

# Oculus

## Chapter Awards and Honorary Membership to be Given at the Annual Meeting

When we gather at Avery Hall, Columbia, on June 21 (see enclosed announcement and Oculus May/77) for the Chapter's Annual Meeting, there will be a brief ceremony in the new auditorium when Peter Samton, will succeed Richard Stein as president of the Chapter and awards will be given.

The firm of Conklin and Rossant will receive the Medal of Honor, the highest award to an architect.

William H. ("Holly") Whyte will be given the highest award to a non-architect, the Award of Merit. Whyte is a distinguished author and resident of New York City. After graduating from Princeton in '39 he was a Captain in the U.S.M.C.R. during W.W.II. He joined *Fortune* in '47 and was associated with the magazine until '59. Since that date he has served on a large number of local and national committees and commissions concerned with preservation of the natural environment. He is the author of: *Is Anybody Listening*, *The Organization Man*, *Cluster Development*, *Exploding Metropolis*, *The Last Landscape* and many other articles and essays.

continued on page 6

## New and Prospective Member Reception at Chapter Headquarters Takes on Aura of Singles Party



With an open bar and a supply of bright and attractive male and female architects the annual chapter reception for new and prospective members was off to a good start. The atmosphere of previous meetings resembling those held at staid in-town ivy league college mens clubs could at last be something of the past - at least here at the chapter.

Over 100 new faces mixed in with many familiar chapter Exec.Comm. and Committee Chairmen to ask and receive answers regarding the chapter.

There will be follow-ups on all those that attended seeking to further clarify Chapter affairs and to increase membership. □

Denis Glen Kuhn



## State Association Undergoes Self-Analysis

All AIA members must belong to national, state and local entities, and nothing rankles many chapter members more than having to belong to the New York State Association of Architects. This is not really justified because we need the NYSAA to deal with state matters of importance to architects.

But it is quite understandable: there is, for nearly all members, no sense of identification with the NYSAA; they do not belong. The NYSAA does its work at a distance.

A solution, currently being studied by a special committee, would have it no longer be a membership organization. It would become a council of chapters, financed by the chapters, with an Albany office and an executive director freed of time-consuming organizational tasks such as dues collection. Peter Samton represents the Chapter on the special committee.

Related to this, the Institute is being asked to collect all individual dues; we hope this will be done in Jan.'78. □

*George Lewis*

## Chapter Committee Helps Resolve State Department of Health Certification Letters

The Chapter's Health Facilities Committee has for some time been negotiating with the State Department of Health to modify a letter it had been asking architects to sign certifying that the architect had supervised construction and that the facility was built in accordance to approved plans and met all applicable codes.

Joseph Shein, committee chairman, reports that the following letters, which have been approved by the Schinnerer Company, are now acceptable to the Department and should be used.

From architect: We are writing to advise you that to the best of our knowledge, information and belief, the Contract Documents prepared under the terms of our Agreement and for the above facility are in accordance with all codes and regulations applicable at the time of approval by the New York State Department of Health of Part II of Article 28, Project Concept.

From contractor: We are writing to advise you that to the best of our knowledge, information and belief, the above facility has been constructed under the terms of our contract and in accordance with all applicable codes and regulations per the contract documents prepared by (architect) and approved by the New York State Department of Health. □

## Candidates for Membership and New Members

Information received by the Secretary of the NYC/AIA regarding the qualifications of candidates for membership will be considered confidential:

### *Corporate*

Henry H. Abernathy, Jr.  
Anthony Giordano  
John P. Hesslein  
John Klausz  
William E. Pedersen, Jr.  
Benedetto J. Puccio

### *AIA Associate*

Neil G. Murphy

### *Chapter Associate*

Marvin Cutler

The NYC/AIA welcomes the following new members:

### *Corporate*

Christopher D. Chadbourne  
Paul F. Deibert  
Andre M. Hurni  
Stephen Weinstein

### *AIA Associate*

Michael Parley



## Hard Times Have Bred a Unique Spirit at The City College School of Architecture and Environmental Studies

Like a city tree taking root through sidewalk cracks, architecture sometimes thrives in unlikely places. Take, for example, the plain, industrial-looking building alongside the IRT El at Broadway and 133rd St., two blocks west of the City College Campus. Once a garage, this building now houses the City College School of Architecture and Environmental Studies. With an apology to Robert Venturi, one could call the building "an undecorated shed." In this case however, the house is the home for architecture at City College.

Recent years have been a time of crisis and austerity for the City University. During this period, though, the School has prospered in its educational and professional growth. Hard times have bred a unique spirit of commitment and cohesion.

