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# OCULUS

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NEW YORK CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS  
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## CHRISTMAS GREETING

With monthly effort mental and corporeal,  
Throughout the year, this obscure, patient staff  
Has tended to its duties editorial  
On opus OCULUS, in your behalf.  
In silence we have borne our baneful burden,  
Deferring clients 'til we've met the deadline,  
Preferring print to fees or other guerdon,  
Defying apparitions of the breadline.  
To those few members who in accents gracious  
Have evidenced the fact of our existence,  
Or sent us contributions long and spacious,  
We here record our thanks for their assistance.  
But wait! This is the season of December,  
The milk of human kindness should be flowing;  
Not just those few, but *every* chapter member  
Should share in this good will we are bestowing. —  
To *all* from Northern Points down to the Isthmus,  
We specify a very  
MERRY CHRISTMAS.

M.E.F.

## REZONING NEW YORK

The plan, now currently under way, for re-zoning the Metropolitan area, should be of interest to all practicing architects of the city, since eventually it will affect their work.

Studies to provide the basis for a general revision of the present Zoning Resolution, basically unchanged since

its adoption in 1916, are being coordinated by the firm of Harrison, Ballard & Allen under contract with the City Planning Commission.

Obviously, a complete study for rezoning of all five boroughs of New York City is no simple matter, as the entire New York region must also be considered. Estimates of population expectancies, present land use maps, transportation, recreation, housing, schools and other facilities, industrial and commercial requirements — all of these factors are basic considerations for recommended changes in area and bulk zoning which will affect architectural design.

Neither the City Planning Commission nor Harrison, Ballard & Allen is working in an ivory tower. Representatives of both have studied the city from the air — by blimp. It might therefore be said either that planners have been up in the air or that they have come down to earth. In any event, both are using every available source of information including all city departments, the Consolidated Edison Company, the Regional Plan Association, etc. Various advisory committees have been established. The Architectural Advisory Committee is headed by Harold R. Sleeper as Chairman. All architects with constructive thoughts on rezoning are invited to send in suggestions either to Mr. Sleeper or to Mr. Matthew Del Gaudio, Co-chairman.

## NEXT CHAPTER MEETING

Jan. 4, Tuesday Lunch 12:30

"The So-Called Modular Library" described by Alfred M. Githens, F.A.I.A., probably assisted by Angus S. MacDonald of Snead & Co.

## THE CATCH BASIN

It is much to be regretted that no newspaper in this city carries a column devoted to architectural criticism. All the important dailies offer discussion at least once a week on all other phases of art, whereas architecture is referred to as a rule only in so far as it reflects activity in the real estate market. It must be admitted that certain projects of vast general interest, such as the development of the United Nations Headquarters site or Mr. Truman's addition of a balcony to the White House, call forth an enormous amount of comment in the form of editorials, letters, and published speeches, but the fact remains that disinterested and intelligent appraisal of current architectural progress is not readily available to the public.

The lack of new undertakings resulting from conditions during the war and from subsequent high costs of materials and labor eliminated for some years the need for, and indeed the possibility of, presenting periodic reviews of the building field. Now, one cannot walk many blocks in a city street or drive even a few miles in the country without encountering evidence of new construction. It therefore seems tremendously desirable that those members of the public who have had no opportunity for enlightenment on architectural matters be offered some means of judging the merits of the houses or public edifices which they are to see and use.

The various architectural monthlies do not fill this need, since they are not often included in the average budget. Furthermore, the articles seen in such publications are frequently highly technical and, in many cases, reflect some



specific enthusiasm of the writer rather than a dispassionate analysis of his theme. Lewis Mumford's column, *The Skyline*, appearing in *The New Yorker*, approaches most closely the type of writing I have in mind. However a weekly essay in the newspapers would be of great benefit both to the profession and to the public.

Every commuter and every housewife would then be able to form some sort of properly-based opinion on the design of new buildings, and much might be accomplished in the matter of influencing public taste.

WILLIAM B. HORNBLOWER

### A NEW VIEW OF WINDOWS

*Windows in Modern Architecture* by Geoffrey Baker and Bruno Funaro, a member of this Chapter, has recently been issued by the Architectural Book Publishing Company of New York.

The principal feature of the work is a collection of photographs and unusually readable structural sections giving details of more than sixty different fenestration treatments, all of very recent date and all found in this country. Some of the examples are familiar, but a great number of the arrangements and devices illustrated had not previously come to the attention of the present reviewer. One especially interesting design involves the window wall of a house in San Francisco, wherein the effect of full transparency is maintained even at night by indirect flood-lighting of a deep exterior overhang.

