



Vol. V, No. 1

THE OCULUS

NEW YORK CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

115 EAST 40th STREET

OCTOBER, 1942

? ? ? EDITOR

WE ARE CHALLENGED!

At the last Annual Meeting of the A.I.A. in Detroit, the delegates voted to continue the work of the Washington Representative. They further voted that the dues of new members be placed at a lower rate, and also that the dues of members in the armed forces be remitted if so recommended by the Chapters.

The carrying out of these mandates will seriously affect the operating income of the Institute, which has already been drastically reduced by the abatement in sales of Institute documents due to the embargo on private construction, and the general decrease in income on investments.

Your Institute Officers are practicing the utmost economies, and will continue to do so, but they need help and support if the Washington Representative is to be continued, if reserves are to be maintained and if a strong position in 1943 is to be assured.

Over the signatures of President Shreve, Secretary Ingham and Treasurer Ashton, this and all other Chapters have been asked to appropriate to the General Funds to the Institute a sum equal to \$2 per member.

Query: Shall we of the New York Chapter merely get on the band wagon, or shall we (as we have done before) lead the way?

Here is a proposition:

In December 1940, the Chapter appropriated \$4000 from its Reserve Fund to further an active Public Relations Program. To date we have expended \$1339. While our individual drive seems for the moment to have stalled, here is the major part of our cause taken up by the national body of the Institute.

This Chapter has a paying membership of 430, or roughly 9½ per cent of the total Institute membership. We suggest that for every \$75 appropriated by other Chapters to the Institute's General Funds, this Chapter contribute \$25, up to a limit of \$1000, to be paid out of our already voted \$4000 Fund.

Shall we show 'em the way?

This is a Chapter matter. Will you please immediately give your decision to the Executive Committee through the Chapter Office?

NEXT MEETING

Time: Thursday, October 8, 7 p.m.
Place: Architectural League.
Subject: Rebuilding Britain.

Notices have already gone out to the members of the Chapter and of the Architectural League of this dinner, the first of a series of joint meetings of the two societies to be held this winter.

We are fortunate in having secured Sir Ernest Simon as our guest speaker. His talk on "Rebuilding Britain After the War" is one close to the hearts of all architects and will be delivered in an appropriate setting of "Blitzed London Architecture" to be shown on the League's walls.

The British Consul General in New York and Mrs. Haggard will be among the honored guests.

Reception at 7 p.m.; dinner at 7:30.
A reservation card is enclosed.

CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP CANDIDATES

The following have applied for A.I.A. membership:

1. Richard G. Belcher
Sponsors: C. Dale Badgeley
Wm. Lawrence Bottomley
2. James F. Connell
3. John Eberson
4. Horace Ginsbern
Sponsors: Matthew W. Del Gaudio
Wm. Lawrence Bottomley
5. Lyford Rome
Sponsors: Edgar Albright
R. Stanley Sweeley

YOUR STATE ASSOCIATION

Commissioner Irving V. A. Huie of the Department of Public Works will be the principal speaker on Friday, October 30 at 8 p.m. at the Architectural League. This will be the feature of a two-day open meeting of the New York State Association, held this year in lieu of a Convention. Every architect is invited to attend and refreshments are promised.

ARCHITECTS WANTED

Contrary to general opinion, there are branches of the Government who believe in the capacities of architects and who very much want their services. Listed below are three branches who have specifically asked for architects.

MARINE CORPS

Our Washington Representative has asked the Chapter to send names of architects who will apply for service in the Division of Aviation of the Marine Corps.

Architects between 22 and 42, of quick sound judgment and practical experience, are urgently needed now.

Those accepted will receive commissions not above 1st Lieutenant at the start. They will be sent to Reserve Officers' School, Marine Barracks, Quantico, Virginia.

This is for service any time, any where, not necessarily overseas.

Please communicate with the Chapter office and send your full "history."

O.P.M.

We quote from a letter from the Executive Chairman for Gasoline Rationing of the O.P.M.

"We are looking for mature businessmen. Men who have been used to handling other men, and who have been called upon to make quick and vital decisions frequently in their own business. We want individuals who have either been at the heads of organizations or in charge of vital departments. Frankly we are looking for the \$25,000 a year type or better.

These men, if acceptable to us, would be required to go through a training period. After they have qualified as members of the board they will be asked to devote three mornings or three afternoons a week to this work, which is conducted on a voluntary basis."

CIVILIAN DEFENSE VOLUNTEER OFFICE

The Director of Group Activities for Greater New York wants volunteers for a fuel rationing program to start about the middle of October. Further details of this program have been promised us.

