



OCULUS

Vol. III

No. 1

THE NEW YORK CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS
115 EAST 40th STREET • OCTOBER, 1940. • ALBERT G. CLAY, EDITOR

MEETING SCHEDULE

Oct.—Tues., Oct. 29, Dinner
Nov.—Tues., Nov. 26, Dinner
Dec.—Tues., Dec. 17, Lunch
Jan.—Tues., Jan. 28, Lunch
Feb.—Tues., Feb. 25, Dinner *Annul.*
Mar.—Tues., Mar. 25, Lunch
Apr.—Tues., Apr. 29, Dinner
May—Tues., May 27, Lunch *Pre Con.*
June—Wed., June 4, Lunch *Annul.*

The preceding schedule of meetings is tentative. Your Committee on Meetings, L. Andrew Reinhard, Chairman, held the first meeting of the year and decided to follow in this schedule the pattern of meetings held last year. Practically an even distribution has been made between dinner and luncheon meetings.

Most meetings are to occur on the last Tuesday in the month. This arrangement, of course, cannot be followed during the December holiday season. The lunches will be short and will hold strictly to a prepared agenda. President Frost will endeavor to continue his custom of calling for adjournment not later than 2 p. m. Dinners will be scheduled early to allow for more protracted discussions, entertainment of guests, social relaxation and early adjournment.

As was announced last year, the Committee requests our more firmly established members to grant the young Associates in their offices a little more time than the customary hour for lunch on Chapter lunch-meeting days. With this incentive the Associates should be urged to attend the meetings.

THE CANDIDATES

Your attention is called to two important meetings of the New York Building Congress. The subject is "The Presidential Candidates and the Construction Industry of America." Both Democratic and Republican Parties are to be represented.

The Honorable James W. Wadsworth will speak for Mr. Willkie at the Congress luncheon to be held on October 16, at the Hotel Commodore.

The Honorable Robert F. Wagner is to speak for the President a week later on October 23 at the Hotel Astor.

OCTOBER MEETING

Time: 7:00 p. m., Tuesday, Oct. 29.
Place: Architectural League.
Subject: Walter D. Binger, guest speaker.

Having gotten off to a good start with the September meeting, an account of which appears in this issue, the Chapter is urged to keep up the good work and to come out in force for this first dinner meeting.

The Brooklyn Chapter of the A.I.A. will be our guests. President Robert F. Schirmer expects a good representation from Brooklyn. We will entertain also that evening the new Regional Director of the A.I.A. for the New York District, Clement R. Newkirk, who lives and practices in Utica, N. Y. This is Mr. Newkirk's first visit to a Chapter function.

The meeting will be addressed by the Honorable Walter D. Binger, President of Borough Works and formerly Commissioner of Sanitation. Mr. Binger, by reason of his long experience as Consultant Engineer and familiarity with public work, is most competent to bring to the architects a message from the engineers.

DOCUMENTS

The Chapter office reports a marked increase in the sale of A.I.A. documents.

Your attention is called to the fact that a complete supply of A.I.A. contract forms is kept on hand. Because these are bought in quantity at a discount and sold to you at the same price you would have to pay elsewhere, these transactions constitute an added source of income to the Chapter.

By ordering your contracts, etc., from the Chapter office, you are helping us pay the well-known overhead.

CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP CANDIDATES

The names of the following men have been presented:

For Institute Membership

1. Ernst Payer

Sponsors { Henry H. Saylor
 { Walter Gropius

For Chapter Associate Membership

2. John Newman Brownrigg, Jr.

Sponsors { Leonard Schultze
 { Van F. Pruitt

STATE CONVENTION

Twenty-four Chapter members attended the third annual convention of the New York State Association of Architects held at Rochester, September 26-28. The total number of members attending ran to over 200, a considerable portion of whom came from the metropolitan area.

The principal bone of contention occupying the convention was that highly debated topic: Unification of the Architectural Profession. This was featured at a special business meeting presided over by Chapter Member Matthew W. Del Gaudio, Treasurer of the State Association, and addressed by President Frost who took as a pattern for the state and nation our highly successful Joint Committee.

It is proposed to accomplish unification through the affiliation of the various state associations with the A.I.A. rather than by setting up another complete national organization. Twenty of the twenty-four existing state associations are already affiliated with the Institute.

The New York Association comprising 16 architectural societies (six are chapters of the A.I.A.) and including one-third of all registered architects in this state, is one of the four non-conforming groups. A resolution for our Association to affiliate itself reached the floor and was seconded but not passed. It was tabled and the matter was referred to the December meeting of the Board with power.

Albert Kahn of Detroit addressed the convention on "Industrial Architecture, An Opportunity and Challenge." Speaking to the practitioner who endeavors to make a start in industrial design, Mr. Kahn urged formation of a group capable of supplying complete engineering service. "Don't forget the estimator," said Mr. Kahn, "for the client wants to know his cost at once."

He continued by suggesting an intelligent consideration of all new materials and contractors' suggestions as a sign of the progressive architect.

"And remember," said Mr. Kahn, "that while it is the duty of the industrial architect always to indulge in

economies, he must never forget to tell his client about these economies."

