



OCULUS

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THE NEW YORK CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS
115 EAST 40th STREET

• FEBRUARY, 1941 •

ALBERT G. CLAY, EDITOR

ANNIVERSARY DINNER

Time: 7 p.m., Tuesday, February 25
Place: Architectural League

A well-established Chapter custom provides for an Anniversary Dinner in February. It was in February, 1857, that a group of architects first met in New York City to discuss the formation of a society which in time became the American Institute.

The 1941 Anniversary Dinner is to occur on February 25. The Committee on Meetings has expressed the hope that the presence of a distinguished speaker and guests will make the dinner a memorable occasion. Ladies are not only invited but they are expected to attend in large numbers. Nevertheless, "black tie" is in order.

SPEAKER

The guest of honor and principal speaker will be His Honor, Fiorello Henry LaGuardia, Mayor of the City of New York, who at the January meeting was unanimously elected to Honorary Associate Membership in our Chapter.

MEDAL OF HONOR

The Executive Committee announce that this year the Medal of Honor of the Chapter will be awarded to Clarence S. Stein in recognition of his many years of study and sociological research in the field of housing. The award will take place at the Anniversary Dinner.

RESERVATIONS

The Committee on Arrangements for the dinner requests that the card enclosed with this copy of the OCULUS be returned at once with your check for reservations. Do this now so that tickets may be mailed. Monday noon is the deadline.

The Legislative Committee is working on a plan which it hopes eventually to present to the State and City authorities. This will be aimed to increase the private architect's interest in Government work, at the same time recognizing the economic problems of Civil Service.

This plan will be discussed at the March Chapter meeting. Further details will appear in the March OCULUS.

SECOND BRUNNER

The Chapter announces the second annual award of the Arnold W. Brunner Scholarship for 1941. The stipend will be \$1200 and will be awarded for the pursuit of advanced study in some special field of architectural investigation to be selected by the candidate. Applications will be received between March 1 and April 15, 1941.

CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP

CANDIDATES

The names of the following men have been presented:

For Institute Membership

1. Konrad F. Wittman
Sponsors { Edgar I. Williams
 { Kenneth Reid

For Chapter Associate Membership

1. Carl J. A. Carlson
2. Nembhard Nottingham Culin
3. Donald Dodge
4. Carl Feltz
5. Roscoe Monroe Hersey, Jr.
Sponsors { John T. Haneman
 { Don E. Hatch
1. Daniel Paul Higgins, Jr.
Sponsors { Theodore J. Young
 { Edwin Olsen

LOSSES

By Resignation:

- Clarence W. Brazer
Thomas d'Arcy Brophy
Howard Chapman
Henry Ives Cobb

By Termination of Membership:

- Royal Dana
Theodore Starrett
William H. Wright

MEMBERS EMERITUS

Williams Adams and Goodhue Livingston have been elected to Membership Emeritus.

R.I.B.A. FUND

Please! Your contribution for the children of British architects should be sent at once to 115 E. 40th Street. Make check out to U. S. Architects' Fund for R.I.B.A.

The day we went to press the fund total was \$392.50.

C.P.

The Chapter Committee on Civilian Protection has held numerous meetings and releases the following merely as an interim report, without particular conclusions.

Effort was promptly made to ask, as associates in the work, representatives of all other professional organizations who already were or should be interested actively in the same aims. The heads of each architectural society in the Metropolitan area were invited to name representatives.

To date replies have been received from only the Queens Society of Architects and the Brooklyn Chapter. On the appointment of the Sectional Committee of the American Society of Civil Engineers, one of their members, Elwyn E. Seelye, attended one of the meetings and steps were discussed for proper cooperation to eliminate overlapping with the members of this group.

The President of the Architectural League was asked to name a representative through whom all activities undertaken by the League could be cleared; Hildreth Meiere was named for this position. A. F. Brinckerhoff agreed to represent the Society of Landscape Architects with the approval of Charles Downing Lay, the President, and in like manner Henry F. Richardson will speak for the Consulting Engineers. Detailed conferences have also been held with Chester L. Churchill of the Massachusetts Committee on Public Safety.

From the Chapter itself, individuals have been asked informally to act in this associate capacity, as the matters seemed most pressing and not necessarily in the order of their importance. It has been the aim of the Committee to eliminate all formalities but to put themselves in the position of being able to call up anyone they required at a moment's notice. There has been complete and unselfish cooperation on the part of every individual so approached, without exception.

As much time has been spent in eliminating the non-essentials of this very comprehensive undertaking as in developing the logical ramifications,

For the moment the subject falls roughly into four headings: 1. Information. 2. Protection. 3. Housing. 4. Post-Emergency Planning. All these are subordinated to a general Planning Group of the Committee to whom the facilities of the Regional Plan of New York have been made available, it being felt that by contrast with the Defense Commission's problem, which is that of speed and quantity alone, it is the opportunity and prerogative of this Committee to study future benefits and uses to the greatest possible degree.