There is a short historical preface; a very thorough comparative study of the basic types of windows, accompanied by drawings of the various stock sash forms at present manufactured; and, for good measure, a group of diagrams and tables useful in determining the angle of sunlight in any latitude at any time of year.

The authors have rather refreshingly refrained from expression of aesthetic opinions, the work being intended only to present the greatest possible variety of practical schemes. A copy of the book should be added to every office library, for it is a rich source of ideas for the solution of window problems, and the close association of working details with the photographs and text results in a highly convenient consolidation of references.

### DINNER MEETING

The evening of November 30 will long be remembered as one of unusual interest and constructive thinking. The subject matter attracted a large, representative attendance. As an experimental innovation to bridge the gap between cocktails and dinner, movies were shown on the qualities and uses of gypsum, through the courtesy of the Gypsum Association.

Special guests present were the presidents of several other chapters in the metropolitan area.

Lessing Williams, Chairman of the Technical Committee, spoke briefly on changing concepts in illuminating engineering, and then introduced Dr. Darrell Boyd Harmon, principal speaker of the evening. Dr. Harmon has spent ten years in the study of children's health in the schools of Texas. During the course of his observations and experiments he discovered the definite influence of lighting upon the physical and mental development and well-being of children. His findings have been revolutionary in their effect upon many former theories involving both daylight and artificial light. Many of the principles evolved apply equally to adults as well as to school children.

Dr. Harmon's main premise is not the amount of light required for clarity of vision, but rather the functions and behavior of human beings in relation to light. He considers of more importance not what a person sees, but what he does as a result of what he sees. Accordingly, it is not the quantity but the quality, distribution and equalizing of sharp contrasts which become paramount. In order to function, every person must find his proper balance in relation to light in three dimensional surroundings. Function is related to seeing in three ways: 1. through light sense; 2. through form sense; 3. through color sense. These overlap, but are not the same.

The natural tendency is for human organisms to adjust themselves muscularly so that light is distributed over the retina. Since there are definite limits of the extent to which such muscular adjustment can take place without strain, stress beyond such limits throws out organisms.

The result of such strain over a period of time is distortion and malformation of many parts of the body and general inefficiency. To demon-

strate how these deficiencies come about, Dr. Harmon put the audience through a series of simple tests, proving how bodily movements produce strain. Photographs of children were shown on the screen in varied positions occasioned by concentration of light. The adjustment of the body to accommodate it to the best position for seeing was clearly indicated.

Dr. Harmon showed a number of school rooms lighted in the normally approved fashion, and their effects upon the children. Subsequent slides showed corrections made in the lighting by means of light deflectors and baffles, changes in color of walls and equipment, and re-arrangement of seating. Where such corrections were made the children gave evidence of more comfortable positions and less muscular strain in the effort to achieve light equilibrium.

The last presentation was a model of a section of classroom, in which improvement after improvement was demonstrated by the introduction of sliding panels, changing colors and light distribution.

We should be grateful to Dr. Harmon for instilling in those present a strong consciousness of the importance of careful study in the planning, fenestration, decoration, and mechanical lighting of spaces in which people of all ages live for any extended period.

### WILLIAM G. KAELEBER

Recent news of the sudden death of William G. Kaelber of Rochester came as a shock to his many friends in this Chapter.

Cut down in the midst of a busy active life, Mr. Kaelber's loss will be keenly felt. Designer of many important buildings in Rochester, including the Eastman School of Music, and the Museum of Arts & Sciences, he still found time to serve his profession generously. He was a member of the Board of the A.I.A. representing the New York District, Vice President of the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards, Vice President of the New York State Association of Architects and President of the New York State Board of Examiners.

Mr. Kaelber was a quiet, kindly man whose judgment was respected by all who worked with him.



### THIRD REGIONAL PLAN CONFERENCE

The importance of planning on a regional or larger area basis, rather than for strictly defined political subdivision, was emphasized at a one day conference held on November 16 under the auspices of the Regional Plan Association.

New York State Housing Commissioner, Herman T. Stichman, speaking after the luncheon, suggested that a Joint Council be set up by New York, New Jersey and Connecticut to coordinate the problems of decentralization and continuing growth in the New York region. The huge expenditures already planned for housing, schools, hospitals, highways, and other facilities should not be spent without reference to over-all needs. Mr. Stichman also urged greater emphasis on neighborhood organization and better relation of residential and business areas for which a separate Board of Industrial and Neighborhood Planning should be created.

Separate sessions were held on Zoning, Recreation and Planning Suburban Land Development. Walter H. Blucher, of the American Society of Planning Officials, pointed out that most new or smaller communities cannot afford the same services and amenities as larger cities unless some industry is allowed to share the tax burden. Charles A. Johnson of New Providence, New Jersey, stressed the advantages of selected industry. Huston Rawls, President of National Suburban Centers, Inc., ended the session with a very entertaining and meaty discussion of the needs and problems of large retail shopping centers.

