

NEW YORK CHAPTER

JANE C. SHORT *Executive Secretary*
115 EAST 40TH STREET
NEW YORK 16 NEW YORK

RICHARD B. SNOW *Editor*



AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

O C U L U S

VOL. XV, No. 6 March, 1954

PROGRAM FOR THE N.Y. CHAPTER'S 85th ANNIVERSARY PARTY AT THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART TUESDAY EVENING, MARCH 30th

THE RECEPTION

AIA members and their guests will arrive at the Museum at around 7:30, having had light sustenance at home or at one of the several small parties now being organized. The reception, with music, in the beautiful new Medieval Galleries will introduce hosts, members and honored guests, and serve as a rallying point to begin the evening's activities.

THE MEETING

At 8:15 we will move to the new Auditorium, of which our visit will constitute the "sneak preview". Ceremonies there are expected to get underway promptly at 8:30 p.m. A 15-minute address by Robert Moses is scheduled, and you will meet and hear our hosts, Mr. Roland Redmond and Mr. Francis Taylor, and our special guests, the recipient of the AIA Gold Medal, the 1954 AIA Building Citation, and the 1954 AIA Journalism award winners.

THE CHAMPAGNE SUPPER

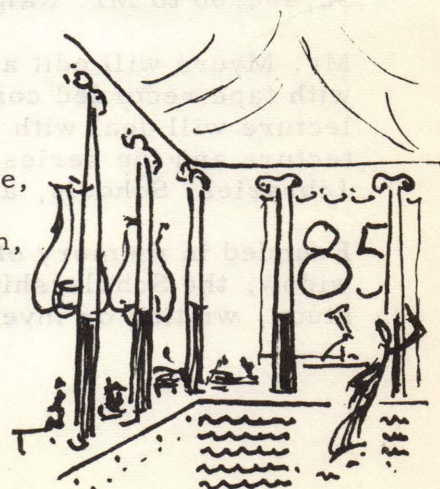
Upon the completion of these ceremonies, at 9:30, the group will move to the Dining Room, where, around the Carl Milles pool we will enjoy a Buffet Supper of hors-d'oeuvres, Chicken a la King, Tossed Green Salad, Ice Cream, Coffee -- and Champagne. Additional drinks may be ordered at the bar. Congenial groups will assemble informally, and service will be largely serve-yourself.

We feel sure you will all enjoy yourselves.
Happy 85th!!

TICKETS

Members of affiliated societies are most welcome to subscribe, and you are free to take tickets for guests. Tickets should be purchased in advance from the Chapter office. Write for them, using blanks previously mailed to you, or phone: MU 9-7969.
\$7.50 per person.

Black tie not obligatory, but preferred.



A FORECAST FROM OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The outlook for building activity throughout the nation is generally hopeful according to reports made by the directors of The American Institute of Architects which held its spring meeting at the Octagon in Washington early this month.

While overall volume is not expected to reach the high levels of previous record years, there is every indication of a continuing demand for new buildings--especially in the educational and institutional, commercial and industrial fields.

Three of the twelve regions--Great Lakes, North Central and Sierra Nevada-- report an overall increase in current activity as compared with last October; three others -- Northwest, Texas and New England -- a decrease; five -- New York, Gulf States, South Atlantic, Central States and Western Mountain -- no change.

The reports indicate that present conditions are better than had been anticipated last October. For instance, at that time it was noted that the backlog of new work in the North Central States was fast disappearing. The current survey reveals that a large volume of new work has developed there. The amount of new work coming in to architectural offices throughout the country, while spotty, is still very substantial.

Schools lead all other building types in every region, with commercial work strong in almost all parts of the country. Nine regional directors mentioned industrial building as important, while in five areas, residential work is continuing at a high level. The need for churches, hospitals and other institutional buildings continues in most areas. The prospects for passage of the Administration's housing program including urban renewal, have stimulated interest in large scale redevelopment programs.

Building costs are leveling off in the Northwest, Central States and New England, with many more bids being entered on every project. Higher wages in the building trades are reported in the Sierra Nevada region and Chicago, which will tend to keep costs high. While some uncertainty exists, the general consensus of the AIA Board of Directors is that large volumes of work still lie ahead.

ARNOLD W. BRUNNER SCHOLARSHIP

The President of the New York Chapter, American Institute of Architects, announces the award of its 1954 Arnold W. Brunner Scholarship in the amount of \$2,400.00 to Mr. Ralph E. Myers, AIA, of Kansas City, Missouri.

Mr. Myers will edit a series of 30 minute lectures in the form of colored slides with tape recorded commentary, entitled "ARCHITECTURE - U.S.A." Each lecture will deal with one of the many aspects of Contemporary American Architecture and the series will be widely available to AIA Chapters, Universities, Libraries, Schools, and civic groups.

