

NEW YORK CHAPTER

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AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

O C U L U S

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COMING EVENTS

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 28, at 12:30, Architectural League, Gallery A, Luncheon Meeting on THE NEW ARCHITECTURE OF SWEDEN. Dr. Gunnar Pleijel, architect and Professor at the Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm. Illustrated.

JANUARY 18, 4:00 to 6:00 P.M. at the Commodore Hotel, Informational Meeting by the Kawneer Company, member of the Producers Council. Refreshments. Chapter members invited.

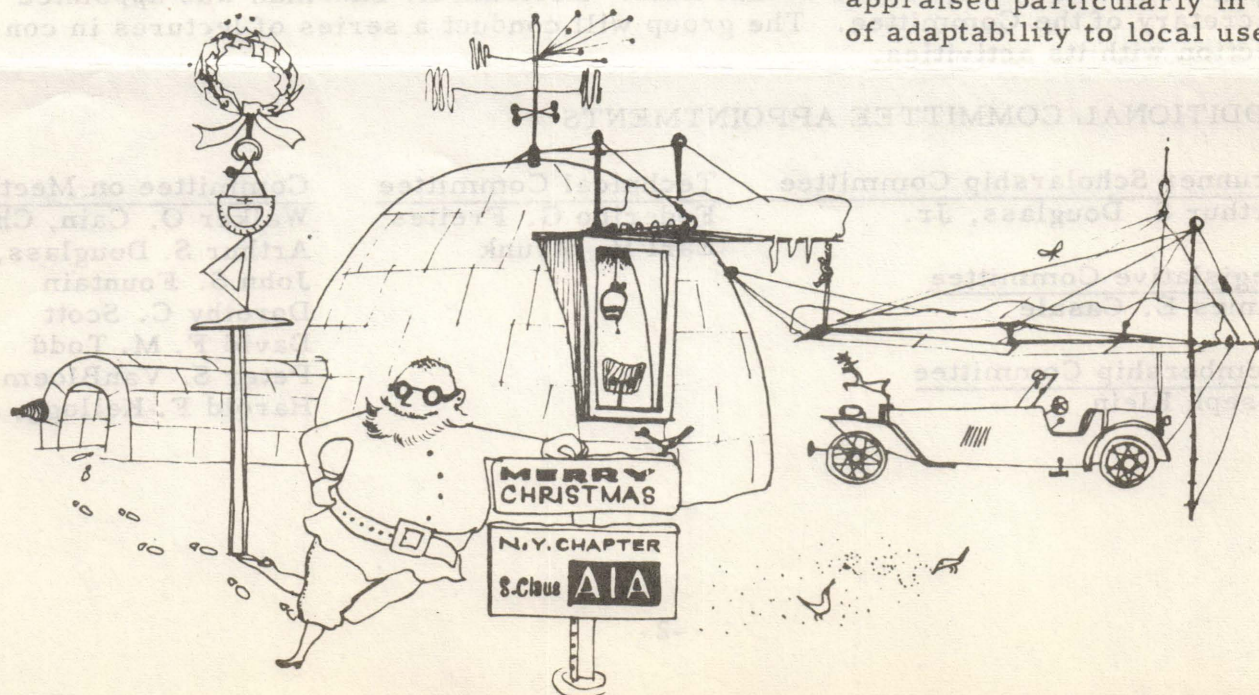
JANUARY 28 - 30th. Metropolitan Museum of Art, Annual Meeting of the Society of Architectural Historians.

JANUARY 31, for one week, Dining Room of the League, exhibit of Homes designed by the Architect for the Speculative Builder.

WITH THE COMMITTEES

Having spent last winter on a study of capabilities shown by recent architectural school graduates in New York offices, the COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION has decided to spend this season making an analysis of what the offices can do to augment the student's basic school training.