The scheme of the convention program was to divide the morning sessions into sectional meetings. These groups meeting for round table discussion were under the guidance of chairmen who had each arranged the details of his section. The complete list of the papers read at these various meetings (the Chapter was well represented) and the record of discussions which ensued have been reported in the proceedings of the convention, a copy of which is on file at the Chapter office.

A formal dinner at convention headquarters, the Hotel Seneca, brought to a close the second day's proceedings. This collation was complete with radio commentator, floor show and dancing. Other diversissements which a thoughtful committee had furnished were bridge teas and cocktails for ladies, not to mention a door prize at each meal. This prize was invariably won by a "material" man—a just reward because these various delights had been financed by exhibitors whose booths lined the hallways adjacent to the convention.

A more serious attraction, and one which drew many favorable comments, was a representative exhibit of the work of members of the State Association. This was hung at the new building of the Rochester Public Library.

Resolutions sponsored by the Chapter which were passed at the convention include one calling for the approval of the pamphlet entitled "How to Select an Architect" which was prepared by our own Chapter Committee on Schools for distribution among the Boards of Education throughout the State. This resolution provides that the printed pamphlet be stamped with the seal of the Association and its constituent organizations.

Other resolutions were the two passed at the last Chapter meeting looking toward a publication for the State Association, and toward improvement in the attitude of the State Department of Public Works as to private architects, as well as an additional resolution emphasizing the architects' interest in the problems of low cost housing and his competence to solve these problems.

To make sure that those who had journeyed to the convention were not disappointed, the architects attending from Buffalo invited delegates to ride back to Buffalo with them at the conclusion of the exercises on Saturday morning, view Niagara Falls and return to New York on the night train.

Ithaca is the city chosen for the convention of 1941.

SEPTEMBER MEETING

President Frost called the first Chapter meeting of the 1940-41 season to order following a luncheon on September 5. Eighty members were present to hear Edmund R. Purves, Regional Director of the A.I.A. for the Middle Atlantic States, speak on the "Architect and National Defense."

"So far 7,800 architects have returned questionnaires," stated Mr. Purves, speaking of the form which the Institute mailed during the summer to architects all over the country.

These were all classified and then handed over to the Quartermaster General who is breaking down the list into states and putting on his own markings. A duplicate set of replies was also submitted to the Navy Department. This department is following a similar procedure.

"All of this," said Mr. Purves, "definitely puts the profession on record with our Federal Government."

The speaker warned that the amount of work available to architects under the defense program will not be extensive, and will probably just take up the slack in WPA. There will undoubtedly be more housing opportunities than with the Army or Navy, the housing program having recently been developed quite rapidly.

All work will have to be done in the field, and not in the architects' own offices. Mr. Purves and his associate, Mr. Fletcher, are now working on ascertaining just how much architectural work lies within each Government Department and this has been difficult to learn since the program of each department has not yet been determined.

The main branches are the Army, the Navy and the Housing Departments. The coordinator of the Housing Department Program is Charles Palmer of Atlanta, with Miles Colean as Consultant. An Advisory Defense Committee has been set up including E. J. Russell, Past President of the A.I.A.; this Committee meets every two weeks in Washington and advises the Army and Navy on all matters concerning construction, although it has no voice in the selection of the architect or engineer.

The WPA has already done a great deal in the Defense Program, particularly with the Army and Navy, and will in all probability do more. Mr. Purves suggested that the Chapter make a survey of the possibilities of defense work in this territory, since all architectural and engineering talent is to be put to work in its own area where possible. He suggested a conference with the WPA Corps Commander regarding local WPA projects and thus put it on notice that we are

ready to be of service.

For further discussion of this topic see: *The President's Message, page 3, in the July Octagon.*

President Frost made the following announcements:

The necessary number of Chapter members have now signified their approval of the revised By-laws, and that accordingly this revised form has been sent to Washington for final ratification.

Changes in the LeBrun deed of gift have now become legal. A little more than the necessary three-fourths of the membership gave their approval of these changes.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Kenneth Reid, Chairman of our Committee on Public Relations, has the following appeal to make: "We are at work on a definite program for the year's activity and will report its proposals to the Chapter within the next month or two. Plans are being made to attack the problem of educating the public to an understanding of the value of the architect's services on a number of fronts through the public prints, radio, schools and clubs, direct contacts, public exhibits, etc.

"To make an effective campaign your Committee must have the active cooperation of every Chapter member. No one man or Committee can do all that needs to be done. Every architect must make sure that he takes advantage of every opportunity, every day of the year, to advance the general cause of the profession. It is not enough to sit back and let George do it. It is only by united action that we can make headway against the many agencies that are waging a perpetual guerrilla war against the architect.

"Your Committee will welcome suggestions from Chapter members as to means and methods of carrying on its work. It will appreciate being notified of examples of anti-architectural propaganda which frequently finds its way into magazines and newspapers. Please send clippings and other information to the Committee, care of Miss Waters."

PLANNING THE HOME

The School of Architecture and Allied Arts of New York University announces a course which should interest our members and many of our potential clients. This course, "Planning the Home," is a series of lectures on Monday afternoons held at the Bryant Park Center, Sixth Avenue and 41st Street, New York City. It has just begun and is to be continued throughout the school year.

The lectures are to be given by members of the school faculty supported by guest lecturers who are recognized authorities in special fields.