Colonnade Row (La Grange Terrace) at 428-34 Lafayette St., was designed by A. J. Davis, architect, and built by Seth Geer for John Jacob Astor. The architect patterned the series of connected residences (originally nine) after Lansdown Crescent in Bath.

The marble for the building (originally the entire facade) was cut by Sing Sing prisoners, an economy measure that triggered a local stone mason’s riot. The columns are Corinthian in feeling and a continuous railing ran across the colonnade. The entrance to each private house was through a small fenced garden plot, and the ground floor contained the entrance hall, stairway, kitchen, and pantry; at the rear of the house, separated by a small court, were servant quarters. Doric columns originally framed the entrances, and the tall double-hung windows on the parlor (2nd) floor were replaced by French doors around 1900 when the fourth-floor studios were added to some of the houses. The five houses on the north extremity were presumably removed around 1900 when a stable-garage was built for Wanamaker's.

Of historical interest is the fact that President Tyler and his bride eloped from one of the houses, and that Messrs. Thackeray and Dickens visited others. President Lincoln is said to have been scheduled to make his “Cooper Union” address from the second floor balcony of Colonnade Row. Today's long-time residents include Conte's Italian Restaurant and a number of individual tenants who have no intention of moving.

Over the years the patching and alterations have not ruined the design of Colonnade Row nor seriously affected its scale or dignity (though the four remaining houses are in dire need of repair). It remains the only large scale example of domestic Greek Revival architecture in the city.

Sources: Chapter Historical Buildings Committee file; WPA New York Guide; “Lost Examples of Colonial Architecture”; “Nooks and Corners of Old New York”; residents in building.

NOTE: Through a printing error, Knight Sturges’ fine sketch of the Watson house in last month's issue was credited to P. Geiger. Our apologies to both gentlemen.

NELSON NAMED FELLOW
Architect-author-designer George Nelson will be the sole New York Chapter member among 35 advanced to the rank of Fellow of the AIA at the May 5-9 convention in Miami.

Nelson, who was named in the categories of design and literature, is well known in these fields as president of George Nelson & Co., Inc., industrial design; and co-author (with Henry Wright) of “Tomorrow's House” and numerous other books and magazine articles.

Born in Hartford in 1908, Nelson is a graduate of Yale's School of Fine Arts and the American Academy in Rome, winner of the
CONTINUED FROM P. 1

Prix de Rome and Scarab Gold Medal, as well as many more recent honors for his furniture, exhibit, product, and graphic arts designs. Prior to founding his own firm, and his current architectural practice with Gordon Chadwick (Nelson & Chadwick), he had been associated with Time Inc. as managing editor and consultant to Architectural FORUM.

The Chapter and Oculus extend warmest congratulations to Mr. Nelson for his latest honor.

IMPROVING NEW YORK

Recently Oculus carried an announcement of the first annual Albert S. Bard Award, established by the City Club of New York. Its purpose is "to encourage and promote excellence in civic architecture . . . " and entries may be submitted by any architect registered in New York for any project executed in New York City for any agency of the city government.

The program got started last year when a young architect who is a member of the club was appointed chairman of its sub-committee on Planning and Housing. This sub-committee undertook to draw up recommendations towards improving the quality of design of public buildings in New York City. (The significance of this assignment was impressed upon the chairman when his research revealed that favorable critical mention of the City’s public architecture ends with New York’s City Hall, designed in 1803!)

The sub-committee’s report actually contained eight specific recommendations, including, for example, one of perennial interest to architects—increased fees. But the president of the club considered that the most appropriate recommendation was that of establishing an annual award as a means of creating public interest in good civic architecture. Its board of trustees voted approval, and named the program in honor of one of its most distinguished members, Mr. Bard. The young architect who initiated the idea is Leon Brand, and we are pleased to note that he is also a member of the New York Chapter.

S. Hart Moore

BOOKS

Architectural Design Preview—U.S.A.
224 pp. Illus. $15.
A compilation of designs submitted to Progressive Architecture’s Annual Design Awards Program at first seems a rather uninteresting idea for a book—especially since a good percentage of prospective readers already have seen the designs in the magazine. But Associate Editor John Dixon has turned it into a good book with a skillful selection of designs welded together by a fine, restrained text, and excellent reproductions.

The advantage of publishing designs rather than photographs of completed buildings is quite apparent and is emphasized by Thomas E. Creighton in the foreword to the book. The time lag between an architect’s final design drawings and the actual completion of the building may be years. Publishing design drawings therefor shows the more immediate influences and thought of architects in the USA.

