

OCULUS

NEW YORK CHAPTER AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS



MAY 1961



NEW BELLEVUE DESIGN LOWERS OPERATING COSTS

The proposed Bellevue Hospital Center will cost approximately \$68,000,000, it was announced by Albert B. Bauer, R.A., Director of the Division of Buildings of the New York City Department of Public Works.

Mr. Bauer stated that the new Bellevue will effect savings in operational expenses of about \$2,250,000 annually over the old Bellevue. "Over a period of thirty years," he pointed out, "this will virtually pay for the cost of original construction."

Mr. Bauer spoke before members of the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects at a meeting sponsored by the Hospital and Health Committee.

Preliminary plans for the new Bellevue are now being studied by the Budget Director's office and the Public Works Department.

In discussing the current waste in time, motion, space, costs, and communications at Bellevue, he stated that the stop-gap methods of modernization instituted during the past two decades have, in instances, only served to compound the inconveniences and inefficiency.

For example, Mr. Bauer said, the original obsolete operating suite was replaced with an up-to-date one but it had to be spread

over two floors due to space limitations. As another instance, he cited elevators that had been added periodically until a total of 43 was reached, yet little had been achieved to assure adequate or smooth functioning service.

Mr. Bauer also stated that there is an average of one mile of principal corridor per floor and this frequently entails a quarter of a mile distance between basic functions. "The lost time inherent in these distances," he said, "is often aggravated by the fact that some-

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IMPROVING NEW YORK

TIMES SQUARE REVISITED

by JAMES L. CADY

We talked to Vincent Sardi about his *Committee to Improve Times Square* and he said that they are just getting up steam. A series of proposals has been drawn up and will be sent to some of the city commissioners. One of the first men the committee members will see is the new Police Commissioner, Michael Murphy.

The improvement committee's concern is understandable since its members are business men in the Times Square area. If the legitimate theatre moves out, what is then left to attract the eaters and drinkers of other than hot dogs and beer? If, somehow, some new life could be injected into the fabulous invalid (who seems to be showing signs of paralysis) and the literature of the theatre could be written and produced for a more mature audience — perhaps that would help. Most theatre patrons are over 30 years of age, we would guess, and judging by the traffic jam at curtain time — they are coming from dinners they have had on the other side of town.

Sardi suggested we talk to Douglas Leigh, the man behind most of the big Times Square signs. Leigh recently bought the old N. Y. Times Tower at the southern end of the Square. We called, but Mr. Leigh wasn't in.

His plans, as announced in the March 16th N. Y. Times, are to modernize the structure and develop it into a combination exhibition hall and office building. Mr. Leigh plans a Broadway luncheon club on top of the 24-story structure as well as a "Top of the Tower" restaurant which will

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OCULUS

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NEW YORK CHAPTER

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LET'S TAKE STOCK

The ways and means of practicing architecture require re-evaluation and self-criticism. Architecture is a profession, and its practitioners must be licensed under the laws of the State.

Over a period of years, the profession has developed certain codes and ethics, and even a few eccentricities. Members of the AIA are required to maintain certain standards for the profession. In many cases in the past the profession has created the illusion only, that these standards are being upheld.

One necessary concern of the practicing architect besides the performance of quality in craft, is in basically "earning a living." To accomplish this he must either work for himself, or with a partner, or for other architects. To work for himself, means that he must be a businessman, promoter, interpreter and processor of the client's requirements, designer, and supervisor of construction from working drawings and specifications. Above this, he must assume the legal and moral responsibility for the soundness of the structure. This process, except on the smallest type of project, cannot effectively be handled by any one individual. Assistance is usually required, and, therefore, the architect usually hires other architects, designers or draftsmen.

Another concern in our profession deals with the young practitioner. Most young architects, after having successfully survived the rigors of obtaining licenses, find

it difficult to practice individually or in partnership. They usually lack experience, clients, and financial backing. Unless a young architect has a private income permitting him freedom to operate, he must for economic reasons seek employment in other architects' offices. The level of remuneration for the young architect does not generally rise commensurately with that of professionally trained men in other fields. In addition he is given very little opportunity to broaden his experience in the overall practice of the profession.

Is the architect beginning to realize that something is wrong, not only inside the profession, but on the outside as well? Why is he not accepted as the authority of good taste? We do not correct the doctor's diagnosis with our own limited and subjective opinions. Why, when the work of the architect molds the very environment in which the effect is immeasurable upon man's lives, is he not accepted as the leader, creator and judge of form?

