



Vol. IV, No. 2

THE OCULUS

NEW YORK CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

115 EAST 40th STREET

OCTOBER, 1941

ALBERT G. CLAY, EDITOR

OCTOBER MEETING

Time: 6:45 p.m., Tuesday, October 28.
Place: Architectural League.

John Vassos, industrial and architectural designer, will speak on the possibilities of collaboration between architects and designers in planning for the future.

Mr. Vassos is National Chairman of the American Designers Institute, an organization very much like our A.I.A. He is consultant for the R.C.A. He will be followed by Ben Nash, N. Y. Executive Chairman of the Designers Institute.

The object of the Institute is the mutual benefit and protection of its members and the promotion of the practice of the art of designing in the home furnishings industry. Their national headquarters is located in Chicago, Illinois, the New York Chapter having been organized last year. This year's Annual Convention was held at the Architectural League and was attended by one hundred delegates from the four chapters.

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George Nelson will be awarded the Scarab Gold Medal. This medal of the Scarab Fraternity, national architectural student organization, was established for the purpose of emphasizing and recognizing outstanding professional achievement of young persons in the profession of designing and landscape architecture. As evidence of past record and future promise, this reward is made annually to a person under 35 for meritorious work in his professional field.

President Stevenson will accompany the award of the medal with a citation written by B. Kenneth Johnstone of the Department of Architecture of Pennsylvania State College, who is Chairman of the Committee making the award.

RECENT ACCESSIONS

From time to time the Chapter library has received books written by its members. Two such works were received this summer, the gift of Harold R. Sleeper. They are "Architectural Specifications" (1940), and "Architectural Graphic Standards, Third Edition" (1941).

A VISIT FROM OUR MAYOR

Fiorello H. LaGuardia spoke for a good half hour at the Architectural League Thursday evening, October 2, when about 150 members of the various architectural societies in the Metropolitan Area gathered for a joint informal meeting.

The Mayor made no mention of the present campaign and, in fact, said the local problems of this City are "trivial" in comparison with the situation which this country today faces nationally. He did, however, speak of the improvements and advances made in the City during his administration.

Said the Mayor, "The prime concern of architects should be post-war reconstruction. Inasmuch as architects are primarily planners, there is no better qualified profession to deal with post-war planning than yours. It is none too soon," he continued, "to start work on this program." He expressed the belief that if the defense program in this country is pushed through without delay the war will be over in 13 months. Then the world will turn to the architectural profession for sound constructive advice.

THE PRIORITIES AND YOU

The extent to which the building industry has been affected by priorities is of primary interest to architects, the building public and the construction field. So far it has been impossible to obtain detailed information from any source. There is much confused rumor and speculation.

The Chapter feels that its members can do a major service by bringing to light the facts of their own experiences of the past few months. It is submitting to its membership the following questionnaire. Members are urged to fill it out and send it to the Chapter Office. Signatures are suggested, but not required. See page 2.

CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP

The names of the following men have been presented:

1. Charles Evans Hughes III

Sponsors—

William J. Creighton,
Maurice Gauthier

2. Herbert H. Swinburne

Sponsors—

J. Davidson Stephen
Maurice Gauthier

SEPTEMBER MEETING

The September meeting of the Chapter, attended by 75, followed lunch at the Architectural League on September 30. President Stevenson reminded those present of the declared program of the year. Its four mutually related subjects are: 1. Public relations, 2. Unification of the profession, 3. Defense efforts, 4. Housing (large and small scale). The first three of these were then reported on in order.

Eight of the eleven new members were present at the luncheon and made their initial bow (applause).

Living up to the promises of the Activities Committee, the meeting adjourned at 2:15—the deadline set for lunch meetings.

1. PUBLIC RELATIONS

William Lescaze spoke on Public Relations. As chairman of the Chapter Committee he described how the Baldwin, Munson & Mann report, which had been approved in principle by the Chapter at its last meeting, was in process of being polished off for general distribution. The major recommendation in this report was the appointment of a National Executive Director of the A.I.A., and Mr. Lescaze reported that at the last meeting of the Chapter Executive Committee the following motion had been carried:

It is the sense of this meeting that the appointment of an Executive Director in Washington is important to the furthering of a Public Relations Program for the profession.

At the further suggestion of the Executive Committee, Mr. Lescaze and his Committee had talked informally with the President of the A.I.A. regarding the possibility of such an appointment, and he had found Mr. Shreve receptive to the idea. He said, therefore, that this Committee planned to submit this idea formally to the A.I.A. board.