The book is divided into building types. Examples are chosen "on the basis of their quality as architecture, how well they satisfy the requirements of the program, and the extent to which they may be prophetic of future trends." It is significant to note that some designs chosen were not award winners, and that the work of 111 architects is represented in the 141 projects included in the book.

Robert Beattie

The handsomely bound Second Edition of the American Architects Directory, which contains listings of all members of the Institute plus a selected list of non-members, is available to AIA members at the special low price of $15. To all others the price is $25.

The Directory contains 11,200 biographies on 976 pages. Orders should be sent directly to the publisher, R. R. Bowker Company, 62 West 45th Street, New York 36.

JOHNSON, PEI ELECTED TO NATIONAL ARTS INSTITUTE

Among 12 eminent creative artists recently elected to the National Institute of Arts and Letters, the nation’s highest honor society of the arts, are Chapter Members Philip Johnson and Ieoh Ming Pei. Also elected: Buckminster Fuller, winner of the Chapter’s Award of Merit (1952); Leonard Baskin, graphic artist and sculptor; Richard Lippold, sculptor; Charles Sheeler, painter; Catherine Drinker Bowen, biographer; Stanley Kunitz, poet; William Maxwell, novelist; Samuel Eliot Morison, historian, Gilbert Seldes, interpreter of the popular arts; and Nikolai Lopatnikoff, composer.

LETTERS

Sirs: I was pleased to see the March issue of Oculus which had an article about my work under the Stewardson Fellowship. Your article presents a full and balanced treatment and I am thankful. At the moment, I am in the process of joining the A.I.A., so quite soon I hope to be a full-fledged subscriber to your publication.

Edward T. Shiffer
New York City

Erratum: J. Stanley Sharp, who is serving on the Chapter’s School Committee, was inadvertently omitted from the Chapter’s Committee Listing mailed to the membership in February.
SPREADING THE ARTS IN NEW YORK—JOHN MACFADYEN
by Sheldon Licht

In 1960, the New York State Legislature made history when it created a commission to survey the State’s cultural resources and determine the role of government in support of the arts. The enabling legislation declared that “the practice and enjoyment of the arts are of increasing importance, and the general welfare...will be promoted by giving further recognition to the arts as a vital aspect of our culture and heritage.”

After some study, a permanent program was adopted enabling communities of the State to present cultural events at a cost consistent with local conditions. Among those which have been developed are touring companies of the performing arts; the exhibition of original works of art on behalf of regional museums, art centers, and libraries throughout the State; and a technical assistance program to provide consultants in a wide variety of fields to smaller museums, historical societies, and similar institutions. To provide the same professional standards throughout the State, the New York State Council on the Arts de­frays a substantial amount of the costs.

In addition to this highly successful program there will be an extension of performances by selected regional symphony orchestras; a county-by-county survey of “architecture worth saving”; a long range art loan program for regional museums from the Metropolitan Museum of Art and other major collections; and a considerable broadening of educational ex­hibits and performances in public schools.

Executive director of the Council for its two developmental years has been Chapter Member John H. MacFadyen, who was first asked to help out with the initial organization, and then stepped in when the first director was compelled by personal business to relinquish the post.

John has found the problem of organizing and expressing the government’s role in the arts as exciting and as demanding as any architectural problem—the work is highly experimental, since it is the first program of its kind. Basically his job is to coordinate and execute his ideas and the ideas of some 200 able advisors. The objective is to give as many people as possible a chance to live with the “living arts.” (As John puts it, “Unfamiliarity breeds contempt.”) There is no effort to enter into artistic decisions; the Council is there only to support existing institutions and to expose them to new audiences. There is an effort to catch up with the State’s rapid suburbanization, in order that people not living in major cities may still have some of the city’s artistic pleasures.

Director MacFadyen finds all these problems stimulating, but he feels there should be a two- or three-year tenure for his job to avoid an “ossification” of the system. Modestly, John MacFadyen claims no qualifications for this job. And for a program of this sort, perhaps this is the best qualification to have.

“DESIGN FOR BUSINESS” PANELS SET BY CHAPTER AND A.M.A.

The New York Chapter AIA has joined with the American Management Association in developing a conference on the theme of “Better Design For Better Business.”

The Chapter’s participation in the conference, which will be held May 15 through 17 at the Roosevelt Hotel, is a public affairs project developed to create a means by which architects can exchange ideas with management.

