## 1936-



atmosphere, created the basis for the building of the whole of Suas well as the commitment of the different experts to the common goal created the famous factory environment. The war brought the fast-moving beginnings of Sunila to a halt, while also sealing the Sunila factory, the joint owners bought first stage of the building work.

factory, and already by mid-June he presented a plan for the location of the factory on the island of Pyötinen, as well as a cost estimate for the whole project. As material for Kanto's planning of the drawings of Enso-Gutzeit's Kaukopää

**he economically stable condi-** In 1936 the world demand for cellulose cellulose pulp mill. It was decided that on the construction of the factory and tions at the end of the 1930s, was good, and thus the joint owners an office and tool-repair shop should the residential buildings, however, it was as well as the culturally vibrant wanted the factory operations to be- be built as soon as possible. At the same necessary to build the access connecgin as soon as possible. In April 1936 time, the company board decided to tions: roads, bridges, water and sewage Kanto, the future director of the factory, discuss matters regarding the architec- pipes, as well as electrical lines. The nila. The project's tight schedule, took on the task of planning the pulp ture of the factory with Aalto and the actual construction of the factory began planning of the building construction the following summer.

auri Kanto was aware of the poor

housing situation in the area, and

with the engineer L. Nyrop. The main part of the factory machinery was ordered already in 1936.

The site of the proposed factory and he thus suggested that the construcresidential areas was almost completely tion of housing for both the managein its natural state. Before concentrating ment and the workers should begin im-

mediately. Already in mid-July Aalto presented to the company board draft designs for the residential area and its first buildings. Construction of the first housing began at the beginning of September 1936.

At the end of November 1936 the first traditional celebration of the completion of the roof took place. The beginning of the construction work was difficult. Early snow fall came unexpectedly and at times there were problems getting the plans to the building site.

- A view towards Sunila: a collage. (Photo Roos, Alvar Aalto Archive.)
- The factory building site on the west shoreline of Pyötinen. (The Provincial Museum of Kymenlaakso (PMK).)







 Alvar Aalto's sketch of the factory and office traffic. (Alvar Aalto Archive.)

hen studying the placement of the aforementioned buildings also bethe factory, Kanto also drew up longed to this group. accurate sketches for a general plan of the residential area. Even though Aalto approved the facade drawings of the had a comparatively free hand when it factory. At the same time it was decidcame to designing the residential build- ed that the house-building programme ings, Kanto studied, for instance, the would continue and workers' housing placements of the stoves and general blocks (the Mäntylä and Honkala spatial organisations in the workers' blocks) were to be built. The total saunas, as well as the emblem that the number of homes was increased to sixty, company needed. The cooperation was and it was stipulated that they were to be fruitful in many ways; Kanto sketched supplied with hot running water. Mäntylä his ideas on paper and Aalto gave them and Honkala were the last buildings their final appearance.

The director's house 'Kantola' and the row house for engineers 'Rantala' were competed in the winter of 1936-1937, was built together with the Karhula OY the row house for foremen 'Mäkelä' company from the Kymi railway station a little bit later, in the spring of 1937. via the Karhula factories to Sunila. The The heating plant and maintenance completion of the factory roof was celbuilding ('C' building) situated between ebrated in August 1937.

In March 1937 the company board of the first building stage to be completed.

That same year a private railway line







auri Kanto and Aalto agreed al- Vähäkallio). Thus Aalto's main contribuready early on that the buildings tion entailed designing buildings indewere to be designed with as little bureaucracy as possible. Therefore, cut- as the office building, the repair shop ting down on costs, the first building building, the Glauber salt storehouse had been carried out with as few docu- and the pulp warehouse. In the process ments and drawings as possible, and sections of the factory building Aalto's there are not necessarily any complete room for manoeuvre was far smaller working drawings for some buildings because the spatial needs of the functions were already pre-determined. For (e.g. Rantala).

