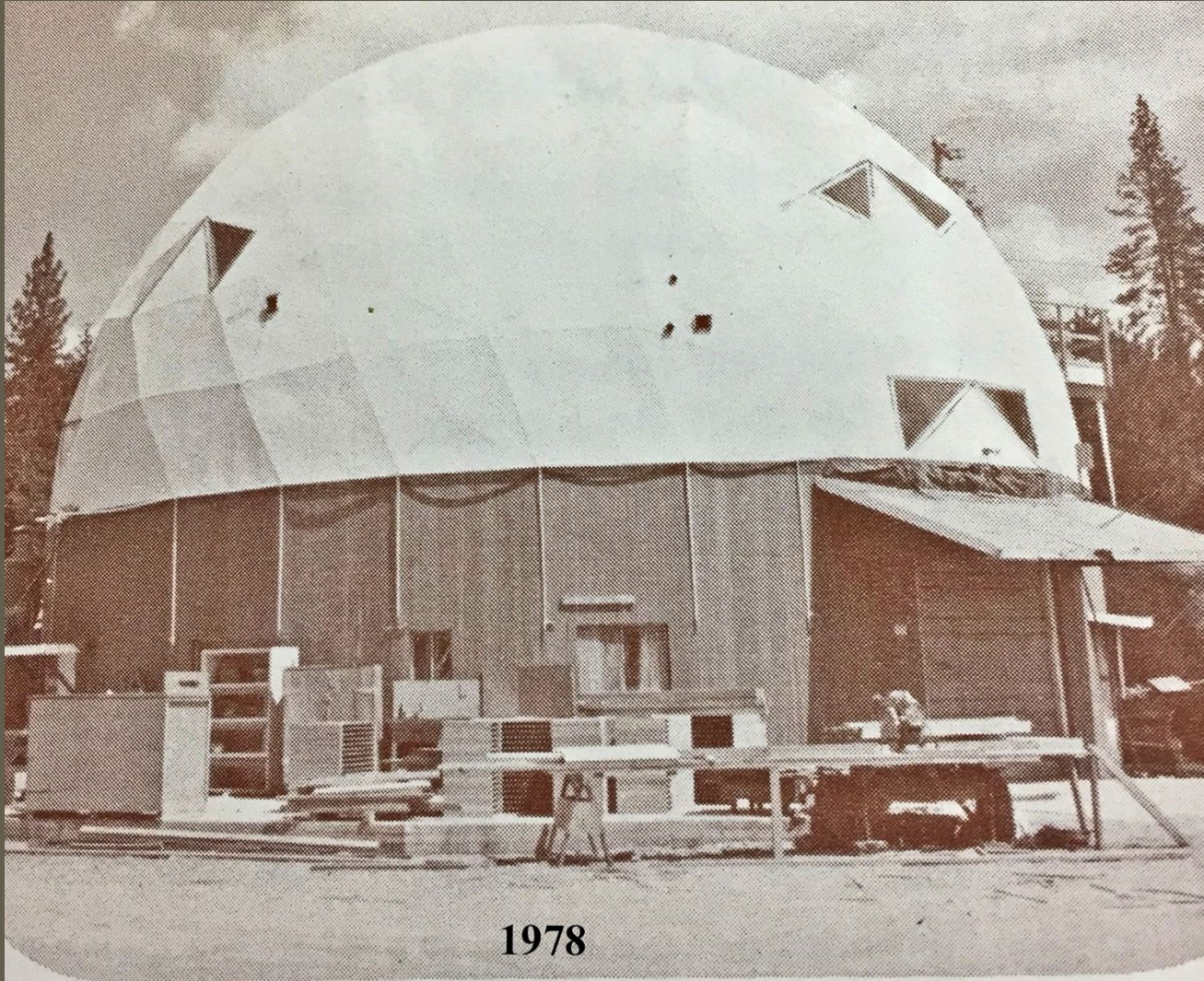




Yankee Hill Historical Society

www.YankeeHillHistory.com

The Dome Store History



1978

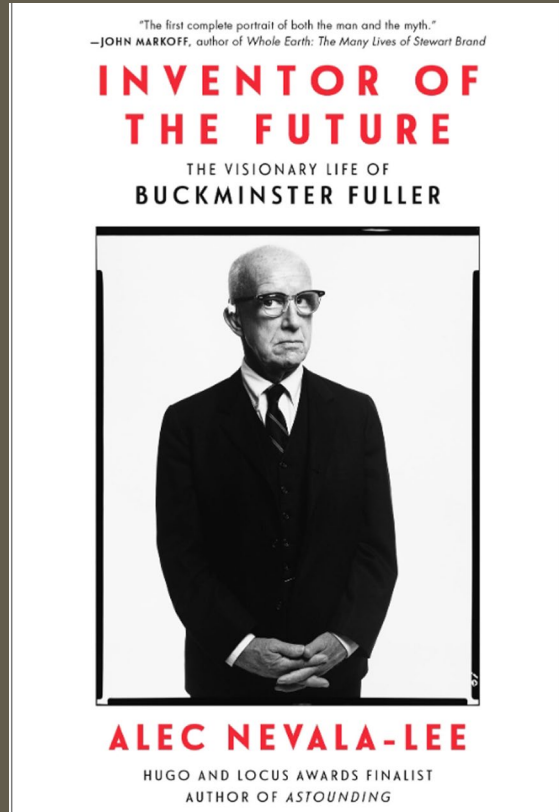
The Cathedralite Domes' factory at Oroville, California.



THE CATHEDRALITE TRIANGLE

Before it was a store, the building was a factory to build domes!

THE INVENTOR OF THE DOME CONCEPT

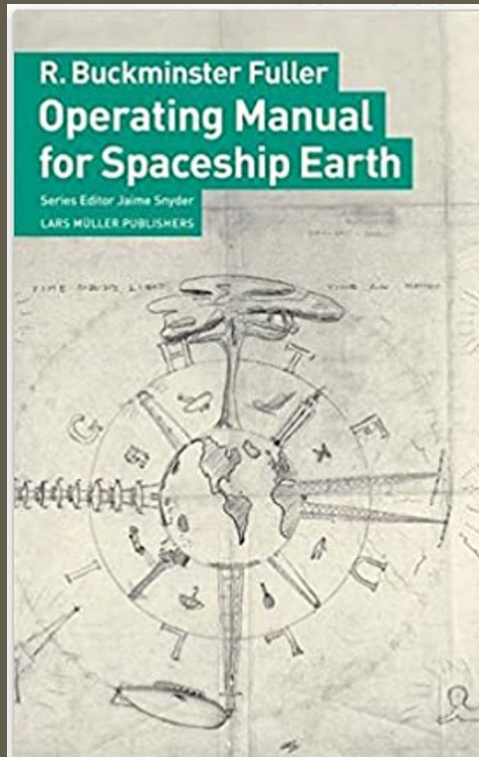


Fuller developed the dome construction concept.