On Wednesday, May 15 a panel including Morris Ketchum Jr. and Walker Cain will discuss “Ugliness Is Costly.” The panel will be moderated by Richard W. Snibbe, chairman of the Chapter’s Design Committee. On Friday, May 17 Max O. Urbahn will talk on “Better Architecture For Better Business.”

Other speakers will include Walter Hoving, board chairman of Tiffany & Company; Arthur A. Houghton, Jr., president of Steuben Glass; Dr. Richard H. Heindel, president of Pratt Institute; C. Nelson Wright, president of Wright Tool & Forge Company.

According to Chapter president Geoffry N. Lawford, the “conference presents the architectural profession with an opportunity to explain the role and services of the architect to business and, in turn, to get a clearer understanding of management’s problems and objectives.”

The project was initiated by the Chapter’s Public Affairs Counsel working in concert with the Public Affairs Committee.

For further information on the conference contact the General Management Division American Management Association (Astor Hotel), or Chapter headquarters.
meeting on the evening of the second day. The work sessions will be by invitation and the final summary meeting will be an open session to anyone making reservation in advance. The seminar will be held at the Carnegie Endowment International Center Building, United Nations Plaza at 46th Street, New York City.

27 CHAPTER MEMBERS ON NATIONAL AIA COMMITTEES

Morris Ketchum, Jr. FAIA, Director of AIA’s New York Region, has drawn to the attention of Oculus that of the Institute’s 53 national committees, 27 New York Chapter members are serving on 22 committees for 1963. Seven of the 27 are committee chairmen, 11 are members, and 9 are corresponding members. “The Chapter,” says Mr. Ketchum, “is to be congratulated on its outstanding service to the Institute.” Members and their committees follow:

Committee on Housing for the Aging: Joseph D. Weiss, AIA, Chairman; Committee on Investments: Benjamin Moskowitz, AIA, Alternate Member; Committee on State and Chapter Affairs: Frederick J. Woodbridge, FAIA, Corresponding Member; Committee on Academic Training: Olindo Grossi, FAIA, Corresponding Member.

Delano and Aldrich—Aldrich-Emerson Fellowships: Lewis G. Adams, AIA, Chairman; John C. B. Moore, FAIA, Member; Lucien David, AIA, Member; Special Committee on Education: Olindo Grossi, FAIA, Member, Ex-Officio; Committee on Office Procedures: Daniel Schwartzman, FAIA, Chairman; Committee on Professional Insurance and Bonds: John Nelson Linn, AIA, Corresponding Member; Committee on Building Codes and Disaster Studies: William B. Tabler, FAIA, Member; James B. Newman, AIA, Corresponding Member; Committee on AIA-Engineers Conference: William Bailey Smith, AIA, Chairman.

Committee on Aesthetics: Richard W. Snibbe, AIA, Chairman; Committee on the Collaborating Arts: Thorne Sherwood, FAIA, Member; Committee on Religious Buildings: Percival Goodman, FAIA, Member; Brother C. J. B. Bau-

mann, FAIA, Member; Committee on Educational Buildings: Michael L. Radoslovitch, FAIA, Member; Committee on Theatre Architecture: Ben Schlanger, AIA, Member; Committee on Public Housing Administration Liaison: Henry D. Whitney, AIA, Chairman; Committee on Urban Design: Clarence S. Stein, FAIA, Corresponding Member.

Committee on the National Capital: I. M. Pei, AIA, Member; Osvaldo Luis Toro, AIA, Corresponding Member; Committee on Preservation of Historic Buildings: Geoffrey Platt, FAIA, Corresponding Member; Committee on International Relations: Robert W. Cutler, FAIA, Chairman; Committee on Pan-American Congress—1965: Philip C. Johnson, AIA, Member; Advisory Council on Pan-American Congress—1965: Wallace K. Harrison, FAIA, Member; I. M. Pei, AIA, Member; Edward D. Stone, FAIA, Member; Robert W. Cutler, FAIA, Member.

The ugliness comes not only from the general clutter, but from the individual appearance of many items, which are designed with little more in mind than lack of maintenance, and convenience for the police, fire and sanitation departments.

As most bus stops are on corners, the Sanitation Department places most of its 11,000 litter baskets there. This makes sense, as littering is extremely high at this location. However, more specialized items such as mail storage boxes, police call boxes, fire alarm boxes, and others not in constant use don’t necessarily have to be placed right near a busy corner and could probably serve most situations in the middle of a block.

