

# Interesting Shapes Offer Surprise Views of Interior

By ELIZABETH WRIGHT EVANS

Richard W. Hobbs, who designed today's Seattle Times open house, spent countless hours with the James Martenson family to discover likes and dislikes, special needs and activities.

He also studied the site so the resulting house fits it perfectly.

It overlooks the East Channel of Lake Washington with a variety of views, many of them tree-filtered.

Leo Fischer, the builder, faithfully has followed design instructions and the result is a "fun" house in the eyes of the family and an architectural statement worth studying by those wanting to make spaces seem much larger than they really are.

**HOBBS HOLDS** a master's degree in architecture from Columbia University and is with a Seattle firm of architects.

He says of the house: "This is a residence for an active family with three boys, on a site which slopes to the shelf of the lake with numerous tall evergreens around the site. These factors gave a direction to me."

"The house becomes a vertical statement relating to the trees to reduce lot coverage and to a sense of vertical interior space. The interior interaction provides a sense of the fun and activity of this family."

**VISITORS** today should plan to walk around the home, if the weather permits. They will see cantilevered areas, relationships of windows, roof lines and of the various levels. They also should plan to spend more time in this open house than most.

Only by expenditure of time will visitors see the simplicity of detail, the maximum quality for the cost, and the consistent and functional eclect that this house embodies.

The owner said, "I want a place to work, but not one remote from my family." That dictated placement of

**How to Get There**  
 Today's Times open house at Southeast 54th Street and 96th Avenue Southeast, Mercer Island, is reached by taking the Island Crest exit from the Sunset Highway, proceeding south on Island Crest Way to Southeast 53rd Place. Then turn left and go east to East Mercer Way. Turn right and wind around three blocks. At 54th Street Southeast, turn down the hill or park on East Mercer Way and walk down. Hours will be 1 until 5 p. m.

his den, with fireplace and deck, overlooking the main living areas where his sons presumably will spend their time.

A VISITOR should stand at the top of the four stairs that lead from quarry tiled dining room to the living room, hold out his arms, and know that this gesture is akin to the house itself embracing the view. For this is the most important feature of this house. From any place in it one sees the view head-on but always there are the surprise views when one looks up or down or to the side.

The extraordinary geometry of the whole is the distinctive feature. Odd-shaped windows conform to the outlook and odd-shaped rooms meet the designer's specifications for enlarging the spaces.

Most important are the ways that each space, area and room relates to each other in terms of looking through each other and to the view.

EVERY wood-paneled inside wall relates to the exterior walls, clad in olive-tinged gold cedar. Cedar leads one up the stairs, for instance, to the den with its small fireplace tucked into the basalt chimney that graces the living areas. Cedar walls also match the exterior in many other places, always relating to the outside as though the outer walls come through.

One of the subtleties is that only four basic materials have been used — cedar paneling on some walls very much like that on all the pitched ceilings, white plaster board for other walls and brown birch for cabinets

and doors. The fired floor tile for entry and dining room also covers the kitchen floor. Other floors will be carpeted.

