

NEW YORK CHAPTER

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AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

OCULUS

Vol. XV, No. 1, October 1953

UNDER WAY

Chapter wheels are turning, committees forming, work shaping up for the year. The most tangible result to date will doubtless be the Fall Opening Buffet Meeting, scheduled to coincide with the publication of this issue.

President Ferriss believes in working his teams. The Executive Committee will meet every two weeks, and the four officers whose names embellish the masthead, every week. An administrative relationship has been established between the Executive Committee and the Chairmen of other groups which will simplify and intensify the Chapter's work. See next month's listing of the completed committees.

Every Thursday will be open house for Chapter members at the Round Table in the League Dining Room. Hugh Ferriss will lunch there and he hopes not to lunch alone. He urges Chapter members to join him as often as the spirit moves them, to speak their minds or keep their counsel, to bring an idea or take one away. OCULUS intervenes to note that Mr. Ferriss' hospitality will stop short of picking up the tab. That it will be limited in no other way is a certainty.

WILLEM DUDOK

A man whose work has been admired by a generation of American Architects arrived in New York on September 29 to begin a lecture tour. Willem Dudok of Holland was met at the ship by representatives of the Chapter and of Columbia University, lunched at the League, very affably met with the press in the Chapter Office and was conducted on a tour of New York and its surrounding motor parkways by the Committee on Visiting Architects. How many Chapter members could survive an equally vigorous welcome to the town of Hilversum?

On the evening of October 2, Mr. Dudok gave a lecture at Columbia University jointly sponsored by Columbia and the AIA, illustrated with color slides of his executed works.

The architect of many distinguished buildings, such as that perennial favorite the Town Hall at Hilversum, Mr. Dudok's basic point of view continues to be that of the town Planner. "What demands our immediate attention," he says, "is the relation which must be established between the town as a whole and its environment -- the surrounding country." His lecture tour will take him to educational institutions in country surrounding New York as far away as Texas.

RADIANT HEATING

Excellent reports have come in on the first of a series of Radiant Heating forums at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn. Under the guise of conducting an undergraduate architectural school, Chairman Olindo Grossi is running full blast an adult education center for practicing architects. Last summer the fruits of a thesis problem were gathered in a handsome brochure published as "Bulletin No. 1" by the New York State Association of School Business Officials. This document has already reached the status of a standard reference text in local drafting rooms.

Now the current series of Tuesday evening discussions, which continue through November 17, is drawing a fine response from the profession. At the opening session on October 13, Alfred L. Jaros, Jr., Engineer, Huson Jackson and William F. Pedersen, Architects, were introduced by Professor Grossi. Admission is gratis. Speakers and topics of the rest of the series are available at the Chapter Office, if you have not received them in the mail.

SEASON IN 40TH STREET

The Architectural League's forthcoming events promise great interest. Seven Forum evenings on Architecture and its allied arts, a seminar on public housing, proposed exhibits and discussion of Caribbean architecture and a lighting exhibit are already planned. The forum evening's speakers, leading practitioners in their varied fields, are to deal with the impact of science and materialism on the arts today. The seminar on Public Housing centers around creative criticism of past and future housing, with Lewis Mumford being honored. The seminar will meet both afternoon and evening. If the League's activities are as successful as its new lobby, hold back the crowd!

REGIONAL PLAN CONFERENCE

The Regional Plan Association had its eighth conference on October 6 and 7, concentrating on two topics: objectives for a master plan and effective planning measures. The conference was attended by 400 people each day, better than previous conferences. Planning consultants were given the opportunity of exhibiting their work and many excellent displays filled the Roosevelt Hotel lobby on both days. Short speeches by practicing planners were to the point and the discussions were lively and interesting. M. Jacques Greber, French professor of Urbanism whose recommendations for re-planning New York include pin-point use of the Atomic Bomb, was not listed among the speakers.

GOLD MEDAL PLANS

The Architectural League plans to have its annual Gold Medal Exhibition with the preliminary submissions of photographs from October 15 to December 31; the Gold Medal Comprehensive Exhibition from February 23 to March 27. Meritorious works in Architecture, Mural Decoration, Sculpture, Design and Craftsmanship in Native Industrial Art, Landscape Architecture and Engineering will receive gold or silver medals. Engineers are again included as possible prize recipients. The exhibition is not limited to League Members. Details of procedure for submitting work will shortly be available.