In attacking this problem the Committee will probe the suggestions made in the Chapter on "Candidate Training Program" outlined in the recent A.I.A. publication "The Architect at Mid Century". The Burdell Commission has in this book developed a series of suggestions and recommendations regarding many present day architectural problems, particularly in education, which the Committee feels should be appraised particularly in terms of adaptability to local use.



WITH THE COMMITTEES (continued)

On October 29, 1954 Ralph Myers gave the A.I.A. Public Relations Committee in Washington one and a half hour presentation of progress made on his project entitled "Architecture - U.S.A." which is being continued under the BRUNNER grant of \$2400. It is reported that a fine collection of slide material has been obtained from leading photographers and that by the first of the year, the collection should be complete. It is planned to distribute "Architecture - U.S.A." through a central library that will service schools, libraries, museums and the general public. In order to complete the project a script is to be written and a professional voice for narration is required. Mr. Myers is arranging to work with Ketchum, Inc. of Pittsburgh in this phase of the project.

The response of Chapter members to the announcement of the exhibition of homes designed by the Architect for the Speculative Builder has been most encouraging, so much so that the Dining Room of the Architectural League has been reserved for the exhibit during the week commencing January 31, 1955. In the meantime, members will receive the program with details as to entries, deadlines, etc. Watch for it and return the entry slip promptly to the COMMITTEE FOR HOUSES.

The work of the MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE is proceeding smoothly and steadily. As rapidly as names of candidates are available, information is supplied them regarding the advantages of membership in the Chapter. Presently this is being done by phone and mail, but plans are underway for a series of small Cocktail Parties, at which time the potential candidates could meet with some of the present members, and perhaps see a League exhibition. Remember to send in the names of any likely prospects for membership.

The PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE has prepared a questionnaire of the views and practices of Chapter members in regard to Public Relations. The answers will serve as a basis for the committee's future work. It has also revised the photograph identification label and a new issue of this will soon be available.

The STORES AND SHOPPING CENTERS DISCUSSION GROUP held their first meeting November 12th and inaugurated a stimulating program for forthcoming meetings. Daniel Schwartzman was appointed Chairman of the exhibition committee, which plans for the Spring months a full scale public exhibition of current work in the store and shopping center fields. Meyer Katzman was appointed chairman of the committee on the store-proper aspects of the work and the programming of subsequent speakers in that field. Bertram A. Sherman was appointed secretary of the Committee. The group will conduct a series of lectures in connection with its activities.

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Brunner Scholarship Committee
Arthur S. Douglass, Jr.

Legislative Committee
James E. Casale

Membership Committee
Joseph Klein

Technical Committee
Federico G. Freitas
Earl H. Strunk

Committee on Meetings
Walker O. Cain, Chairman
Arthur S. Douglass, Jr.
John S. Fountain
Dorothy C. Scott
David F. M. Todd
Peter S. VanBloem
Harold F. Kellogg, Jr.

IN GEAR

From a standing start, the Chapter accelerated to top mid-season speed in three hours on December 7 at the League, with President Robert S. Hutchins at the wheel. The season's opening meeting discussed as its main subject the Executive Committee's actions on the comprehensive report prepared last year by Roger Halle's Committee on Younger Architects.

Beginning with an adequate buffet supper, the meeting was moderately well attended by Chapter members and aesthetically enhanced by many of the wives. President Hutchins opened with a summary of the Committees and their members, and then proceeded to discuss the Executive Committee's actions and referrals on the resolutions and recommendations proposed by the Committee Report.

The Executive Committee recommended that the National A.I.A. grant financial assistance to the NCARB to make it more effective.

The Executive Committee will be glad to hear any specific suggestions for the Chapter's review of public projects leading to a higher quality of public work, while bearing in mind the activity of the Art Commission of the City of New York, whose duty is to insure the highest caliber in public projects. The Committee is taking steps to see whether some public projects could be awarded on the basis of open competition. It will continue to put younger men on committees as a conscious policy. It will refer the question of foreign association to the National body, recommending closer ties with foreign professionals. The recommendations on education were referred to Mr. Teegen's Committee.