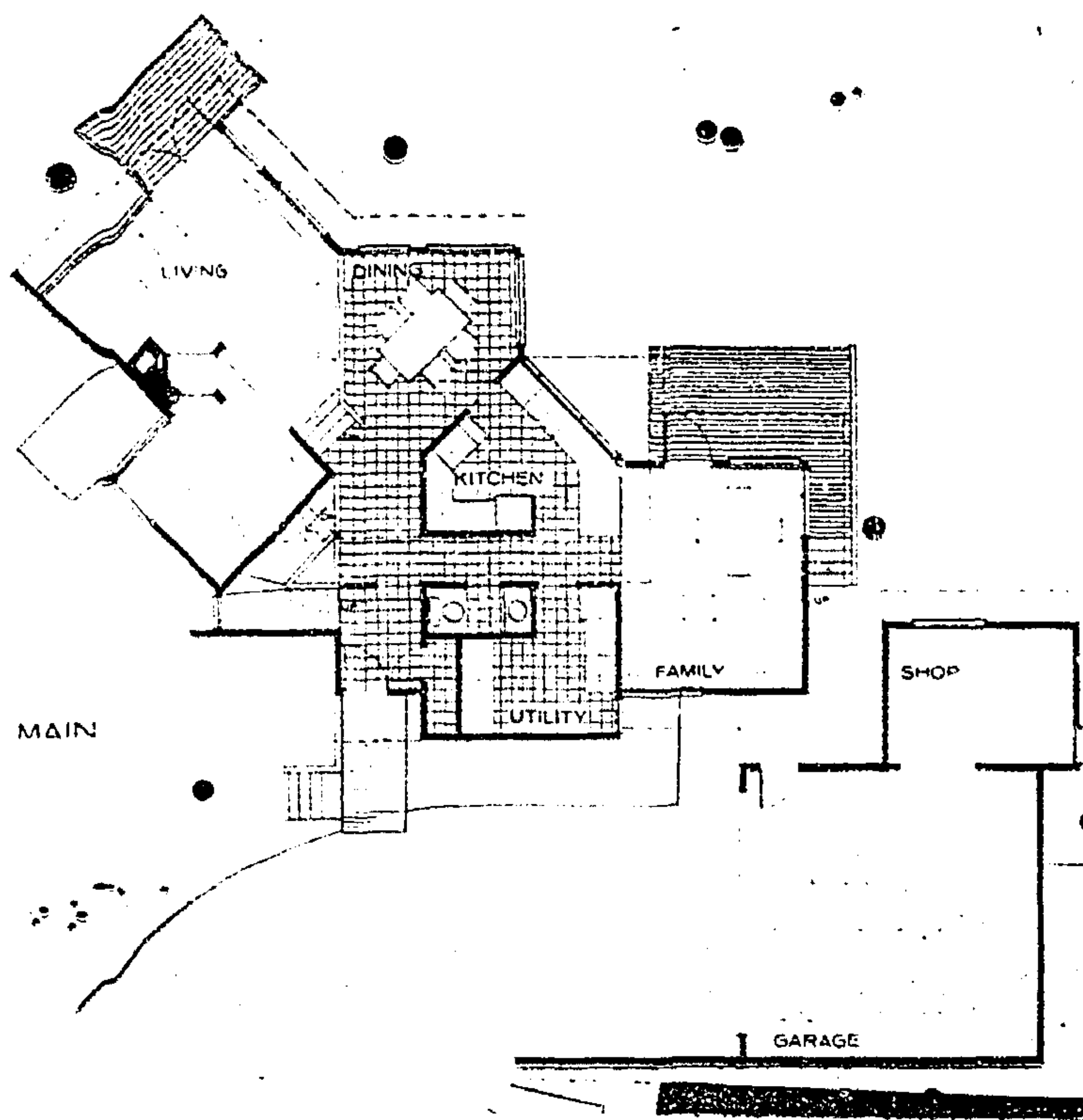
IN THE living room there are two areas, one called the cave with a conventional height ceiling, the other more formal with the high ceiling. The basalt column, stretching 30 feet to the ceiling of the den, opens with three fire apertures to warm not only the living room areas but also the dining room.

The triangular-shaped kitchen is graced with golden plastic laminate for counters, stainless steel appliances and plenty of cupboards. It has a large eating bar which gives some separation from the adjacent family room. Here the exterior cedar comes down from the upper floor and covers one wall.