But the greatest space-eaters are Manhattan’s news stands. They are to some degree a considerable convenience to the pedestrian, yet they crowd many corners, especially where subway entrances have already pre-empted most of the walking space. For example, on the northwest corner of 40th Street and Seventh Avenue only one person can pass between the subway entrance, the news stand and a traffic sign without walking in the gutter! One solution would be to relocate news stands at the same intersection so as not to interfere with foot traffic. Another: incorporate the news stands over a new subway entrance.

Architects have proposed before the incorporation into a single, well designed unit all the street corner necessities, placed out of the pedestrian traffic pattern. Each component within this “street utility unit” would have distinctive color and/or texture to help avoid confusion. The result could be that all components would be more visible and easier to use.

CHAOS AT THE CORNER

By Charles K. Robinson

As most citizens are at least dimly aware, the average street corner is one of the messiest places to be found in any city, especially New York. Fire hydrants, traffic lights, street lamps, fire alarm boxes, news stands, bus stop signs, mail boxes, police call boxes, traffic signs, potted plants and litter baskets—all compete for limited sidewalk space and for the attention of motorists and pedestrians.
FIRE AND CODES DISCUSSED

Joseph Platzker, Building Code Consultant who served as Commissioner of Buildings & Houses under Mayor LaGuardia, lectured on February 26th on “Fire Safety with New Building Materials.” Recent statistical studies show an alarming increase in the number of fires in New York City in the last five years. Causes, building types and point of origin were analyzed. National fire losses exceed one billion dollars annually.

Fire protection afforded by building codes varies greatly due to the wide differences in local building codes. Sixty-six of the largest cities in the United States use their own individual codes while 10 percent of our smaller cities have no building code whatsoever. In New York State less than 500 of approximately 1500 communities have accepted our excellent state code even though this has been widely promoted for several years.

Mr. Platzker stressed the importance of code revisions to permit the use of new construction techniques and new materials. The delay in accepting plastics under various codes illustrates this problem despite the fact that a large number of state fire marshals and fire insurance companies in replying to his questionnaire indicated that they had observed no fire safety problem in their experience with plastics.

Mr. Platzker recommended AIA support of code revisions on which a coordinating committee is working to bring closer together the three “model” building codes. The AIA should also try to persuade the National Board of Fire Underwriters, who sponsors the National Building Code, to participate in the efforts of this committee.

E. A. Dennison for the Technical Committee

PRESTRESSED CONCRETE SERIES

Having successfully published the newly enacted Concrete Section of the New York City Building Code, the Concrete Industry Board is now focusing attention on prestressed concrete.

A Symposium Series on Basic Design of Prestressed Concrete will be held April 29, May 6, 13, and 20 at Hewitt Hall, Cooper Union, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. under the auspices of The Concrete Industry Board, in co-operation with Cooper Union, the New York Association of Consulting Engineers, and the Portland Cement Association.

The fee has been established at $5.00. A certificate of attendance will be available. Application may be made to the C.I.B. Office—220 East 42 Street, New York 17, N. Y.

WOMEN'S ARCHITECTURAL AUXILIARY

No, you don’t have to bring your husband to come to the W.A.A. “Dutch Treat” luncheon May 1. But it would be interesting for him, too. Prospective members are especially welcome. It will be in the Pine Room, Architectural League, at noon. We will, at this time, make our third grant to Architectural Students. The awards given now amount to $10,000.

The Auxiliary takes this opportunity also to name its Nominating Committee for the coming year: Mrs. John Steinle, Chairman; Mrs. Jule von Sternberg, Mrs. Selig Win­ston, Mrs. Percival Goodman, and Mrs. Charles Macchi.

The slate they have presented consists of these nominees: Mrs. Ronald Allwork, Mrs. John Bur­roughs, and Mrs. Lathrop Doug­lass. Those elected to remain on the Board of Managers are Mrs. Douglas Haskell and Mrs. Samuel Juster. Those retiring are Mrs. Max Urbahn, President, Mrs. Mor­ris Ketchum, Jr. and Mrs. William Delehanty. Immediately following the election of new Board members, the W.A.A. will name the officers. However, this is not too much of a business meeting, so please show up May 1—fun, too, is guaranteed.

Convention “Coffee”

Mrs. Morris Ketchum, Jr. will be Chairman of our gathering in Miami. It will take place directly after the “Ladies Forum,” May 6.