Does the architect's training and experience qualify him for the responsibility of molding man's environment? Perhaps the answer lies in the architect's own reluctance in acknowledging the worth of those within his own profession. Perhaps he has been negligent in helping the expansion and development of his younger colleagues, sacrificing long term worth for short term needs. Before we can expect to gain more respect from those *outside* the profession, we must first become a little more self critical, and express greater concern and respect for those *within* our profession.

P. J. G.

A PRIVILEGE AND A DUTY

To anyone who has been active in the affairs of the Chapter, attending meetings and working on committees, it has been evident that funds are an important part.

Each year we must point out that you have forgotten something . . . your dues. Please don't let your dues remain "outstanding" any longer.

Dues account for most of our income so the 10% which is in arrears hurts us greatly. Please send in your dues now.

BOOKS

And on the Eighth Day, The Last Word on City Planning by Richard Hedman and Fred Bair, Jr. Falcon Press, Philadelphia, 1961, \$3.00.

Hedman and Bair team up to present some succinct statements on the plight of cities undergoing fumigation with "planning gas." These are accompanied by some perfectly delightful cartoons by Hedman illustrating the woes of present day planning problems.

If one is apt to soften and turn into an accepting soul of society, the authors very quickly snap one out of his apathy with the "eighth day" creation: the mess we have accepted and which we continue to feed upon in our blighted cities, both new and old.

Master plan, or no master plan, planner or no planner, we must face up to it and realize there are no gimmicks, no over-night solutions, and no "mad genius" who can bring us to salvation. If "every city should have a master plan, bold, imaginative, flexible, to guide its development so that by the end of twenty years it becomes a thing of Beauty, Order, and Convenience fitted to its time," the book implies . . . it's not so much the plan that really counts as it is the people, one and all, who through their basic values and understanding, can jointly contribute to the achievement of "City Beautiful."

"*And on the Eighth Day*" . . . for both a treat and a treatment!

Paul John Grayson

It's the Law by Bernard Thomson, 436 pp. Channel Press, New York, 1960, \$7.50. Edited by Norman A. Coplan. Preface by Edward D. Stone.

Those familiar with Bernard Thomson's monthly column for *Progressive Architecture* will find, in this book, a study and reference text that pointedly refers to the legal hazards involved in the architectural field. Mr. Thomson's columns have been collated into five general groupings.

1. Statutes regulating the practice of architecture, engineering and construction.
2. Organization and business prob-

lems of architectural engineering and construction firms.

3. Architect, engineer, contractor and owner — the employment relation.
4. Rights and liabilities of architects, engineers and contractors.
5. Restrictions upon the use of property.

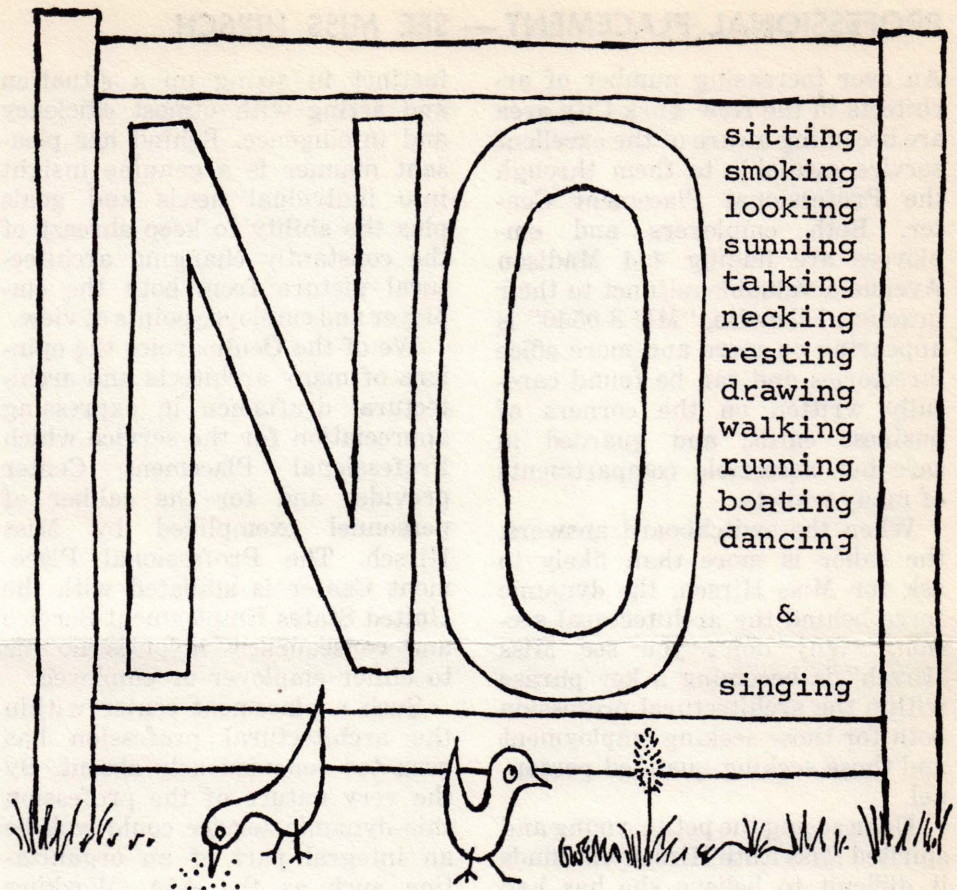
Reading this book will provide the architect with a basis for approaching his particular problems with a realization of the most important legal points and an awareness of difficulties which may be avoided through precautionary measures.

