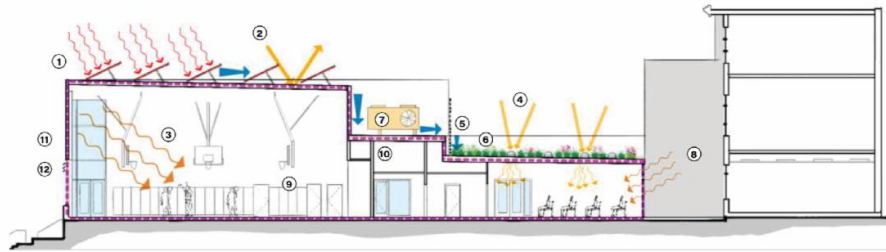
Cheers,

T. David Bell, FAIA, LEED AP
Principal

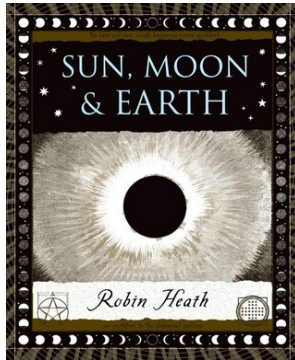
david.bell@bellarchitects.com

Integrated Daylighting Section at Shepherd Park Community Center

Washington, DC - LEED Gold targeted



1. Solar photovoltaic roof
 2. Light color TPO roof with high solar reflectance factor minimizes heat island effect
 3. Ample daylight and views through energy efficient curtain wall
 4. Solatubes bring natural daylight into deeper spaces within the building
 5. Rain water flows from upper roof to lower green roof
 6. High capacity water detention green roof
 7. Energy efficient mechanical units
 8. Courtyard between existing and new building provides additional daylight, views, and outdoor space
 9. Tight air barrier
 10. Energy efficient insulation
 11. Open cement board rain screen
 12. Sunshades
- High efficiency building envelope

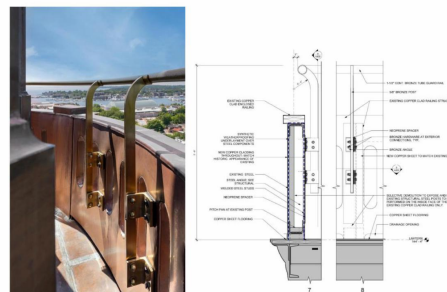
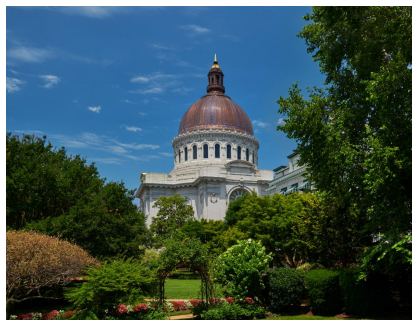


Robin Heath has a science degree and has written several books based on research into the astronomy and architecture of megalithic sites. Heath describes and illustrates solstices and equinoxes, the relation of the moon and the tides, the difference between lunar and solar years and how to remember them.

Every organism on Earth responds to four major cycles: the solar and lunar day, the synodic month and the year. We all dance to these primary rhythms. This book reveals the poetic cosmology that lies within the cycles of the Sun and Moon as seen from the Earth.

Order now

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Washington, D.C.

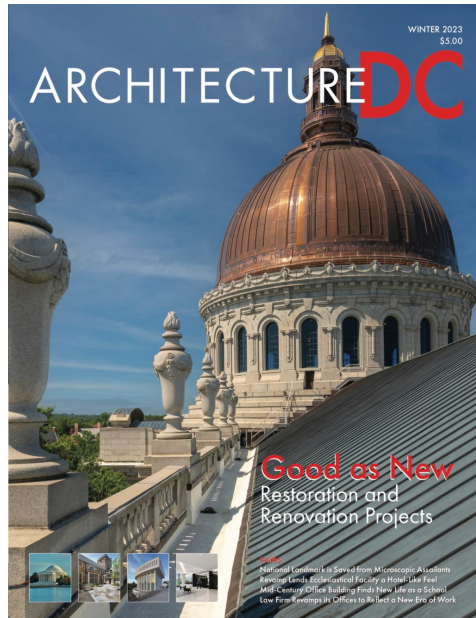


BELL Architect receives the 2023 Faith and Form Award for Religious Architecture - Restoration

Traditional practice meets technology.
The rehabilitation of a cultural masterpiece.

The US Naval Academy Chapel

Clearly, the rehabilitation of the US Naval Academy Chapel with its monumental historic relevance is now a shining beacon on the Academy's campus which will last for the next 100 years.



BELL Architects is proud to be showcased in ArchitectureDC Magazine

Major Team:

Special thanks to: United States Naval Academy and The Library of Congress

Rogers, Lovelock & Fritz Inc.

T. David Bell, FAIA, LEEDap Architect of Record, BELL Architects

Scott Knight, LEEDap, Senior Associate & Historic Preservation Specialist, BELL Architects

Structural engineering: Silman

Materials conservation: Evergreene Architectural Arts

LIDAR scanning: Existing Conditions Surveys, Inc.

Surveying: Vertical Access

Waterproofing consultant: Seal Engineering Inc.

General contractor: GW Management Services LLC,

Waterproofing installer: Prospect Waterproofing Co.

Copper fabricator: Copper Craft

Copper sheets: Revere Copper Products Inc.

Terracotta balusters replacements: Boston Valley Terra Cotta

Masonry repairs - Lorton Stone (Manny Seara)

The skylight manufacturer is Wasco. CBG South is a certified Wasco installer.

Photography: Anice Hoachlander

Sustainable Design | Historic Preservation | Master-Planning
Adaptive Reuse | Education | Recreation | Housing
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