

NEW YORK CHAPTER

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AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

OCULUS

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THE YEAR'S WORK IN REVIEW

Adhering to the present administration's cardinal principle ("adjourn lunch meetings by 2 p.m.") the committee reports are presented to the annual meeting herewith, in written and highly abbreviated form.

The Executive Committee, which has met 20 times, (10 members; quorum: 6; average attendance: 8.0; should be 9.5) and whose minutes are in the Chapter office open to inspection by members, congratulates the various committee chairmen and the Executive Secretary on their willingness to so briefly report so much devoted activity.

Hugh Ferriss, President

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE, Lewis G. Adams, Chairman

Eight major cases discussed, one of which was forwarded to Washington by the Executive Committee. Balance of cases within Chapter jurisdiction were resolved locally. In some cases charges were withdrawn when all facts were brought out. Many inquiries from clients and architects answered by individual members of the Committee. Recommendation for next year: a review to define precisely the function of this committee which is not supposed to be a general advisory group.

FEES AND CONTRACTS, Francis Keally, Chairman

As a result of extended study, the Committee brought forward its recommendations at a Chapter luncheon meeting on May 19. After full discussion by the members, the following motion was passed: To accept the report of the Fees and Contracts Committee in principle and to authorize the Committee, having taken cognizance of the discussion meeting of May 19, 1953, to proceed with the preparation and publication of a new fee schedule and accompanying documents subject to the approval of the Executive Committee.

LEGISLATION, S. M. Kurtz, Chairman

Cooperated with Architects Council and with Chapter Code Committee concerning local, state and national legislation. Work with the Architects Council centered on various procedural changes in the Department of Housing and Buildings, approval of proposed Code changes affecting theater construction, and various other changes including classification table C26-256. The Chairman represented the Chapter at the conference of the Joint-Legislative Committee on Housing and Buildings, the MacNeil Mitchell Committee. Opposed bills adversely affecting the practice of architecture with gratifying results. Chairman is also secretary of a State Association special legislation committee.

CODES, Emil J. Szendy, Chairman

Participated in the work of local building code improvement as follows: reviewed proposed Code revisions; assisted Architects Council committees; is assisting a State Association committee on multiple dwelling regulations; investigated prohibition on aluminum windows in buildings over 150' high. The committee recommended to the Chapter approval of code changes affecting theater construction, use of fly ash or other acceptable pozzulans to replace 20% of cement in concrete, and, (with certain exceptions in regard to combustibles), centralization of building control in the Department of Housing and Buildings as proposed by the Architects Council.

CIVIL DEFENSE, Hippolyte Kamenka, Chairman

In addition to several committee meetings, have sponsored two Chapter meetings: on December 2 in conjunction with the Technical Committee, round table discussion on "Atomic Blast Protection Need Cost No More"; on March 3 jointly with Architects Council a meeting at which two films were shown. Robert W. Dowling of New York City Civil Defense was guest speaker.

AWARDS, Morris Ketchum, Jr., Chairman

In January, 1953, the Committee announced the first annual Chapter Competition for Honor Awards for Current Work. Entries restricted to school design within 50 miles of New York City. Perhaps because of too specialized a program insufficient entries were received and the competition was cancelled. Recommendation for next year: try this competition again without restrictions on building types or location, use an out-of-town jury and hold public exhibition of all entries.

FIFTH AVENUE ASSOCIATION

Cameron Clark, who recently resigned this Chairmanship owing to an absence from New York which the Chapter hopes and believes to be temporary, has so advanced the status of his committee that its advice has been sought by the Association not only on its formal awards but on aesthetic matters of wider scope. The awards were announced this year at the Association's annual luncheon by the Chapter's Vice President, Geoffrey Platt, F.A.I.A.

JURY FOR THE MEDAL OF HONOR, Hugh Ferriss, Chairman Ex-Officio

After preliminary discussions, the Jury met formally on February 13; reviewed awards of previous years; discussed a number of possible candidates for the 1953 Medal; concluded by unanimously voting to recommend Grosvenor Atterbury, F.A.I.A. This action subsequently approved by Executive Committee. Citation prepared and read at Anniversary Dinner by William Lescaze; medal received on behalf of Mr. Atterbury by William Adams Delano.

FELLOWS, Perry Coke Smith, Chairman

Committee met three times in September and October, 1952 to consider carefully recommendations for Fellowship to be presented to the Executive Committee. On October 21, Executive Committee approved the nominations, which were forwarded to Washington to the Jury on Fellows. The Chapter is proud to have these members advanced to Fellowship: Robert Allan Jacobs, Morris Ketchum, Jr., Albert Mayer, Geoffrey Platt, Otto Teegen.