One of the disturbing aspects of the larger legal situation that confronts the architect, as brought out by Mr. Thomson, is the extraordinary absence of communication between those affected by similar legal problems in various parts of the United States and the rest of the world. As a result much wasted effort ensues due to the lack of understanding of the similarity of many legal problems.

The book includes an appendix with sample form agreements and an index of recent legal cases throughout the country.

This much needed work by one of the small number of attorneys qualified to write on this subject by virtue of his study and research of the construction industry again indicates the enlarged area of responsibility and increasing complexity of professional practice in an age heightened by new methods in construction, trade specialists, complex building systems and intense competition.

Robert Djerejian



WHAT ARE PARKS FOR?

Let's give the parks back to the birds . . . that is, if the Police and Park Departments are going to start restricting the assembly and people. It's not just the "beats" who ostensibly gather in Washington Square Park to enjoy a spring or summer night with "home made music," but it's other people too who, at the beach or park, can hardly escape from those huge signs.

Where can people go these days to sit, to rest, to talk, to watch, or to do whatever proper people care to do?

The corner street gangs have been sent into hiding, and now it's the "beats," out of the park . . . and into the coffee houses. However, finding a coffee house these days that isn't on the black list because it isn't licensed as a cabaret, is like finding a Cadillac without chrome.

How come the *Girlie Shows* which are spread about the town get off so clean, and have it so easy? What our town needs, are parks for people and . . . not for the birds only.

Paul John Grayson

Bellevue

Continued from Page 1

times it is impossible to go from one location to another on the same floor without detouring by way of a lower or upper floor."

The ratio of the number of employees to each patient bed is about 50 per cent higher than the national average. It was pointed out that the annual Bellevue budget amounts to \$21,000,000, of which approximately \$4,000,000 is for food, drugs, and supplies, and the balance, about \$17,000,000, represents employees' salaries.

Mr. Bauer said that the new

building would be 24 stories high and completely air conditioned. In addition, all patients' rooms would be located along the outer perimeter with full daylight exposure.

Exhaustive studies of the existing Bellevue Hospital complex plus recommended fundamental changes were pursued under the direction of the late Public Works Commissioner Frederick H. Zurmuhlen, Deputy and Acting Public Works Commissioner Meyer F. Wiles, and associated architects and engineers retained as consultants. The latter includes **Pomerance and Breines; Katz, Waisman, Weber, Strauss**

Joseph Blumenkranz; and Feld and Timoney.

Mr. Bauer pointed out that there would be 188 patients to a typical floor in the new Bellevue. They would be in 6-bed, 3-bed, and 1-bed rooms.

These arrangements, he added, will permit interflow of medical and surgical cases, regardless of sex and age, and will do away with the now common sight of some patient areas "bursting at the seams" alongside nearly empty rooms, with the concomitant low level of over-all occupancy.

PROFESSIONAL PLACEMENT — SEE MISS HIRSCH

An ever increasing number of architects in the New York City area are becoming aware of the excellent service available to them through the Professional Placement Center. Both employers and employees are finding 444 Madison Avenue a valuable adjunct to their practice. Likewise, "MU 8-0540" is appearing on more and more office directories and can be found carefully written on the corners of business cards, and guarded in safe but accessible compartments of many wallets.

When the switchboard answers, the caller is more than likely to ask for Miss Hirsch, the dynamic force behind the architectural section. "Why don't you see Miss Hirsch" is becoming a key phrase within the architectural profession both for those seeking employment and those seeking qualified personnel.

