

O C U L U S

N E W Y O R K C H A P T E R

115 EAST 40TH STREET, NEW YORK 16, N. Y.

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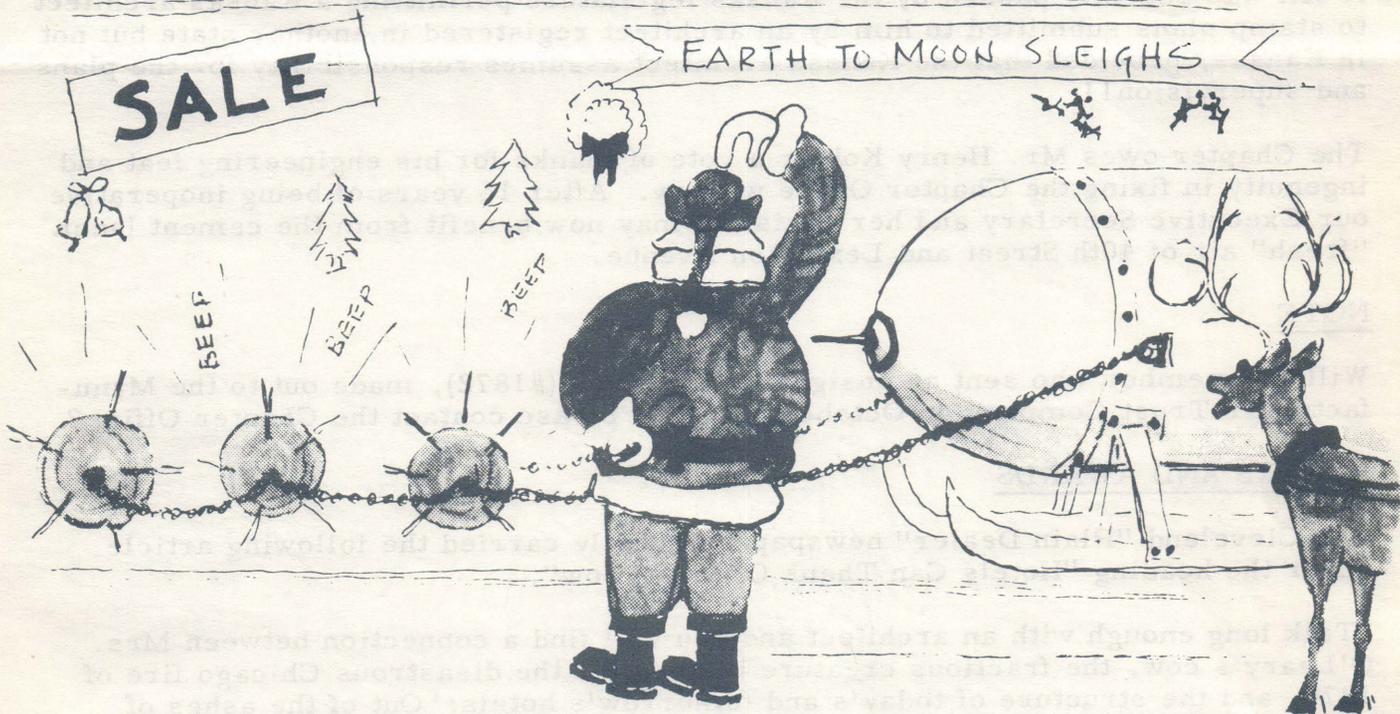
G I L L E T L E F F E R T S, J R., *Editor*



Special Insert: Harvey P. Clarkson

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M E R R Y C H R I S T M A S



COMING EVENTS

January 23, Thursday Gallery A - 12:30 "Regular Meeting" Election of Committee on Nominations

PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM

Your Chapter's Public Relations Committee and the special Fund Raising Committee working with it have now reached 70 per cent of the goal of \$20,000 for a public relations program for the Chapter.

The program is slated to start January 1 and to extend through 1958. But to get it under way adequate funds must first be available.

Large, medium and small firms have contributed to the campaign, and many individuals have also sent in checks. The response has been excellent, and the goal is in sight. If you or your firm has not already contributed to make possible this program, by all means send your check to the Chapter Office today!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The American Institute of Architects has announced that extra time will be given to make nominations for the 1958 R. S. Reynolds Memorial Award -- the \$25,000 honorary payment to the architect making the "most significant contribution to the use of aluminum" in the building field. Established a year ago by the Reynolds Metals Company in memory of its founder, R. S. Reynolds, Sr., the annual Award is administered by the AIA. The AIA will accept nominations until January 15, 1958.

Attention all members with cars registered in the State of New York: It has been called to our attention that low numbered license plates with the letters "R.A." can now be secured without extra charge by mailing your renewal form, check, and a letter written on your professional stationery to: Frank M. Dolan, Chief Clerk, Oneida, New York.

A bill was recently passed by the Kansas legislature permitting a Kansas architect to stamp plans submitted to him by an architect registered in another state but not in Kansas, provided that the Kansas architect assumes responsibility for the plans and supervision!!

The Chapter owes Mr. Henry Kohler a vote of thanks for his engineering feat and ingenuity in fixing the Chapter Office window. After 16 years of being inoperative our Executive Secretary and her assistant may now benefit from the cement laden "fresh" air of 40th Street and Lexington Avenue.

NOTE

Will the member who sent an unsigned dues check (#1872), made out to the Manufacturers Trust Company on October 5, 1957, please contact the Chapter Office?

HONORS AND AWARDS

The Cleveland "Plain Dealer" newspaper recently carried the following article under the heading "Hotels Can Thank O'Leary Cow".

"Talk long enough with an architect and you will find a connection between Mrs. O'Leary's cow, the fractious creature blamed for the disastrous Chicago fire of 1870, and the structure of today's and tomorrow's hotels: 'Out of the ashes of that fire emerged our structure steel framing system,' says New York Architect Robert W. Cutler. Cutler, president of the New York Chapter of The American Institute of Architects, was in Cleveland to speak at a business session of the American Hotel Association. Interviewed at Hotel Carter, where he addressed the hotel men, Cutler traced the beginnings of the steel framing system to the years following the fire. This system, he pointed out, is leaving an imprint on hotel architecture. 'The skin we are putting on these buildings -- steel, aluminum, glass -- makes them more flexible,' he said. For the hotel men he envisioned greater utilization of public spaces, thinner walls and partitions, larger rooms and lower maintenance costs. Cutler thinks the glass industry has the greatest opportunity in this simplification. He foresees the day when outer glass will contain heating and cooling elements."

William Potter of the New York Chapter has been re-elected Chairman of the State Board of Examiners of Architects. Members of this Board are appointed for three year terms by the Regents of the University of the State of New York.

THE TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS OF RAISING THE INSTITUTE TO BE ONE HUNDRED YEARS OLD

The reader who is fortunate enough to possess a pocketknife on his watch chain and thus to have gained access to Henry H. Saylor's wonderful "The A.I.A.'s First Hundred Years" will instantly recognize the source of much of the following material. To Mr. Saylor is due our acknowledgment and thanks; to his reader, our apology. It is hoped that those who have not read his history will be encouraged to reach for their May 1957 "Journal of The American Institute of Architects - Part Two", and forearmed for cutting into its untrimmed sheets, be prepared for an entertaining and informative experience.

It is evident that from its very inception our profession's Institute has been composed of men fully equipped with all mankind's aspirations and frailties, regardless of how impregnable and august they may have believed (or wanted others to believe) themselves to be. They have been guided by human emotions and enthusiasms. It has also been suggested that they have been influenced by a very special tendency, peculiar to architects alone, to favor experiment and change, to always "like to try something new".

