

# Bruce J. Graham

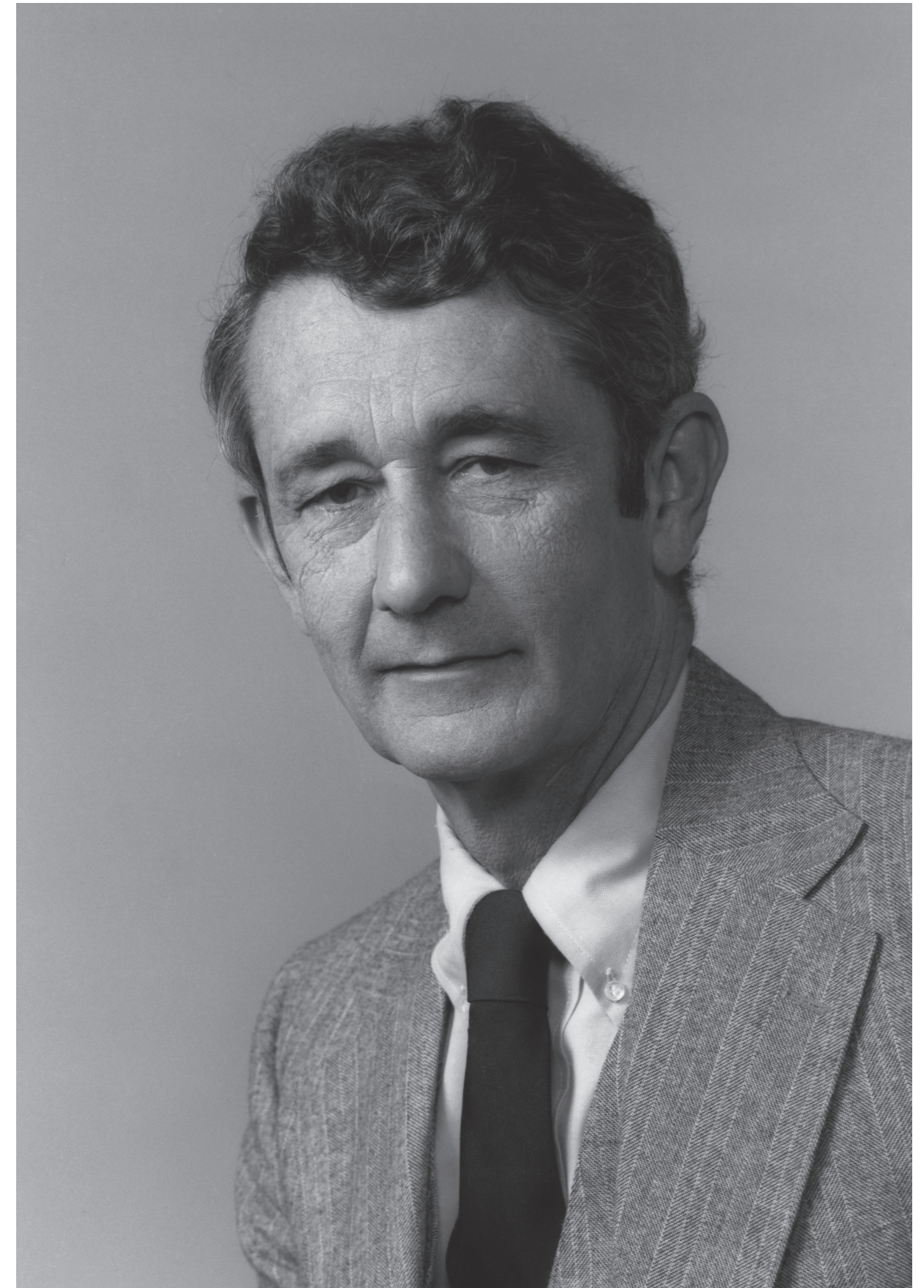
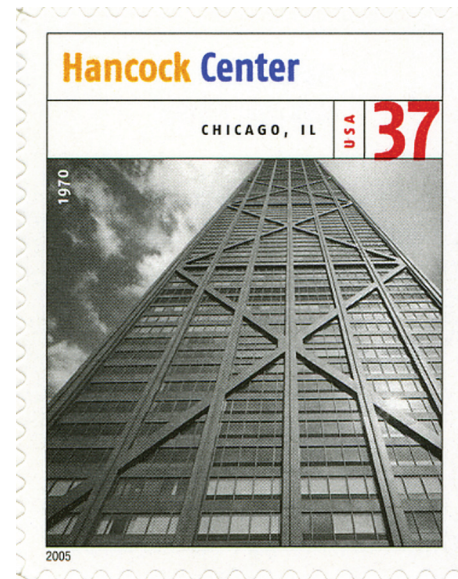
Architect (1925 – 2010)

One of the finest American designers of high-rise skyscrapers, Graham played a leading role in Chicago commercial architecture during the 1950s and 1960s. As *The New York Times* stated, “The Loop shows Mr. Graham’s fingerprints at every turn.” Graham also designed buildings across the United States, and in Hong Kong, Cairo, Barcelona, Seoul and elsewhere. He led the team that drafted the master plan for Canary Wharf in London.

Graham was born in 1925 in La Cumbre, Colombia. He studied civil engineering for two years at the Case School of Engineering in Cleveland before serving in the Navy during World War II. After the war, he studied architecture at the University of Pennsylvania, graduating in 1948. Graham worked for three years in the Chicago architectural firm of Holabird, Root & Burgee. He joined the Chicago office of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill in 1951 as chief of design and 1960 was elected partner.

Graham became a specialist in high-rise corporate buildings, designing skyscrapers and office complexes in Chicago and around the world. Two of Chicago’s landmarks—the Sears Tower and the John Hancock Center—were designed by Graham. He was heavily involved in drafting the Chicago 21 Plan in 1973, which called for the transformation of Navy Pier into a recreational area and the straightening of the infamous S curve in Lake Shore Drive. In a 1976 interview, Graham said, “In the heartland we believe in a direct relationship between work and thought. We make real buildings; we’re not abstract about life, as they are in New York.” Despite that feeling, he joined the Century after being proposed by ALBERT BUSH-BROWN, President of the Rhode Island School of Design.

Graham left the firm in 1989, and opened the firm of Graham & Graham with his second wife, the former Jane Abend, who ran the interiors department at SOM. Graham then retired to Hobe Sound, Florida, where he died in 2010. He was a member of the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Architects and an Honorary member of the Royal Institute of British Architects.



Courtesy of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill