



Vol. IV, No. 5

THE OCULUS

NEW YORK CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

115 EAST 40th STREET

JANUARY, 1942

ALBERT G. CLAY, EDITOR

NEXT MEETING

Time: Tuesday, Feb. 3, Dinner 7 P.M.
Place: Architectural League
Speaker: A.I.A. President Shreve

Your Committee on Activities, having learned that state registration examinations are to take place the week of Jan. 27 (the date originally set for our next Chapter meeting) has voted to postpone the meeting for one week to FEBRUARY 3.

This will allow for a larger attendance from our Associate members, many of whom will be occupied the previous week with exams.

The program announced in the last issue has also been changed to conform more fully to the changing times. Our Associate members have invited Mr. Shreve to give us a picture of the Institute today and its part in the present emergency. Mr. Shreve will outline the Associate's place in the picture.

In line with our membership drive, we are to have as guests at the meeting a large group of young men, prospective members.

P. W. R.

Melvin E. Scheidt, Acting National Director of the Public Work Reserve under the Federal Works Agency, will speak at a luncheon on Thursday, January 22, at 12:45 P.M., at the Architectural League. All Chapter members are invited to attend, but they must make reservations at once through our office. Telephone CA. 5-6034.

WAR WORK

With increasing regularity the Chapter office is asked for the names of architects to fill Government jobs of one sort or another, usually on about 24 hours' notice. It must be understood that this generally implies the filling of a salaried position rather than the awarding of a commission.

The only way in which the Chapter can carry out what should be a definite service, both to the Government and to our members, is to have on hand the name and biography of every architect who would be willing to consider a Government appointment in whatever capacity. Everyone who might conceivably be interested is urged to send in his biography to the Chapter office without delay.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ACTION PUTS UNIFICATION TO CHAPTER VOTE AT NEXT MEETING

By unanimous vote at a special meeting last Tuesday, January 13, our Executive Committee framed the following resolution for submission to the Chapter. This matter will be discussed and acted upon at the next meeting on Feb. 3. (See notice elsewhere in this issue.)

WHEREAS from past experience it is impractical for the existing architectural groups in the Metropolitan Area to provide the strength, leadership and funds to carry out a progressive program essential to the architects' future well-being,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the New York Chapter, A.I.A., invite the Brooklyn and Westchester Chapters, A.I.A., to form the nucleus of a new Metropolitan Chapter, A.I.A., with new by-laws and new officers, and if the proposal is accepted by them that the Metropolitan Chapter thus formed invite the individual members in good standing of the New York, Brooklyn, Bronx, Queens, Staten Island, Long Island and Westchester Architectural Societies, (and all other registered architects in the Metropolitan Area now unaffiliated with any of the above groups,) to join the Metropolitan Chapter, A.I.A., as associate members with the privilege of becoming corporate members A.I.A. if they so apply, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that groups be permitted to retain their identity as subdivisions of the Metropolitan Chapter for local purposes if they so elect and be reimbursed by the Metropolitan Chapter for their activities in proportion to their membership, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Metropolitan Chapter become a member of the New York State Association of Architects, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Metropolitan Chapter collaborate with other allied professional groups to their mutual advantage, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a full time executive director be employed by the Metropolitan Chapter who, under the general direction of the Executive Committee, will carry out the details of a progressive program.

The Executive Committee meeting had been called to consider a report of our Committee on Unification, whose members are Lewis Greenleaf Adams (Chairman), William Lawrence Bottomley, and Matthew W. Del Gaudio.

They have just completed a survey in the interests of unification. A questionnaire was sent to the 70% of registered architects in the metropolitan area who do not belong to any architectural organization, asking them:

- 1: Why they do not belong.
- 2: If they would consider joining a single, central organization.

Advantages of such an organization were listed in the questionnaire and the proposed yearly dues were given as \$35.00. The questionnaires have stopped coming in, and a summary of the results has led to the following conclusions:

70% of those answering strongly favored such an organization; the main difference of opinion being the amount of the dues.

5% were undecided; mostly on account of cost or the improbability of such a program being realized.

5% only were opposed to joining a single, central organization of architects.

In view of the fact that 15% already belong to Chapters or Societies in neighboring states, or for one reason or another were erroneously sent questionnaires, the figure of 70% mentioned above should be lowered to about 55%. But still the majority of the group answering replied that they would be glad to join a single organization.

If the ratio of replies received were applied to the total number of questionnaires sent out, the membership of such a proposed organization would reach 1136, with 81 possible candidates from undecided architects. For comparison, we remind you that our Chapter membership is today 449.