The Institute's present form and ritual developed by sometimes painful trial and error. It evolved through times of prosperity and depression, of peace and war, constantly influenced and beset by outside events having little or no direct relationship to the professional life. In the earliest days, the visionary thirteen founders, lead by Richard Upjohn, were brought together to counter the sense of loneliness they must have felt in what was then a harsh world. There was no architectural education in the United States, there was dissension and jealousy among protagonists of various styles -- Medieval, Gothic, Renaissance, and the public's interest in architecture or knowledge of its practice as a profession, or the proper costs thereof, was appallingly nil. Within four years of the founding meeting, the Institute's activities had been so beclouded by the Civil War that they were forced to go "underground", to suspend all meetings, storing their archives in an attic. As had happened with previous attempts to form professional organizations, the Institute might easily have disappeared completely at that time. Instead, by 1867 the Institute had not only resumed its operations, but had progressed to the organization by chapters which is still its backbone. The New York Chapter, the first, held its first meeting in that year.

In that year the first Convention was also held at a cost of \$12.50 for refreshments; in marked contrast to this year's Annual Dinner in Washington which cost close to \$10,000. Other expenses were similarly modest, but dues, the only source of revenue, were apparently even more modest, with the result that the Treasurer was obliged to dip into his own pocket for the difference. Apparently this state of affairs continued for some years until the idea of operating on a budget was first introduced!

The basic aims of the Institute and its first Chapter -- to unite in fellowship, to encourage public understanding and establish equitable standards of fees and practice, and to foster knowledge among themselves, soon spread to other cities. Other early Chapters were formed in Philadelphia (1869), Chicago (1869), Cincinnati (1870) and Boston (1870). New York remained the core Chapter, largely through the respect held for Richard Upjohn, who was re-elected as President until 1876.

At the time of the Institute's founding one of its principal endeavors was the creation of a library. So necessary a tool-of-the-trade in that day of no formal professional education was the library that the few books available, privately owned, were kept under lock and key, zealously guarded from prying eyes. Not until 1868, under the aegis of the Institute and its members, was the first architectural school founded, at M.I.T. Others, similarly encouraged, soon followed at Illinois (1870), Cornell (1870), Syracuse (1873). Through the years that have followed, the Institute has played a significant role in furthering professional education in this country, by encouraging and staffing other schools, by founding the American Academy in Rome, and by influencing the individual States to establish licensing standards requiring a high level of education or training, and in the encouraging of the N. C. A. R. B.

The previously suggested tendency on the part of Architects to like experimentation is well illustrated by the changes of membership forms and requirements during the Institute's history. Last month's "Oculus" told the story of membership classes as they now exist. At the start there were "Professional Members" and "Associates", the latter being considered "apprentices" preparing for full membership. Soon after this, an advanced membership form, "Fellow", was added. In 1889 the A.I.A. absorbed the rival Western Association of Architects, formed originally in Chicago, all of whose members were known as "Fellows", this title which was retained after the amalgamation, so that until about 1900 when time began to take its toll, there was confusion as to the meaning of this supposedly advanced title, which was once more an indication of distinctive service to the profession.

It was not easy to become a member in this early Institute, which became known as an exclusive gentlemen's club. This tendency existed until very recently in Institute history. Growth in size was relatively slow until changes in policy in the 1920s and 1940s turned the membership curve sharply upward. The strength which we now feel in having the support of every reputable practitioner in the nation in our fold was not always the Institute attitude.

Similarly indicative of the architectural proclivity for change is the story of the Institute's journalistic endeavors. A very stable and lucrative foundation for its publication efforts have been its various standard forms and circulars of information. Beyond that, we find that the Institute has published a number of bound books, in many editions, some profitable and some not, and no fewer than six periodicals, starting with the 1900 "Quarterly Bulletin", a slick paper monthly "Journal" in 1912, the 1928 "Octagon", then in 1943 a new "Journal", followed by the 1948 "Bulletin" and the slightly later "Memo". These last three are still with us, presumably operating on a more or less profitable basis, something which could not always be said of the earlier efforts, some of which were financially disastrous.

The Institute, and the profession, have enjoyed varying fortunes as the fortunes of the nation have varied. First the Civil War, then successive booms and depressions in the succeeding decades, the tremendous impetus to the profession occasioned by the 1893 Columbian Exposition (regardless of the questionable effect it had on following generations of architects) and a high "plateau" of prestige in the early twentieth century evidenced by its influence on the planning of Washington and its frustrations in being shunted aside by armed force interests in two world wars only to be vindicated by later valuable contributions to the national effort, all attest to the fluctuations of fortunes.

