

NEW YORK CHAPTER

MARGOT A. HENKEL *Executive Secretary*

115 EAST 40TH STREET
NEW YORK 16 NEW YORK

FRANK G. LOPEZ *Editor*



AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

O C U L U S

VOL. XVIII, NO. 6 MARCH 1957

COMING EVENTS

March 28, Thursday	Technical Committee Gallery A - 7 P.M.	Speaker: Walter A. Netsch, Jr. "The Design Development of the Air Force Academy"
April 17, Wednesday	New York University Club 123 West 43rd Street - 7:30 Joint Committee of the AIA and AIP on Design Control	Subject: Planning For Community Design, A Draft Report on Con- troversial Legal Regulation of Design
April 18, Thursday	Chapter Meeting Gallery A - 12:30	Pre-Convention Luncheon
April 25, Thursday	Delmonico Restaurant 56 Beaver Street - 7:30	Dinner Commemorating 100th Anniversary of the Founding of The American Institute of Architects

AIR FORCE ACADEMY DESIGN

This is the subject of the Technical Committee Dinner Meeting March 28th, as noted above. Those of you who have not known Walter Netsch, of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill's Chicago office, have missed an opportunity. A brilliant analyst, Mr. Netsch was the man primarily responsible within his firm for the U. S. Navy's Postgraduate School at Monterey, California, known as the Annapolis of the West, and one of the country's fine examples of architecture for education. He is in charge of the Air Force Academy project, knows this highly controversial subject inside and out, and has a most interesting story to tell. Remember the arguments in and out of Congress when the original design was unveiled? If you'd like to hear the inside story, call the Chapter Office and reserve a place for the dinner.

AWARDS AND HONORS

The National A.I.A. Journalism Awards have just been announced. Limited this year to magazines and newspapers of general circulation - excluding professional publications, which seems most sensible considering the opportunity to further public understanding of architecture - four of the nine awards were made to individuals and publications in New York. In the magazine classification, first prize (\$500.) went to Cranston Jones, Associate Editor, Time, for his article on Eero Saarinen; honorable mentions were awarded Eric Larabee, Associate Editor, Harper's, for a piece called "Better Building" in the November, 1956, "After Hours" column; and to Ed Kiester, Parade, for his article, "U. S. Churches Go Modern."

AWARDS AND HONORS (Continued)

Among Newspapers, second prize (\$250.) went to Leonard Buder, Education News Department, New York Times, for his series of two articles on trends in school design. The New York Chapter will arrange suitable presentation ceremonies at a time and place to be announced.

EDITOR'S NOTE

This publication, The Oculus, has a limited scope. Its point of view is strictly professional; its audience is the Chapter membership. It is not "newsy" because it appears -- thank God! -- only once a month whereas news sensations wither overnight. It is not a company "house organ" since it does not promote a commercial policy emanating from some brass hats. All it can hope to do is record and inform its small readership of pertinent events and opinions within and without the Chapter's confines.

The Oculus appears at all only because a still smaller, though enthusiastic and often argumentative group of individualists -- your Publications Committee -- works furiously for a few days each month. Hardly ever does an issue excite comment, which makes doubly welcome certain expressions of approval of last month's notes on the founding of the A.I.A. and the Centennial. The notion to print something of the kind was conceived, we confusedly remember at a luncheon editorial meeting where everybody talked at once. It grew from ideas in a brief report made earlier to the Committee by Milton Kirchman. The actual leg-work, research and writing were done by Stuart Baesel, Harvey Clarkson and Gillett Lefferts, Jr., all Committee members and all quite busy with their own affairs. They deserve the applause. Please transmit gripes directly to The Editor.

CAN CHICAGO'S ROBIE HOUSE BE SAVED?

Climaxing persistent rumors that their city's famous Robie House is scheduled for early demolition to make way for a new building, Chicago dailies of March 2nd published a confirming statement to that effect. A. C. McGiffert, Jr., president of Chicago Theological Seminary (owner of the house since 1926), announced that his school desperately needs dormitory space for married students and finds itself financially unable either to acquire other property or to maintain the house as an architectural monument. Therefore, he has instructed the architects for the new building (Holabird & Root & Burgee) to start working drawings at once. McGiffert sees no alternative to destroying the house which, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1906, is widely heralded today as a landmark in the development of modern architectural design. No demolition date has been set, but time for possible preventive measures is obviously short.