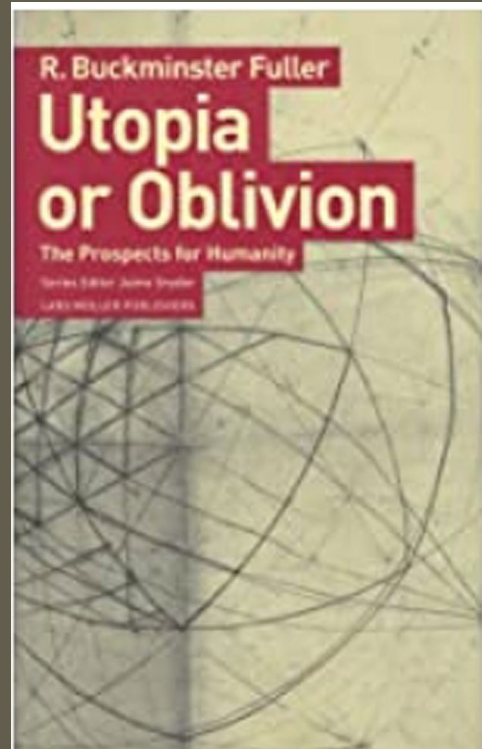
Richard Buckminster Fuller
(went by Buckminster Fuller)

Born in 1895 in Milton, Mass.
Interested in philosophy, math,
engineering and considered
himself a futurist.

Wrote 24 books, held many
patents, an avid lecturer. He
had a large following.



Two of Buckminster Fuller's books



In 1964 Buckminster Fuller was living in San Bernardino with his wife and daughter.

