

OCULUS

NEW YORK CHAPTER AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS



OCTOBER 1960

FDR AWARDS ANNOUNCED

One Chapter member was among the six winners of the first stage of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial Competition announced last month: Abraham W. Geller (in association with Douglas Gordon, Diana Kirsch, and Claude Samton), and Rolf Myller (who is also Books and Travel Editor of *Oculus*). Other winners, chosen from 574 entrants from all parts of the country, were Architects Tasso Katselas of Pittsburgh, Pedersen & Tilney of Boston, Sasaki-Walker-Luders Associates of Watertown, Mass., and Joseph J. Wehrer of Michigan. The jury commented on the wide variety of solutions submitted, ranging from pure sculpture to abstract architectural forms, from civic plazas to quiet, simple garden schemes. First stage winners will be awarded \$10,000 each and will prepare detailed drawings and models for submission in the final stage. The winner of the second stage will be awarded \$50,000. After the final judging on December 29-30, there will be an exhibition of winning and honorable mention designs.

BRI CONFERENCE

The 1960 Fall Conference of the BUILDING RESEARCH INSTITUTE will be held in Washington, D. C. on November 15-17. The conferences during the 3-day period will be concerned with "Pre-assembled Building Components," "Structural Forms," "Fasteners for Industrial Curtain Walls," and a "Roundup of New Building Research."

Complete information and registration material may be obtained from Harold Horowitz, BRI Assistant Director of Technical Programs, 2101 Constitution Avenue, Washington 25, D. C.

CHAPTER BACKS ZONING

by E. O. TANNER

In connection with last month's hearings on New York City's zoning proposals, Chapter President **Frederick J. Woodbridge** and members of the Civic Design Committee strongly endorsed the Planning Commission's revised comprehensive amendment. The committee urged it be enacted into law without further delay. In a news story in the *New York Times*, President Woodbridge said the city "desperately needs a zoning amendment to make a master plan possible," and that while no plan was without flaws, the present rezoning proposal would effect density controls, would discourage "wedding-cake" design and encourage plazas and arcades around buildings, and would simplify parking requirements for shopping districts.

MEDAL OF HONOR TO L. W. ORTON

by SAUL ELLENBOGEN

The Medal of Honor for City Planning will be awarded to **Lawrence M. Orton**, a charter member of the City Planning Commission, on Wednesday evening, November 2, 1960, at a Formal Dinner given at the Sheraton-East, N. Y. C. This award is given jointly by the Metropolitan Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers, the New York Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects, and the Brooklyn and the New York Chapters of The American Institute of Architects. The award is given to "those planners with vision, a capacity for service, men with broad horizons of interest and a proven ability to solve problems endless in their complexity."

Mr. Orton has been a charter member of the City Planning Commission since January, 1938. Prior to that time he was a consultant to the National Resources Planning Board and chairman of its Committee on Urbanism. He was also General Director of the Regional Plan Association, the organization established to promote and carry out the Regional Plan.

"While some still cry for more time to study the proposals," said Woodbridge, "the amendment is actually the result of a process started in 1948. Furthermore, the amendment has been available for analysis and review at many meetings and hearings for the past year and a half. This has been a matter of greatest urgency" Woodbridge told the *Times*, "but it is now crucial. With increasing problems of neighborhood renewal, of traffic and parking congestion, of schools and other public construction, we lack a master plan as a matrix in which these numerous and often competing needs can be properly evaluated and related. The establishment of the New Housing and Urban Renewal Board is a great forward step, but until the Master Plan is completed, its efforts will inevitably be piecemeal, uncoordinated and lacking in unity of design and purpose."

In a recent letter to Woodbridge, Chairman James Felt of the Planning Commission saluted the Chapter's "wholehearted cooperation." Said Felt: "When the amendment is finally passed the Commission will continue to welcome this cooperation. It will be of continued importance in arriving at such modifications as experience may indicate are desirable."

OCULUS

Vol. 32 — Number 1

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS
NEW YORK CHAPTER

MARGOT A. HENKEL, *Executive Secretary*
115 East 40th Street
New York 16, N. Y.
MUrray Hill 9-7969

FREDERICK J. WOODBRIDGE *President*
DAVID L. EGGERS *Vice President*
PETER S. VAN BLOEM *Secretary*
MICHAEL M. HARRIS *Treasurer*

PAUL JOHN GRAYSON, *Editor*

NEW FORMAT

*With this issue of the **Oculus**, the Publications Committee is trying out a new format. We hope a new banner and a three-column layout, plus broader news and feature columns, will provide livelier and more informative reading. In addition to our regular departments, we plan to run occasional guest columns and special features on subjects of particular and timely interest. You will also notice a new department titled "Improving New York," where new ideas, comments, and reports on the City can find an outlet. We welcome your contributions to the **Oculus**.*

WHO IS THE TROUBLEMAKER?