The Committee, after several months' intensive study, reports the following recommendations for accomplishing a merger of architectural societies. The steps already taken include a completed master list of the members of all organizations in the

metropolitan area; the dissolving by the end of the year of the Beaux Arts Society and the joining of all its members to the Beaux Arts Institute of Design; an actual plan to have the Beaux Arts Institute of Design dispose of its building and become tenants of the Architectural League. In addition to these three valuable steps a dinner meeting was held on October 27, to which were invited representatives of 12 organizations, at which unification was discussed. The result of the meeting was a resolution favoring the principle of unification.

MEMBERS IN SERVICE

The Institute has announced the following procedure to be followed in connection with dues of Institute members in military service:

As in the first World War and as in the depression, the Institute is now faced with the difficult problem of carrying on its work for the profession with drastically reduced funds.

In view of the difficulties of many corporate members who are practicing architects in civilian life, whose work has been virtually terminated by priorities arising from the defense program, it was the sentiment of the Board that it would not be fair to remit the Institute dues of members who hold commissions in the military service of the nation; and that any such remissions should apply only to those serving below the grade of commissioned officer.

WASHINGTON PLAN EXHIBIT

As announced in the OCULUS last month, the main gallery of the Architectural League contains a comprehensive exhibition of the City of Washington. The growth of the plan of Washington from the L'Enfant Plan, through the Macmillan Plan, and including the most recent studies is shown in detail. Included also is a 14 x 8 foot model of the Mall System.

Washington, as the outstanding example of city planning in this country, should appeal to the interest and enthusiasm of all the artistic professions, but above all to the architects. The A.I.A. took an active part in promoting the Macmillan Plan in 1902 and has endeavored through the years to preserve the plan, to keep alive interest in it and to guard against projects which menace it.

We can do our part in carrying on this tradition by keeping ourselves informed of current problems and stimulating interest in preserving the original conception.

FELLOWSHIPS

It has been a matter of some concern to the officers and members of this Chapter that none of the men we proposed last year for advancement to Fellowship was awarded that honor at the last Convention. Upon inquiry, we were informed by the Jury of Fellows that not sufficient supporting letters and data were on file regarding our candidates.

Our Executive Committee is therefore re-recommending last year's list with the addition of one more name. Accompanying each name is a statement or citation describing the candidate's qualifications.

Fellowship in the Institute should unquestionably be an honor and a distinction, more closely resembling an honorary degree bestowed by an educational institution, rather than a test of friendship. The Executive Committee deplores the current custom of large quantities of supporting letters from the candidates' friends. However, until such time as some means can be devised of bestowing this honor solely on the qualifications and merits of the individual, your Committee is forced to recognize that supporting letters are a definite factor in election to Fellowship.

Herewith is the list of our candidates:

Archibald Manning Brown
Cameron Clark
J. Andre Fouilhoux
Frederick G. Frost
Arthur C. Holden
George Licht
Harris H. Murdock
Edgar I. Williams

SCHOLARSHIPS

LANGLEY—The Institute announces the Langley Scholarship Awards for 1942. These are awarded annually for advanced work in architecture for study, travel or research, and come within two groups: the first to architects in private practice, or architectural draftsmen; the second to teachers in architectural schools, students about to graduate, or graduates engaged in post-graduate work.

Applications may be obtained from the Octagon, 1741 New York Avenue, Washington, D.C., and must reach the Octagon Office not later than March 1.

LEBRUN—S. Merrell Clement, Chairman of the Chapter's LeBrun Scholarship Committee, reports that since a winner of this Scholarship would be able to travel only in the United States or Mexico and due to

the present emergency would be called, in all probability, for the draft, his Committee is unanimous in recommending the omission of the award this year. The recommendation has been approved by the Executive Committee.

MEMBERSHIP

William Edgar Shepherd, Chairman of our Membership Committee, reports a net increase during 1941 of 17 persons. Changes in our rolls can be tabulated as follows:

Membership: January 1	432
GAINS: Associates	10
Corporate Members	28 38
Total	38
LOSSES: Resigned	10
Dropped	3
Died	8 21
Total	21
Net Gain during year	17
Membership December 31	449

A question which has arisen recently is the status of applicants who are neither registered nor citizens. With regard to this problem, the Committee wishes to point out these are not requirements for A.I.A. membership.

Non-registered architects are always eligible for Associate Membership, and in special cases, when the candidate is contributing outstanding services to the advancement of architecture, he may become a Corporate Member.

No hard and fast rule exists about aliens. If the alien applicant makes a favorable impression on the Committee, but is not well enough known to be accepted unanimously, his application will be held over, pending the receipt of further data and meantime he will be invited to attend meetings. Members are warned to look carefully into the background, qualifications, and professional integrity of such applicants before sponsoring them.

The following candidates have been submitted for Institute Membership:

- 1: James Jennings Bevan
Sponsors { William J. Creighton
Willis N. Mills
- 2: Donald Rowell
Sponsors { Willis N. Mills
J. Davidson Stephen
- 3: Serge Peter Petroff (Former Associate)
Sponsors { Arthur Loomis Harmon
Richmond H. Shreve