

# Fire cleanup begins

## Archivist helping firm take stock

By JUDITH KELLIHER  
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AMHERST — For archivist Maria D'Arienzo, neatness counts. Sorting through the soot and ashes of Kuhn, Riddle Architects, D'Arienzo took inventory yesterday of the fire-damaged files on the second floor of the Cooks Building.

"I'd say about 90 percent of their files, plans and financial records can be salvaged. It's amazing," said D'Arienzo, archivist at Amherst College. "I'd say these are slightly damaged records, but not bad."

D'Arienzo, who was called in to assist with the restoration of the architectural firm's records following last Saturday's fire, says years of paperwork and plans neatly filed in metal cabinets and drawers were spared from flames, water and soot. The architectural firm and 70 other businesses in the Cooks Building, at the corner of Main and North Pleasant streets, suffered fire, water and smoke damage. Bolles Shoe Inc. was completely destroyed. But the offices of Kuhn, Riddle Architects did not fully escape the ravages of the devastating fire: two computers, a fax machine, copier, blueprint machine, computer-aided drafting machine and about a half dozen architectural models were destroyed. The damage estimate for the firm is at least \$130,000, according to the owners.

The material that the firm is trying to salvage has been moved temporarily from the



DeAnne Riddle, financial coordinator for Kuhn, Riddle Architects, looks on as Amherst College archivist assesses the damage to drawings for the new police station. The architectural firm is attempting to restore plans and drawings damaged in Saturday's Cooks Building fire in Amherst.



RANDY PILAND/Gazette Photographer

Among items damaged in the Nov. 4 fire was a Mylar drawing of a plan for an addition to the Hitchcock Center. The darkened, shriveled shape at upper right is that drawing, which melted from a size as big as the blueprints under it.



Smoke pours from the building on the northeast corner of the main intersection in downtown Amherst Saturday (Photo by Julia Schmalz)

# Architects build again

## Amherst fire forces firm's move

By KAY J. MORAN  
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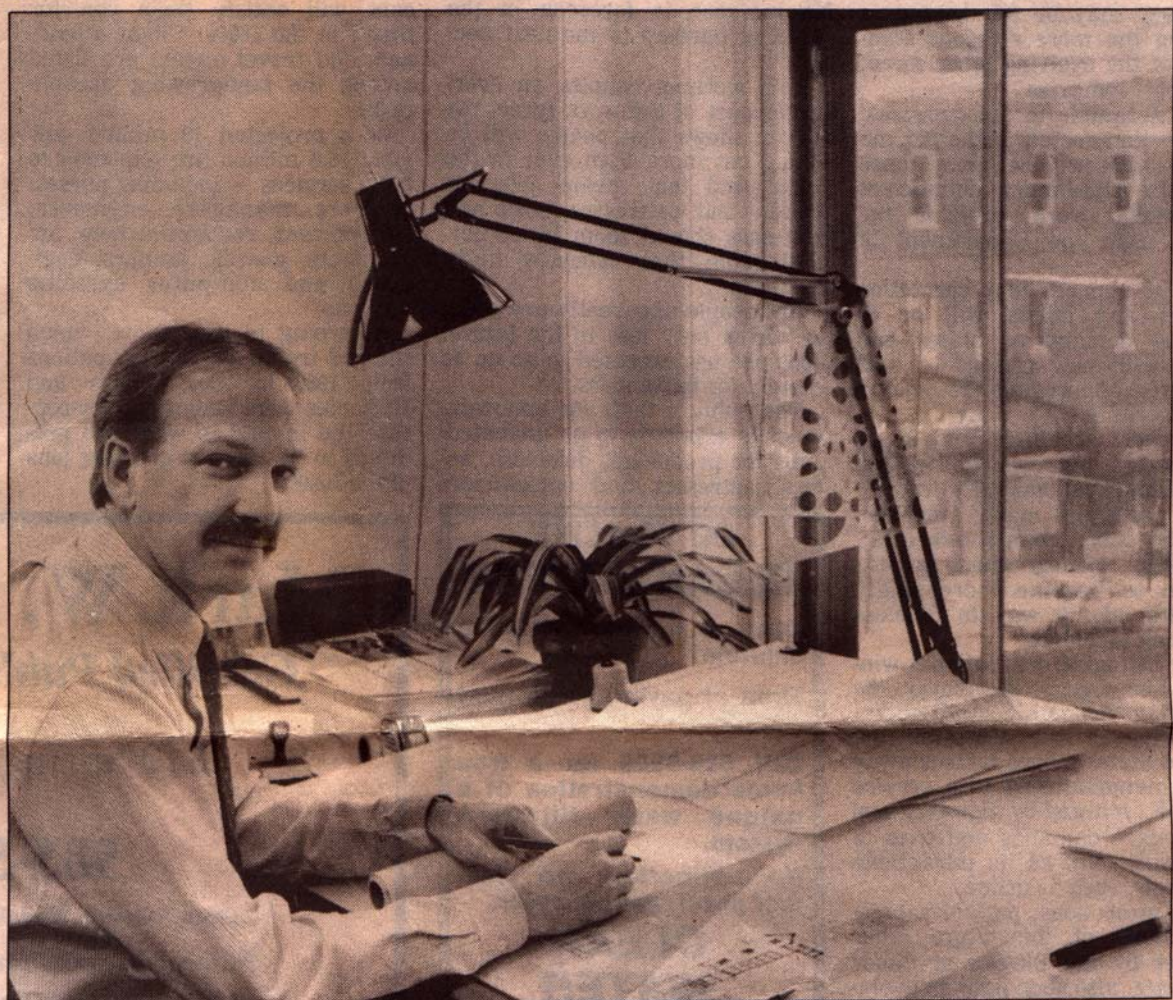
AMHERST — The drawers stick, and the cream-colored file cabinets in a side room at Kuhn Riddle Architects Inc. are dingy with soot that even a professional cleaning couldn't remove.

"They looked pretty good, compared to everything else" in the old office at 6 Main St. the day after the November fire there, said John W. Kuhn. "I guess we'll have to replace them, too."

For Kuhn, two months after the fire, things are almost back to normal. But the experience has taught him a lot about what a business has to do to survive such a major disaster.

"It's the kind of thing you think is never going to happen to you," he said.

His firm's temporary quarters on the third floor at 29 South Pleasant St. are brightly lit and cheerful, with windows filling two walls. Some metal and wooden file cabinets were brought over from the old office. Some furniture is borrowed. Books still smelling of smoke are shelved in plastic



GORDON DANIELS/Gazette Photographer

Through a window of John Kuhn's new South Pleasant Street office he can see the Main Street building where Kuhn, Riddle Architects Inc. had its office until a Nov. 4 fire heavily damaged the building.