Founded in memory of the well-known architect, Arnold W. Brunner, by his widow, the Scholarship allows substantial grants annually for aid in advanced study, writing or investigation in the field of architecture.

NEW BOOK

FURNITURE FOR MODERN INTERIORS by Mario Dal Fabrio.
Reinhold Publishing Co., New York. \$7.50

Furniture for Modern Interiors by Mario Dal Fabrio presents an interesting cross section of the more recent work of outstanding modern designers from Italy to California, from Brazil to Japan. The examples have been chosen chiefly for their unusual features, technical innovations and design integrity and are ably illustrated by a host of photographs and pen and ink line drawings. Especially valuable qualities of this book are the clarity with which the construction details are indicated and the illustrations showing suggested groupings in contemporary interiors.

THE LEBRUN AND THE BICENTENNIAL

Dean Leopold Arnaud of the Columbia School of Architecture has announced that in drafting the program of the competition for the scholarship, the winner of which will receive \$2,800 for six months or more of travel in Europe, the Chapter's LeBrun Scholarship Committee decided to link the design to Columbia University's Bicentennial theme, "Man's Right to Knowledge and the Free Use Thereof." Professor Henry H. Linn of Teachers College, Columbia, consulted with the committee in developing the program for an elementary school to "reflect the most advanced thought in architecture and education."

"Columbia will be proud if its theme has inspired more attention through the LeBrun Scholarship to the crisis in school building which now faces the nation," said Dean Arnaud, who is also a member of the University's Bicentennial Committee. "As the Scholarship announcement points out, the United States Office of Education estimates that at least 345,000 new school rooms are needed to meet the present shortage of space in our schools. At this time, therefore, it was gratifying to have the cooperation of Teachers College in working out the details."

FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

The Legislative Committee of the Chapter has sponsored and introduced in the City Council via the Architects Council of the City of New York the following modification to Sections C26-289 and C26-292 of the Building Code:

City Council: No. 100 Int. No. 99; and No. 101 Int. No. 100;
introduced by Councilman Mirabile.

This local law will liberalize, within certain safeguards, the present provisions of Sections C26-289 and C26-292 of the Administrative Code, against openings in exit passageways. It will permit openings in exit passageways (except fire tower exits), (normally 1st floor lobbies), to offices, banks and similar non-storage areas, toilets and slop sink closets whether sprinklered or not; allow structural glass doors to such spaces; and allow construction of information booths or desks.

These modifications are especially important in the planning of office buildings affording greater flexibility in design; and should be wholeheartedly supported by our Chapter by writing to Mr. Mirabile, Committee on Buildings, N.Y. City Council, Manhattan, New York. Individual letters from architects are the most effective means of action.

BY-LAWS LUNCHEON

A luncheon meeting on March 4th called to consider important changes in the By-laws was moderately well attended and produced a notable volume of sensible, well-considered talk.

In order to determine the sense of the meeting Harry Prince, the able Chairman of the By-laws Committee, moved to abolish the Nominating Committee, accept nominations only from the floor and vote in person only in electing Chapter officers. After much informative discussion this motion was defeated, primarily because Chapter members felt that a hard-working effective nominating committee is the only means of insuring hard-working effective Chapter officers. Excellent recommendations as to the election of this Nominating Committee, its constitution and its duties were left with the By-laws Committee for consideration.

In regard to the recommendation of Fellows, a motion was similarly put to the Chapter assigning three non-Fellows (fleetinglly referred to as Laymen, which is rubbing it in) to the present Committee on Fellows and reviewing its decisions in an open Chapter meeting. This motion also suffered friendly defeat, with a recommendation to the By-laws Committee to consider other means of increasing Chapter participation in the nomination of Fellows.

THE HOSPITABLE METROPOLITAN

The galleries in which we will be privileged to assemble on the occasion of the Chapter's 85th anniversary represent the second installment of the extensive rehabilitation of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The architectural changes in the galleries have been the work of Robert B. O'Connor and Aymer Embury II. James J. Rorimer, Curator of Mediaeval Art, is responsible for the installation of the exhibits under the direction of Francis Henry Taylor, and Laurence Harrison is largely responsible for the fine lighting.

The former Armor Hall now houses a handsome collection of Mediaeval sculpture and tapestries. The Renaissance Sculpture Gallery has works by such masters as Andrea della Robbia, and a large early French Renaissance Pieta from the Chateau de Biron. Two Venetian galleries are included, in one of which is the splendid Baroque bedroom from the Sagredo Palace.

The Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, in which the formal portion of the Anniversary Program will take place, has been completely transformed, architecturally and acoustically. Those members who may remember the former aspect of this space, somewhat akin to a theater for the demonstration of Natural Sciences in the Argicultural College of Linz, will be delighted with the prestidigitatation of Messrs. Voorhees, Walker, Foley and Smith.