With this in mind, a study has been begun of one of the Metropolitan areas where industrial and housing expansion is most pressing and where the evils of such unplanned work offer the greatest hazards to civilian protection as well as disruption of industry. It is hoped to proceed along these lines and to publish reports from time to time, as the Mayor is willing and Architects generally should be interested.

Our C.P. Committee consists of Harvey Stevenson, Chairman; Matthew W. DelGaudio, J. André Fouilloux, Geoffrey Platt, Alfred E. Poor and Harry Milton Prince.

N.Y.U. SCHOOL

Our Executive Committee, at the instance of the Committee on Education, passed at its last meeting a resolution deplored the discontinuance of the New York University School of Architecture and lending its moral support and encouragement to the faculty members who are endeavoring to find ways and means to continue the School.

PANEL OF PRESIDENTS

The Chapter office is now attempting to make a complete collection of portraits of our past Presidents, to be formed into a Panel of Presidents and displayed upon the walls of the Chapter office.

The OCULUS is asked to announce that so far we have not been able to locate any photographs of the following: R. G. Hatfield who served two terms—1870-1872 and 1877-1879; Walter Cook—1898-1901, and H. Rutgers Marshall—1902-1904.

PLANT DINNER

The American Encaustic Tiling Company has invited Chapter members to a personally conducted tour through their plant, after which dinner will be served. Transportation to and from the Chapter Office will be provided. This junket is to take place on Friday, March 14, at 2 p.m. Chapter members wishing to make this trip should inform Malcolm A. Schweiker, 101 Park Avenue, telephone LExington 2-9883.

COMMITTEE WORK

FEES

The recommended schedule of fees used at present by our Chapter is one which was adopted officially in 1914. Realizing that in almost 30 years the requirements of the practice of architecture have changed, President Frost has appointed a special committee to decide whether we should keep this schedule, revise it, or abandon altogether the recommendation of proper fees.

Leon N. Gillette has been asked to head this committee. He is now at work and has issued a plea for members to step forward with constructive ideas derived from personal experience in handling this vital matter of professional charges.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Mr. Gillette is also the chairman of our Committee on Professional Practice. He has sent to the OCULUS the following comment on the work of this committee:

"Something must be the matter with our architects. No fighting, no squabbles to settle, not even any charges of unprofessional conduct. For two years your Committee on Professional Practice has had nothing except some simple questions as to whether it is okay to be a general contractor and architect at the same time.

"Our answer to that is that this point is covered by the approved arrangement whereby an architect may split up the contracts as much as he wants, and in some cases he is entitled to a larger fee. But in all cases he should act as the owner's agent and payments should be made by the owner. In other words, lump sum or guaranteed contracts covering the building costs should not be made between architect and owner, nor should an architect guarantee estimated costs.

"This all seems too elementary to be the subject of discussion as it is obvious that the professional objective of architects is fundamentally different from the objective of contractors who hope to make a profit from their contracts.

"Young architects, who are tempted to stray from the beaten path, should realize that their greatest asset is their professional virtue; once lost, as with the blonde on the sidewalks, it cannot be regained. Furthermore, it is the observation of old timers that it does not pay."

POSTAGE DUE

The Chapter office pays postage only too often on return post cards that arrive too late to be of any use. Miss Waters requests that when members notify her of their intended presence

or absence at a meeting, they mail the cards before the meeting takes place.

JANUARY MEETING

Ninety-two Chapter members present at the lunch held on Tuesday, January 28, heard Quentin Reynolds speak of his recent experiences in London during air raids. Mr. Reynolds, world famous correspondent for *Collier's*, author and narrator of the unforgettable films "London Can Take It" and "Christmas Under Fire," and author of the recent book "The Wounded Don't Cry," expressed his relief in the realization that New York is not as asleep as London was before the war.

"If London had realized the necessity for preparedness to insure the safety and comfort of the population in a war-stricken city," said Mr. Reynolds, "a considerable proportion of the 30,000 deaths from London air raids might have been prevented."

Mr. Reynolds told of the work of the RAF boys to whom Nazis are always "bandits" and a fight is always a "scramble." He described how his own apartment in London has had the glass blown out of the windows three times since the bombing began. He concluded with praise of his wonderful neighbors in London and the thought that they were "our kind of people."

The talk was received with great enthusiasm and the speaker was asked many questions at the conclusion of his very informal remarks. Questions ranged from queries as to his personal experiences to some on the technical problems of defense and civilian protection in London.

The one piece of business brought before the meeting was the election of an Honorary Associate. Mr. Frost reported that the committee considering nominations for Honorary Associate Member in the Chapter this year consisted of William A. Delano, Chairman, Matthew W. DelGaudio and Archibald M. Brown. Following the recommendation of this committee the Executive Committee nominated the Hon. Fiorello H. LaGuardia for this honor. The motion was then put before the meeting and Mayor LaGuardia was unanimously elected.

Mr. Frost, in announcing that a Civilian Protection Committee of the New York Chapter had been formed to cooperate with the Mayor's Defense Board, emphasized the importance of differentiating between Civilian Defense and Civilian Protection. Defense is the concern of the Army and Navy, whereas protection has to do with measures for the safety and care of the population during any periods of danger.