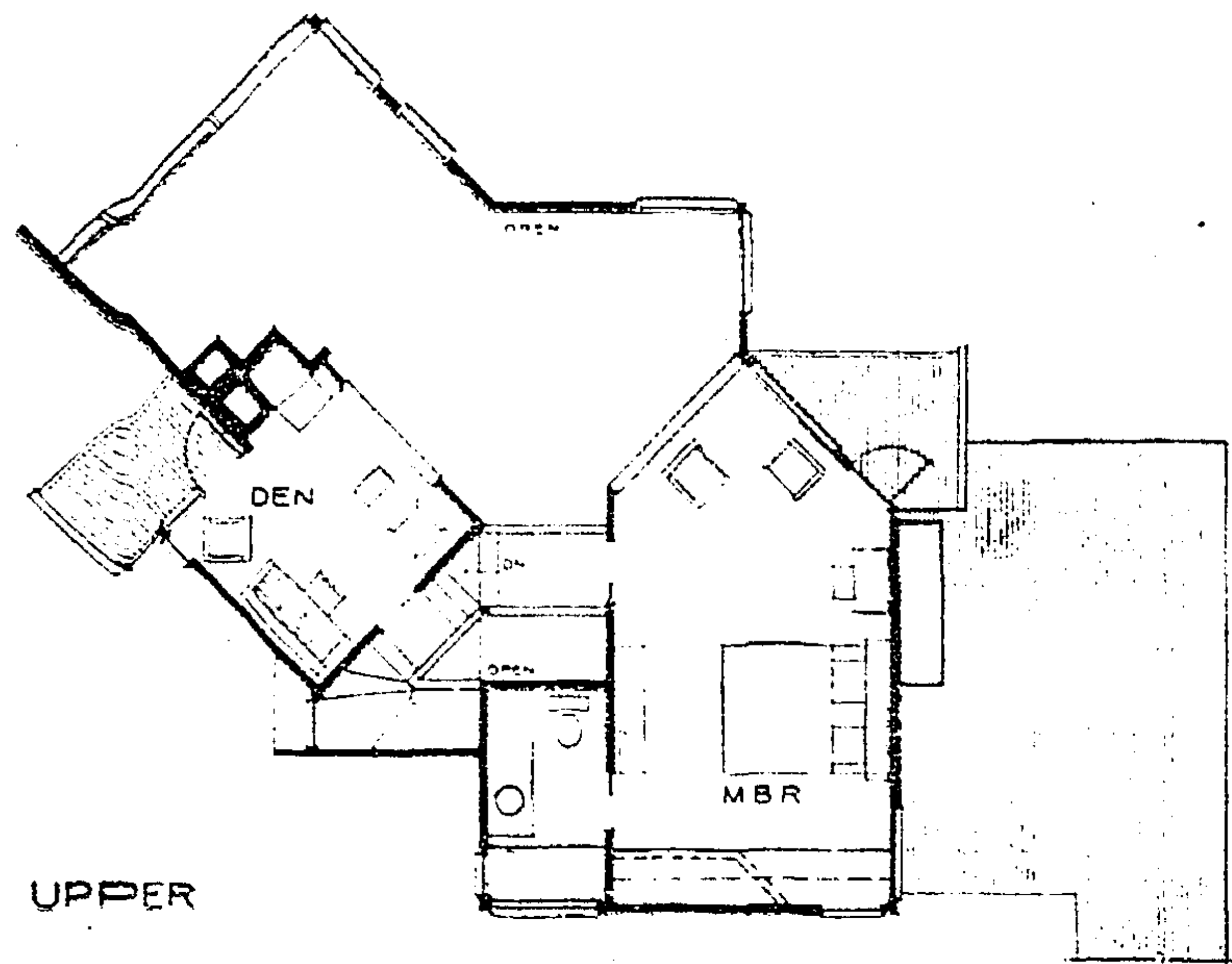
OTHER interest points on this floor include a skylight over the entry, glamour spotlighting in the cave where the spots are on an ingenious light track, spots in the kitchen and hallway, a convenient powder room and a good-sized utility room with special bins and cupboards.

Up the angled stairway to the upper floor, visitors will find the large master suite with three birch, bifold-closed wardrobes, extra storage space above them. Olive tile is throughout for the baths which have a distinctive feature for hiding the indirect fluorescent light tubes.

