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O C U L U S

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NEW YORK CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS
115 EAST 40th STREET, NEW YORK 16, N. Y.

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COMING EVENTS

Saturday, October 16, luncheon with members of the Philadelphia Chapter, at the Town Hall Club, 12:30 P.M. Members wishing to attend should notify the Chapter office in advance.

Tuesday, October 19, dinner by invitation of Tile Manufacturers Association at Hotel Commodore. Edwin Bateman Morris will be host.

Tuesday, October 26, cocktail party at Chapter building to welcome new members.

Friday, Saturday & Sunday, October 28, 29 and 30, New York State Association Convention.

Throughout the month of October, 10:00 A.M. to 10:00 P.M., TOMORROW'S WORLD at N. Y. Museum of Science & Industry, Rockefeller Center.

TODAY'S LOOK AT TOMORROW'S WORLD

An exhibition which might well have been a dud, but for the persistence and hard work of Eleanor Pepper's committee, opened with a bang at the Museum of Science and Industry in Rockefeller Center on October 1st. At tea-time, with some two hundred architects and wives on hand, the bar in the reception room was shut down to permit the official ceremony to get under way. President Sleeper introduced Commissioner Wagner, Chairman of the City Planning Commission, who, after saying some nice things about architects, was handed a pair of blunt scissors to cut the golden ribbon that barred the way to "TOMORROW'S WORLD."

A large model of a neighborhood development, some twenty-seven feet square, provides the visual focal point of the exhibit while the transcribed voice of Robert Jacobs (lyrics by

Richard Snow) dramatizes the architects' approach to the solving of everyday working and living problems of the people. Examples of chapter members' work, in photographs, sketches and models, provide an interesting backdrop.

Tomorrow's World will be open to the public through October 29th. Each week day at five o'clock, and at two o'clock on Saturdays and Sundays, noted speakers will talk on some phase of modern architecture. A schedule of these talks follows:

- Oct. 2—Max H. Foley
BUILDING TODAY
- Oct. 3—Harold R. Sleeper
MATERIALS OF TOMORROW
- Oct. 4—A. Gordon Lorimer
STANDARDIZATION OF MATERIALS
- Oct. 5—Nathan Walker
KNOW THE LAW BEFORE YOU BUILD
- Oct. 6—Theodor Muller
SPOTLIGHT ON COLOR
- Oct. 7—John S. Burrows
EQUIPMENT MOVES AHEAD
- Oct. 8—Henry S. Churchill
BETTER LIVING THROUGH COMMUNITY PLANNING
- Oct. 9—William Lescaze
THE HOUSING DILEMMA
- Oct. 10—Morris Ketchum, Jr.
COMMUNITY SHOPPING CENTERS PAY OFF
- Oct. 11—Herbert Lippmann
CAMPS AND CAMPING FOR CITY DWELLERS
- Oct. 12—A. Carl Stelling
LANDSCAPING YOUR COMMUNITY
- Oct. 13—Arthur C. Holden
LET'S FACE ZONING
- Oct. 14—Harold R. Sleeper
BEFORE YOU BUILD
- Oct. 15—Daniel Schwartzman
IMPORTANCE OF DESIGN
- Oct. 16—Thomas H. Creighton
WHAT IS A MODERN HOUSE?
- Oct. 17—Robert W. McLaughlin
WHAT IS PREFABRICATION?

- Oct. 18—Harold R. Sleeper
SAFETY IN THE HOME
- Oct. 20—Elisabeth Coit
DECORATING YOUR HOME
- Oct. 21—Mrs. Burris-Meyer
YOUR KITCHEN, HEART OF YOUR HOME
- Oct. 22—James C. Rose
LANDSCAPING IS NOT AN "EXTRA"
- Oct. 23—Harold Burris-Meyer
THEATERS OF THE FUTURE
- Oct. 24—Morris Lapidus
THE STORES WE SHOP IN
- Oct. 25—Roland Wank
INDUSTRIAL DESIGN STEPS OUT
- Oct. 26—Walter H. Kilham, Jr.
NEW SCHOOLS FOR OLD
- Oct. 27—Miss Fahsbender
LIGHT IN YOUR LIFE
- Oct. 28—Robert W. Cutler
HOSPITALS OF TOMORROW
- Oct. 29—Ely Jacques Kahn
WHERE AMERICA WORKS