Hildegarde Sleeper

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Technical Committee: Ten copies each of lectures by Frank Fryberg and J. Platzker will be placed in the Chapter office for members who wish to refer to them.

Membership Committee: The committee was informed of recent action of AIA Directors concerning the establishment of the following categories in the Institute and its component organizations: Corporate (national), Professional Associate (chapter)—new category, As­sociate (chapter), Student As­sociate (chapter), Honorary Member (national), Honorary As­sociate (chapter), Honorary Fellow (national). Current categories to be abolished will be Junior As­sociate and Honorary Affiliate.

School Committee: Monthly in­formal discussion sessions will be held at 5:30 p.m. on the last Wed­nesday of each month for the next three months in the Bar of the Architectural League. These ses­sions will be completely informal and open to all interested chapter members.

Final preparations are being made for the two-day Seminar on Schools to be jointly sponsored by the New York Chapter, and the New York City Board of Education on June 6th and 7th.

Legislative Committee: Repre­sentatives of the Chapter and the Architects Council met Acting Chairman Blaustein of the City Planning Commission on March 14th to discuss problems in connection with interpretations of the new Zoning Laws. A second meet­ing for the same purpose is being set up with Commissioner Birns of the Department of Buildings.

Headquarters Committee: Mich­ael M. Harris has agreed to take over the chairmanship of the com­mittee, which was without a chair­man.

James T. Burns, Jr.
COMING EVENTS

APRIL 23-25  Building Research Institute Spring Conferences, Shoreham Hotel, Washington, D.C.

MAY 1  Hospitals & Health Lecture
    Gallery A, Wed., 5:15 P.M.

MAY 5-9  A.I.A. Convention
    Miami, Florida (Hotel Americana)

MAY 14  Technical Committee Lecture
    Gallery A, Tues., 5:30 P.M.

MAY 19  Modern House Day, New Canaan, Conn.
    Tour of Six Homes and St. Mark’s Church
    11:00 A.M. to 5 P.M. Sunday (Benefit)
    Tickets: Mrs. G. S. Ritchie, Fable Farm Rd.

MAY 22  Reception for Prospective & Newly Elected Members
    Wednesday, 5:30 P.M., Gallery A

MAY 25  Hospitals & Health Field Trip
    N.Y.U. Teaching Hospital
    Saturday, 10:00 A.M.

JUNE 5  Nominating Luncheon
    Gallery A, Wed., 12:30 P.M.

JUNE 6 & 7  School Committee Seminar
    Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

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OCULUS is grateful to the following contributors who helped sustain the costs of this issue.

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CHAPTER BULLETIN BOARD

The fourth Annual N.Y.A.C.E.—A.I.A. Golf Outing has been set for Tuesday, May 21st at Winged Foot Golf Club, Mamaroneck, N. Y. Details of the outing and reservation forms will be sent out soon.

Beginning with the July 1963 issue AIA Journal subscription rates for Chapter Associates will be increased to $4.00 per year ($3.50 for students). Single copies, $1.

To help defray the cost of mailing and billing, it is the policy of the Chapter Office to charge a nominal handling fee on mail orders for A.I.A. documents.

A copy of the prospectus, “Summer Course for Architects and Engineers, Nuclear Defense Engineering, Protective Construction” may be examined at the Chapter Office. These courses, sponsored by the Office of Civil Defense and free to qualified professionals, will be held in June and July at George Washington University, Washington, D.C.; the University of Arizona, Tucson; and the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Interested members are urged to register as soon as possible.

MEMBERSHIP

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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

Corporate

Istvan Botond  Nathan Streitman
Rosario D’Agraso  Frederick B. Wildfoerster
Harry R. de Polo  Stanley M. Wolf
George T. Frank  Harold H. Hokin
Dan Fayer  Southern California
Joseph L. Russo  (Chapter)

Associate

Douglas N. Blauvelt  Robert H. Schofield

CANDIDATES

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

Corporate

Tamas J. Belanyi  Frederick B. Wildfoerster
Sponsors:
Edward J. Hills and William Bailey Smith
Harold Theodore Graves, II  Michael M. Harris
and Stephen J. Kagel
Sponsors:
William Charles Shopsin  Samuel S. Arlen
and Michael M. Harris
Sponsors:
Albert M. J. Simon  Herbert A. Teader
and A. Gordon Loeimer
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Walter J. Johnson  Jack L. Follett
and Joseph M. Ray

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