*He is the silent one. He never speaks up on issues. He never sounds off in the letter column of his local newspaper. He never writes his Congressman. He is quiet as a clam. And in his wish to offend nobody, he offends Democracy. How could Democracy succeed . . . if all of us, like this one, withheld our opinions, our ideas, our criticisms? Voting on election day is only part of a citizen's duty. Active, day-by-day participation in government, in society, in business associations, is a responsibility for each and every one of us. The *silent* trouble-maker fails to understand this. In his worship of "law and order," he never dares to question an oppressive law, never distinguishes "order" from stagnation. He is the apostle of social decay, not democracy.*

IMPROVING NEW YORK

With each issue of the **Oculus** we plan to include this column as a forum for our membership to enable you to express your ideas on the ways and means of improving our city. Please address your comments and your ideas to the Editor, care of the Chapter Office.

A Hole in the Street

Excerpt from a letter written to the Mayor on June 13, 1960: ". . . On East 55th Street between Park and Madison Avenues there exist a series of excavations which are improperly protected and which run the full length of the block. I am aware that there is in progress a vast program of repair and improvement to our underground network of water, electric and steam supply, however there are certain regulations regarding the protection of such excavations to prevent damage to vehicles and injury to pedestrians . . ."

Excerpt from a letter from the Mayor's Legal Aide on June 21, 1960: ". . . The Mayor acknowledges your letter to him, . . . and has forwarded a copy to Bureau of Franchises, and the Borough President's Office . . . for their attention and consideration . . ."

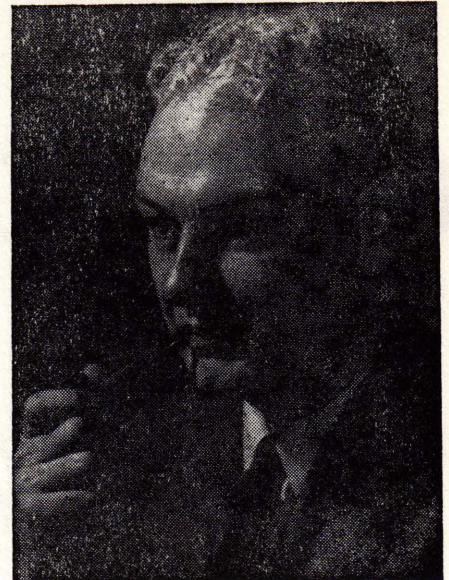
October, 1960 . . .

No action and although work was completed a few months ago, and a concrete base was prepared for asphalt there still remains . . . "a hole in the street" . . . 600 feet long by 6 inches deep by 2 feet wide.

It Grows on You

The curbside trees that everyone enjoys for the shade they cast on city pavements don't just sprout where a lucky seed happens to fall. They must be planned for, planted and maintained. But this process is not as formidable or expensive as many people think. The pamphlet, "It Grows on You," explains clearly the necessary steps. It is being distributed by the Municipal Art Society as an educational service to the Architects of New York in the hope they will encourage clients to plant street trees. Additional copies and further advice are freely available from the Chairman of the Municipal Art Society's Tree Planting Committee. Mrs. Sidney Mattison, 1035 Fifth Avenue, New York 28, New York, RE. 7-0403, is chairwoman.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



FREDERICK J. WOODBRIDGE

This issue of the **Oculus** marks one of those recurrent beginnings which characterize the life of any active professional organization. Administrations change, and with them come inevitable changes in committees and their chairmen. This year there has been a considerable amount of carrying over very largely to preserve a degree of continuity, which is just as important as change. The **Oculus** itself has a new format in the hope that more of you will read it!

When I asked my partner what I should write as a message he cynically asked what difference it made because who would read it anyway. It is perfectly true that we all receive so much "literature" in our daily mail that we end by reading almost none of it.

One might also cynically ask why such a substantial number of busy architects are willing to spend so much time on committee work which may only occasionally seem to produce tangible results. Many of us can remember the days when there was so little Architecture to do that sitting around together trying to find ways and means of improving ourselves and our profession was an absolute life-saver. Now that such large numbers of Architects are as busy as they can be, one might wonder whether it would not be just as well for each of us to tend to his own knitting and not bother about possible common problems.