He was involved with manufacturing dome buildings. His patents only covered the dome concept

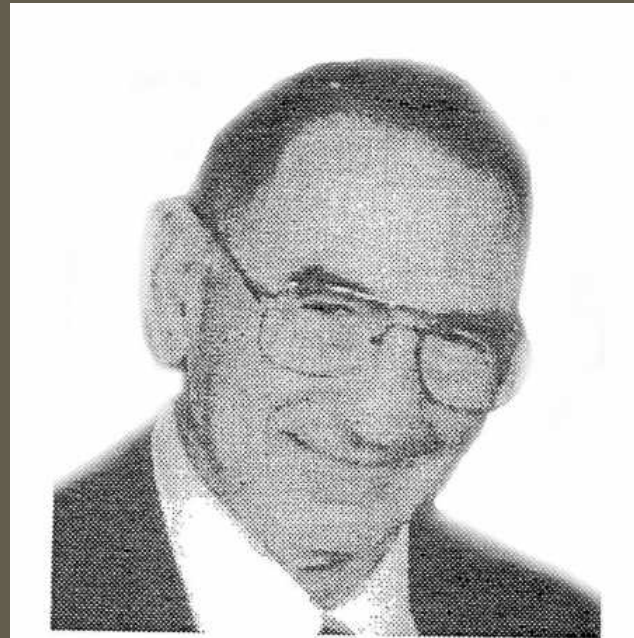
A company in Hayward, California would soon inquire about buying 2 dome buildings.

Price and Rutzebeck

(Manufacturers of wholesale tools for plumbing, electrical and construction trades)



John "Jake" Rutzebeck



LIEF STEINBERGER

Established about 1952 by Jake Rutzebeck and a silent partner

Brother Lief joined the company in the early 1960's

The company used two 39-foot adjoined domes for their office

BUYING THE PATENT FOR THE DOMES

Dome Factory, Concow



Price & Rutzebeck went into the dome business in the mid 1960s

In 1968 John Rutzebeck acquired patents for the manufacturing process for the domes

In 1968 the company began building a dome plant to manufacture domes in Concow



The plant consisted of a 60 ft diameter dome and a 26 ft diameter dome

Lief Steinberger developed custom equipment for the plant

Equipment to cut struts, hotwire machine to cut Styrofoam insulation, jigs, etc.

The plant would offer 26 ft, 30 ft, 39 ft, 45 ft and 60 ft domes

Panel cutting machine introduced into the plant



John "Jake" Rutzebeck

In 1969 disaster strikes when Jake Rutzebeck, a pilot, dies in a plane crash

His brother Lief Steinberger is now in charge of both the Hayward tool facility and the Concow dome plant, commuting back and forth

The decision was made to sell the Concow dome business, keeping the property and leasing it to the new owner

The new owner was a Chico native, Donald Benjamin Sheley

Donald Sheley was 38 years old when he purchased the dome business and continued to operate it in Concow

He nearly died several times when he was a child and was devoted to his faith

In 1959 he established the Calvary Cross Church in Daly City. In 1972 the church moved to San Bruno and was renamed the Church of the Highlands. He later traveled the world establishing ministry training programs



Pastor Donald Sheley and his wife Vernita later in life

DON SHELEY SOON REALIZES IT IS TIME TO SELL

By 1975 Pastor John Sheley realizes he doesn't have the time to devote to the dome business

Scott Hewett, Barry Nottoli and Tate Miller, who were in college together, operate a distributorship for John Sheley in Aptos, Ca. They agree to buy the dome business in Concow

They had a very special relationship with John Sheley and the Steinberger families



In photo above, person labeled as Scott Hewett is Tate Miller

Too Much Publicity

Dome Home Creates Traffic Problem

By DALE POLLOCK
Sentinel Staff Writer

Sometimes extensive publicity can be too much of a good thing.

Most businessmen may not agree with that assessment, but no argument will be ventured from the Cathedralite Dome people, who are based in a stunning model of their concept on Mar Vista Drive in Rio Del Mar.

After an Associated Press story on the Aptos-based company's success in marketing their various sized domes, a steady stream of visitors began to wind their way up the Rio Del Mar hills to visit the structural anomaly.

"Outside visitors don't have much consideration for local parking," admitted Tate Miller, one of the partners in the growing firm. On weekends, between 12 and 15 cars would line the narrow street the dome occupies, snarling traffic and upsetting some neighbors.

