



Vol. II

# OCULUS

No. 1

THE NEW YORK CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS  
115 EAST 40th STREET • OCTOBER, 1939 • WARD W. FENNER, EDITOR

## HOUSING DISCOVERIES

The Architectural League has invited Alfred Rheinstein to give a talk at noon on October 26th to explain the possible applications to the general practice of architecture of some of the economical planning and construction principles discovered in connection with large scale low cost housing developments.

New materials, new uses for old materials and various short cuts in construction have had to be evolved by the planners of large scale housing developments to make it possible to keep the costs down to the utmost. In the various Housing Authority groups completed or now being built a good many extremely ingenious devices have been found to achieve this end and it may well be that these same principles and practices can be used advantageously in other fields than low cost housing. Mr. Rheinstein will undoubtedly have many interesting things to tell his audience.

## STATE WAR MEMORIAL

The New York State Association of Architects, of which the Chapter is a member organization, will present suggestions as to the form which the New York State War Memorial should take. The Association has therefor asked each of its constituent societies to present their ideas on this matter.

Each member of the Chapter is asked to send in to the Chapter office (in writing please, no telephones) his idea as to what sort of memorial would be appropriate.

No cost for the memorial has been set; write your own program. What would be a reasonable and fitting memorial for this State to erect?

No matter what form is eventually decided on, the choice of an architect will definitely be by the competitive method.

Please send in your suggestions not later than October 24th or bring them to the meeting yourself.

## NEXT MEETING

Time: 6:30 P. M. *Tuesday*  
October 25 *Wednesday*

Place: Architectural League.

Subject: Color in architecture.

Don't miss this one. Julian Garnsey has promised to give us an illustrated talk which promises to start the year with a rosy hue. There is a lot to learn about color that many architects don't even suspect. Mr. Garnsey will produce some surprises.

## PLEASE

Some time ago the Executive Secretary of the Chapter sent out to the entire membership blanks to be filled out so that the Chapter would have a complete file of its members, their addresses, the kind of work they do, and other pertinent facts about them. Although a fair proportion of these blanks were returned with information on them, there are still a great many missing.

Those members who have not as yet returned their forms are urgently requested to do so at the earliest possible moment. Additional blank forms may be had at the Chapter office. Any members who have already filled out this form and have any additional information are also requested to send it in.

## CONVENTION

Your reporter not having gone to Washington has asked several chapter members who did go to write a few paragraphs on the subject. They were all either too busy or too shy. Since the next "Octagon" will undoubtedly have a full report, we respectfully refer our customers to this as we rather hesitate to make public the bits of information we have gleaned at lunch which had mostly to do with the more frivolous moments and might also involve us in libel suits.

## RESTRAINING ACTION

An action to restrain has been brought in the Supreme Court of New York State in the County of New York by Eleanore Curran represented by her attorney Herman E. Cooper against the Board of Estimate of the City of New York, Comptroller McGoldrick, Budget Director Kenneth Dayton, Commissioner of Public Works Irving Huie, and Architect William Gehron. The action was brought under the amendment to the Charter effective January 1, 1938 (the Buckley Bill). At the time of going to press the case has not been heard.

## SALUTE

A new architectural publication has recently come into being. The New York State Association of Architects is entering the field of publications with a monthly news bulletin of items of interest to its members, of which you are one. For years the Association has had a difficult time disseminating the vitally important news of its own activities, and the new bulletin is designed to meet this need.

We wish it every success and our sympathies go out to its editor, whose problems we know very well.

## CANDIDATES

The names of the following men have been presented for membership:

1. Phelps Barnum  
Sponsors { Dwight James Baum  
John W. Cross
2. Andre Halasz  
Sponsors { Maurice Gauthier  
Charles E. O'Hara, Jr.
3. Irving D. Harris  
Sponsors { James Gamble Rogers  
Harrie T. Lindeberg

Pursuant to Section 6, Paragraph 3, of the Chapter By-Laws, members are requested to submit within ten days for the information and guidance of the Committee on Admissions, privileged communications relative to the eligibility of the above-mentioned candidates.



## WHAT DO THEY DO?

The Chapter has a great many committees, all doing important work for the Chapter and the Institute, but unfortunately their functions are not generally very well understood by the membership at large. With the thought that a more general understanding of the committees' functions would be helpful in knitting the Chapter more firmly together, the Executive Committee has asked each committee to outline its own conception of its duties, and these descriptions will be published during the course of the coming year in OCULUS. The first two reports follow:

### COMMITTEE ON THE

#### FIFTH AVENUE ASSOCIATION

The Fifth Avenue Association offers each year, several medals and citations for the best architectural designs and alterations in the district under its jurisdiction, roughly from 34th Street to approximately 80th Street and from Lexington Avenue to Sixth Avenue.