City College attracts a wide spectrum of students. A "typical" student could be 18 or 35, a newcomer to architecture or an experienced draftsman, from Queens, Brooklyn, Israel or Nigeria. He or she might well be a transfer student with a previous degree in English or Fine Arts, or a professional, such as an interior designer, returning to school to pursue an architectural degree. This diversity of background, experience and age enriches the life of the School and broadens every student's education.

Many students work as well as study. The School is not an ivory tower; it is rooted in the real life of New York City. Students bring their working experiences to the design studio and the classroom, so that courses at City are more than academic exercises.



Main entrance of the City College School of Architecture located in a former garage.

Photo by N. Jerry Maltz

The School's basic commitment to urban improvement translates into a practical goal: teaching students the complex skills which a contemporary architect or planner needs to practice effectively. A sequence of design courses which forms the core of the School's programs, challenges students with realistic design problems of increasing complexity.

Students learn how to analyze the needs of clients and users, to respond to complicated programs, to work within the constraints of site conditions, the zoning ordinance, and the building code. They learn about the trade-offs and hard decisions real design requires. Most importantly, they learn a methodology, a rational approach, for making those decisions and solving problems.

The School has an informal atmosphere. Faculty meetings are open to students; indeed, two students are voting members of the Executive Committee. Activism is growing at City. This year, students founded the Architectural Student

Union. ASU, to which all students belong, was formed to foster communication among students and faculty, to promote academic and professional improvement, and to give students a greater say in the running of the School. Planned programs of the ASU include a student tutorial service in which students will help each other through those difficult moments of inertia, in developing drafting skills, and the like. The ASU represents the active responsibility students at City take for their education.

Thus, along with their traditional formal and technical training, City's students graduate with specific skills they can put to use in practice. They gain the essential ability to organize and evaluate information, to integrate needs, aspirations, and constraints into physical design. This is City's comprehensive approach to architecture. □

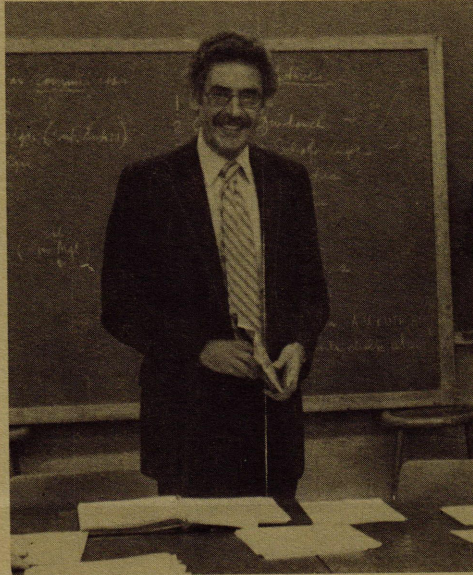
William Stein  
Fifth year student The City  
College School of Architecture



## Spring on Todays School of Architecture at CCNY

There are three related professional degree programs offered by The School of Architecture and Environmental Studies at The City College of The City University of New York. The largest, by far, is the five-year Bachelor of Architecture program chaired by Norval C. White, FAIA. (The chairperson is elected by the Faculty every three years.) In addition, there is an Urban Landscape program (directed by M. Paul Friedberg) which leads to an ASLA accredited Bachelor of Science degree in four years and a graduate program in Urban Design (under the direction of Jonathan Barnett) leading to a Master of Urban Planning degree.

New York State has nine schools which offer architectural degrees (seven of these are accredited by NAAB). CUNY is the only accredited degree available from a public university in this State. The very low tuition can be entirely supported by State and Federal scholarship aid and thus for students who are poor, tuition-free college education is still available. Students from families of very modest means may still be able to attend college without severe financial hardship. As standards for admission and retention of students are high, the School maintains The City College tradition of academic excellence and open access for talented and motivated people who would not otherwise have been able to attend college at all. Scholarship aid, is of course, available at other schools. But with a student population of 700, the School provides more actual and equivalent scholarship aid for deserving students than all other schools in the State combined.



*Bernard P. Spring at recent CCNY Faculty meeting.*

*Photo by Irving Leong*

CUNY has the only remaining undergraduate evening program for students who must work full-time while attending school.

The architecture program at City College has granted degrees to about 800 people since it began as a small department in the School of Engineering in '61. By '68 the number of students had increased to about 300 and the program was moved to a new School of Architecture. Bernard P. Spring, FAIA, the present Dean came from Princeton to head the School in '69. Enrollment peaked in the fall of '74 at about 1400 students, far more than the capacity of the School's quarters. Because of the limitations of space, the School never had an open admission policy. Only a fraction of those who apply can be admitted. In the future, enrollment will most likely be held at the present level of about 700 as this allows for adequate teaching and workshop space.