All the fuss was the farthest thing from what Miller wanted. "We built this house a year and a half ago with the idea of selling it, but we were unable to get in our other offices."

Miller promises that by January 10, 1977, a date set by the Zoning Administrator's office, Cathedralite will vacate its offices from the premises, hopefully to larger quarters. The house, meanwhile, will be put on the market for \$85,000, which might shoot down the

theory that domed houses are less expensive.

They are less expensive to build, Miller asserts, because there is less surface area. Also, many dome owners do the finishing themselves, using one of a variety of kits that Cathedralite sells. There are additional savings in time, heating costs and materials, along with the soaring, "cathedral-like" effect of the skylight interiors.

"We've made Santa Cruz the dome capital of the world," Miller proudly states of his \$2.5 million business. While most of the projects are sold to out-of-area home builders, there are currently five domes being built in the county, with about 40 others standing testimony to the popularity and efficacy of Cathedralite's designs.

Cathedralite has its sights set on foreign soil, too, with planned expansion into both Nigeria and Saudi Arabia. Miller recently returned from a Nigerian sojourn, where he huddled

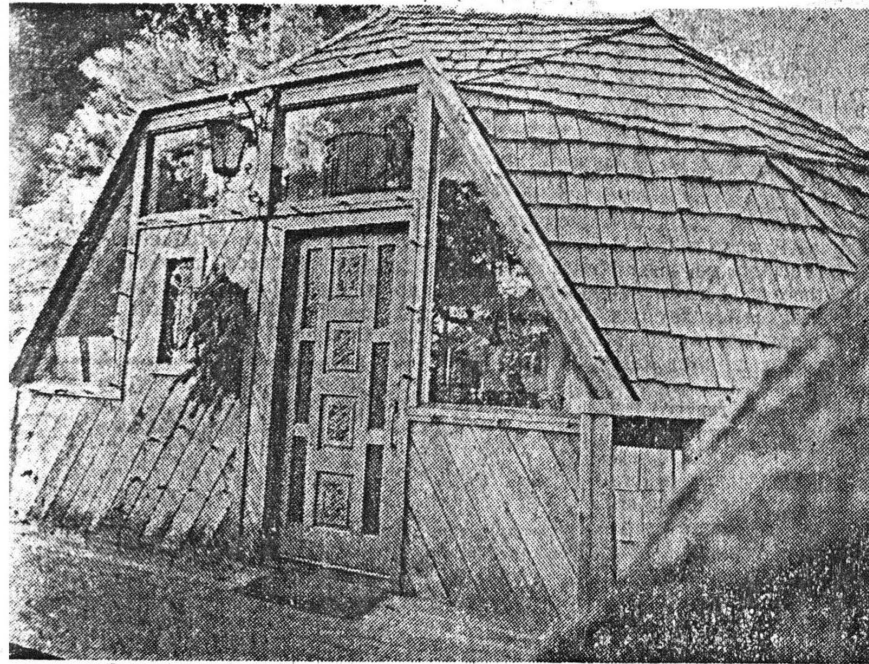
with government and private officials to start dome construction there.

Back on the local scene, Miller and his partners, Barry Nottoli and Scott Hewett, are looking forward to their new

offices, which may temporarily be relocated to Larkin Valley, where another domed house is taking shape. "It's a remote place, so there should be no parking problems," smiles Miller.

"We're very sorry if we caused the neighbors any problems," Miller continues. "We consciously tried not to." But sometimes the publicity bandwagon gets the best of dome builders, too.

-Santa Cruz Sentinel Sunday, December 19, 1976

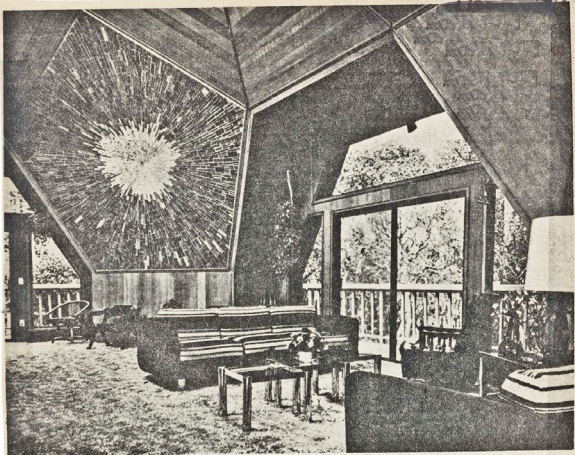


Dome House On Mar Vista Drive Has Caused Some Traffic Problems.

