



OCULUS

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THE NEW YORK CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS
115 EAST 40th STREET • JANUARY, 1941 • ALBERT G. CLAY, EDITOR

URGENT APPEAL

The Chapter voted at our December meeting to initiate a fund to be raised by architects throughout the United States for children of British architects. This fund is called the U.S. Architects' Fund for R.I.B.A. and the entire amount collected will be sent to the Royal Institute of British Architects for children of its members.

Times may be hard for some of us here but they are a thousand times harder for our colleagues, the architects of Great Britain. A committee of the Chapter, headed by Frederick G. Frost as Honorary Chairman and William Lescaze as Chairman, has set up the machinery to collect this fund. They urge us to make contributions as large as possible and to send the check in now. An attempt will be made to close this collection before the end of February.

Checks should be made out to:

U.S. ARCHITECTS' FUND FOR
R.I.B.A.

115 East 40th Street
New York City

CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP CANDIDATE

The following candidate has been presented for Institute membership:

Roger Wade Sherman

Sponsors { Arthur B. Holmes
 { Arthur C. Holden

NEW MEMBERS

The following have been elected:

Associate

William Butler Hornblower

Institute Members

Clarence Dale Badgeley

James W. O'Connor

Charles Magill Smith

Ernst Payer, former Associate

William Eagleton Frenaye, Jr.,
reinstated

LOSSES

William Lee Stoddard,
died October 1

Philip Hiss,
died December 15

Carl F. Grieshaber
died December 25

Chester Holmes Aldrich,
died December 26

CHAPTER LUNCH

Time: 12:30 p.m., Tuesday,
January 28

Place: Architectural League

Subject: Defense

Your Meetings Committee has decided to devote to this subject the remaining meetings of the season. At this opening lunch QUENTIN REYNOLDS, foreign correspondent, will speak, and at the subsequent gatherings we will be addressed by speakers on a variety of subjects related to The Architect and His Part in Defense.

Each agenda will provide a period allotted to open discussion.

The Committee wishes to remind you that you have set aside the evening of February 25 to attend—with your lady—the Anniversary Dinner which marks the Chapter's 84th birthday.

ALDRICH MEMORIAL

All members of the Chapter are invited to attend a memorial service to be held for Chester Holmes Aldrich in the Auditorium of the Kips Bay Boys' Club, 301 E. 52nd Street, N.Y.C., at five o'clock this coming Wednesday, January 22. This memorial has been arranged by the American Academy in Rome, the New York Chapter of the A.I.A., the Society of Beaux-Arts Architects, the Architectural League of N.Y., the National Institute of Arts and Letters and the National Academy.

It is so appropriate that the services will be held at the Kips Bay Boys' Club. The building was done by Delano & Aldrich; it bears the touch of Chester Aldrich's hand. The club was one of his avocations and he gave to it many years of unstinted guidance and uplifting spirit. For he had faith in boys.

The announcement of the memorial service for him is significant of the respect in which he was held by the six organizations which spontaneously have come together to do him honor.

DECEMBER MEETING

The final Chapter meeting of 1940 was held after lunch on December 17. Seventy-five members were in attendance. The first order of business was the presentation of the budget for the calendar year 1941. President Frost explained that approval of the budget was necessary at this time due to the fact that under our new By-Laws the fiscal year has now been changed to the calendar year. Gerald A. Holmes, Chairman of the Budget Committee, preceded his presentation of the proposed budget by remarks in which he gave the members a general picture of our financial status.

Our only real source of income is from dues, which for 1941 should be \$6050. In former years it has been the custom to include as predictable income a certain proportion of arrears, but experience has shown that only a small percentage is ever realized, while at the same time new arrears are always accumulating. For this reason the Committee has decided not to include any portion of arrears in the budget. One item of additional income is an estimated \$100 from sale of documents.

Chapter running expenses, including administration, dues to other organizations and the ten per cent of dues which the By-Laws require us to transfer each year into the reserve fund, come to \$5770. Subtracting this sum from the total estimated income leaves the Chapter only \$380 marginal income. This we must spend on all committee work, social, educational and publicity activities, medals, the OCULUS, our year book, etc.

As this amount is obviously inadequate the Budget Committee proposed that the whole \$380 be allotted to the Executive Committee to use for its own work and that of the other committees; and that our other foreseen costs, estimated conservatively at \$520, be taken from the ten per cent of dues to be deposited in the reserve fund in 1941. In turn the reserve fund hopes to be reimbursed by arrears when and if collected.

An additional point raised by the budget report was that the cost of

the yearly audit of our Funds has been heretofore paid by the Executive Committee out of the meager sum allotted to it. The more equitable method of payment suggested is that this charge be proportioned among the three major funds of the Chapter (the LeBrun and Brunner Scholarships and reserve fund).