*Oculus wishes to express its appreciation for the efforts of N. Jerry Maltz in preparing the City University articles.*

The teachers and the new curriculum of the School have a basic commitment to the highest academic standards as these relate to the practice of architecture in its increasingly varied forms. Our fundamental objective remains to help our students to learn how to design buildings and complex groups of buildings in a way that is fully responsive to the needs and aspirations of both the clients and the users. We recognize that this is a complex and difficult challenge in our time, particularly in a five-year program. We feel that educating people who will work to raise architectural standards in public agencies and industry is equally significant as preparation for the whole gamut of office practice at its best. We try to accomplish all of these objectives.

The teaching staff is made up of 20 full-time Faculty who are assisted by about 25 part-time teachers. All regular architecture teachers are

*continued on page 5*



Continued from page 4

licensed architects who have been appointed on the basis of substantial, recognized achievement in the profession. Our teachers are expected to continue in an active role in professional work. Naturally the amount of outside work done by full-time people is limited. However, they are encouraged to take a leave of absence when they have an opportunity to complete a major project.

In the B.Arch program, we try to maintain a fine balance between professional courses and a comprehensive liberal arts education. Of the 160 credits required for the professional degree, 96 are in architectural courses and 64 are in arts and science. The first two years of professional courses stress basic design methods and graphic communication. Beginning students are also given an overview of the design professions. We have given up the "super-market" approach to course selection that became popular in the '60's. Our students are required to take a full year of math and of physics, statics and strength of materials, an advanced level of English, Geology, Art, Economics, Psychology and Sociology in addition to free electives.

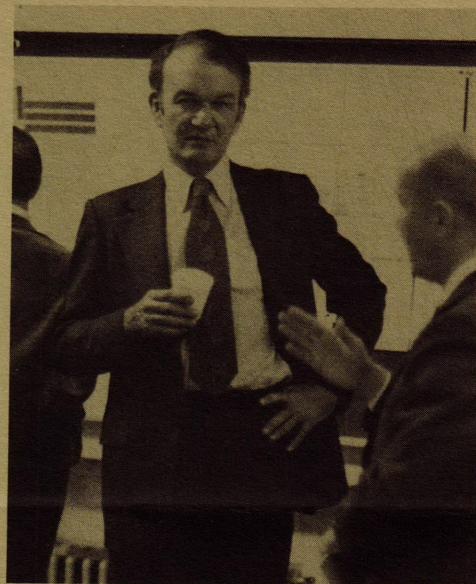
The professional courses in the third and fourth year are based on a case study approach not only in the design workshop but in the other two professional subjects, history-theory (which we call "Values, Concepts and Methods of Architecture") and building technology. The case study system allows us constantly to deal with buildings as a

whole, with all aspects of design and technology fully related. Our courses do not come in small packages that deal with structures, HVAC, lighting, acoustics and design separately. Our teachers see these as parts of a whole and the courses are designed to reflect this philosophy. By using the case-study method (with most cases being actual projects in the New York area) we have found a way to tie together the work a student does in technology, history-theory and design and give this work a sense of reality.

The work in the fifth year is modeled on the realities of present day practice and emerging trends. Each student does an independent project which takes an actual building project in New York City through all stages from feasibility and programming to a full set of design development drawings. This course is backed up by a two semester sequence in management and professional practice. In the final year, students may sample areas of specialization in their choice of professional electives.

Our program is a difficult one for students and they are well prepared when they receive their degree not only for a high level of performance in their first jobs but also for a lifelong career of increasing professional responsibility. □

*Bernard P. Spring, Dean  
The City College  
School of Architecture*



Norval C. White at recent  
NAAB visit to CCNY School of  
Architecture.

*Photo by Irving Leong*

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## Chapter Awards and Honorary Membership to be Given at the Annual Meeting

*continued from page 1*

Our new Honorary Member (no more than one may be named each year) will be Beverly Moss Spatt, Chairman of the Landmarks Preservation Commission for having "clarified issues and provided leadership in the fields of city planning; historic preservation and neighborhood conservation." She is a resident of Brooklyn Heights and holds a B.A. Cum Laude from Brown University, a M.U.P. and Ph.D. from N.Y.U. "Bev" has been the Chairman of the Landmarks Preservation Commission since '74 and is a member of AIP and now the Chapter.