A group of Chicago AIA members and interested citizens met March 8th to discuss how the house might be saved and restored (it is in need of thorough rehabilitation). They decided to reactivate and strengthen the 1941 "Citizens' Committee for the Preservation of Frank Lloyd Wright's Robie House" as an action group. Their three objectives: 1st, to prevent demolition; 2nd, to find an acceptable substitute site for the dormitories; 3rd, to find a new owner willing to preserve and maintain the house.

The committee hopes there will be letters expressing sympathy and support from AIA members (and others) everywhere, directed either to the seminary or to the committee. The committee (name above) may be addressed at the office of William F. Deknatel, AIA, 25 East Jackson Boulevard, Chicago 4.

COMMEMORATIVE LUNCHEON AND TABLET

The week of February 17-23, proclaimed Architects' Week by New York City's Mayor Wagner and New York State's Governor Harriman, was climaxed by the unveiling of a bronze plaque at 111 Broadway commemorating the founding of The American Institute of Architects.

The commemorative luncheon preceding the unveiling was attended by over 130 members and friends and 25 invited guests. Highlighted by the official launching of the commemorative stamp by Mr. Kieb, Assistant Postmaster General, the attending members heard addresses by the Deputy Mayor of New York, Dr. John Theobald; and Leon Chatelain, Jr., President of the Institute. Edgar I. Williams presided.

The general public was informed of these activities through the local City and Westchester County publications.

The Bronze plaque, 22" by 30", was designed by McKim, Mead & White with the Inscription by E. James Gambaro.

In a time when the skyline of New York is changing as rapidly as its traffic patterns, we herein call upon all members and specifically those of the Historical Buildings Committee, to make note of the historical importance of this plaque so that its continuing existence shall be guaranteed beyond the present uncertainties of stone and steel.

THE FOUNDERS OF THE A.I.A.

The following additional information has been received from our membership regarding the original 13 founders of the Institute.

Leopold Eidlitz (1823-1908) had two sons - Cyrus, an architect who was the head of the firm of Eidlitz & McKenzie, predecessors to the present firm of Voorhees, Walker, Smith & Smith; and a second son, Leopold, who was a structural steel contractor of the firm of Eidlitz & Ross. It was the elder Leopold's brother, Marc Eidlitz, who came to America from his native Bohemia and with two of his 4 sons founded the New York Construction firm of Marc Eidlitz & Sons.

As Mr. S. F. Voorhees recalls from a personal association, Leopold Eidlitz (1823-1908) was very independent in his thinking and was very strong in his knowledge of engineering. It was Leopold Eidlitz who suggested in 1850 running the Sixth Avenue elevated train on a solid ground embankment between Fifth and Sixth Avenues. An envision quite possible at that time because of the then very sparse settlement above Canal Street.

Frederick A. Pederson (1808-1885) was German born and educated. He immigrated to the United States as a youth and is best known through Cooper Union.

Henry C. Dudley, F.A.I.A. was a member of the firm of Wills & Dudley and received prominence as early as 1850. He was a gothic practitioner and served twice on the National Board of Directors of the A.I.A.

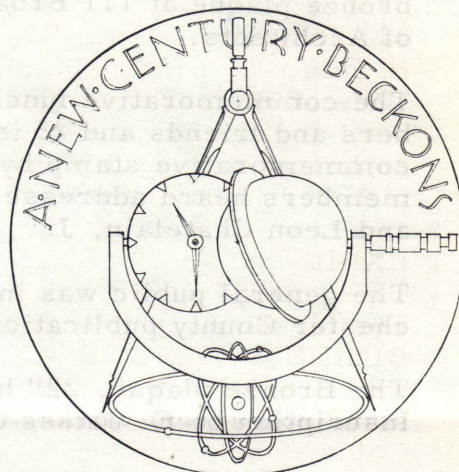


"OCULUS" NEW YORK CHAPTER, A.I.A.