The Committee on Meetings was instructed to develop a lecture program involving outstanding persons in the field. This Committee is already taking first steps for a show of Chapter work which never advanced beyond the project stage. President Hutchins instructed its chairman, Walker O. Cain to organize a meeting in the Spring at which the various committees would report back to the Chapter on their judgments of the questions referred to them.

The Membership Committee was instructed to develop closer ties with and a program for Student Chapters. The Membership and Bylaws Committee will study necessary steps for automatic promotion of those eligible to the next higher rank of Institute membership.

The Bylaws Committee will study a graduated dues system. The Committee on Fees and Contracts was instructed to consider the position of the beginning practitioner in setting up recommended fee schedules. The Oculus was instructed to publish as much information as possible on Municipal, County and State Building Programs. The Committee on Education will study recommendations regarding registration.

The proposal for establishing a Workshop to study community problems was endorsed with the suggestion that interested Chapter members notify the Executive Committee and help formulate its program.

Following this resume, the Chapter agreed that the "Younger Architect" was a relative term used in the architectural profession, but that actually the recommendations of the Committee closely paralleled the recommendations of the Burdell Commission and the National Committee on Organization - that discussion of all these could well be undertaken immediately by the various committees so that specific recommendations would be passed by the Chapter before the Annual Convention.

URBAN PLANNING EDUCATION in the UNITED STATES

by Frederick J. Adams

The Alfred Bettman Foundation, Cincinnati, Ohio

The past ten years have seen an unprecedented growth in our cities and towns and a spectacular worsening in the appearance and functioning of our urban centers and countryside. Expanding rings of growth are encompassing more and more of the quiet towns and undeveloped countryside into the metropolitan agglomerations.

At present our urban planning is grossly inadequate and suburban growth is almost completely left in the hands of real estate developers, local surveyors, and volunteer planning boards of untrained local citizens. For the thousands of cities and towns which will be subjected to such a growth in the coming decades, there are only 538 trained planners to direct it.

Against this near-crisis background Professor Frederick J. Adams of M.I.T. has written a report "Urban Planning Education in the United States", a project undertaken by the Alfred Bettman Foundation in connection with several planning organizations and aided by a Brunner Scholarship of the New York Chapter, A.I.A. It indicates the same necessity for undertaking new responsibility and opportunity for growth which the Burdell Commission's Report represents in the Architectural Profession. It summarizes the functions of the planner, his education, the various professional schools, their curricular and faculties, and makes recommendations to better the number and quality of graduates. Its theoretical and practical value should encourage more candidates to enter this essential field and to assume a higher level of training.

LATEST AT THE METROPOLITAN

The Metropolitan Museum of Art has opened another section of its galleries which are part of the extensive alteration carried out by R. B. O'Connor and Aymar Embury. This phase of the Museum's program is of especial interest to architects as it features several superb period rooms of the late eighteenth century, French and English. It is a unique experience to be able to see and compare such fine originals under one roof. The contrast between the somewhat bleak elegance of Robert Adam's great Dining Room from Lansdowne House and the warm richness of the Salon from the Hotel de Tessé of almost exactly the same period is most striking. On the ground floor, which was formerly devoted to storage and workshops, are a number of fine galleries showing outstanding collections of silver, glass, porcelain and jewelry.

A.I.A. 2ND ANNUAL JOURNALISM AWARDS

The Institute announces its 2nd Annual Journalism Awards for writing and photography in the field of architecture. A total of \$1500 will be awarded in prizes of \$250 to the author of the best published work in six classes, four of which are for articles and two for photographs. Material to be entered must have been published during the period January 1, 1954 to December 31, 1954. Entries should be mailed to the Department of Public and Professional Relations, the American Institute of Architects, 1735 New York Avenue, N.W., Washington 6, D.C. not later than January 15, 1955. It is felt that this competition will be of great help in the Institute's public relations program.

