DENBROOK
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Denbrook also designed the Shooting Star Casino and Hotel in Mahnomen, Minn., in 1981. The complex opened the following year.

"It was what you called fast-tracking," he told the Herald in June 1992. "Sometimes we'd be sending design over as one phase of construction was nearing completion."

'A busy character'

Dietrich described his former colleague as "somebody who would design a very functional, conservative building. He was known for balancing budgets and aesthetics."

His health had started to fail in recent years, and he moved to northeast Minnesota to be close to his son, Mark, of Hibbing, Minn. He had been at the nursing home about a year.

"He was a busy character, and proud of all his work," his son said. "When he was working, 70 or 80-hour weeks were common, with all the traveling to meetings."

Dietrich said Myron Denbrook hired him as an intern in 1988.

"He was a hard worker who put in a lot of hours himself," he said. "He was very detail-oriented and a great project manager. When you were working with him, he knew everything you were doing."

Denbrook's other UND projects included Gamble Hall and Burtness Theatre. In 2004 and 2006, Denbrook deposited at Chester Fritz Library hundreds of blueprints and other architectural records detailing work done by his company and its predecessor in and around Grand Forks from 1925 to 1980.

The folders contain records of city and country schools, churches, Greek houses and dormitories, upscale homes and bungalows, city halls and county court houses, apartment buildings and garage additions.

"He did a couple hundred schools and school projects from Warroad, Minn., to western North Dakota," said Calvin Marjamaa, a retired architect living near Walker, Minn., who worked with Denbrook for more than 30 years.

Denbrook was involved in early planning that led to the merger of the city's two hospitals and development of the medical complex now known as Altru Health System, Marjamaa said.

"He was a great creator," he said.

Denbrook was especially proud of Chester Fritz Auditorium, with its ornamental glass work, and he kept a picture of the building on an office wall. Dietrich said.

"It's one of the best acoustically designed buildings around," he said.

Denbrook was born in Ohio in 1922. He earned a degree in architecture at the University of Washington in 1945. He worked in Washington for a few years, then sent out a bunch of letters saying, 'I want to be a partner somewhere,' and whoever was the first to answer him, that's where he was going," his son said.

The first letter came from architect Ted Wells in Grand Forks, and Denbrook joined the firm in 1948. UND was booming with the arrival of veterans using the GI Bill, and Denbrook "got thrown into the fire," his son said.

The firm merged with EAPC in 1978, and Denbrook continued as a partner and architect until he retired in 1992.

"There were three or four retirements," Mark Denbrook said. "He told me he enjoyed being an employee rather than a boss, and he continued working to 2005 or 2006."

Denbrook's wife, Eve, died in 1995.

Mark Denbrook said a funeral service is planned for 2 p.m. April 28 at United Church of Christ in Grand Forks.