Upon seeing the petite, young and spirited Miss Ruth Hirsch one finds it difficult to believe she has had so many years of interviewing and placement experience. Our doubts soon leave when we see her in action; otherwise we are forced to believe she has some supernatural

instinct in sizing up a situation and acting with utmost efficiency and intelligence. Behind her pleasant manner is a genuine insight into individual needs and goals plus the ability to keep abreast of the constantly changing architectural picture from both the employer and employee points of view.

We of the **Oculus** voice the opinions of many architects and architectural draftsmen in expressing appreciation for the service which Professional Placement Center provides and for the caliber of personnel exemplified by Miss Hirsch. The Professional Placement Center is affiliated with the United States Employment Service and consequently involves no fee to either employer or employee.

Such a placement center within the architectural profession has been too conspicuously absent. By the very nature of the profession this dynamic service could well be an integral part of an organization such as the AIA. Working within the scope of the AIA, this service could not only help maintain ethical standards between employers and employees, but could also act as a significant influence

in attracting the "Younger" architect and in serving as an example of the organization's interest in the member, whether employer or employee.

BRI CONFERENCE

by PHILIP M. CHU

The 1961 Spring Conference of the Building Research Institute was held at the Shoreham Hotel, Washington, D. C., on May 16th to 18th.

The main topics of the program were (1) Weatherproofing thin shell concrete roofs, (2) Pressure sensitive tapes, (3) Selection and field application of adhesives, (4) Public entrance doors, and (5) Plastics in buildings. In addition, there was a presentation of 15 papers on new building researches including five on roofs of curved shapes.

For additional information on future conferences, write M. C. Coon, Jr., BRI Executive Director, Building Research Institute, National Academy of Sciences, National Research Council, 2101 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington 25, D. C.

Times Square *Continued from Page 1*

have a spectacular view of the Square and will be open only in the evenings. The famous traveling sign will remain, and will be modernized, and the building will be renamed. All this sounds encouraging and will certainly help to give the area a much needed lift. The Square viewed at night from the Times Tower is one of the most spectacular sights in the world (we went up there and had a good look). That is what we call a good spot for a restaurant that will attract a desirable clientele.

Mr. Leigh also wants to plant more trees in the areas. Now trees are nice and lovelier than any poem about them but there are places for trees and this overcrowded asphalt jungle is not one of them. Planting trees along Third Avenue (after the "El") has wrought a miracle and provided a continuity and vitality that could hardly have been accomplished otherwise. The street was also widened and the sidewalks

were cut back closer to the buildings and there was still room for the trees.

Times Square is overcrowded as it is, and the slight pass made at landscaping the north end of the square is uninspired and unrelated in design and scale to the surroundings. The lozenge size and shaped planting bed behind George M. Cohan's statue has served no one's purpose except the Sunday Bomber's. The perimeter curb was designed to discourage the foot weary tourist. The granite settee behind Father Duffy is enclosed in an iron fence and a cheerless sign reads, "Do Not Feed the Birds," meaning pigeons. The huddle of sycamore saplings behind the much decorated statue and settee appears as forlorn as if on a desert isle. Trees on a desert isle are welcome enough provided there is room enough left over for the castaways.

What Times Square needs is a big, overall theatrical solution to the basic problem of people and traffic.

Mr. Leigh points out that Times

Square draws more visitors than any other attraction in the world. "One and one-half million people go through the Square every day, and 900,00 of these are New Yorkers, 450,000 are from out of town, and 100,000 of those are foreign visitors." Now *there* is a crowd that's worth coping with. Why not, as a starter, limit vehicular traffic between 8 p.m. and midnight to crosstown traffic in the area bounded by 6th and 8th Avenues and 42nd to 57th Streets? Pedestrian traffic would flow continuously from block to block and vehicular traffic would flow crosstown without having to halt for the downtown traffic on Broadway and 7th Avenue or the multitude going to and leaving the theatre area.

Since a great many of those 450,000 folks go there to walk around and look at Mr. Leigh's signs why not line the curbs with benches and leave the trees to the parks and boulevards! Well good luck anyhow, and see you in Times Square!

ONE OUT OF 18 NEW YORKERS LIVES IN PUBLIC HOUSING

Today, one New Yorker out of every 18 lives in public housing, according to *Architectural Forum*. When projects already approved are completed, one out of every 14 persons will have the city as a landlord. This does not count privately built projects that receive public subsidy by tax abatement.