THE CODE MANUAL

The second edition of the Code Manual for the State Building Construction Code is currently available. The work of the State Building Code Commission aims to establish a system based upon a required standard of performance for work rather than on rigid specifications. It has been felt that a code of this type is more flexible in permitting the use of new materials and methods of construction as they become available. The code has been developed in two stages; the first in 1951 applied to one and two family dwelling construction and the second in December 1953 to multiple dwellings. It carries the force of law in municipalities where the legislative body has voted its adoption. In three years 125 cities and towns had availed themselves of the first code.

For ease in interpretation, application and enforcement, the Code Manual, indicating acceptable standards of compliance with the requirements of the code has been issued. Text, tables and illustrations describe methods and materials acceptable as meeting the requirements of the code. Other techniques or materials which meet the performance requirements of the code may be equally acceptable under the law.

The Manual, in a loose-leaf format, sets forth definitions, building lines, foundations, means of egress and all phases of construction. It is profusely illustrated with well-drawn plans, details and isometric diagrams. Priced at \$3 per copy, postage paid, the Manual may be obtained from the State Building Commission, 1740 Broadway, New York 19, N.Y.

SPREADING THE DOCTRINE OF MODERATION

Our Chapter member Romer Shawhan, Managing Director of the Marble Institute of America has been so helpful as to publish in the December issue of the Institute's News Bulletin the entire text of OCULUS' paragraphs about the Architect-Contractor Christmas gift situation; first page, too. Thank you Mr. Shawhan; thank you, gentlemen of the quarry.

COMPETITION IN SILVERWARE

To signalize the fiftieth anniversary of the company, Georg Jensen, Inc. is planning a competition involving the design of flat silver, jewelry, and the like. The first prize will be a round trip to Copenhagen with the opportunity to study and work in the Jensen Shops there, and a royalty arrangement if the design is put into production. Closing date April 1, 1955. Address: Just Lunning, 667 Fifth Avenue, New York 22, N.Y.

SAVING THE NEW YORK RAILROAD STATIONS

The November Architectural Forum carries an open letter to the Chairman of New York Central and the President of the New Haven Railroad signed by more than 200 leading architects and designers urging that in the event that Grand Central is demolished, the great Concourse somehow be preserved.

It now appears that Mr. Zeckendorf in addition to Grand Central has designs on Pennsylvania as well. Will someone, while there is yet time, put in a word for the Seventh Avenue Colonnade and the Baths of Caracalla?

VOICE OF EXPERIENCE

Richard F. Bach, that wise veteran of many years in all the various fields of design has some pertinent things to say about credit lines in the press. When he was Director of the Industrial Design Department at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, it took him eight annual exhibitions to work up to one hundred percent design credit on all the labels in the show.

"Some years ago while I was still a trustee of the Municipal Art Society," he continues, "we launched a program which we were certain would be supported by architects and other designers ... We concocted a form of gummed label of dignified appearance carrying a request for full credit to all concerned, which could be affixed to photographs distributed to the press. The project flivvered... it seemed too much of a chore to attach the labels!

"My own feeling on the subject is still the same ... if Chapter members issue photographs only on condition that credit is included when published, the papers will fall in line...."

The action of the Public Relations Committee in reissuing the credit labels makes Mr. Bach's comments timely and helpful. Let us take the advice of an experienced hand, glue on the stickers, and make it easy for the press.

CANDIDATES

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

Corporate Membership

Harold Cooper

Harold Field Kellogg, Jr.

Robert Rickenback

Sponsors: Glenn Stanton and Brian S. Baylinson

Sponsors: William F. R. Ballard and Walter H. Kilham

Sponsors: Meyer Katzman and Newton J. Fassler

Associate Membership

Paul Grotz

Joseph C. Hazen, Jr.

John Louis Marlais

Sponsors: Douglas Haskell and Walter McQuade

Sponsors: Walter McQuade and Douglas Haskell

Sponsors: Bruno Funaro and Theodor K. Rohdenburg