BUSINESS MEETING

Interest in the announced topics to be discussed attracted a large, representative attendance at the season's first dinner meeting on September 28th. Before discussion started on the business at hand, President Sleeper called for a moment of silence to mark the passing, on September 3, of Morris Sanders, a former vice president. He had been a valued member, of high ability and accomplishment, and is a great loss to the profession. New members, recently admitted to the Chapter, were introduced and made welcome. Alonzo Clark, Chairman of the Membership Committee, made a plea for cooperation in the campaign to bring in additional new members.

At the national Convention in Salt Lake City, a resolution was passed recommending the award of the Institute's 1949 gold medal to Frank Lloyd Wright, for outstanding work in the advancement of architecture. The

A.I.A. rules require that the gold medal award be made only upon unanimous approval of the national Board of Directors. Opinions and comments of Chapter members were sought on the resolution. Thomas Creighton moved that the New York Chapter vote endorsement of the award.

A lively discussion followed, in which Messrs. Walker, Scoville, Rudolph, Holden, Douglass, Baldwin, Del Gaudio, and others participated. Mention was made of the difficulty anticipated in obtaining favorable action by other chapters because of the feeling voiced by some of their members that architectural achievement alone is insufficient basis for this award. However, it was the sense of our discussion that inasmuch as the medal is purely a recognition of professional ability, its award need not be predicated upon the requirement that its recipient be a paragon of all virtues. As Ralph Walker put it, Mr. Wright may be considered to be the pioneer in the trend to free architecture from the bonds of precedent and established pattern.

There was only one dissenting opinion. When the motion was put, six members refrained from voting, but a show of hands brought no nays, and the proposal was carried. It was suggested that members write as individuals to friends in other chapters, advising them of our action and urging approval in their respective chapters. A motion was passed to the effect that President Sleeper appoint a chapter delegate to present our arguments in person before the national Board. The Chapter secretary is to notify William Kaelber, Regional Representative, of our approval of the award.

Matthew Del Gaudio, Chairman of the Unification Committee, spoke of recent developments in the movement to combine all local architectural bodies into a consolidated Metropolitan Chapter. This movement was started in 1938, and our resolution to attempt the merger dates from Jan. 7, 1942. The Chairman mentioned, among other advantages to be obtained, the greater prestige and power for accomplishment by presenting a united front, as well as the opportunity for men now divided in their allegiance to concentrate on a single organization. The amalgamation would also make possible the pooling of resources. The Committee members have met with the presidents of other societies and report favorable reaction. The following is an extract from a written re-

port of the Committee, accepted and approved for action:

"The work has reached a point where the Chapter must take a more active part if unification is to be achieved. The resolution of 1942 will require amendment due to the fact that some of the independent societies have now become chapters. Our officers should meet with the officers of these other chapters to work out details, and the combined officers should then invite the officials of the independent societies to cooperate. Discussions heretofore have been at the individual level. It is now time to make these discussions official. If there are any changes in viewpoint of the membership since the passage of the resolution of 1942, members should make their opinions and recommendations known to this Committee."

Albert G. Clay, Chairman of the Committee on Public Relations, spoke briefly on the Chapter's project at the N. Y. Museum of Science & Industry, under the title "Tomorrow's World." Eleanor Pepper, Chairman of the Exhibitions Committee, outlined the highlights of the exposition. The town model, focal spot of interest, has a sound track obbligator, written by Richard B. Snow and voiced by Robert A. Jacobs. There will be a running poll on public opinion as to modern versus traditional house design. Copies will be distributed gratis of a leaflet titled "You Need An Architect." Thirty outstanding speakers will give talks — one each day. Tickets and passes are available at Miss Waters' Office.