CENTENNIAL MEDALS



The Centennial Commemorative Medal designed by Sidney Waugh will be presented as a memento of the Centennial Year to all members who attend the Washington Convention. Members and friends who do not attend may buy the medals at \$3.50 each. Place orders through the Chapter Office, and place them soon; the price will probably increase when the original run is exhausted due to the cost of striking a new lot. If our Chapter gets its order in early we will be assured of the lower price.



Correction: In the February issue of Oculus it was erroneously stated that Ralph T. Walker was being awarded the Centennial Medal designed by Sidney Waugh. Mr. Walker will receive a Special Centennial Medal Award designed by Julian Hoke Harris, Architect and Sculptor, and member of the Georgia Chapter, A.I.A. This Special Medal is to be given only once - this Centennial year.

Centennial Dinner at Delmonico's: There are a very few tickets left, at \$12.50, for this gala evening affair April 25th. Call the Chapter Office; first come, first served.

ANNUAL PARTY, NEW YORK CHAPTER

The 90th Anniversary Dance at the Metropolitan Club on March 8th was - what's the word? A wing-ding? The music was excellent for both old timers and younger members; the company was equally excellent. When he received the Chapter's Medal of Honor, Arthur Holden spoke with great sincerity of the broad fields opening out before architects - large scale planning and civic design - after modestly disclaiming his own worthiness of the honor. Charles McKim Norton made us all feel good in accepting honorary chapter membership, by his praise of the work and attitudes of architects. These were only brief interruptions, however. Dawn wasn't quite coming up as most of us got to bed, but it was a close thing. By the way, lots of candid photos were taken. They are available at nominal cost through the Chapter Office.

JOINT COMMITTEE, A.I.A - A.I.P., ON DESIGN CONTROL

A meeting of the American Institute of Planners to which all A.I.A. Chapter members are invited, will be held April 17th. At this time the Joint Committee on Design Control (in our Chapter, a sub-committee of the Civic Design Committee; in the A.I.P., a committee in its own right) will present a draft of the report it has been working on for two years. Henry Fagin, A.I.P., who is co-chairman with our own Bob Weinberg, will present the findings under the title, "Planning for Community Design". The report, we hear, is highly critical of the types of design regulations tried to date; instead, it proposes a new approach which emphasizes community planning, not rigid regulatory rules. Time: 7:30 P.M. Place: New York University Club, 123 West 43rd Street. Date: April 17.

YOUR NAME IN THE PHONE BOOK

The Red Book (Classified telephone directory) is now soliciting architects for listings in bold face type - at a higher fee, of course. This is directly contrary to the A.I.A. Code of Ethics. Your Executive Committee warns you against the practice; it is notifying the Chapter members who have inadvertently permitted their names to be so listed; it is protesting to the publishers. In many cities, an architect whose name is listed in bold black type is automatically suspect!

EXHIBITION

The Museum of Modern Art's current Architectural Exhibition, "BUILDINGS FOR BUSINESS AND GOVERNMENT", a handsomely arranged, dramatic presentation of scale models, full size wall panel mock-ups, photographs and drawings of six outstanding current works - Skidmore, Owings and Merrill's Chase-Manhattan and Colorado Springs Projects, Edward Stone's Delhi Embassy, Saarinen's General Motors Research Center, Yamasaki's St. Louis Airport and Johnson and Van der Rohe's Seagram Building, all illustrating the thematic premise that good architecture inherently contributes to the community.

Perhaps this worthy theme has been illustrated with too limited a selection of examples. While the projects presented are outstanding in their near perfection, there is no suggestion of the numerous more modest but none-the-less sincere efforts of our entire profession toward the goal of civic progress. The impression of these being unique examples, rather than cross-sectional, is heightened by the drama of the individual displays, which appear as sharply lighted cases of interest against jet black wall, floor and ceiling backgrounds.

This outstanding presentation will be at the Museum until April 28th. It should be a "must" visit for every architect and student of dramatic presentation.

GOING TO ENGLAND?