Special Citations will be awarded to:

- The Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation,
- Frank O. Braynard, organizer of Operation Sail,
- The Cooper-Hewitt Museum,
- Chapter member Herbert Lippmann, for among many other things, 7 decades of professional practice,
- The New York Botanical Gardens, and
- The Roosevelt Island Tramway.□

*A view of a selection process and the picking of award winners. Drawing by Albert Lorenz.*

## Executive Committee Approves Choices for Brunner Scholarship and Chapter Awards and Other ExecComm Actions

It was honors and awards afternoon at the Chapter Executive Committee's next to last meeting of the 76/77 season. The recommendations made by appropriate Chapter committees received the ExecComm's blessing. See article starting on page 1 and concluded in adjoining column for awards to be bestowed at the Annual Meeting. In addition, the **Brunner Scholarship** was given to **Richard Oliver**, for a proposed book and/or exhibit on the work of Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue.

Also noted was the award of the New York Society of Architects' **Sidney L. Strauss Memorial Award** to former Chapter president **Giorgio Cavaglieri**.

In other actions, the ExecComm

●Decided to appoint Chapter president Richard Stein to re-state the Chapters stand on Westway at hearings before the New York State Departments of Transportation and Environmental Conservation and the U.S. Corps of Engineers. Earlier this year, the ExecComm voted by a large margin to support Westway but to urge strongly the need to adhere to sound land use practices and concern for neighborhoods affected by the program.

●Encouraged a plan by the Preservation Rehabilitation Task Force of the Urban Design Committee to firm up and circulate to developers a detailed ways-and-means plan on the rehabili-

*continued on page 8*





## Chapter Members Go Inside 42nd Street

Plans are afoot for the redevelopment of 42nd St.; plans to find new uses for abandoned buildings, to refurbish neglected ones, to move undesirable tenants out. Fred Papert with the help of two local banks, did just that - brought out the lease of the largest pornographic bookstore and helped move a police precinct into the space. There are plans to plant trees, clean the sidewalks, and repaint the shabbier buildings. All good ways to aid in the redevelopment of this famous street.

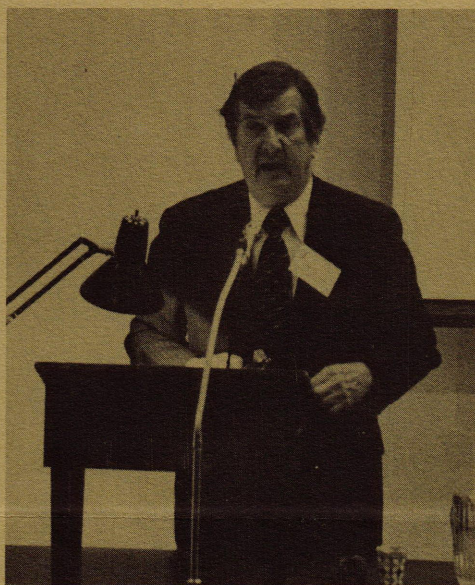
It occurred to us that the foundation of such a program should be to find out what is existing on 42nd St. and to help people understand the spirit of its buildings and its greatness. So, with architect Wallace Randolph, we began a survey of all the buildings on 42nd St. from River to River, for it is not only the West Side that is having problems. The Commodore Hotel is unoccupied, Grand Central Terminal's landmark status is threatened, Mobil and Texaco plan to leave New York, and a bottomless bar has opened at the corner of 41st St. on Lexington Ave.

The survey showed 30 buildings that had some historic, architectural or decorative interest. We decided to concentrate on interiors because they are least known and most easily renovated or changed and an exhibit to be held in the spacious lobby of the Grace Building seemed to be an ideal way to show drawings and photos.

New York has so much that no other city has, and 42nd St. more than any other Street. □

*May Callas*

## First Preservation Convocation Held at Columbia



The preservation convocation was held on May 13 and 14 in the new extension to Avery Hall to honor Professor James Marston Fitch upon his retirement. It was a marvelous display by former students and associates of their affection and respect and appreciation for his contributions to architectural education, criticism and preservation. Dean James Stewart Polshek opened the convocation by paying tribute to Mr. Fitch's energy and imagination in developing the program in Historic Preservation. From its inception in '67 it has grown to its current enrollment of ninety-five graduate students. A major source for preservation professionals, its graduates are employed nationwide in private firms and in private and governmental agencies concerned with preservation.