THE NEW BEAUX-ARTS PROGRAM

The Beaux-Arts Institute of Design is revising its program this year so as more nearly to fill the needs of the architectural schools of the country. Established in 1894, the Institute has always had as one of its main objectives the creation of a tie between the student and the practicing architect. Last year a survey was made of architectural schools throughout the country to determine how Beaux-Arts problems could be made to fit more satisfactorily into their curricula, thus spreading the program among more schools and achieving a broader base for service.

Under the new program, the Institute will issue at the beginning of each semester, three problems for each class in design. While an allotment of time for each problem will be suggested, there will be no definite date of rendu. The problem will be indicated in general terms leaving a good deal of initiative to the student in determining the elements that go into the planning of the building, its construction and design and also the method and character of their presentation.

At the end of each term the drawings will be collected and sent to the Institute for judgment. Only two of these will be held each year, in January and in June, each in a different city. It is contemplated that traveling exhibitions of prize problems will be sent to various schools on request and that the Bulletin will continue to be published. By limiting the number of programs, it will doubtless be possible to have each one written by one of the country's most distinguished architects.

Otto Teegen has contributed a fine account of this forward-looking program to the October Journal of the AIA, "The B.A.I.D., Its Past and Future".

PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Public Relations Committee is one of the first to roll. As its Chairman Harmon Goldstone took an active part in welcoming Mr. Dudok and furnishing the press with details of his visit. Among the objectives already established as a part of this year's program are an active approach of getting Architects' names in the press in connection with published buildings, a reference panel to assist the Chapter Office in answering the questions of the public, and another attack on the Members' Experience File.

LEWIS MUMFORD'S NEW YORKER ARTICLES.

The New Yorker is currently running a series of articles by Lewis Mumford on his observations of present day architecture in England. Traditionally a difficult man to please, it appears that Mr. Mumford has this time found something to catch his eye. His feeling is that the new school building program is architecturally the best that the British have done since the great days of the early nineteenth century. There are some good works for the new public housing as well. Mr. Mumford points out that when applied to a utilitarian subject, British architectural genius is at its height and that it is only when monumentality is attempted that trouble seems to creep in. This is a maxim that might be applied to other nations.

PRODUCERS COUNCIL HOSTS AT LUNCHEON

On October 13 Chapter members elevated to Fellowship at the June Convention were guests of honor at a luncheon held by the Producers Council, Robert S. Wylie, President. The guests were presented with inscribed desk pen sets, and were introduced by Hugh Ferriss. E. James Gambaro of the Brooklyn Chapter joined his New York colleagues for this occasion. Congratulations, Fellows.

SOCIAL SECURITY

President Eisenhower has recently called upon Congress to extend the provisions of the social security program to include, among others, self-employed architects who are at present exempted. The Institute is anxious to know whether the profession favors inclusion or exclusion in this program. Please advise the Secretary of this Chapter by mail at your first opportunity of your feelings in this matter.

CIVIL SERVICE

If you are interested in serving as a Surveyor of Unsafe Buildings for 1954, please advise the Chapter Office by mail that you wish to serve, that you've had 10 years' experience in building construction; that you have lived in New York City for the last three years and your correct address and telephone number.

MOVE OVER, OCULUS

Congratulations to the Architects Council of New York City for the first number of its attractive new publication, **THE NEW YORK ARCHITECT**, Mortimer E. Freehof, Editor. The Council is made up of the seven architectural organizations of the City, its purpose being to represent the profession in a unified manner within the City, and this publication is intended to present to the members news of the Council's activities, as well as legal and technical information. Contributions of civic news items will be welcomed.

CANDIDATES

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

Corporate Membership

Reino Edvard Aarnio
Frank Dan George
William W. Landsberg
Fritz Nathan
Carl Bolivar Stoye
Richard Banks Thomas
Henry W. Vikung

Sponsors: Lorenzo Voight and Oscar Wiggins
Sponsors: Olindo Grossi and Albert Melniker
Sponsors: Marcel Breuer and Walter Kilham
Sponsors: Vito Battista and Simon Zelnik
Sponsors: Stanley Sharp and Francis Gina
Sponsors: James Gambaro and Charles Beeston
Sponsors: Alfred Fellheimer and Roland Wank