ATTENTION: ALUMNI OF JAMES MONROE HIGH SCHOOL, BRONX, N. Y.

The Hall of Fame Committee is anxious to contact all men and women who have distinguished themselves in their chosen work, public life, and community affairs. If you are eligible for nomination or know someone who is worthy of consideration, please contact Max Taub, Chairman, James Monroe High School, 1300 Boynton Avenue, Bronx, New York.

URBAN RENEWAL AND THE EXPANDING METROPOLIS

The New York Chapter of the American Institute of Planners in conjunction with the New York Area Chapter of Lambda Alpha are sponsoring a conference on "*Urban Renewal and the Expanding Metropolis*." The conference will be held on Saturday, May 27, 1961 at the Men's Faculty Club, Columbia University. All AIA members have been cordially invited to attend and participate.

The Annual Business Meeting will be held from 9:30 to 12 noon with **Douglas S. Powell**, Chapter President, presiding. This will be followed by a luncheon at which **Herbert H. Swinburne**, Philadelphia Architect, will speak on "Legacy 1999." The afternoon program will consist of a seminar on "Community Renewal Program for the City of New York." For reservations and additional information write or call: **J. M. Miller**, Books International, 501 W. 121st St., New York 27, N. Y., MO 3-8030.

HERE AND THERE

by JAMES L. CADY

... Architects have the authority on city jobs, it has been disclosed, to get artists into the act before the last minute so that the building, landscaping, etc., becomes part of the whole ... rather than being applied later.

Cavanaugh Assures Artists on Housing ... Fire Comm. Cavanaugh met with artists group (May 9) to assure them that the city wants them to stay ... artists had complained that mass evictions are forcing them to leave the city, and threatening New York's continued existence as a center of artistic life. An artist we know, who appropriately enough lives in a downtown loft was called on by the fire department and the first question he was asked was: "Are you a beatnik?" Indicating that they're really looking for beatniks (people, usually men, with beards) to clear out.

Pratt Institute's New Head, Mr. Richard H. Heindel, 4th president of the 74-year-old institution, succeeds Dr. Robert Fisher Oxnam who is now President of Drew University, Madison, N. J. Dr. Heindel is a graduate of Harvard College, and a former Chancellor of the University of Buffalo. Most recently he was president of Wagner College, Staten Island.

Coliseum Has Fifth Birthday. The structure cost \$35 million, and half that many million people have attended exhibitions there. The N. Y. World Telegram & Sun reported that 60,000 persons attended the World Trade Fair in one day and they had to close the doors. The greatest single attraction was the 42-day run of the Soviet show, 1959, which drew 1,100,000.

New City Housing to Cost \$83 Million. Record Program calls for 5,500 homes. Six separate projects with more than 5,500 home units will provide apartments for 4,739 families in Brooklyn, Manhattan, the Bronx, and Staten Island at rents ranging from \$60 a month for 2½ rooms to \$105 a month for 7½ rooms. In addition 826 of the apartments will be designed specifically for the aged. The Authority Chairman, **William Reid**, announced that construction of the first project is scheduled to start in August. Four more will get under way before the end of the year. Tompkins Houses, \$17,185,000, will cover six blocks in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, Unger & Unger, architects. Jonathan Williams Houses, \$10,855,000, four block site, Williamsburg, Brooklyn, Eggers & Higgins, architects. Chelsea Houses, \$8,390,000, half block site, Manhattan, W. 25th Street, Ninth Avenue, Paul L. Wood & Assoc., architects. Gerard Swope Houses, \$9,970,000, East 93rd Street, Manhattan, Frederick G. Frost, Jr. & Assoc., architects. John Purroy Mitchel Houses, \$28,175,000, Mott Haven section, Bronx, Greenberg & Ames, architects. Richmond Terrace Houses, \$8,627,000, N. E. corner of S. I., LaPierre Litchfield & Partners, architects.

COMING EVENTS

MAY 26, 1961, Friday 6:30 p.m., Architectural League

Council for Advancement of the Negro in Architecture

Annual Meeting

Speaker: Hon. Edward R. Dudley, President, Borough of Manhattan

JUNE 7, 1961, Wednesday, 12:30 p.m., Gallery A

Annual Luncheon for the Election of Officers and Elective Committees

BUILDERS ASSOCIATION MEETS WITH CHAPTER

by EDWIN M. FORBES

At the request of the Metropolitan Builders Association, a committee was appointed by the Chapter to discuss with them various common interests. As a result of these first meetings, the following have been recommended by the Executive Committee of the Chapter:

1. A single general construction contract with the architect having control over the selection of major subcontractors.

2. Contracts be written with a 10% retention clause on the condition that after 50% of the contract has been completed the contractor will be permitted to request reduction of the retention. The architect may, in turn, so recommend the reduction to the owner if it is equitable and without penalty to the owner. In no case would total retention be reduced beyond 5% of contract price.