LEBRUN SCHOLARSHIP, Olindo Grossi, Chairman

Committee has been studying the possibility of more latitude in the amount of the stipend awarded and of applying funds toward necessary administrative expenses. These changes require consent of 3/4 of the membership but so far only 376 proxies have been returned. No LeBrun Competition was held during the year.

BRUNNER SCHOLARSHIP, Bancel LaFarge, Chairman

Reviewed 7 applications and recommended award to Professor Paul Zucker of Cooper Union for furthering his proposed book, "The Square: Its Significance in City Planning". Especially commended the applications of Addison Erdman concerning Hospital Planning and Philip Mei Chu concerning Redevelopment of a Typical Urban Area. As regards the 1952 Scholarship holders, the Committee reports that Huson Jackson's "A Guide To New York Architecture, 1650-1950" was distributed to all attending the 1952 AIA Convention and that Addison Erdman's "Modern Hospital Planning" was well started with the help of the Scholarship Funds.

FINANCE, William Potter, Chairman

The Finance Committee met twice during the year to review the status of each of the Chapter's special funds. Mr. Kirkbride reported at each meeting that the investments were all in good condition and no changes have been made, other than the sale of stock from the Contingent Reserve Fund to cover Convention expenses last year.

ADMISSIONS, Alonzo Clark, Chairman

During the Chapter year, the Committee interviewed 26 applicants for Corporate Membership and 13 applicants for Associateship in the New York Chapter. All applicants were passed by the Committee. Two applicants for Corporate membership who could not meet with the Committee were passed in absentia. One application for Associateship from a non-resident Architect was disapproved because the applicant did not work or reside within the territory of the Chapter. Total approved -- Corporate 28, Associates 13 -- Total 41.

YOUNGER ARCHITECTS, Roger Halle, Chairman

Organized to inquire into lack of younger members in the Chapter and scant participation by younger persons in the architectural activities of New York, the Committee has made preliminary investigations and is well on the road to presenting its conclusions and recommendations. Hopes to continue its work toward this end during the coming Chapter year.

PRESERVATION OF HISTORICAL BUILDINGS, Edgar I. Williams, Chairman

Committee has concerned itself with the following projects during the year: endeavored to stop the destruction of the chapel at Sailors' Snug Harbor; used efforts to prevent the possible change of the building at No. 4 Gramercy Park; supported efforts being made to protect the former Van Cortlandt Manor House property at Croton-on-the-Hudson; gave encouragement to a public committee endeavoring to save the historic Third Ward in Rochester, N.Y.; studied the

HISTORIC BUILDINGS (continued)

problem and endeavored to prevent destruction of certain buildings in St. Luke's Chapel block on Greenwich Street. Its efforts along with those of many other groups were not successful in saving the chapel at Sailors' Snug Harbor, unfortunately. In the other cases cited there is still hope that landmarks of significance will be preserved. Recommends strongly continuing Chapter support for preservation of historic landmarks.

SMALL HOUSE, Mortimer E. Freehof, Chairman

The 28 members of the panel have answered many questions regarding small houses, such as speculative versus custom designed houses, relative costs, revisions to stock plans, many legal questions. Believe service has been valuable. Many questions answered by phone at no charge. Some resistance to established fee of \$10 per hour. Recommendations: publicize service and fee; hold periodic exhibits of members' work in this field.

HOUSING, Henry S. Churchill, Chairman

Has been working for a year on a study of population trends in relation to housing in this city under a grant from the Lavanburg Foundation. Material has been obtained on the growth of New York since 1790 related to the United States, the rate of growth 1910-1950, population density in 1950, household sizes 1930-1950. Studies have been made of existing housing. It is hoped that the grant may be extended for a second year so that the study may be intensified and extended into other aspects of the problem such as community facilities, transportation and manufacturing, making possible the publishing of a report by May 1954.

TECHNICAL, Bruno Funaro, Chairman

Has sponsored a series of luncheons and dinners in cooperation with other committees, magazines and manufacturers. The subjects of the meetings have been Blast Resistance Construction, Visit to U.N. Headquarters, Lighting, The Metal-Walled Buildings of Pittsburgh, Corrosion in Water Pipes and Packaged Ceilings.