Julian Clarence Levi and Ralph Walker spoke of their attendance as Institute representatives at the International Congress held in Lausanne, Switzerland, this past summer. The proceedings were marked by variance in ideology between East and West. A constitution and by-laws were drawn up and adopted. There were 450 representatives present, from some 50 countries. Papers had been prepared as the basis for discussion on: 1. The architect's relation to town planning. This was tied up largely with rehabilitation of war blighted areas. 2. The architect and industrialization. 3. The architect's relation to government and politics.

The Congress is of some 30 years' standing and started with a number of disconnected groups, some of which have since been combined. At such time as unity is achieved and common interests established, this move-

ment can become of great value to the profession.

Due to lack of unity in the various European countries at the present time, there is no standardization of methods and materials. Cooperation and interchange of material replacements are difficult. Against this condition, there are more international competitions in other countries than we have in the U. S.

Some of the problems discussed seemed similar to our own, for example, prefabrication. It was gratifying to learn that a paper by Arthur C. Holden was considered the best submitted. Ralph Walker was elected a vice president of the present governing body. The A.I.A. is not as yet a member of the Congress. Before this step is taken, there must be due consideration and approval of the constitution and by-laws.

An interesting sidelight reported by Julian Levi is that France is encouraging American students to apply for free instruction in the Ecole des Beaux Arts.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Last year, our efforts in this field brought positive results. One improvement is the recognition given by some newspapers to architects in connection with publication of building news. This is not yet general. Also, we must be vigilant in the effort to sustain and improve further the advantage gained. The members of the Editorial Committee are limited in the number of periodicals they read. The 700 members of the Chapter can achieve a much more comprehensive coverage. Whenever you see an architectural item published without the architect's name, clip the item, note the vehicle and the date, and send it in to Miss Waters. Your committee will do the rest.

PLASTICS

The 1948 National Plastics Exposition was held at the Grand Central Palace September 27 to October 1. The ever-increasing use of plastics in architecture was aptly demonstrated by the exhibits, many manufacturers including special displays to illustrate the adaptability of their products to building design and construction. As usual, however, the greatest emphasis was placed upon the use of plastics in the manufacture of articles for the retail trade. Great credit is due the exhibitors for their excellent and interesting settings.

HOUSE COMPETITION

House & Garden Magazine has announced a regional competition for houses either completed or sufficiently advanced in construction to be ready to photograph before the closing date. The announcement reads:

"Our country's wide range of climate, topography and local building materials gives a strong regional flavor to the design of our houses. In recognition of this fact, *House & Garden* will award prizes to architects in four geographical divisions of the U. S. for houses which are the best expression of each region. The closing date is Jan. 31, 1949."

THE CATCH BASIN

The stimulating article by Arthur McK. Stires in the September issue of the *Architectural Record* presents a challenge to do something in the small house field to assure the home building public a better product. Mr. Stires points out that many millions of American families will be forced to rely indefinitely on the kind of housing offered them in the real estate pages of our Sunday newspapers unless the obligation of the architectural profession, implicit in its special skills and knowledge and in its pledge "to be of ever-increasing service to society" is more fully realized.

One method by which he proposes that architects can serve the small house public is the cooperative, or group practice, method, similar to the Small House Service Bureau formerly conducted by the New York Chapter and usually undertaken, he claims, for altruistic service reasons or to be self-liquidating rather than profit-making. A survey by the *Architectural Record* revealed that five Chapters currently operated such a service and eight more had a program under consideration.

Perhaps the most interesting example cited is that of the Architects Home Plan Institute of Minneapolis, Albert O. Larson, A.I.A., president. With the entire Chapter concurring in the belief that something should be done to give the small house owner the benefits of the best in architectural advice, a committee was appointed to study the problem and make suggestions, following which the Chapter decided to endorse and sponsor a stock plan service which would give the small house client the benefit of architectural services at a price he could afford to pay. To date, plans and specifications have been sold to

957 prospective home owners and two books of plans, published under the title "Northwest Homes," have sold about 9,000 copies.