On Friday evening a reception was held at the restored Abigale Adams Smith House and on Saturday a banquet was held at Fraunces Tavern. Robert Herbst, an Assistant Secretary

from the U.S. Department of the Interior credited Mr. Fitch with raising the level of awareness regarding the preservation of the nation's historic resources. Beverly Moss Spatt presented Mr. Fitch with an award from the mayor, the City Certificate of Appreciation. In this setting in which George Washington bade farewell to his officers, Fitch restated one of his principal themes, calling on his students and professionals to abandon the idea of trying to conquer nature, but rather, to understand that nature can only be manipulated by men who are aware that they are part of the natural system. After a brief overview of the development of the modern movement in architecture he stated his view that history was set aside by early modern practitioners to free themselves from historicism. This has really provided us with the unique opportunity to look at history in a new and free way. The real question is are we going to be frivolous or serious with this new found freedom?

Mr. Fitch recalled that the Preservation program at Columbia was established in response to the savagery of the highway and urban renewal people. He concluded by observing that the authentic possibility at the present time was to appreciate the incalculable value of the built world and return to reclaim the abandoned urban tissue.

*Raymond F. Pavia*



## ExecComm Actions

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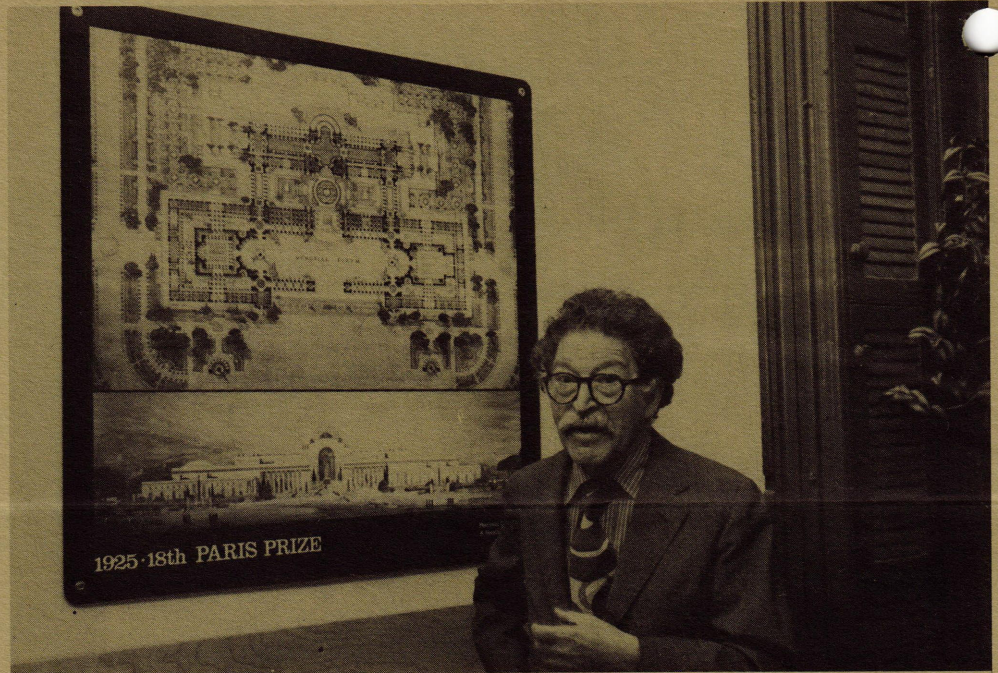
tation potential of five actual properties in the city.

Noted with satisfaction that a \$5000 grant from the J.M. Kaplan Fund was being used by the city's five schools of architecture to conduct a design problem for a neighborhood government facility in line with provisions of the newly revised city charter strengthening the role of community planning boards.

Heard how the Wisconsin Society of Architects had recently increased its membership by 20% over 6 months by means of an aggressive, coordinated membership drive. The New York Chapter's own campaign began with invitations sent to 1000 eligible non-members to a reception at the end of May. See page 1 and follow *Oculus* for results as the drive picks up during this summer and fall. □

*Stephen A. Kliment*

## NIAE Opens New Headquarters With an Exhibit of Paris Prize Winning Designs



*Chapter member Prof. Percival Goodman with his 1925 18th Paris Prize winning solution on exhibit at new NIAE headquarters.*



*Chapter and NIAE members Giorgio Cavaglieri, Stanley Salzman and Albert Lorentz at NIAE reception on May 16.*

The National Institute for Architectural Education has moved from the building where the Chapter is located to a brownstone it owns at 139 East 52nd Street.

by James Byron Bell, Jr., and an exhibit of Paris Prize winning designs from 1907 to '76 are on display and can be seen from 9:00 to 5:00 during the month of June. □

The building has been refur-

*Photos by Denis Glen Kuhn*