The processes and spatial layout of these buildings Aalto was responsible the factory were to a large degree based for the choice of materials, fenestration on the plans of the Enso-Gutzeit Kauko- and the fine-tuning of the overall masspää factory (1934-36, architect Väinö ing.

he factory's own drawing office was already at an early stage nopendent of the factory processes, such ticeably independent, designing changes and extensions. The more modest designs were often made in the drawing office and Aalto's contribution could consist of general advice on the overall massing, materials and fenestration. Examples of changes carried out by the drawing office were, for instance, the raising of the roof height of the Rantala housing block in the beginning of the 1950s and the extension to the workers' sauna. In the factory, the extension to the office was carried out by the drawing office following the original massing



## -1938-





he factory was rapidly completed in a worsening economical situation and amid growing political uncertainty, but Kanto methodically promoted the improvement of the housing conditions of the working population.

are evident in how carefully the floor plans of the workers' housing were studied or in how the stairwells of the buildings were designed.

Sunila Oy decided in May 1938 to participate in the creation of EKA (Etelä-Kymi Housing Company), founded together with Karhula Oy and Kymi Oy. The social aims of Kanto and Aalto a maintenance building were constructed north of the sports field in 1939. Lauri Kanto was also chosen as the chairman of the new housing company.

Before the Winter War (1939-40) the work force got to enjoy a normal life in the new factory and residential area. The war, however, abruptly stopped the Five residential buildings intended for routines, and the operation of the facthe staff of the companies together with tory and life in Sunila became difficult for over a decade.

▲ Post and maintenance building. (Sunila Oy, Foto Roos 1939.) A cross section of the Karhu and **Päivölä terraced and single-family** houses, 1938. (Alvar Aalto Archive.)

- ▲ The maintenance building, so-called Aalto's cabin, in 2003. (Maija Holma, Alvar Aalto Museum.)
- ▼ The master plan for the EKA area, 1938. (Alvar Aalto Archive.)



## FROM BUILDING ON SITE TO PREFABRICATED ELEMENTS





**With the changes in the facto- ry processes and the grow-**cross-section of building from the 1930s painted with lime white wash. In later **building changed. Stage by stage** 1930s was built on site with a reinforced **the operations moved out from the** concrete and brick construction. The factory halls, and the old build- major part of the buildings received redings have partly been left empty. brick façades. Only the tower-like tech-The new buildings from the 1980s nical buildings and warehouses were **construction, albeit that they have** then whitewashed. The structural solu**been adjusted to fit into the old** tions were traditional; only the forms **surroundings by giving them red** became more pared down with time, in brick facades. The old red-brick the contemporary Functionalist style. 'ocean liner' is in the process of disappearing between the boiling and bleaching department towers and the soda department.

A sketch for the Sunila company logo. A letter from Lauri Kanto to Alvar Aalto, 1937. (Alvar Aalto Archive.)

The buildings of the residential area were placed spaciously in the terrain, and the main facades of the buildings were directed towards the southwest or west to maximise daylight. The buildings

with the changes in the facto- The Sunila pulp mill gives an excellent were given a bagged render finish and colour of the facade brick or from minor new details.

ing need for space, the style of to the 21st century. The factory from the projects, too, Aalto continued to demarcate the different functions of a building complex through the use of different materials and colours. At the Jyväskylä University campus the buildings related to sports culture have whitewashed faand 1990s are of prefabricated left with concrete facades, which were cades and all the academic buildings are in red-brick.

> The Sunila factory extensions and its way up until the 1960s continued sysextensions of the tall pulp boiling buildwere separated from the factory build- In many buildings, however, it is posings through the façade treatment: red sible to distinguish the old part from its suggestion, Gripenberg rounded off the brick or lightweight concrete block walls extension only by the slightly differing external corners of the extension.

Many changes occurred at the beginning of the 1960s. Lauri Kanto retired and the role of architectural consultant moved from Aalto to architect Bertil Gripenberg. The end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s was a time of development in terms of both pulp production and building.

The recovery boiler renewal carried new buildings from the 1940s all the out in 1963–66 fittingly symbolized the changes: the new recovery boiler equiptematically along the same lines. The ment didn't fit into the old building, and so the height of the roof was raised by ing from the beginning and end of the some ten metres with the help of prefab-1950s were made simply by continuing ricated concrete elements: this extension the existing building mass eastwards. was the last building in Sunila with which Aalto was involved. Following Aalto's