With our city at the center of one of the greatest home building sections in the country, should we not consider seriously the revival of the Small House Service Bureau or the adoption of some other method of serving the small house public? Apparently such schemes have not failed in the past for lack of interest on the public's part but rather because the individual members could not devote sufficient time to the venture. This might be overcome, however, by either excluding supervision or the making of changes in the stock plans. If there were a sufficient number of plans to choose from, the latter should not impair the service too greatly.

PHILIP G. BARTLETT

HOW LONG IS A GARAGE?

A recent article in the *New York Times* highlighted the fact — already known to observant pedestrians—that many post-war petromobiles are longer than their pre-war cousins. Some, in truth, are so long that they cannot be contained between the end walls of pre-war garages.

This may not be too serious where the garage can be extended—indeed it may even be a GOOD THING since it is estimated that if all new cars are eventually made over 19'-3¾" long the extension of pre-war garages will provide work for some 3,000 architects over a period of twenty years. But the *Times* described the sad case of one durable goods consumer who, apparently unable to lengthen his car-house, was forced to shorten his car—and at no inconsiderable expense. To make matters worse, Don Graf no longer publishes his annual data sheet giving the length, breadth, height and displacement of current models.

Such a predicament clearly calls for decisive action on the part of the A.I.A. No surgeon would permit himself to be put in the position of removing twenty feet of intestine when thirty had become the standard. No attorney would allow himself the ignominy of arguing a case on the basis of a decision which had been superseded. The automobile manufacturers must be brought to define the ultimate lengths to which they will go—and the architectural journals must be induced to publish the annual and ultimate carstistics.

SQUINCH

HIDDEN TALENT COMPETITION

A competition to discover and encourage latent architectural talent is currently being sponsored and conducted jointly by the Museum of Modern Art and the *Architectural Record*. This competition is open only to individual architects, designers, draftsmen, engineers and students whose work has never been published in a national magazine.

A total of \$2,750 in prizes is offered for the winning design for a Memorial Community Center for a town in the Middle West. Civic pride as exemplified by the character, proportion, scale, spacial arrangement and use of materials is to be stressed in the judging.

The professional advisors for the competition, Philip C. Johnson, Consultant of the Department of Architecture of the Museum of Modern Art, and Kenneth K. Stowell, A.I.A., Editor-in-Chief of the *Architectural Record*, announce that the competition will close November 8th and that judging will commence December 3rd. Winning designs will be exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in February and will be published in the *Architectural Record*.

The jury is to be composed of five recognized architects. Each competitor may submit the names of five persons whom he would like to have selected as members of the jury. The final selection of jurors to be made by the Museum of Modern Art and *Architectural Record* will not be announced until the first day of judging.

This competition is to be highly commended for its endeavor to discover and encourage new talent. Also to be commended is the attempt to learn the desires of the competitors as to the composition of the jury, while at the same time preventing the tailoring of a solution to suit the personalities and desires of known jurors as is too frequently the case.

RE-MEMBER

President Harold R. Sleeper has issued an urgent call to increase membership. He tells us that only one-half of the architects in our territory belong to the N. Y. Chapter. Our new slogan for the membership drive will be: Every Member Bring a Member. By simple arithmetic, this will bring all the outsiders into the fold. For any detailed information required about procedure, get in touch with Alonzo Clark, Chairman of the Membership Committee.

ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION

The Chapter Education Committee is sponsoring a series of free lectures on Architectural Registration at the Chapter building. Chairman Ben John Small reports that several months ago the introductory lecture was given by Harold T. Brinkerhoff, Secretary of the N. Y. State Board of Examiners, who discussed registration prerequisites before a large, interested audience. Gannet Herwig, of the Committee, spoke on aesthetics.

Subjects to be discussed include Architectural Design, History and Theory of Architecture, Architectural Engineering, and Architectural Practice and Equipment. These subjects encompass the full scope of the N. Y. State examination for registration. A final lecture, on "How to Prepare for the State Examination," will serve as a summary. The series is not intended to supplant the work of preparatory schools, since discussion by each expert will be limited to a general resume of a particular examination subject.