CIVIC DESIGN, Walter H. Kilham, Jr., Chairman

Gathered a group of men in different fields to discuss civic problems and to assist in determining the area of study for the Committee. It was decided to make a comparative study of the development of relatively free land on the outskirts and the redevelopment of an interior district of the City. Part of this redevelopment program was made the subject of the competition for the last stage of the Paris Prize. The major effort of the Committee has been in support of the proposed Rezoning Law, studies of which are now being made through the Architects Council at the request of the City Planning Commission.

EDUCATION, Robert S. Hutchins, Chairman

Met in December to discuss its purposes and future activities. The Committee receives visits and telephone calls from students and persons wishing information on educational subjects. On December 15 a meeting was held jointly with Cooper Union Art School at which the speaker was Martin Pilch, graduate of the School of Architecture, Dundee, Scotland, who compared architectural training in that country and the United States.

VISITING ARCHITECTS, John C. B. Moore, Chairman

Gave assistance to ten architects from Brazil, France, Germany, Greece, Denmark, England and California who wished to visit buildings or offices in this city or to plan trips to other parts of the country. Furnished letters of introduction to other A.I.A. members when appropriate. Committee Members enjoyed their opportunity to exchange views with members of our profession from abroad.

PUBLIC RELATIONS, Daniel Schwartzman, Chairman

Negotiated a contract with Harold Burson, Public Relations Counsel, for a Chapter program in that field. A "Public Relations Manual for Committee Chairmen" prepared and distributed. Monthly progress reports submitted to the Executive Committee. Mr. Burson reports a total of 16 releases on Chapter topics to press, wire services and specialized publications.

MEETINGS, Geoffrey Platt, Chairman

Committee met early in the year to consider topics which in variety and scope would arouse most general Chapter interest. Has cooperated with other committees, particularly the Technical Committee, in a program which has resulted in 26 Chapter gatherings, from round-tables to banquets.

PUBLICATIONS, Richard B. Snow, Chairman

Monthly meetings have been devoted almost entirely to preparing material for the nine issues of the OCULUS. Have attempted to cover all Chapter meetings, however briefly. Committee also gave minor assistance in the preparation for publication of the Chapter DIRECTORY. Appreciate assistance of Chapter Staff.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER, Eldredge Snyder

The total receipts of the Chapter for the past 7 months consisting of receipts from Membership Dues, Sale of Documents and Interest on the Reserve Fund investments was \$29,009.68. Disbursements during this time were \$21,375.40 leaving a balance in the General Funds on April 30, 1953, of \$7,634.28. On this date the Contingent Reserve Fund stood at \$23,277.97; the LeBrun Scholarship Fund was \$31,339.83, Income Account \$6,462.02; the Arnold W. Brunner Scholarship Fund was \$44,768.52, Income Account \$3,108.46 and the Lavanburg Housing Fund stood at \$663.97. Receipts and disbursements are in keeping with the Budget Schedule. Audit reports as of September 30, 1952 and May 31, 1953 are on file at the Chapter office.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY, Richard A. Kimball

Steps have been taken toward improving the financing of the LeBrun Scholarship. A general revision of the By-Laws is being undertaken. Fifteen members of the Chapter have died during the year, 19 have resigned, 13 have transferred to other chapters making a loss of 47. In new members there has been a net gain of 47. In new members there has been a net gain of 64. The membership of the Chapter now stands at 907.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, Jane C. Short

The Executive Secretary wishes to report that architecture is apparently on a lot of people's minds. Document sales have reached an all-time high of \$600 per month. Telephone calls are received at the approximate rate of one every five minutes and judging from the conversations it appears that the public holds architects in very high esteem. They believe that the architect knows everything and can do anything and that out of his great love of humanity, he can and will do everything and anything for the love of same. And speaking of love, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all those members who have been so patient and cooperative in answering questions above and beyond the call of duty and in general aiding and abetting the staff.

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HUGH FERRISS, PRESIDENT

This is the one editorial of the year, and it is entirely unauthorized. But OCULUS is reluctant to close its columns for the season without a few words of warm appreciation for the brand of leadership which Hugh Ferriss has given the Chapter this year.

Hugh Ferriss is a man of imagination. We have known that for years from his drawing and design, and more recently from some fine public utterances. But how many of us would have thought that the business of Chapter organization and administration with all its mounting demands would capture that same imagination and put it to work for the benefit of the members and the renown of the A.I.A.

Certainly it is no disadvantage in a president to have an unfailingly felicitous turn of phrase and a subtle sense of humor. It is a good quality in a president to have an acute appreciation of the value of other people's time and a complete disregard of his own. It's fine to like people and to be liked.