It is not, I hope, necessary to labor the absurdity of such an attitude when we all know that the world today presents problems which we must face together if we are not eventually to be snowed under. And yet it is a striking sta-

Continued on page 3

tistic that only a fifth to a quarter of the impressive membership of this Chapter is actively engaged in its work. Rarely does much more than a tenth of the membership attend a Chapter meeting.

In spite of this one hears from time to time that the same old gang runs the Chapter and that a new or younger member does not have a chance. Can anything be more absurd? Once upon a time a lot of us who are working now were young, too.

As is customary at this time of year a meeting was held of the 29 appointive and 3 elective committees of the Chapter. You can see what these committees are elsewhere in this issue and can judge for yourselves of the many and varied activities. Each chairman was asked to give a brief account of his committee work and program and discussion was invited. It was an interesting and stimulating occasion, and I am sure that any of you who could have been there would have been impressed and convinced that all this energy and interest is not sound and fury signifying nothing. It is of great importance to the welfare not only of our profession but to the society we serve and consequently to ourselves. One thing was obvious—that there is much greater opportunity for cooperation and communication between committees than has been practiced in the past. This opportunity I hope will be grasped and exploited to the full this year.

The work of the committees is to a great extent the life of the Chapter. They deserve your support. Probably most of you have not been asked to serve on a committee. That is because in the natural press of circumstances your interests, capacities and willingness cannot be known unless you make them known. In the past the experiment has been tried of sending post cards asking for an expression of interest. As in all such queries the returns were only partially satisfactory. The best way of finding opportunities to help is to come around—attend meetings—get to know the various committee chairmen—find out what they are actually doing and how you can be useful. There is plenty of work to be done.

If you have read this far you might even read further and find out more about what goes on. And being informed rally and give your whole-hearted support to make the Chapter's work this year worthy of the importance we attach with pride to our chosen profession.

HERE & THERE

by HERBERT L. SMITH

The Municipal Art Society stacked its Board of Directors with Chapter members at their last election: **Harmon H. Goldstone** was elected President; **Edward Larrabee Barnes**, Treasurer; and **Charles L. Magruder**, Secretary.... Speaking of art, the National Guild of Mural Artists, Inc., notifies us that they maintain a "cross-file of artists, nation wide, in all price and style areas, fine and applied art." The Guild offers a referral and estimate service free of charge to architects and designers, and offers "services of some of our members for exhibition purposes for public showings, shows, etc., on loan for proper credits."

The Regional Plan Association announced the election of **Perry Coke Smith**, of Voorhees Walker Smith Smith & Haines, to the Association's Board of Directors... **Joseph J. Roberto** has been named University Architect at New York University.... **Robert W. Cutler**, of S.O.M., has been re-elected for his second term as Vice President of the Building Research Institute.... **Hugh Ferriss** was elected to Academicianship in the National Academy of Design; and **L. Bancel LaFarge** and **Geoffrey N. Lawford** to Associate Membership.

MATTHEW W. DEL GAUDIO

It is with sorrow that we report the sudden passing on September 17 of **Matthew W. Del Gaudio**. An active member of the Chapter and of the Architectural League, and a past president of the New York State Association of Architects, he was always willing to assume any task that would advance the standing and prestige of architects anywhere. Our deepest sympathies to his wife Alma and family, of 2873 Bainbridge Avenue, New York 58.

BRUNNER SCHOLARSHIP

Closing date for all applications for the 1960 Arnold W. Brunner Scholarship, awarded annually by the Chapter, is November 15. The grant is for an amount up to \$3,000 covering advanced study in some special field which will contribute effectively to the practice, teaching, or knowledge of Architecture. Application blanks and information may be procured from the Chapter office at 115 East 40th St., New York 16 (Murray Hill 9-7969), according to **Emanuel N. Turano**, Brunner Scholarship Committee Chairman.

The editor of the "American Architects Directory" (published by R. R. Bowker Co.) offers a limited number of copies of the Directory at the discount price of \$12.50 by writing him personally: **George S. Koyl**, 440 Spruce St., Philadelphia 4, Pa.

One of our members urges the founding of an "Alert Society of Photographers of Historic Buildings" to catch photos of some of the city's landmarks while the air around them is cleared by all the current destruction and construction. Any volunteers?

Kahn & Jacobs are blazing the trail for the 1964 New York World's Fair with their design for the "Rheingold Oasis" which has a restaurant on a cantilevered platform atop 60-foot columns.

The Columbia University School of Architecture, getting steam up under its new Dean, **Charles R. Colbert**, announces a two-month program of celebrations next spring, "in honor of the four great founders of modern architecture"—Gropius, Corbu, Mies and Wright. Each will be feted at the school for a two week period, with Mrs. Wright representing the late FLW.