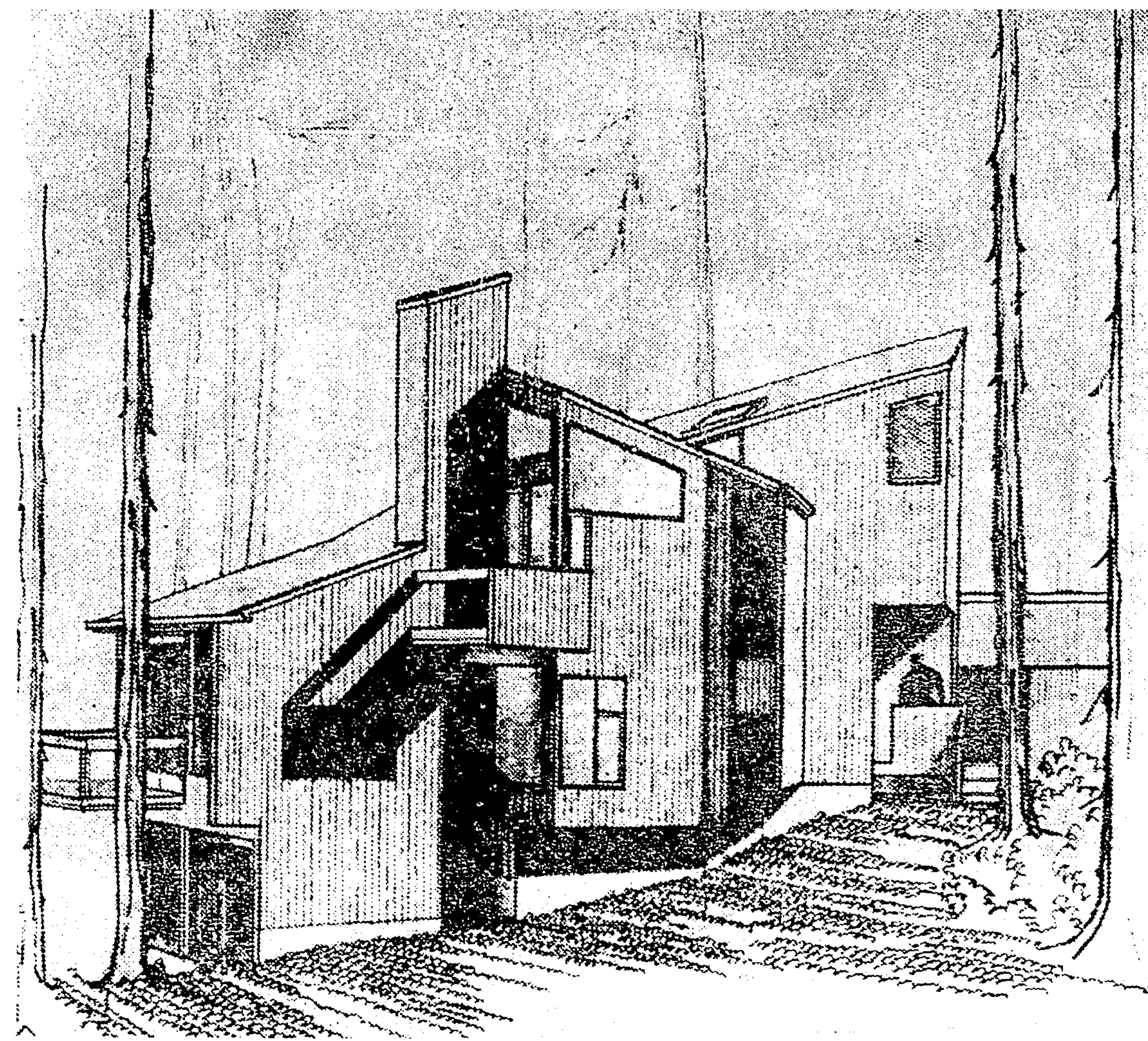
The lower area holds the boys' bedrooms and a recreation room with a bar.



Shapes of the rooms, particularly on this main level with the living room four steps below the rest of the main floor, are planned so that they relate to each other and also completely embrace the views.