Santa Cruz Sentinel
Dec 12, 1976

The dome concept was generating a lot of interest because it was strong and efficient.

The dome kits were built in Concow, but the headquarters were in Aptos, Ca.



Inside a dome there's plenty of open space

In the business world

Best year yet for Aptos firm

Cathedralite Domes, the Aptos-based residential dome firm, is enjoying the biggest year to date in its 16-year history.

The company, which is now the largest dome residential firm in the world, expects to build 1,500 domes this year in California alone.

Each year for the past five, it has doubled the number of domes built the previous year. It now employs more than 100 people and has an annual payroll of more than \$1 million.

Additionally, it has established two subsidiary

corporations, both based in Watsonville. One is the Rio del Mar Architectural Group and the other, Shelter Systems, which manufactures dome-shaped greenhouses useful for backyard gardening or in large farming operations.

Cathedralite, as part of its program to widen its market, has established a franchise program to augment its roster of 50 distributors. It sponsored a convention at the Holiday Inn in Santa Cruz earlier this week, attracting attendees from throughout the United States and three foreign countries.

The group was feted at a concluding barbecue Wednesday night held at its model dome which can be seen from the freeway at Larkin Valley Road.

Tate Miller and Barry Nottoli, both 38, president and vice president respectively, head the firm that was founded in 1962 by Jake Rutzebeck, a Hayward toolmaker who had gotten the rights to a so-called Pease dome kit design.

The Pease patent differed from other dome designs in that it replaced the open lattice-work framing, which required inner and outer skins, with a system of solid wood triangles. When the triangles were bolted together to form pentagons, their curved shapes could be linked to

form geodesic domes. (Enthusiasts of dome construction contend that the rounded structures built with a system of triangles, an idea developed by Buckminster Fuller, are stronger than conventional homes, quicker to assemble, and cheaper, require less energy, and can be put up by the owner himself. Visitors are welcome at the dome model at 2001 Larkin Valley Road (note the address: 2001) which draws more than 1,500 sightseers a month from all over the country.)

When Rutzebeck was killed in a plane crash in 1966, the company was bought by the Rev. Don Shelby of Daly City who gave it the "Cathedralite" name and built a sales base. In 1973 control passed to Nottoli and Scott Hewett who brought in Tate. All hold

college and university degrees from schools in northern California. (Hewett left the firm in 1977 to pursue other interests).

Cathedralite domes come in eight sizes ranging from 26 feet in diameter to 80; many of them can be seen sprinkled throughout the Aptos area, some in expensive residential areas. The kit for the 26-foot diameter domes sells for \$3,995, and provides 485 square feet of floor area. The 48-foot dome kit costs \$8,295 and includes an upstairs in its 1,500 square feet. The 60-foot domes sell for \$28,995 and provides 2,800 square feet with a second and third floor.

The company maintains a manufacturing plant in Oroville where the actual work of cutting out the various struts and triangles to precise sizes in large jigs takes place. That plant employs 30 persons.

GREEN SHEET
October 14, 1978

Aptos residential dome firm is enjoying their biggest year

The company expects to sell 1,500 homes in 1978

The company employs 100 people at three sites, including Concow.

Annual payroll over \$1,000,000

They have two subsidiaries in Watsonville
Rio Del Mar Architecture
Shelter Systems (makes outdoor greenhouses)

They have started a franchise program to supplement their 50 distributors

CONCOW PLANT LAYOUT

- A. 60 ft dome, main dome factory assembly (three floors)
- B. Two 39 ft domes connected for cutting plywood
- C. Residence dome 39 ft with 5 extensions, 1,500 sq ft (used by Pastor Don Sheley)
- D. 97 ft concrete slab surrounding C which was for a large dome that did not work out
- E. 26 ft baby dome used as a residence over the years



Scott Hewett moved to Concow on 12 acres and built a dome home in 1978. The post office requested the street name be changed to Yankee Vista

He installed a 100 ft tall wind generator tower in Concow



Concow Home



Top of tower



TIME TO MOVE THE FACTORY



In Oct 1979 the factory was moved to White City, Oregon to be closer to lumber sources. The Concow plant continued to complete earlier orders and to sell remaining inventory