But the quality of imagination is what really tips the scales. It sees beyond the status quo, it goes beyond tinkering. It has one message for every worker in the Chapter: "What we're doing is interesting. It's worth doing. Maybe we can do it a little better."

PRE-CONVENTION LUNCHEON

At the pre-convention luncheon on May 26 it was announced that thirty delegates and some alternates had been elected to represent the Chapter at Seattle. They will go to the Convention uninstructed. An interesting letter from Robert B. O'Connor on the subject of the Architect and his relations financial and professional with the Educational Consultant occasioned the most extended discussion of the meeting.

As a result the President appointed a committee of two members and the Secretary to draft a resolution that the A.I.A. define the relations of the Architect and the Consultant. This draft will be submitted to the members at the annual luncheon, and if approved it will be presented at the Convention in Seattle.

IN MEMORIAM

"It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles

And see the great Achilles whom we know"

A. Peter Amari

Francis Y. Joannes

James W. O'Connor

Walter D. Blair

William F. Lamb

Edmund Howe Poggi

Walter S. Church

Eugene J. Lang

Irving L. Scott

Thomas H. Ellett

Electus D. Litchfield

A. Stewart Walker

William H. Hayes

Goodhue Livingston

Henry S. Waterbury

ARCHITECTS AND ARTISTS

At the turn of the year, Emily Genauer, Art Critic for the New York Herald-Tribune, made a resolution to devote more attention to the integration of the other fine arts with architecture, and made a strong beginning in an interview with Edward D. Stone on his work with collaborating sculptors. Another manifestation of this excellent resolve appeared in the May 24 issue of "This Week", that Sunday supplement which is folded into newspapers all across the country, locally into the H.-T. It was a colorful page devoted to Percival Goodman and his collaborators, Adolph Gottlieb, Ibram Lassaw and Robert Motherwell, whose work for the Congregation Beth-El in Springfield, Massachusetts will be shown here at the Kootz Gallery through June 6.

A critic who takes so vital an interest in these aspects of the profession and who actually mentions architects by name, merits the Chapter's respect and thanks.

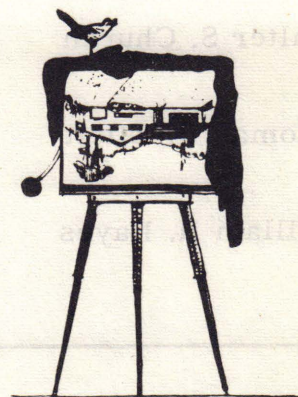
PACKAGED CEILINGS

On May 6 a dinner was given for members of the New York Chapter, A.I.A. by Owens-Corning Fiberglas at Essex House to demonstrate its packaged ceiling. A large representation of the Chapter was present to enjoy the hospitality of the Owens-Corning Corporation and the excellently presented exhibits.

The three essentials of the packaged ceiling are the panels, in this demonstration made of incombustible Fiberglas, the suspension system, represented by the Alumicoustic, Acoustibar and Securitee systems, and the lighting units, here furnished by the Daybrite and the Miller Companies. Various combinations were shown in full size mock-ups, including a two foot wide recessed fixture characterized by low surface intensity. A question-and-answer period preceded the dinner.

ARCHITECTURAL PHOTOGRAPHY

Architects will be interested in a new book, Architectural Photography, recently published by the F. W. Dodge Corporation. Written by Robert Cleveland, West coast photographer, this volume ranges from the simple charm of a colonial kitchen to the complex problems of indoor-outdoor relationships. The layout is quite satisfactory; bold type sets apart various sections. In fact, one does not have to resort to the index, for a few seconds of page flipping locates any desired subject in the work. All in all, it is very refreshing, devoid of cliches.



CONVENTION PREVIEWS

A word of appreciation to Washington and West Coast colleagues for their colorful and inviting pre-convention material. It is indicative of excellent organization and promises fine hospitality for the delegates.

CHAPTER RECESS

It has been decided this year to close the Chapter office for the four weeks beginning Monday, July 27. The office will reopen on August 24.

CANDIDATES

Information regarding the qualifications of the following candidates for membership will be considered confidential by the Admissions Committee:

Corporate Membership

Siegmund Spiegel

Sponsors: Julian H. Whittlesey and Gerhard E. Karplus

Harold Yoshihiro Yanagi

Sponsors: Lawrence Lieberfeld and Helge Westermann