More complete notes of the conference will be available from the Regional Plan Association at 205 East 42 Street. It is recommended that more architects join this Association in order to keep informed of developments in the New York metropolitan area.

The Chapter, as an organization member of the Association, was officially represented at the Conference—a Chapter table was set up in the lobby for display and distribution of our latest publications: *East Midtown Manhattan, a Comprehensive Plan for Development*, and *You Need An Architect*.

### MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

The long list of candidates appearing in this issue is evidence that the

drive of Alonzo W. Clark's Membership Committee is showing results. The Committee reports an increase of 30 members since November 1947. The total Chapter membership is now 694.

We are making progress, but there are still many eligible persons to be approached. The Committee believes that lack of information regarding Chapter activities is an important factor in their reticence. Letters have been sent to all members furnishing ammunition in the way of data regarding such activities and details of membership. Every member is urged to use this information in approaching potential candidates.

Your approach can be fortified by a little concentrated subjective thinking. Pause to consider the benefits you have derived from your affiliation and you should be better able to sell the prospect.

Not the least important part of your sales talk should be an indication of the possible contribution by the candidate towards making the Chapter the strong, influential body it should be.

FRANCIS DAY ROGERS

### 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. William George Beck  
Sponsors: Julian Clarence Levi  
L. Andrew Reinhard
2. Nembhard Nottingham Culin  
Sponsors: Donald Dodge  
Frederick G. Frost, Jr.
3. David Lawrence Eggers  
Sponsors: Otto R. Eggers  
Theodore J. Young
4. Edward Anthony Ferraro  
Sponsors: Walter T. Williams  
William F. Lamb
5. Benjamin Macson Gruzen  
Sponsors: B. Sumner Gruzen  
Electus D. Litchfield
6. Lawrence J. Israel  
Sponsors: Harvey P. Clarkson  
Peter Copeland
7. Lawrence Lieberfeld  
Sponsors: Giorgio Cavaglieri  
Peter Copeland
8. George Frederick Poehler  
Sponsors: Livingstone H. Elder  
Michael M. Hare

9. Ira Douglas Schwam  
Sponsors: Seymour R. Joseph  
Morris Lapidus
  10. Newton Roy Smith  
Sponsors: James Kellum Smith  
Lawrence G. White
  11. John Rhineas Snodgrass  
Sponsors: Newton P. Bevin  
Samuel R. Bishop
  12. William Roderick Wheeler  
Sponsors: George F. Axt  
Alfred M. Githens
- Associate Membership:
1. Ainslie Morrin Ballantyne  
Sponsors: Jonathan F. Butler  
Nicol Bissell
  2. James Lawrence Bates, Jr.  
Sponsors: Henry Otis Chapman  
William B. Delehanty
  3. James Raymond Bennetti  
Sponsors: Joachim C. Accurso  
John H. Bennett
  4. Donald Willard Butler  
Sponsors: Herbert Epstein  
Edward J. Hills
  5. Philip Mei Chu  
Sponsors: Frank C. Shattuck  
Richard Boring Snow
  6. Hamilton Doane Darby  
Sponsors: Gordon S. Marvel  
Oscar Murray
  7. Frank Jerry Forté  
Sponsors: Wm. E. Delehanty  
Randolph Evans
  8. Edward S. Gawlicki  
Sponsors: William A. Gustafson  
William B. Mylchreest
  9. Benjamin Goodrich  
Sponsors: Joachim C. Accurso  
John H. Bennett
  10. William C. Jaeger, Jr.  
Sponsors: Edgar Albright  
Russell Colean
  11. William Peter Lichtenstein  
Sponsors: Otto Teegen  
Ralph Walker
  12. Eiji Ninomiya  
Sponsors: Harold W. Beder  
Henry Otis Chapman
  13. William R. Sunderland  
Sponsors: Edwin A. Horner  
W. Stuart Thompson
  14. Jason S. Trespel  
Sponsors: Joachim C. Accurso  
John H. Bennett
  15. Kenneth Vance Wagenbach  
Sponsors: Joachim C. Accurso  
John H. Bennett
  16. Peter Schuyler Van Bloem  
Sponsors: Perry Coke Smith  
Ralph Walker
  17. Mary Theye Worthen  
Sponsors: Edgar Albright  
Russell Colean



## HELP FOR DRAFTSMEN

Our series of eight lectures for architectural draftsmen apparently fills a real need judging by the attendance of over one hundred enthusiastic neophytes at each of the first two so far given.

The Education Committee, of which Ben John Small is Chairman, has arranged each session in two parts: a lecture by a qualified architect followed by a discussion period. Questions from the audience show a keen interest and a high level of intelligence. The first evening one of the group, having passed the design part of his State examination, volunteered an exposition of his own method of preparation for it.

At the opening session Harold Sleeper, Chapter President, welcomed the draftsmen, and Alonzo W. Clark, Chairman of the Membership Committee, spoke briefly of the classes of Chapter membership available to those interested. Sheets of information on Chapter membership qualifications were on hand and were taken by many of those present.

The Chapter offers this course to draftsmen without charge, nor does it require them to register. As a result, anyone interested may feel welcome to join the group whenever able. Lectures are given in the Architectural League Building starting at 7:30 p.m. and ending at 9:30.

Schedule for coming lectures will be: *Tues. Jan. 28:* Architectural Engineering, Part II (structural) by Fred N. Severud.

*Fri. Jan. 7:* Architectural Practice and Equipment, Part I (practice) by Frederick G. Frost, Jr.

*Tues. Jan. 11:* Architectural Practice and Equipment, Part II (mechanical and electrical) by Cecil I. Cady and Carlton P. Roberts.

*Wed. Jan. 19:* How to Prepare for an R. A. Examination, by Ben John Small.

## NATIONAL REAL ESTATE CONFERENCE

A special Committee of 25 members of the Chapter gave a lunch on November 19 at the Commodore Hotel to the leaders in the real estate profession throughout the nation who were visiting New York on the occasion of the Conference of the National Association of Real Estate Boards.

Twenty-nine guests, most of them members of the Board of the Urban Land Institute and Officers of the Association, attended the luncheon.

Harold Sleeper presided, and Arthur Holden introduced the architects with a few words on each one's accomplishments. Appropriate appreciation was expressed by Hobart C. Brady of Wichita, Kansas, President, and Herbert U. Nelson of Chicago, Executive Vice-President of the Association.

Richard J. Seltzer of Philadelphia, President of the Urban Land Institute, described the work of that organization, and Walter S. Schmidt of Cincinnati, its first President, explained the reason for its founding and the need for cooperation between Architects and Realtors to improve the methods of land use.

William Craven-Ellis, who had come from London to address the National Association meeting, was a guest at the luncheon and described the throttling effect of many of the new regulations imposed by the Socialist Government upon the construction industry in England.

The President designate of the Association, Theodore Maynard of Omaha, described his early career as an architect when he and Hugh Ferriss were fellow students in Architecture at Washington University in St. Louis.

At a special dinner tendered by the Real Estate Board during the Convention to the real estate operators of the nation, Albert G. Clay, Chairman of our Public Relations, represented the Architects of New York.

## TECHNICAL INNOVATION

The Seminar on Radiant Heating, under the auspices of the Technical Committee of the Chapter, is getting off to a good start, judging by the reservations coming in, as we go to press, for the first of the series on Dec. 10th.

The Technical Committee proposes to invite to each session of the series speakers who have specialized in such problems as control, mechanical design, technical research, etc., and to arrange a field trip in order to experience the practical results in a few typical installations.

Dates of coming sessions will be announced shortly.

## TOMORROW'S WORLD—A SUCCESS

An estimated attendance of 30,000 people saw the Exhibition of the Chapter, "Tomorrow's World", at the New York Museum of Science & Industry during October.

One feature of the exhibition — the census taken of the public's choice on modern versus traditional home design — showed that 72 percent of those voting preferred the modern. Another interesting statistic reveals that all but a few hundred of the 10,000 pamphlets "You Need An Architect", printed for distribution at the show, were taken by the visitors.

The daily talks on various aspects of architecture were quite popular and sometimes provoked stimulating discussion. At the talk on kitchen planning, one young veteran took strong exception to the current trend in modern residential design of practically making the kitchen a part of the living room. The popularity of this trend was evidenced, however, by a chorus of female voices raised in opposition to the veteran's more conservative views.

All members of the Chapter who contributed to the success of the exhibition, including the exhibitors, are to be congratulated on a fine job.

## USUS LOQUENDI

On November 19, at the Careers for Youth Forum, Dean Leopold Arnaud and Ben John Small, Chairman of the Education Committee, spoke on the subjects of architecture and building construction. The forum was sponsored jointly by the Brooklyn Daily Eagle and the N. Y. Institute of Applied Arts and Sciences.

In the last quarterly issue of the magazine "Illumination", there appeared an article by Richard Roth on the subject, "Modern Lighting Revolutionizes Planning."

## ERRATUM

The OCULUS regrets that when making up the dummy for the October issue, the line "Associate Membership" under the heading "Candidates" appeared in the wrong place.

The two candidates for Associate membership should have been George Francis Denniston and James B. Klein.