3. Architects, engineers, and owners are to avoid, wherever possible, requests for alternate estimates and unit prices, but when necessary they should be held to a minimum. They should not be used to determine the basic scope of the work.

In helping the general contractor prepare his lump-sum bid submissions, only customary unit prices should be requested. The architect shall have the right to negotiate unit prices prior to the award of the contract and shall decide what unit prices are essential to the construction of the work.

4. Unit prices shall be contained in only one section of the bid documents, preferably in the bid proposal form.

Further meetings will be held to examine other problems.

CARPET DESIGN COMPETITION

"Carpet Trades Limited" announces its International Competition for Carpet Designs. Entries are invited from the field of Architecture and allied arts. The closing date for entries is September 10, 1961. Entry forms can be obtained from Carpet Trades Ltd., P O Box 5 Mill Street, Kidderminster, England. Mark envelope "Competition."

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

by F. MARSHALL SMITH

Education and Scholarship Committee:

Plastering Institute Award

H. Bourke Weigel, Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Scholarships reported that his group has been reviewing applications for the Plastering Institute Award. Preliminary screening of the thirteen valid applications resulted in the selection of six finalists. Their records and references will be carefully checked and each will be called in for a personal interview during the latter part of May. The winner will be announced in the *Oculus*. Other members of this subcommittee include Joseph M. De Chaira, John B. Dodd, Ralph Mignone, Dorothy C. Scott, Clarence E. Weigold, Jr., and Walter H. Kilham, Chairman.

INSTITUTE FELLOWSHIP

Frederick G. Frost, Chairman of the Committee on Fellows, would be glad to receive the names of members who, on the basis of design or service, should be advanced to Fellowship.

When your time comes to be so proposed think how honored and rewarded you will feel. At this time there are members who deserve this honor. Will you call the chairman now?

YOUNGER ARCHITECTS

In hopes of injecting new blood into Chapter activities, a newly formed Younger Architects Committee last month mailed questionnaires to 203 members and associate members under 40 years of age. As the mailing pointed out, these 203 represent only 15 per cent of total chapter membership, reflecting in part a limited interest of young architects in their professional organization.

To date, some 60 responses have been received, according to Committee Chairman Norval White, with most indicating enthusiasm and offering new ideas. The respondents will be invited to get together in small groups to discuss specific plans at the homes of committee members. Others on the committee are Harold Edelman, Joseph Fuller, Bruce C. Graham,

Norman Klein, Julian Neski, and Rolland Thompson.

Thirty of those who answered the questionnaire indicated a willingness to serve on the Chapter's committee which this year will organize the NYSAA's convention at Saranac, September 28-30. Preliminary meetings have brought forth discussion of a possible theme for the convention: "Town Design and the Role of the Architect," and various ideas for workshops in urban renewal, visual design and finance, and answers as to how architects can assume a more active role in their communities.

Interest has also been expressed in other Chapter activities: the role of young architects in the development of the 1964 World's Fair; public exhibitions of architectural work in highly visible places about the city; stimulation of design competitions; agitation for a truly integrated NCARB system; constructive criticism of, as well as concern over, active participation in the important work of the many Chapter committees.

MEMBERSHIP

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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

Corporate

William Bailey Smith (Transferred from the Baton Rouge Chapter, A.I.A.)
E. William Thun (Transferred from the New Jersey Chapter, A.I.A.)

CANDIDATES

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

Corporate

John M. Dixon
Laurence Sandt Litchfield
Albert Musgrave Hyde (Readmission)
Edwin D. Martin
Ralston W. Newsam

Associate

Sheldon Hutchins Cady
Alan Burt Goldsant

Sponsors:

{Burton H. Holmes
{David F. M. Todd
{Clayton P. Morey
{Irwin D. Weisberg

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Housing, Fees, and Contracts

William F. R. Ballard, Chairman
Earl H. Lundin, Vice Chairman
Simon Breines
Frederick G. Frost
Milton M. Glass
Arthur C. Holden
Saymour R. Josephs
Samuel Paul
Harry M. Prince
George G. Shimamoto

Speakers Bureau Committee.....Miss Jeanne Davera