The Committee of Awards for these citations is composed of members of the Fifth Avenue Association and of several members of the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. Last year they met for the first time in six years. It was composed of three members of the Fifth Avenue Association and three members of the New York Chapter with Douglas Elliman acting as chairman.

The awards offered consist of gold medals, silver medals, and honorary scrolls which are given to the owners of the buildings. In each case a certificate is awarded to the architect, and another to the builder of the building.

Buildings to be judged are divided into three major groups:

A—New buildings.

B—Alterations.

C—Tax-payers (Buildings two stories and under in height).

The listing of these buildings is made by the Secretary of the Fifth Avenue Association, and given to the members of the jury. The jurors are then expected to visit the buildings listed, and to submit their choices for awards. Not having met for many years, the list this year was particularly long, but three meetings were sufficient to make the necessary decisions. Signed: LEOPOLD ARNAUD

### COMMITTEE ON SURVEYS OF UNSAFE BUILDINGS

The City building code provides that before an unsafe building can be condemned it must be surveyed by representatives of the Building Department

and of the owner, and by an architect or engineer as the third party. The fee for a survey is twenty-five dollars.

The old Chapter by-laws called for seven members for this committee. About a year ago when the Municipal Civil Service Commission became the personnel clearing bureau for all City jobs, a change became necessary, and each of the architectural and engineering societies interested met through the Joint Committee and agreed to appoint, regardless of its membership, a committee of ten members, each man to be qualified under the City regulations, to make surveys.

It is customary for each member on the New York Chapter Committee to serve not more than three years. The names of the ten members on this committee have been approved by the Civil Service Commission and presumably, no changes will be made in this committee until there is a vacancy due to the three-year term having expired.

Notices of surveys are sent direct by the Building Department to the architects and engineers appointed; and the members of the Chapter committee are asked by the Chapter to send a copy of their report of the survey to the Chapter office in order that the Chapter may have a record of the number of surveys assigned to its committee.

### POMONOK OUTING

The newly formed Recreation Committee submits the following report of the brave doings at the Pomonok Club on September 15.

"The Golf and Tennis Party sponsored by the Recreation Committee was a great success. Those unable to attend missed a grand time.

"The initial activity of this new committee was well aided and abetted by Charlie Butler. By special arrangements he made at his home club, the Pomonok Country Club at Flushing, L. I., the racket-wielders and the divot chasers of our Chapter were royally entertained and at a surprisingly low charge as befits the somewhat straitened condition of the professional pocketbook.

"There were many stirring clashes, and when the smoke of battle cleared away most of the loose money flowed into the bulging wallet of Charlie Butler, with Charlie Platt doing a fair share of the collecting too.

"It seems that Messrs. Butler and Platt, being old timers of the game, initiated a little side issue called "syndicates" and by close cooperation and team work (unintentional to be

sure) succeeded in syndicating most of the money into their own jeans.

"Among those heavily involved in the contributing end were Adolph Klueppelberg and Fred Platt. Adolph said it was well worth the lesson in high finance, and Fred Platt likes to give a party anyway, so we let him have his way.

"Wes Bessell was in better form at the dinner table than on the links. His anecdotes and bon mots at the festive board were much more numerous than his "pars" and "birdies" on the golf course. Of course the same stimulants are known to have opposite effects in the two departments.

"Clare Hosmer, due to a bad attack of post-summer languor, contented himself with watching the others work but helped 'Roll Out The Barrel' at the proper time and did not miss a round.

"All in all it was a grand time. Thanks were duly tendered to our genial host, and it was voted to have a similar outing every Spring and Fall."

### RECREATION COMMITTEE.

### MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

The following changes in membership of the Chapter have occurred during the summer:

#### NEW MEMBERS

Walter H. Kilham, Jr.  
Frederic W. Mellor  
Eugene Raskin  
Laurence Scacchetti  
Harry Seckel  
Seth Talcott  
Ides van der Gracht  
Clifford C. Wendehack  
Theodore J. Young

#### NEW ASSOCIATES

Nicol Bissell  
Logan Stanley Chappell  
John H. Christiana, Jr.  
Harvey P. Clarkson  
Raymond Kenneth Graff  
Victor Philip Hugo  
Charles Benjamin Irish  
Michael Leone  
Robert McKay  
Walter F. Noyes, Jr.  
Spencer R. Smith  
Arthur W. Wareham  
Andrew Weggenman  
Charles Frederick Wise

#### DECEASED

Alexander W. Ross (1936)  
John P. Walther (July 15, 1939)

#### MEMBERSHIPS TERMINATED

Lawrence Kocher  
D. A. Summo

#### WITHDRAWN

Robert R. Tufts