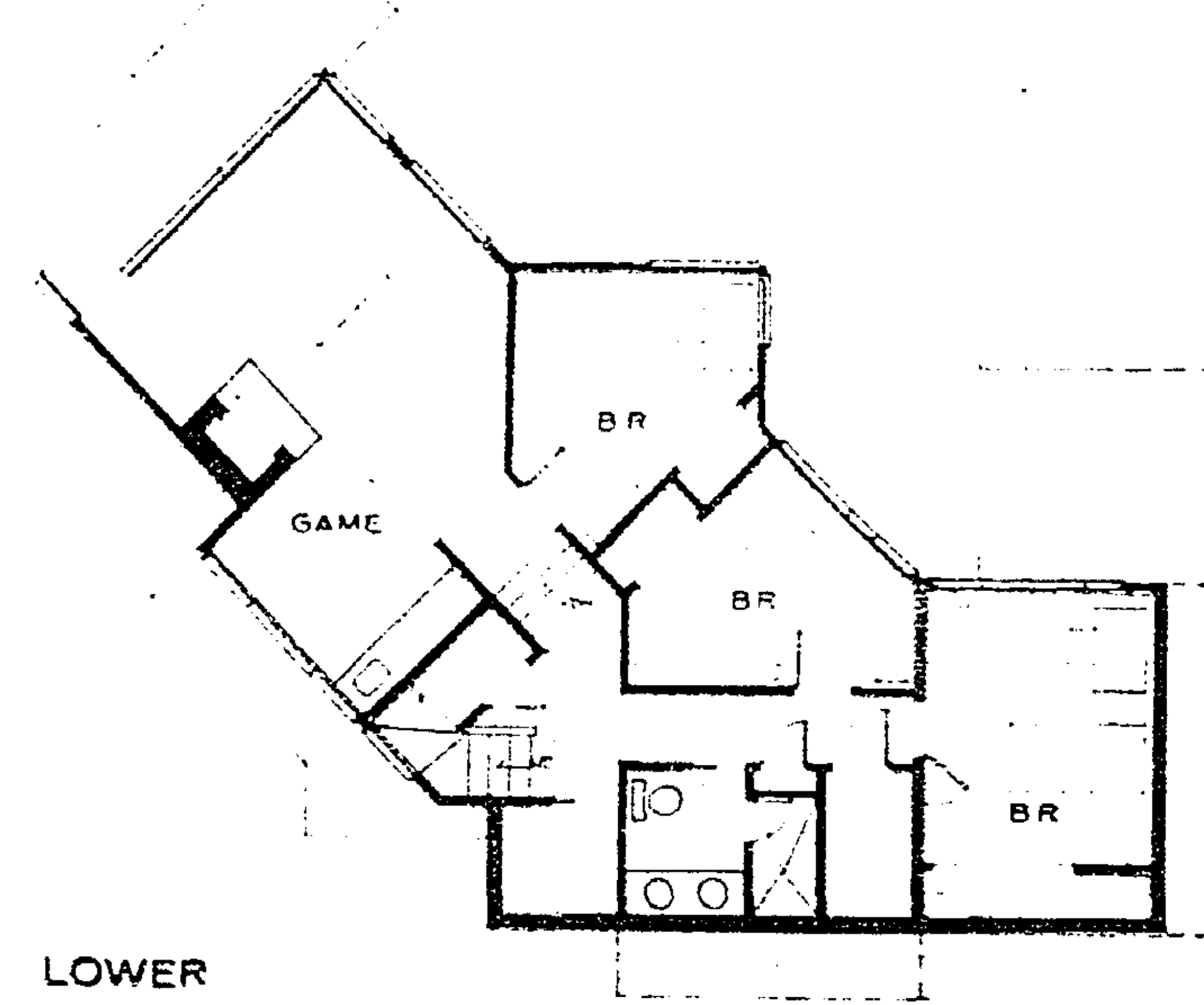


The master suite upstairs and the owner's den are like balconies over the living areas below. Each opens to encompass the lower level. Three young sons will occupy the bedrooms on the lower floor and will



This soaring, angled house on Mercer Island was designed by Richard W. Hobbs and constructed by Leo Fischer for the James Martenson family.

**Times Open House**



use the play area there with its access to the outdoors and its large amount of illumination, thanks to the steep slope and careful design.

## Industrial, Commercial Building Loans to Cost More

Borrowers seeking industrial financing will pay more for it the next six months, either through higher interest rates or additional charges, according to the research department of the National Association of Real Estate Boards.

Mortgage funds will remain in "moderate" supply because of the continuing flow of savings into lending institutions, the report said. The research department forecast a tightening of the present situation, in which commercial and industrial

money is ample in 38 per cent of the country, moderate in 50 per cent and tight in 12 per cent. Interest rates range between 6.5 per cent and 7 per cent, with 6.5 per cent reported as average in 23 per cent of the country, 6.75 per

cent average in 41 per cent and 7 per cent interest average in 16 per cent. Six months ago, 39 per cent of the country reported a 6.5 per cent average rate and 25 per cent a 6.75 per cent rate. In some areas, interest

rates may remain at present levels, and the rising costs take the form of placement fees or more stringent prepayment penalties, or provision for a period of years for which there is no prepayment privilege, the report noted.