The new restaurant in the Pompeian Court centers around a broad pool and has been decorated by Dorothy Draper, predominantly in a handsome deep brown which we are to learn to call "Blackberry." The sculpture being completed in Italy by Carl Milles (not by the 30th, unfortunately) will receive beautiful lighting from a velarium of striking simplicity swung across the pool.

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

The second in the Technical Committee's excellent Intercollegiate series of Engineering lectures was given by Paul Weidlinger to a large audience at Cooper Union on February 18th. Mr. Weidlinger discussed various technics, such as girder, truss or suspension systems for achieving long spans, and the methods of analysis which will indicate just which system is the most economical for a given set of conditions. Glamor in longspan is not enough; there must be economy too. He emphasized that the analysis must be made to achieve an intelligent answer. No rule of thumb is effective in a longspan problem.

On February 25 the Committee sponsored a luncheon meeting on the prefabricated panel as used in "Operation Bluejay," a military construction project in Greenland.

The third lecture in the Intercollegiate series will be given by Fred Severud at Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, Wednesday, March 31st at 8:00 p.m. His topic: "Skeleton in Construction with Analogies to the Human Skeleton."

"BUILDING YOUR HOME, 1954"

The Architectural League of New York is sponsoring a trade and public exhibition of progress made in home building materials, products and residential housing design. Called "Building Your Home, 1954" the exhibition will be held May 27-June 6 at the 71st Regiment Armory, 34th Street and Park Avenue, New York City.

In carrying out the theme of the Exhibition, the widely acclaimed "Excursion" House, as built by Techbuilt, Inc., will be erected and completely furnished and landscaped in the center of the Armory exhibit floor. Designed by Carl Koch & Associates, the 2000 square foot, two-story house will be displayed under the sponsorship of "Living For Young Homemakers" magazine. The original research and construction of the \$14,000 house was sponsored by the TV-Radio Workshop of the Ford Foundation.

PENN STATE

James Hornbeck points out with filial pride that Pennsylvania State College has, since late in 1953 become Pennsylvania State University. The Architectural school, formerly a department in the School of Engineering, has also mounted a rung. It is now a member of the School of Engineering and Architecture. BAID News-Letter please copy.

A FOLLOW UP ON THE EDUCATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Otto J. Teegen, Chairman of the Chapter's Committee on Education, urges all members to complete the questionnaire circulated by the Committee on Feb. 5th., concerning post-war architectural training. While the response so far has been very good, Mr. Teegen emphasizes that the Committee needs information from all Chapter members who have had recent school graduates under their observation, not merely from employers. The Committee plans an open meeting in May.

TUNING UP FOR JUNE

"Forces That Shape Architecture" will be the theme of the 86th annual convention of The American Institute of Architects. The convention will meet in Boston, Massachusetts, June 15-19, with headquarters at the Statler Hotel. At that time an estimated 2000 architects and guests will visit a city famous both for its historic buildings and as a center of modern architectural thinking.

This year's convention theme will give us the opportunity to assess those forces which have so radically changed our profession during the past fifty years. Modern technology; government building programs; developments in health, education and industry; new commercial patterns; the changing structure of the family, the community and the city -- all have exerted a profound influence on architecture. Their impact on building design will be the subject of the various seminars at the 1954 convention.

Chairman of the 1954 Convention Committee is Philip Creer of Providence, Rhode Island, assisted by James Lawrence, Jr. of Boston, president of the Massachusetts State Association of Architects and Chairman of the host Chapter Convention Committee. Arthur Holmes of the AIA staff is Convention Manager.

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PLASTIC ARTS

Fourteen leading national art societies of the United States with a combined membership of more than 5000 painters and sculptors have formed a Joint Committee to make provision for professional American artists representation as delegates to the first General Assembly of the International Association of the Plastic Arts. They will meet in Venice next fall under the auspices of UNESCO. To make the representation as broad as possible these societies are inviting individual artists and local art groups to become associated with the Joint Committee.

The purpose of the International Association of the Plastic Arts is to further the professional and economic interests of painters and sculptors on an international level and to encourage the international exchange of works of art.

The Joint Committee in America is headed by Mr. Leon Kroll, Chairman, and Mrs. Ruth Yates, secretary-treasurer. Headquarters are in Studio 37, at 58 West 57th Street, New York City.

CANDIDATES

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

Corporate Membership

Philip Cortelyou Johnson
David Kraus

Sponsors: Wallace K. Harrison and Louis Skidmore
Sponsors: Arnold A. Arbeit and Henry George Greene

Associate Membership

J. Vincent Fonell
Philip W. Pfeifer, III

Sponsors: Robert J. Reiley and George H. Ferrenz
Sponsors: William E. Lowry and James M. Chase