The subject of the expenditure of \$4000 for publicity was then introduced by Mr. Frost. He explained that as a result of the letters written to various Government officials regarding the employment of private architects in Government work and the noncommittal replies received, the Executive Committee had authorized him to appoint a temporary committee to make suggestions as to how best to continue these efforts. The Executive Committee had further suggested the expenditure of \$4000 from the Chapter reserve fund toward carrying on these effects.

William Lescaze, Chairman of the temporary committee, reported that he and the other members, Messrs. Fellheimer and Prentice, had had less than two weeks to study this question. In this short time they had come to the conclusion that a three or four-year campaign should be planned, which should not be limited to the present Government defense program but which should be aimed at the public at large and at all officials of the Federal, State and Local Governments, as well as at corporations who maintain their own architectural force. He then moved a motion, which after various amendments during a lengthy discussion from the floor was seconded and unanimously carried:

BE IT RESOLVED that a sum out of the Contingent Reserve Fund of the New York Chapter, A.I.A., not to exceed \$4000, be made available to a Special Committee, to be appointed by the President, to study ways and means of making the architectural profession of greater service to the public and thus to clarify the architect's own position; said Special Committee to report back to the Executive Committee for approval of its proposed program.

The temporary committee has since been reappointed by the Executive Committee, and their ground work has been continued. It is the intention of the Committee to hold some kind of hearings, at which members and persons outside the profession will be invited to air their opinions on this subject. The Committee will only then attempt to formulate definite suggestions for a program. This formulative stage is expected to extend over several months.

UNIFICATION

In the October 1940 OCULUS we gave you the highlights of the Rochester Convention of the New York State Association of Architects, at which one of the principal discussions centered around the subject of Unification of the profession. As no decision was reached then, the matter was referred to the Board of the Association with power.

That Board has now met and we are happy to report that its decision was in favor of affiliation. Thus the New York State Association of Architects is the 25th existing state association to affiliate itself with the Institute.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

In reviewing the year of building activity, we see the so-called private building continuing its tapering off and the rapid rise of public building. This is manifest in the low cost housing operations which have gone on steadily ahead under the able leadership of our New York City Housing Authority, and the United States Housing Authority.

For the past six months the great cry has been the Defense Program. This program which by all means is the most pressing, is gradually absorbing all the technically trained. Both for research and practical purposes, factories are expanding under their increased orders, and this means more men and more buildings of an industrial character. In turn, it brings with it the problem of housing the increased population due to the extra number of operators and their families in the various industries.

The Government apparently does not want to tackle this kind of housing; neither does private capital, due to its evident temporary nature. Here seems to be a great problem, which perhaps architects can help solve. Its solution may lie in prefabricated houses that can be taken down after the emergency is over and again set up in other locations where they could be of value for the inevitable change of population after the need of preparation is over, or again it might be solved by selecting locations away from the industrial areas but easy of access to them, so that when the pressure abates these living quarters could be used as permanent housing for other classes of our population.

While there are many drawbacks to the New York Area as a production center, there are a great many things to recommend it, for throughout the city there are still many buildings that can house workers, and many factory buildings which are available for immediate use.

It is also a great center for all

classes of skilled workers and their families, and therefore its use as a production center would avoid shifting populations. One of the objections to New York is its vulnerability; this, however, may not be well founded for it is entirely possible that closely knit areas can be better defended than those which are spread out. This appears to be the case in England where London seems to be better protected than many other sections of the British Isles.

It is difficult to see the trend of affairs in the building industry for the coming year. Although many new materials have appeared in the market during the last year, the fabricated building still lags, for while many systems have been devised, most of which have been designed by architects and developed by the manufacturers, yet their economy has still to be demonstrated. The cost of fabricated construction still remains higher than that of natural materials. Perhaps this next year the defense necessity will force the fabricated building into actual competition with buildings constructed under the older methods. Every architect is ready and willing to lend whatever help he can to bring this about.

FREDERICK G. FROST

ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE

Wm. Lawrence Bottomley, Chairman of the Chapter Committee on Admissions, reports that his Committee has held meetings every month during 1940 except in the middle of the summer. "We have examined and recommended 41 candidates," writes Mr. Bottomley, "who have all been approved and elected by the Executive Committee. Of these, 19 have been Institute members and 22 have been Associate Chapter members. The men coming up before the Committee have all shown that they are familiar with the aims and the ideals of the Institute and most of them indicate that they would like to take an active part in its work and would be interested to serve on committees."

Through the efforts of this Committee two points regarding eligibility have been clarified: First, men otherwise qualified but not registered in this State may be elected to active membership if they are *not* in active practice. This group represents usually men who are on faculties of Architectural Schools, editors of magazines and men working in offices but not practicing under their own names. Second, designers and industrial designers not registered in the State who do architectural work in collaboration with architects or engineers are not eligible for Institute membership.

The membership of the Chapter is continuously increasing.