If you are going to be in England on May 14 an excellent opportunity awaits you. The West Essex Chapter of the Essex Cambs and Herts Society of Architects, an affiliate of the R.I.B.A., is holding a joint meeting with the London Master Builders Association on that evening. They want very much as their principal event at the meeting to have a talk from an American architect, preferably illustrated with color slides. Subject: "The many aspects of building in your vast land." Call the Chapter Office if you, or someone you know, is going to be in Britain in the middle of May.

INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF STUDENT ARCHITECTURAL WORK

A look at the future of architecture on a world-wide scale will be provided by the International Exhibition of Architectural Student Work. Over a year in preparation, this show will be held from April 22 to May 4 at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, United Nations Plaza and 46th Street, New York City. The student work from approximately fifteen countries shows a variety of techniques and content, dependent upon differences in politics, topography, weather and materials available. About 150 panels will make up the show. One or more schools are expected to be presented from Austria, Belgium, Canada, Cuba, Greece, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, Turkey, Uruguay, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. The exhibition is sponsored by the National Institute for Architectural Education.

EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL ENGINEER TO SPEAK AT COLUMBIA

On Monday, March 25, 1957, 8 p.m., the Columbia University Schools of Architecture and Engineering are going to sponsor a lecture given by Senor Eduardo Torroja, Professor of Structural Engineering at the University of Madrid, and Director of the Institute for Concrete Research of Spain. The subject of his talk will be "Modern Concrete Design". Professor Torroja is one of the most brilliant engineers of Europe and is well known for the Jai Alai Court in Madrid.

This lecture will be held at the Harkness Theater in Butler Library Building, Columbia University, on West 114th Street. (Entrance on West 114th Street).

CANDIDATES

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

Corporate Membership

Alexander F. Capella
Robert William Citron
John Gray Faron
Myron Stuart Hurwitz
Gary Laredo
Richard Arthur Miller

Henry O. Niemann
Walter A. Rutes
Carlos R. Sanz
Henry Paul Scheffer
Douglas Fraser Thomson
Alfred Pope Brooks

Associate Membership

William Ernest Baltz
Joseph Anthony Capano
David Evans Dewey
Alexander A. Gartner
Nejat A. Gokbelen
John Warner Hoag
Jerrald L. Karlan
Aldo Miraglia
Leon Moed
Peter Gale Moore
Frank W. Munzer
Ralph Myller
Whitson Makamie Overcash, Jr.
Clarence Tyrrell Paul
James Warren Sarfaty
Rudolph R. Sattler
Patricia Weston Swan
Henry Szatmary
John P. Usowski
Hugh Bradley Ver Bryck

Sponsors: John S. Fountain and George S. Lewis
Sponsors: Richard M. Pott and Theodore J. Young
Sponsors: Richard M. Pott and Theodore J. Young
Sponsors: Harold J. Olson and Robert W. Cutler
Sponsors: Perry Coke Smith and Peter S. Van Bloem
Sponsors: Kenneth M. Young and Charles E. Hughes
Sponsors: David L. Eggers and Henry Boak
Sponsors: Charles E. Hughes and Wayne Soverns
Sponsors: Albert Kennerly and Charles E. Hughes
Sponsors: Richard M. Pott and Theodore J. Young
Sponsors: Richard M. Pott and Theodore J. Young
Sponsors: Richard M. Pott and Theodore J. Young
Sponsors: Jeffrey E. Aronin and Robert A. Jacobs
Sponsors: Charles E. Hughes and Albert Kennerly
Sponsors: Wayne Soverns and Charles E. Hughes
Sponsors: Richard M. Pott and Theodore J. Young
Sponsors: Richard M. Pott and Theodore J. Young
Sponsors: Roy O. Allen and Charles E. Hughes
Sponsors: Richard M. Pott and Theodore J. Young
Sponsors: Richard M. Pott and Theodore J. Young
Sponsors: Charles E. Hughes and Robert W. Cutler

NEW BOOKS

Work Place For Learning
by Lawrence B. Perkins and Walter D. Cocking
Reinhold Publishing Corporation

270 pages and 450
illustrations
\$4.00