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11 from State Attend A. I. A. Convention at Washington

A Wisconsin delegation of 11 members carried the state banner at the national convention of the American Institute of Architects at Washington, D.C., on May 14-17 at the Shoreham Hotel.

The Wisconsin delegates were led by Pres. Arthur O. Reddemann, and included Maynard W. Meyer, Frederick Schweitzer, Fitzhugh Scott, Jr., Walter Domann, Leigh Hunt and Fritz von Grossmann, Milwaukee; Karel Yasko, Oshkosh; Joseph Flad, Madison; Julius Sandstedt, Oshkosh; and Edgar Berners, Green Bay.

The convention marked the A.I.A. Centennial Year, and was regarded as the finest convention ever held by the organization. In addition to an outstanding cast of speakers, several amendments to the By-Laws were considered, and honors awarded for outstanding architectural work.

Cranston Jones, of TIME, and Frank Beckman, of THE DETROIT FREE PRESS, are winners of the A.I.A. Journalism Awards, while six buildings representing a wide range of human activities — an office building, school, two churches, home and courthouse-jail — were top winners in the Honor Awards Competition. In addition, 14 Awards of Merit, were also presented.
Wisconsin Cities Included In Building Costs Study

Three Wisconsin cities — Madison, Milwaukee and Wausau — were included in a survey conducted among 34 cities in eight states to determine the situation regarding building costs.

Showing even less strength toward increase in the cost to build than 18 cities in the New England States and 15 others in and around New York, N.Y., the test sampling cities in the States of Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin and Delaware, report a stalemated market condition for the 6 months ending in March this year, according to Myron L. Matthews, Editor, The Dow Service Real Estate Valuation Calculator, issued by F. W. Dodge Corporation. There have been signs for about a year that such a condition might develop. Whether this loss in the force of the upward movement in construction costs will persist will be better known after the crest of the 1957 building season has passed, i.e., September-October.

Last week 33 cost-sampling cities in the metropolitan New York and New Jersey area, plus the New England States, averaged only a 1% increase in the 6 months ending in March. Now the 34 test-tube cities in the 8 States named above, comprising District No. 3, show that 11 of them report a "no change", 12 show increases of from 1 to 4%, and 11 of them report decreases ranging from 1 to 4%.

As in Districts No. 1 and No. 2, the situation in District No. 3 is due to weaknesses in the price of construction grades of lumber and in some masons building materials. These, and other findings, some of which are referred to here, have been reached in connection with the Spring 1957 Construction Cost Survey, used in support of The Dow Service Real Estate Valuation Calculator, a construction cost guide used nationally for approximating replacement costs for buildings.

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Iowa State College Seeks Architects for Its Faculty

Iowa State College, at Ames, Iowa, is seeking young men as staff members in the school’s Department of Architecture.

Men selected would work under Leonard Wolf, head of the Department, and would gain valuable teaching experience thereby, according to Karel Yasko, Wausau, W.A.A. member.

According to Mr. Yasko, Wolf “has done a splendid job at Ames, turning out well trained men without stifling their imagination or creative zest. Needless to say, his graduates are in great demand.”

Any W.A.A. member interested in investigating this proposition is invited to write to: Mr. Leonard Wolf, Head, Department of Architecture, Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa.

Move is Afoot to Save Chicago’s Famed ‘Robie House’

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

A group of Chicago AIA members and interested citizens met March 8th to discuss how the house might be saved and restored (it is in need of thorough rehabilitation). They decided to reactivate and strengthen the 1941 “Citizens’ Committee for the Preservation of Frank Lloyd Wright’s Robie House” as an action group.

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

GOLD MEDAL AWARD TO LOUIS SKIDMORE

The Gold Medal for 1957 will be awarded to Louis Skidmore of New York in recognition of his leadership in the formation and conduct of an outstanding firm which has made major contributions to the architecture of this nation. With unusual skill and imagination, Skidmore, Owings and Merrill has utilized fully the resources of contemporary building technology.

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CAN YOU HELP?

A copy of the September, 1953, issue of THE WISCONSIN ARCHITECT is urgently needed by the W.A.A. office. The file of publications dating back through the years is complete, except for that issue.

Anyone who has a copy of the September, 1953, issue and is willing to part with it is asked to contact Mrs. Ruth Hill at the W.A.A. office.
Here's a general view taken during the judge's commentary at the W.A.A. Honor Awards program presentation at the Madison Exhibit in the State Capitol Building in April.

This photo shows Winston Elting, F.A.I.A., as he gives a commentary to an interested audience during the program.

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