ANNUAL REPORTS

As noted in the last issue of the OCULUS, the following Committee Reports of last year's administration are printed herewith:

PUBLIC RELATIONS

William Lescaze, Chairman

The Committee prepared a report based on the findings of the Public Relations Counsel's analysis and on further suggestions from members of this Chapter. Early in 1942 this report was filed with the Executive Secretary of the Chapter, and it is now awaiting distribution to other chapters and to the Institute after further discussion of its content.

In the Autumn of 1941 the Chairman reported at the New York State Association Convention in Syracuse on the work of this Committee. In April 1942 the Chairman and two members of this Committee, Messrs. Holden and Reid, were asked to join with several members of the New York Association in order to constitute a Public Relations Committee of the State Association, with the three following major purposes before them:

a—The development of a public relations program to be presented to the Annual Convention in October;

b—The integration of the New York State program with local associations and any national program which may be evolved;

c—A program within the profession acquainting the architects with their own short-comings and informing them of what changes in practices are necessary before a public relations program may be successful.

During the year your Committee, while not deciding on either the wisdom or feasibility of public forums at which architects would be the principal speakers, did furnish a speaker in answer to a request from the Brooklyn Technical High School. Mr. Rich graciously accepted to answer the call.

Upon nomination of George Howe, a former member of this Chapter, as Supervising Architect of the Public Buildings Administration, F. W. A., Washington, your Committee suggested to him that a few architects of several chapters might meet with him in order to discuss the problems of government architecture.

The Committee continued to aid the work undertaken by the Chapter's

Unification Committee. It ear-marked \$500 from its own funds for use by the Unification Committee. The value of the Unification Committee's efforts cannot be too greatly emphasized. In order to put into motion an effective public relations program, the strong and large and unified support of all architects and allied professions in one organization must first be obtained.

This Committee suggests the following activities to its successor:

1—Closer contact with public officials in city, state and federal government;

2—Examination of the responsibilities of the profession in connection with post-war planning;

3—Establishment of active cooperation with South American architects;

4—Preparation of a short and up-to-date booklet informing the general public of the services of the architect;

5—Re-vamping of the *Octagon*.

Some of the members of this Chapter have, from time to time, expressed an interest in community studies applicable to our City. The City Planning Commission is sponsoring a Public Works program. This Committee urges the Chapter to encourage by every possible means, the undertaking of such community studies, either by individuals or by groups. The publication of such studies is bound to be an excellent way to inform the public of some of the vital services which the profession is capable of rendering.

UNIFICATION

*Wm. Lawrence Bottomley,
Acting Chairman*

The following steps leading to the unification of all Architectural Societies in the Metropolitan District to form one strong organization have been taken:

1—A master list of members of all architectural organizations completed.

2—Questionnaire sent out to all Registered Architects who are not members of any Architectural Society and results reported upon in detail December 1941. Briefly the results showed that 70 per cent answering strongly favored such an organization, the main difference of opinion being the amount of dues. Only 5 per cent were opposed. A great majority re-

plied that they would be glad to join the single organization.

3—Beaux Arts Society is merged with Beaux Arts Institute.

4—National A.I.A. has approved for membership all reputable registered architects. This has been confirmed by our Chapter.

5—Meetings have been held with the Westchester and Brooklyn Chapters. They plan to call meetings of their Chapters to discuss this plan and join if action is approved.

6—A number of registered architects, now members of other organizations, would be glad to join the Chapter and this Committee recommends, if the Executive Committee and the Chapter approve, that they be invited to do so. There should be no stoppage of our efforts now to get new members.

7—In general this Committee recommends that this program be carried on vigorously now so that when conditions in the profession become normal again, we will be ready to build up rapidly this new organization and thereby strengthen our entire profession.

LAST MEETING

About 50 members attended the Chapter's last general meeting on July 14th which was given over to reports on the A.I.A. Annual Meeting in Detroit.

Mr. Holden reported on the Post War Planning sessions, Mr. Del Gaudio on Unification, Mr. Arnaud on Education, and the gaps were filled in by Mr. Woodbridge who had been Recorder of the Meeting.

Readers are referred to recent issues of the *Octagon* for detailed discussions of these subjects.

The principal Chapter business transacted was a vote approving the suggestion of Mr. Bottomley, Chairman of our Membership and Unification Committee, that invitations to join the Chapter be sent to a selected list of registered architects in this area. *Editor's note:* About 75 invitations have since been mailed to which we have so far received 16 replies, 12 of them asking for applications to join. Remember this is your Institute and its welfare is your personal responsibility. Won't you help the Membership Campaign along?