NEW YORK CHAPTER A.I.A.
115 EAST 40th STREET
NEW YORK CITY

ANNIVERSARY DINNER

Time: Thursday, February 17th, 7:30 p.m.
Cocktails 7 p.m.
Place: Architectural League.

At this dinner, William Wilson Wurster, A.I.A., Architect of San Francisco, will be our guest of honor. Mr. Wurster is known by reputation, if not personally, to many of our members. In spite of a successful practice in California, he has come East to gain further knowledge of his profession at Cambridge, where he is doing special research work, with an occasional lecture to the students at the Harvard School and at M.I.T. on how to conduct a successful practice.

For his talk to us Mr. Wurster has chosen the provocative title, "Education for Architecture".

As this dinner will be in celebration of our 75th Anniversary, some remarks appropriate to the occasion will be made by Edgar I. Williams, F.A.I.A., former President of the Chapter and now a Director of the A.I.A.

The Committee on Arrangements requests that the slip enclosed be returned at once with your check for reservations. Black tie will be in order (though not mandatory). Ladies are invited and the Committee hopes your wives will be present in full force and will be, in the words of a former Editor, winsome in their wimples.

CIVIC DESIGN

This Committee's First Report on Redevelopment Problems is now in its second printing. The extraordinary and unanticipated demand for copies, from agencies all over the United States and even Canada, has exceeded all expections and quickly exhausted the first printing. Copies of the second printing of the Report are available to members of the Chapter and the Architectural League by application to the Chapter Office.

FEES

As advertised in our November-December issue, the Chapter's January dinner meeting was devoted to a discussion of architectural fees. The relatively meagre attendance at the dinner - slightly over forty, or about 9% of our membership still remaining in and around New York - was possibly due to the fact that many of those members are now working on salary for war plants or government agencies and for the moment are not immediately concerned with fees, and most of our younger members who have not yet been called into service, are working either in war plants or in the employ of the comparatively few remaining private firms.

As long as the profession of architecture is practiced, however, thequestion of adequate fees will be with us. While the unusual conditions obtaining today may make the question for many an academic one, the Chapter Officers believe that the subject must be studied now and a practical working fee schedule established against the time when our members at war return, and normal conditions are once again resumed.

Accordingly the Chapter Committee on Fees has held a series of meetings to consider the advisability of making the present recommended schedule of the New York Chapter (generally known as the "brown sheet") more realistic in the light of present day conditions.

At the dinner, Max Foley, Chairman of the Fees Committee, opened the discussion by telling of the plans and hopes of his Committee when they began this season's work. While their hearts were still

"young and gay", they sent out a questionnaire to 75 firms in this area asking what fee methods they used and whether they would allow their books to be examined in order that the current practice in New York might be reduced to some sort of general average.

Exactly 9 replies were received, only 7 of which gave any information, the other 2 refusing point-blank!

The Committee, undiscouraged, continued its work and has now accomplished one forward step. The "brown sheet" (the Chapter's supply of which is now exhausted) is to be reprinted with the addition of a clause covering the "cost plus fee" method, but with no other changes.

A minimum percentage fee of 6% still remains the Chapter's recommendation, and Mr. Charles H. Higgins spoke earnestly in its defense on the ground that that rate has been firmly established in the minds of the public and further has been on occasion used in court testimony. Like the Constitution of the United States it should not be revoked, said Mr. Higgins, although it might be subject to amendments from time to time.

Mr. George Cooper Rudolph, speaking on behalf of the young man starting practice, said that in lieu of the large commissions which the young man cannot hope for, he must explore other possibilities if he is to support himself. The field of industrial design offers these possibilities, said Mr. Rudolph, if we will but "glamorize" our design ability. He believed that architects can substantially increase their profits by going into that field, since the fees paid are far higher than those generally paid architects.

Getting back to the specific rate of compensation, Mr. R. H. Shreve said that in his opinion the formula is not the important thing. While the established schedule is accepted by many to be a fair expression of an architect's services, it may be 100% wrong in a given case, and he cited several to prove his point. His firm uses the New York Chapter Schedule as often as it fits the occasion, although they do not force a client to adhere to that Schedule. Mr. Shreve believes that to satisfy a client is all-important, and each case is decided on its merits. When the terms of the architect's compensation are to be fixed, - frequently sometime after the work has started - the work sheets are exhibited to the client and a fair rate of compensation agreed upon, after which a contract is drawn up, on whatever basis the client prefers. Mr. Shreve did not believe that any fee Schedule should be set up as a hard and fast rule. Mr. Shreve also did admit that his profits from some of these commissions were considerably less than they had been on similar work in former times. However, he seemed satisfied that this should have been so.

The President asked for an expression of opinion regarding the Chapter's Schedule, at the same time calling the members' attention to the Schedule issued by the State Association of California Architects, in which the grading of fees may not conform in all respects to conditions in this area, but which shows an effort to meet current demands.

The meeting resolved that the Fees Committee be urged to continue its study of our Schedule with a view to making it more nearly representative of present day conditions, and a further motion made that in its study the Committee consider carefully the gradations of the California Schedule.

It was also voted that copies of the California Schedule be sent to every Chapter member for his information and comments.

A copy is accordingly enclosed and you are urged to address your comments to Mr. Max Foley, Chairman of the Fees and Contracts Committee, at the Chapter Office.

MEMBERSHIP

The following names have been submitted for Institute membership:

1. Samuel Mordecai Kurtz
   Sponsors: Philip Sawyer
   Louis Ayres
2. Ferdinand L. Liebmann
   Sponsors: Morris Sanders
   Sidney L. Strauss
3. Frederick Morris Wells
   Sponsors: Louis Ayres
   Ernest M. Anderson
4. Carl A. Vollmer
   Sponsors: Steward Wagner
   Caleb Hornbostel

The following name has been submitted for Associate Membership:

1. William T. Snaith
   Sponsors: Morris Sanders
   Caleb Hornbostel

A HINT TO MR. WEBSTER

One day last week a gentleman from New Jersey called the Chapter to ask the following question: "I'm calling could you give me some information on reciprocity for registration. What are the States have reciprocity with New Jersey?" We replied that each State has different requirements with regard to non-residents. "Oh but I wouldn't be a non-resident" said he, "if for instance should I move to some other State, I should dislocate from New Jersey".

We nevertheless recommended the NCARB non-resident chart.

THE DALZELL BILL

The effort to secure by legislation the elimination of private architects and engineers from the design of public work has again commenced in the State Legislature. The bill is known as the Dalzell Bill #123-INT-123, and requires that architects, engineers, technical inspectors and assistants employed in or by departments or independent agencies of N.Y. City, shall be under civil service, except where a person of peculiar or exceptional qualifications is required in an advisory capacity. The bill is intended to confine the design of public works projects to civil service architects and engineers. A companion bill has been introduced in the Senate, known as the Downey Bill S.I. 101.

If the Architectural profession is to maintain its traditional and legitimate right to design public buildings this Bill must be defeated promptly and effectively. It should be discussed with your local legislators without delay, and we can assure you, from personal experience, that you will receive a cordial reception and helpful cooperation once you "break the ice".

In presenting your opposition to the Bill itself and in making the acquaintance and cultivating the friendship of those in charge of legislation, you will help the profession as well as yourself. The Institute's Committee on the Architect and Governmental Relations is urging all architects to take that personal interest in legislation and to establish cordial relations with their legislative representatives which is essential to the sound operation of the American system.

Robert Hutchins, the Chairman of the Chapter Committee on the Architect and Governmental Relations, is collaborating with our Committee so that in carrying out the specific suggestion of this letter you will be assisting the work of both committees, the profession, and yourself.

As soon as you have had contact with your local legislators, both in the Senate and in the Assembly, regarding this Bill, the plan is to have you notify our Committee by letter, enclosing copies of your letters and replies received, as well as memoranda of interviews, telephone calls, etc. We hope, thereby, to build up a strong legislative contact that will keep this pernicious bill from serious consideration.

Let each of us do his share. We are tabulating these responses, both for their substance and as an indication of the degree to which the members of the Chapter are willing to undertake this important civic and professional duty.

Please therefore let us hear from you so that we may be assured that you are doing your share.

Committee on Legislation,
New York Chapter, A.I.A.
Charles C. Platt, Chairman
Lucian E. Smith, Vice Chairman
for State Legislation.

HISTORIC LANDMARK

Our attention has been called to the Old Merchant's House, situated at 29 East 4th St., a stone's throw from the Cooper Union. This house was built about 1830 and was the residence of Seabury Tredwell, a well-known New York merchant of those days.

At the death of the last surviving member of the Tredwell family, the house was acquired by the Historic Landmark Society, Inc., and has been preserved by them in its original state. The entire contents of the house are those of the Tredwell family and have not been changed nor added to. Thus the house is the only surviving example of the fine dwellings of early New York, and is unique in that its furnishings and equipment are the originals. No record of the architect's name has been found but the design has been attributed to Minard Lafever.

The existence of this landmark in our very midst has been a surprise to us and to practically every architect to whom we have spoken about it.

Therefore we pass this information on, in the hope that a visit will be both pleasant and interesting to you.