White City is just outside of Medford, Oregon. It is primarily an industrial area

White City was formerly a WWII army base known as Camp White where German prisoners were detained

PRODUCTION INCREASES

Kent Williams stays behind at the Concow plant to deliver completed domes until the new plant ramps up. The Concow plant could produce 80-90 domes a month with 20 employees

The White City plant totaling 110,000 sq ft with a more efficient layout could produce 120-130 units a month with improved efficiency

Cathedralite Domes were sold in Alaska, California, Hawaii, Louisiana, Nevada, Oregon, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Washington as well as Iraq (Baghdad), Kuwait, Saipan

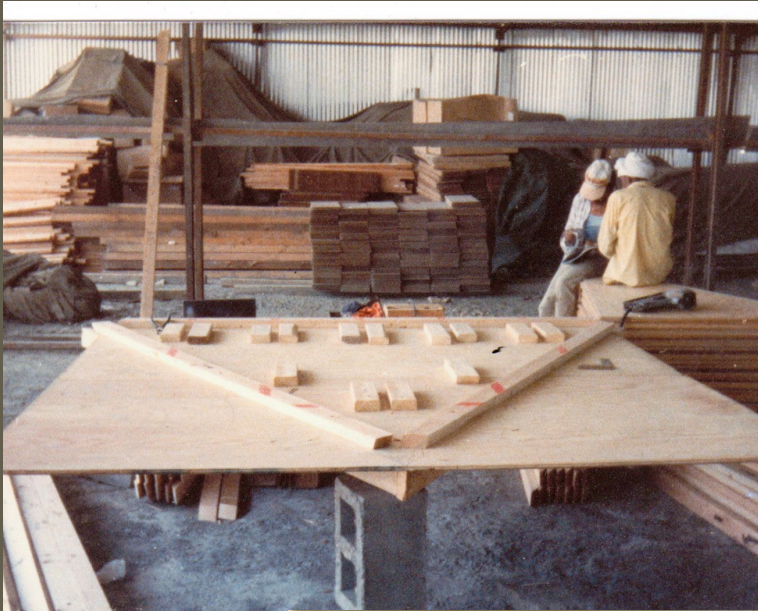
But fortunes would change when in 1984 a distributor broke away and started Oregon Domes using slightly different construction methods

By 1985 Cathedralite Domes was experiencing financial difficulties.

THE DOME BUILDING SOLD AS A KIT

- The kit included triangular roof panels and wall panels with the hardware to assemble the dome. The electrical installation, insulation and interior wall coverings were the responsibility of the buyer.
- Many people built separate garages or added rectangular extensions to the domes to act as additional rooms.