Further details with respect to speakers and dates will be announced soon. Draftsmen and others interested are cordially invited to attend.

The City College of N. Y. has announced industry sponsored courses in Marketing and Management in Housing and Light Construction, Hardware Consultants Training, and other intensive courses related to the building industry. Details may be had from Victor E. Musso, Supervisor, City College, 430 West 50th Street.

BOOK FROM PRAGUE

A small volume by Vladimir Nemecek of Czechoslovakia, illustrating projects for various types of residential and school buildings, is being mailed from Prague to architects in this country. A letter from the author requests recipients either to return the book or to forward its cost price of \$1.50 to Mr. Tibor Moss of Pittsburgh and adds, somewhat vaguely, that any funds so collected will be used for the purchase of technical material in the United States.

It was decided to ask Mr. Moss to describe the scheme in detail, and his answer is quoted in part as follows:

"Mr. Nemecek is a former friend

of mine, who requested me to open an account for him. In his letter he stated that he will use the money received for his book to buy American literature on architecture and some special tools which he can purchase for U.S. \$ (sic) only. As to distribution of the funds, he stated that he would make all purchases by himself. . . . You might perhaps also be interested to know that he has distributed his book to Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Poland, and U. S. . . . I am mailing your letter to Mr. Nemecek, and perhaps he might give you more information about the distribution of funds received."

The projects presented in the book are not without interest as an indication of the type and scale of building contemplated in central Europe at the present time, but it is hoped that the author will send some sort of analysis of his program to enable individual architects to assess its worthiness and practicability.

BUILDING OFFICIALS CONFERENCE

Adoption of the Abridged Building Code written for use in the smaller communities of the nation was the main accomplishment of the recent meeting of the Building Officials Conference of America, Inc., according to Mr. Arthur Benline, Manhattan Superintendent of the Department of Housing & Buildings. This document is a companion to the Basic Building Code and covers in simple language light construction of masonry and wood frame up to three stories in height for all types of occupancy. It is partly a functional-type code and partly a specification-type and is intended to be a transition between the two types, later to become basically functional.

Further favorable action by other groups is anticipated by the Conference. Hundreds of small cities have been awaiting such a code; in fact, one city is said to be preparing now to authorize its use. The National Association of Home Builders of the United States, which assisted in its preparation, is expected to take action also during its Board meeting early in October.

The Basic Building Code is in process of completion. The Board of twenty-two experts which has already completed a number of the twenty

sections or articles will meet later this year to consider the balance.

We are proud to state that the A.I.A. and several Chapter members have had a part in drafting these basic codes which may have far-reaching effects on architectural practice.

CANDIDATES

According to the By-Laws of the Chapter, names of candidates for membership shall be submitted to all members before consideration by the Committee on Admissions. Information received regarding the qualifications of the following candidates will be considered confidential:

Corporate Membership:

1. Alan Burnham
Sponsors: Leopold Arnaud
Bro. Cajetan Baumann
2. Christopher Coleman Carven
Sponsors: Henry Boak
Elliott L. Chisling
3. George Harry Cooley
Sponsors: John H. Bennett
Perry Coke Smith
4. Ethan Allen Dennison, Jr.
Sponsors: Eldredge Snyder
Raymond W. Olson
5. Julius Eckmann ✓
Sponsors: M. W. Del Gaudio
John T. Briggs
6. James Suydam Jones ✓
Sponsors: Philip Ives
Edwin M. Forbes
7. Francis Dodd McHugh
Sponsors: Arthur C. Holden
Russell Colean
8. St. Elmo Tower Piza ✓
Sponsors: Edgar I. Williams
Rosario Candela
9. Alfred Aloysius Rothmann ✓
Sponsors: Clarence B. Litchfield
Ben John Small
10. Morris Zeitlin
Sponsors: Elroy Webber
Daniel Laitin
11. George Francis Denniston
Sponsors: Daniel Paul Higgins
Otto R. Eggers

Associate Membership:

12. James B. Klein
Sponsors: Richard C. Clark
Edward W. Slater

→ Douglas
→ Reuss
→ Hanger