2. UNIFICATION PROGRESS

Lewis G. Adams, Chairman of our Special Committee on Unification of the Profession, explained to the meeting what was behind an interim report which was distributed in mimeographed form.

The report was the summary of a prodigious computation of rosters of organizations associated with architects in the Metropolitan area. Its figures are staggering and reveal how our efforts are dissipated.

Of 4780 names on this list, 3535 are registered architects. It shows that only 20 per cent of Registered Architects in the Metropolitan area belong to the A.I.A., that 23 per cent belong to other societies and that 70 per cent do *not* belong to any architectural organization.

The report also showed the overlapping memberships—that 30 people belong to both the New York Chapter and New York Society, that 105 members belonged to the New York Chapter and B.A.I.D., that 96 belonged to the New York Chapter and Architectural League, 14 to the Brooklyn Chapter and New York Society, 75 to the B.A.I.D. and Architectural League, etc.

Corrected for overlapping members, 7 of the existing organizations, if merged, would have a total membership of 1417. The largest organization at present is the New York Chapter with 431 members, followed by the New York Society with 309.

A report has just reached us that the proposal for one architectural organization in Michigan has been approved. One of the provisions is that any architect registered in Michigan, by the payment of \$5 annual dues, becomes an associate member of MIA and his branch chapter. Within two years such associate members become eligible for A.I.A. membership.

Commenting on the success in Michigan, Mr. Adams recently said: "This seems like a tremendous step forward and it is hoped that we can accomplish in New York something along the same lines."

3. CIVILIAN PROTECTION

President Stevenson reported that the Chapter Civilian Protection Committee was continuing its study of Civilian Defense problems and planning, and it had been materially aided by the information furnished by one of its members, Mr. Prince, who has just returned from England.

The Committee is now working on a proposal to raze all non-fireproof and unused buildings in the City, and suggested a Board of Technical Advisory Panels in various regions, whose duties would be to advise those within each region on their building problems with particular regard to defense.

SO. AMERICAN ARCHITECTS ARE GOOD NEIGHBORS

Harold R. Sleeper told the September meeting of his recent trip to South America. Mr. Sleeper said in part:

"Remarkable hospitality transformed my recent trip there from a mere pleasure cruise into an instructive, interesting trip. Julian Levi provided letters of introduction which were sent ahead by air mail and the Architects responded by doing their share toward the Good Neighbor Policy.

"At Buenos Aires, as we were picking our ant-like way down the gang-plank, I was surprised to be addressed by two strangers as "Senor Sleeper." They introduced themselves as Senors Repetto and Sabate, President and Past President of the Argentine A.I.A. When questioned as to how they had spotted me, they pointed to the initials on Mrs. Sleeper's handbag, 'CBS'. But it still seemed magic to us.

"The next four days were perfect examples of how much can be seen if plans are conceived and executed without a flaw.

"At Montevideo we were surprised at breakfast by Senor Acosta y Lara, Minister of Sec. Educa., and Arquitecto Barriere. It developed that the country is run by architects: the President, two Ministers, the Mayor. Perhaps that is why it is the most liberal,

progressive and democratic South American country!

"We flew from Sao Paulo to Rio after a short stay in S.P. This was a busy place with new buildings being finished every two hours.

"Rio has sun slats on newest buildings and balconies on apartments. These make a definite imprint on their buildings and govern the style of architecture. There is much more activity in the building industry in Brazil than in the Argentine.

"The East Coast architects asked me to bring you their best wishes and to tell you that you must be sure to let them know when you are arriving there.

"I wish to thank you for being so hospitable to these architects when they visited New York, for I reaped the benefit of it. If you hear of any of them coming up here, please count me in on the Committee to show them about. I'd like to show my appreciation.

"I was surprised by the enthusiasm they all had for the U.S.A. This was shared by those who had been here and those who were determined to get here. They read all of our architectural magazines, as they are cut off from Europe. I trust that our magazines will publish more of their work."

QUESTIONNAIRE ON PRIORITIES

October, 1941

1. Have contracts for private work in your office been affected seriously by priorities?
2. If so, by delays in deliveries of materials?
3. Certain materials not obtainable?
4. If so, have adequate substitutes been found?
5. Have there been labor shortages?
6. Have contracts been halted or canceled?
7. Have reserve materials been stored at job in advance of actual needs?
8. What approximate dollar volume of construction has been in your office in the past 12 months?
9. What proportion of the work was residential?
10. Has your office been obliged to expend more time and effort as a result of priorities?
11. Have you found that some subcontractors are taking advantage of the situation by trying to substitute inferior or cheaper products and are using priorities as a pretext?
12. Remarks: