



OCULUS

NEW YORK CHAPTER, AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS, 115 EAST 40 STREET, NEW YORK 16, NEW YORK
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AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Now that the summer is ended and the Chapter's new regime is getting into full swing, it is time to consider the aims and objectives of the OCULUS and its relationship to other activities of the Chapter.

Publication of the OCULUS is a function of one of the many branches of the Chapter's public relations organization. During the last few years the profession has increasingly recognized the importance of public relations, and the Chapter's activities in getting an active public relations program under way have met with considerable success. During the coming year the program will be intensified and broadened under the leadership of the outgoing President, Harold Sleeper, the new Chairman of the Chapter's Committee on Public Relations.

Intelligent circulation of information about the profession of architecture, its objectives, its ethics, its activities, its manifold services to the public, is essential to a successful public relations program. The public knows little, almost nothing in fact, about these matters.

One of the best ways of educating the public about the profession is to have the architects themselves tell what the profession is and does. To do this an architect must be armed with factual information and not merely generalities, as generalities rarely make interesting news. Luckily there is an abundance of interesting factual information about the profession which would be of considerable interest, even to the general public, if it were known to them.

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

The activities of the Chapter yield much newsworthy material. But how many architects know enough about what the Chapter accomplishes, to be vocal — or even appreciative?

With this situation in mind the OCULUS this year will place its major emphasis on telling the membership about the Chapter's activities in such form that the information may be used for reference, and as a source of material which can be presented either to laymen or to architects who are, or should be, interested in joining the Chapter.

ORGANIZATION CHART

As a start toward informing the members about their own Chapter, there is attached hereto a reproduction of the Organization Chart which shows the extraordinary range of the Chapter's activities. Every effort will be made to give recognition to the work of the various committees by having each committee report its activities regularly and fully to the membership through the OCULUS.

INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITIES

In addition to publishing reports of past and coming activities of the Chapter the OCULUS plans to publish

more information about the activities of individual members. It is therefore hoped that members will report to the Chapter Office material of interest such as information about their writings, speeches, civic activities, etc. It is also hoped that they will report incidents which illustrate the value of A. I. A. membership and standards to the architects and to the public, — and there are many such incidents, with which we are all familiar.

In addition to such items of professional interest, the architect's own practice is often a source of material which would be of widespread interest to laymen. But how many architects know how to select this material or how it should be presented to the public?

RELEASES

As a positive step in helping the Chapter members to help themselves in this matter of better public relations, this issue of the OCULUS contains a guide prepared by the Chapter's Public Relations Counsel pointing out the stages of a job at which the public may be informed about the architect's existence — and services. It also analyzes the way in which this information should be submitted to facilitate its acceptance and publication in proper professional form by the newspapers, rather than in garbled or incomplete notices of which complaint is so often made.

By publishing material such as the Organization Chart and the Public Relations Guide, it is hoped that the Chapter's full membership will get to know how their fellow architects work collectively and individually for the benefit of the profession, so that all members will appreciate more fully what the A. I. A. does for them, and so that each will join in carrying on his part of the Chapter's all important activities.

FORMAT

To facilitate the use and filing of the material published in the OCULUS every effort will be made to keep separate subjects on separate sheets of paper. To do this will require more paper and extra cost but this will be offset, at least partially, by mimeographing the various reports and attaching them as supplements to the printed section which will be kept as short as possible and primarily editorial in content.

COOPERATION — A PLEA!

The success of the OCULUS in performing an effective public relations job by supplying the membership with information as to the activities of the Chapter and their fellow members will depend of course upon the cooperation of all concerned. Committees and individuals alike are urged to help the OCULUS in achieving this objective by contributing as much material as possible and by offering suggestions for specific ways in which the Chapter, through the OCULUS can help its members.

HOUSING MONOGRAPH

The Chapter's Committee on Housing released on September 21 a comprehensive monograph entitled "Significance of the Work of the New York City Housing Authority." This report, the result of two years intensive study of the Authority's completed projects, has already aroused wide public interest and received the highest commendation. The significance of its findings and the excellence of its presentation will do much to raise to even higher levels the standing, both civic and professional, of the Chapter.

Copies of the monograph are available to the public at \$2.50 per copy. However, each Chapter member may obtain a free copy by applying at the Chapter Office.

MEMBERSHIP SEMINARS

On July 20 and August 4 President Kilham met with groups of new members to discuss the objectives of the Chapter and other related matters of interest. The work of various committees and some of their plans for the coming year were explained. General discussion covered a wide variety of subjects from the unionization of drafting rooms to architectural criticism and aesthetics. A number of positive suggestions were made and referred to appropriate committees. Particularly notable were the expressed desires:

To develop a television program showing the architect and his client working out plans for a suburban house.

To establish better ways of serving the public in the design and supervision of small houses by such methods as the Chapter's maintaining a list of members interested in such work; and the writing of more articles by Chapter members on the subject of small house design.

To create more interest, particularly for the younger members, by group discussions of building projects of modest size rather than the large scale projects which more often come within the personal range of comparatively few members of the Chapter.

To investigate existence of legal provisions to curb the filing of building applications in excess of \$10,000 without benefit of Architect.

To stimulate architectural effort by establishing an annual award for meritorious design similar to the "Oscar" awards by the moving picture industry.

To improve curricula of drafting schools in the New York area.

To establish a Chapter Library with books properly catalogued and indexed.

To streamline standard specifications, and to improve methods of cost estimating and the keeping of active records of job types and their relation to costs.

To hold Chapter meetings at hours assuring the greatest degree of attendance, especially for the younger membership.

It is hoped that the various committees concerned will develop these suggestions further and that they will be the subjects not only of group meetings but also of letters of comment from individual members.

VOLUNTEERS FOR SPEAKERS, RADIO & TELEVISION SUB-COMMITTEE

This year we are going to fill speaking engagements at high schools in connection with the exhibit being pre-

pared by our Exhibition Committee. We expect to have a speaker go to each of the 54 high schools in the city over a period of several years.

The Chapter has also been asked to have an architectural speaker for a series of television shows, with one speaker every week. The men on this program should be interested in small houses. We hope opportunities for radio broadcasts and other speaking engagements will develop.

Those interested in serving on this Committee please call or write the Chapter Office as we need a large Committee available.

PUBLIC SPEAKING CLASSES

Our members who would like further practice in public speaking are invited to join the Effective Speaking Course jointly sponsored by the Chapter and the Architectural League for a series of 10 sessions. These classes will be conducted by Mrs. Harold Sleeper at a weekly luncheon at the League for a fee of \$10.00, which goes to the League Building Fund. Enroll by calling or writing the Chapter Office before October 7.

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

William Corbett

Sponsors: Jedd Stow Reisner & Max O. Urbahn

Owen Lau (Gowen) *Lawman*

Sponsors: Eric Gugler & William Platt

Theodore Hood

Sponsors: Edward D. Stone & Julian Whittlesey

Samuel Lehrman

Sponsors: Harry R. Dowswell & Irvin L. Scott

Kassel Samuel Slobodien

Sponsors: C. W. Beeston & Julian von der Lancken

Associate Membership

Daniel Chait

Sponsors: Arthur S. Douglass, Jr. & Edward W. Slater

Joel H. Cooper

Sponsors: Frank P. Calamita & Robbins L. Conn

Angelo P. Lucia

Sponsors: Arthur S. Douglass, Jr. & Edward W. Slater

Siegmund Spiegel

Sponsors: Elisabeth Coit & Julian Whittlesey