BOOKS

New Housing in Great Britain, by **H. Bruckman** and **D. L. Lewis** (Published by Universe Books, Inc. \$9.50)

The blurb on the jacket of the book says that the illustrations make this volume invaluable for everyone concerned with building homes. The pictures are interesting, but generally speaking (and this is a matter of taste), English Architecture has much in common with the proverbial English cooking.

The explanatory text and the introductions are an excellent review and a beautiful critical analysis of the important thinking that has made the English leaders in the planning field. The book is very important to all connected with planning. (Incidentally, any architect who is not interested in planning might as well be dead.) The book is important because it is a clear condensation of the efforts, the dreams, the failures, the successes, and the results of many English thinking minds who think about the same things that many American thinking minds think about—R. M.

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Legislative

On September 8th, Chairman Rutkins presented a subcommittee report to the Legislative Committee concerning the Proposed Comprehensive Amendments of the Zoning Resolution. The amendments "in their present statements are not workable documents," said one aspect of the report. The committee plans further discussion on the subject at their October 7th meeting.

A subcommittee is to study new Section 26 of the Multiple Dwelling Law relative to height, bulk, and open spaces and report by December 1st. The law becomes effective July 1, 1961.

In other business, the committee approved the proposed revisions of the New York State Building Construction Code.

Public Affairs

A proposed blueprint of operations and activities for 1960-61 has been drafted by a three-man subcommittee. It recommends: 1) the name of the committee be changed to Public Affairs Committee. 2) the Executive Committee and the Public Affairs Committee select a Public Affairs Counsel to coordinate an eleven-point program. 3) the Public Affairs Committee accept a preamble to the new program. The preamble is a brief dissertation on the Architect's place in the fabric of society, his role in the construction industry, and his professional society's responsibilities to the public.

Featured in the proposed program for 1960-61 are the formation of a special committee to deal with the position of the Chapter in regard to the 1964 World's Fair; an increase in coverage and a

change in format of the Oculus.

Civic Design

The main objective of the Civic Design Committee during the past two years has been the adoption of the new Zoning Resolution. Under the direction of Chairman **G. Harmon Gurney**, the Committee produced with Brunner Funds, a detailed report and analysis of the proposal which was the basis of the Chapter's endorsement at the public hearings before the City Planning Commission.

The adoption of the new Zoning will continue to be an important goal in this year's work. It is expected that the Chapter will take part in the hearings before the Board of Estimate sometime this winter.

Of particular news this year is the recent Federal grant for long range urban renewal in New York City. The Planning Commission has set up a Master Plan Department under **Jack Smith**. The Civic Design Committee expects to follow this plan closely and keep the Chapter actively involved in the future planning of the City and of the Metropolitan Region.

Office Practice

Every practicing architect, regardless of the number of people he employs, is encouraged to study the excellent report issued by last year's Office Practice Committee titled "Tabulation of Answers to Personnel Practices Questionnaire." It could and should lead to a more uniform treatment of all persons working within the architectural profession in the Greater New York area. Each Corporate Member of the Chapter was sent a copy last Spring.

MEMBERSHIP

NEW MEMBERS

The New York Chapter extends its warmest welcome to the following new members:

Corporate

Samuel S. Arlen (Transferred from the Westchester Chapter)
William M. Barnum
Louis Battaglia
Herbert Beckhard
Paul John Grayson
(Former Associate Member)
Ara Ignatius (Transferred from the Chicago Chapter)
Robert W. Jones
Everett Rader
George W. Thompson
Richard E. Zegler

Associate

George E. Merkel
William R. Sachs
Augustus R. Schrowang, Jr.
Michael Schutzel
Nathan Silver
George W. Wilcox, Jr.

CANDIDATES

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

Corporate

Leonard Battaglia
Eduardo Baranano da Costa
George Eckerson Fischer
Irving Edward Gershon
Eli Jack Held
Seth Hiller
Edward F. Knowles
George C. Machlouzarides
Paul Reiss
Stanley Salzman
Hugh A. Simpson
Herbert A. Tessler
Howard John Warren
Irwin Daniel Weisberg

Associate

Sponsors:
John Milton Arms {Ernest A. Durham
Louis Barberis {Wayne A. Soverns
Jeanne Marguerite Davern {Vincent Pellegrino
Donald Alexander Fischer {Paul C. Reilly
Arnold Herbert Goldberg {Edwin B. Morris, Jr.
Robert H. Levine {Wm. Dudley Hunt
Willard Scolnik {Morris Ketchum, Jr.
Bernard Segal {Robert Handren
Michael H. Spector {Morris Ketchum, Jr.
George Todorovich {Samuel M. Kurtz
{James J. Souder
{Olivier de Messieres
{Robert T. Handren
{Hyland Dinion
{Pasquale J. Frisone
{Charles S. Spector
{Isaiah Ehrlich
{Daniel Schwartzman
{Abraham Sperling



WOMEN'S ARCHITECTURAL AUXILIARY

First Scholarship Awarded

The WAA announces that its first scholarship grant has been awarded to **Wallace Kaminsky**, of Columbia University, School of Architecture, evening school. The committee extends its congratulations to Mr. Kaminsky and wishes him a successful and happy career.