BUILDING YOUR DOME



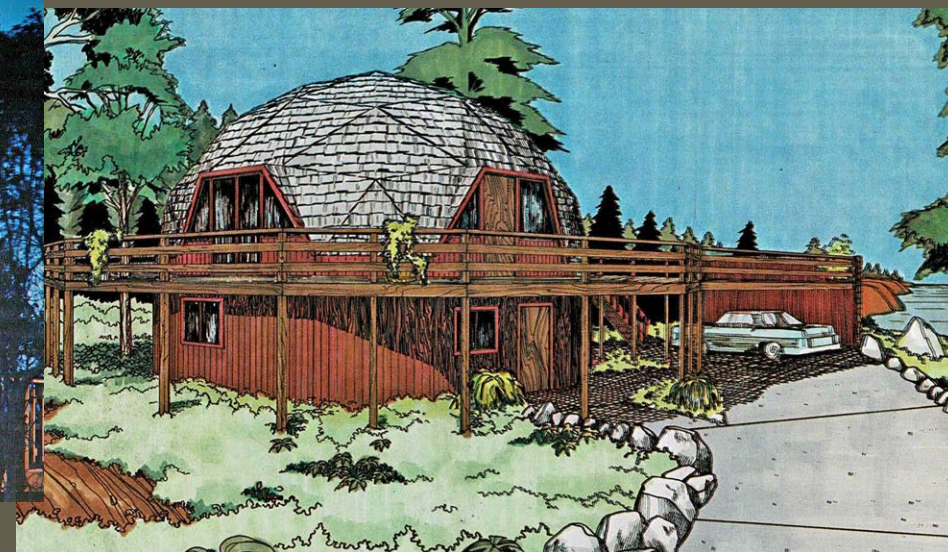
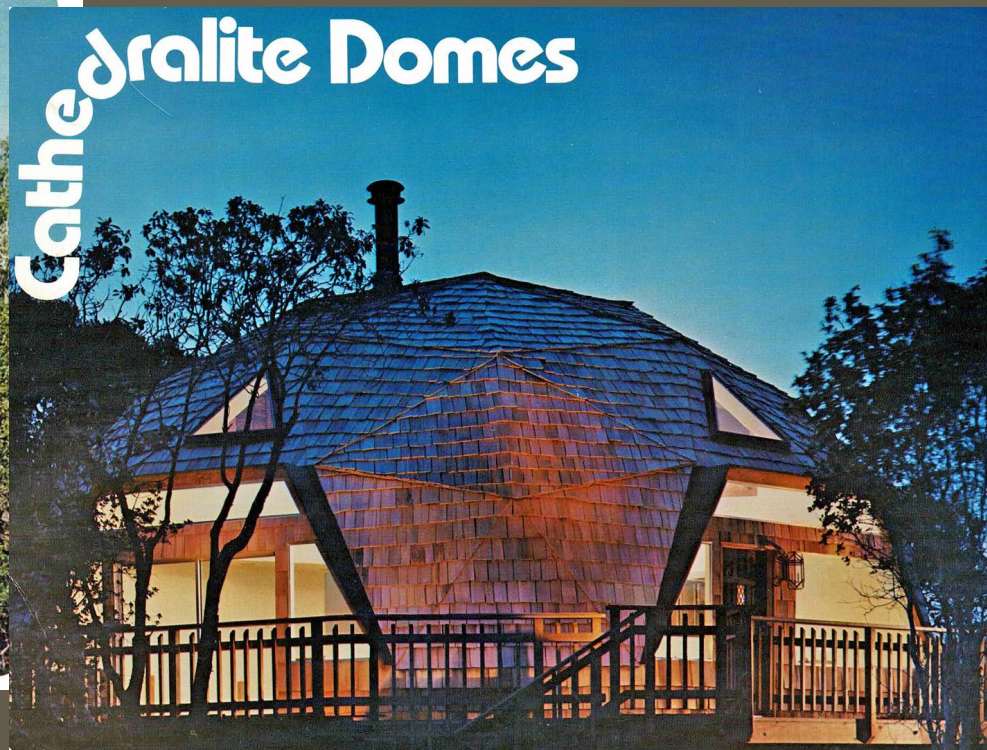
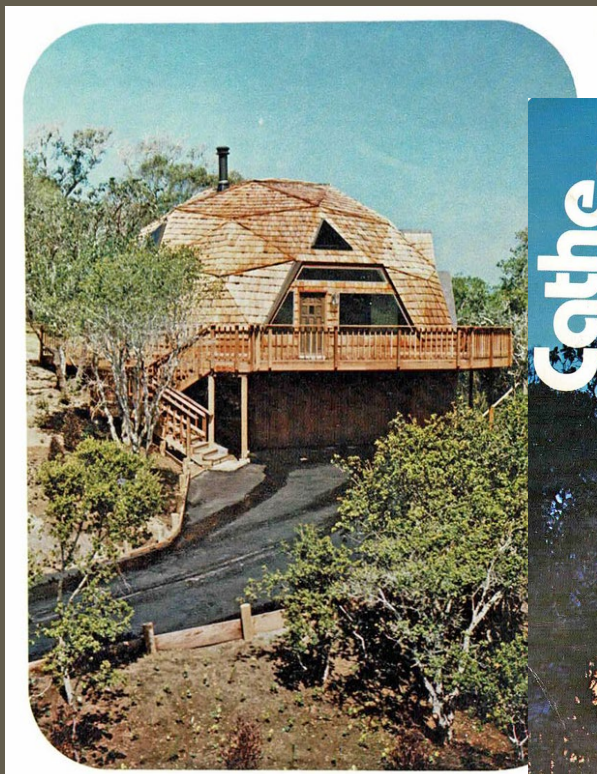
In The
Plant



In The
Field



COMPLETED EXAMPLES



THANK YOU!

CHECK OUT THE ONLINE BROCHURE
ON THE PRESENTATIONS PAGE