Luncheon Meeting

The auxiliary had an enthusiastic turnout on October 3, 1960 at the Architectural League, 115 East 40th Street, for the membership planning and policy making "Dutch Treat" luncheon.

Second Annual

Doric Debutante Cotillion

Special arrangements have been made for parents, guests, and architectural groups to hold private dinner parties in the Club prior to the Cotillion event. This year the Second Doric Debutante Cotillion will be held on Saturday, November 26, 1960 at the Metropolitan Club. Ten Doric Debutantes will be presented. One vacancy now exists. If you wish to submit the name of one of your young friends please call CI 6-1288, CI 7-4436, or write to the Women's Architectural Auxiliary, 24 West 55th Street, New York City.

WARREN FELLOWSHIP

The 1960 Lloyd Warren Fellowship of \$5,000 for one year's study abroad was awarded to **Lloyd G. Walter, Jr.** of North Carolina State College, Raleigh, N. C. **Bernard N. Steinberg** of Mt. Kisco, N. Y. placed second in the national competition and was awarded \$500. **William E. Valentine** of North Carolina State College was awarded the third prize of \$250.

Circulars of information for 1960-1961 outlining the problems for the coming school year are now available and may be obtained from the NIAE, 115 East 40th St., New York 16, N. Y.

C O M I N G E V E N T S

NEW YORK CHAPTER AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

A · I · A

NOVEMBER 2, 1960, Wednesday, 7 p.m.
Presentation of Medal of Honor for City Planning
to Lawrence M. Orton
Sheraton-East Hotel
Park Avenue and 51st Street

NOVEMBER 15, 1960, Tuesday, 5:15 p.m.—
Gallery A
Technical Committee Lecture
Speaker: Robert B. Newman, Acoustical Consultant
Topic: "What's New in Acoustics"
115 East 40th Street

NOVEMBER 26, 1960, Saturday
2nd Annual Doric Debutante Cotillion
METROPOLITAN CLUB
Fifth Avenue at 60th Street

NOVEMBER 10, 1960, Thursday, 5:30 p.m.
Special Showing of new design products
NATIONAL DESIGN CENTER
415 East 53rd Street

OCTOBER 3, through NOVEMBER 5, 1960,
America House, 44 West 53rd Street, New York,
will present "*From the Hand to the Home*," featuring
a live demonstration of craftsmen at work.

Monday through Saturday, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.,
craftsmen will perform their various arts.
Silversmithing—OCTOBER 3-15
Screen-printing—OCTOBER 17-22
Pottery-throwing on a wheel—OCTOBER 24-29
Loom Weaving—OCTOBER 31-NOVEMBER 5

A. I. A.

COMING EVENTS

NEW YORK CHAPTER AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

NOVEMBER 10, 1960, Thursday, 7:30 p.m.
Special showing of new designs produced
NATIONAL DESIGN CENTRE
115 East 53rd Street

OCTOBER 8, through NOVEMBER 5, 1960
American House, 14 West 52nd Street, New York
will present "From the Hand to the House," featuring
a live demonstration of craftsmen at work.

Monday through Saturday, from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.
craftsmen will perform their various arts.
Silver Anniversary—OCTOBER 8-15
Screening—OCTOBER 17-22
Pottery—showing on a wheel—OCTOBER 24-29
Loan Viewing—OCTOBER 31, NOVEMBER 5

NOVEMBER 2, 1960, Wednesday, 7 p.m.
Presentation of Model of Honor for City Planning
to Lawrence M. O'Brien
Sheraton-East Hotel
Park Avenue and 51st Street

NOVEMBER 10, 1960, Thursday, 8:15 p.m.—
Gallery A
Technical Committee Lecture
Speaker: Robert B. Newman, Acoustical Consultant
Topic: "What's New in Acoustics"
115 East 40th Street

NOVEMBER 28, 1960, Saturday
2nd Annual Book Debate & Collision
METROPOLITAN CLUB
11th Avenue at 60th Street