As we have been continually reminded, this year 1957-58 has been celebrated as our Centennial Year, with appropriately well attended Chapter meetings and National Convention, and enthusiastic recognition from various government officials, and from others prominent in other walks of life who have had occasion to be in contact with the profession. The New York Chapter specially celebrated this year, starting on Anniversary Day, February 23rd, with the unveiling of a commemorative plaque on the Trinity Building, site of the first meeting, followed by a luncheon at the Sub-Treasury Building attended by 155. On April 25th the Centennial Dinner, held at Delmonico's, was attended by 230, and on October 18th the Student Chapter Centennial Dinner at Jager House on 86th Street was attended by 140.

During this Centennial Year, the New York Chapter has increased by a total of 144 members, including 28 Corporate, 40 Associate, 73 Student, and 4 Emeritus Members. The National A.I.A. in the same period increased its membership by 888 to a significant total of 11,522.

"A New Century Beckons" is the motto of this Centennial Year. It will be a successful century for the Institute and for the Chapter if, in 2057, it can look back on progress such as we have celebrated this year.

(Ed. note: The preceding article has been prepared by Harvey P. Clarkson in recognition of the close of the A.I.A. Centennial Year. Mr. Clarkson was instrumental in formulating last year's special Oculus Centennial articles.)

FALL DINNER MEETING

Roger Allen's "First Hundred Years of Architecture" have indeed contained many amusing anecdotes if we are able to judge by his entertaining speech of November 6. The Fall cocktail and dinner meeting was attended by the largest gathering ever for this occasion. A list of a few of Mr. Allen's observations had been previously published by the Chapter and the quotations offered therein gave us an enticing sample of Mr. Allen's humor. Those fortunate enough to attend the meeting, we're sure, will be able to relate to all just what "medicated marila" consists of as well as the definition of a "migratory broadbeam of slackboster"! Our thanks again to Roger Allen for a light and refreshing after-dinner speech.

CHAPTER REPRESENTATIVES

The following members of the New York Chapter have been selected by the Executive Committee to serve as representatives to the New York State Association of Architects:

Awards	Philip Ives
Civil Defense	Jonathan Butler
Confer With Other Professions	James Gordon Carr
Construction & Specifications	Harold R. Sleeper
Contracts	Edward N. Forbes
Convention 1958	Paul Grayson
Education	Harvey Stevenson
Ethics & Professional Practices	Harold C. Bernhard
Fees	Gilbert L. Seltzer
Insurance	James R. Colean
Labor Law	William J. Freed
Multiple Dwellings	Frederick Genz
Multiple Residence	H. I. Feldman
Publications	Gillet Lefferts, Jr.
Revision of By-Laws	David F. M. Todd
Resolutions	Robert S. Hutchins
School Buildings	Reginald Marsh
State Building Code Comm.	Louis E. Ordwein

MEMBER'S WORK FILE

In 1952 the New York Chapter established a "Member's Work File" after a majority vote of the Chapter favored such action. At that time each member was given the opportunity of filling out a folder with as much, or as little, information included therein as the individual saw fit. All new members have had the same opportunity to submit their "Work File" upon assignment to the New York Chapter.

However, the file is presently neither complete nor up to date. New members are urged to send in their folders. All others are asked to drop in at the Chapter office to either obtain new file folders or make whatever additions and corrections are necessary for an accurate working file.

These folders may, at the discretion of the individual, include such information as a member's professional experience, awards, Chapter activities and examples of work executed either as a principal of a firm or associate at the time of execution. Each folder is limited to twelve 8 x 10 photographs or illustrated clippings.

STUDENT CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

The New York Chapter welcomes as Student Associates 141 new student members. The 81 members from Columbia University's School of Architecture have elected Nelson T. Nordquist as President; John M. Baker, Vice-President; Claire de Reineck, Secretary; and Edward N. Simons, Treasurer. The Cooper Union Department of Architecture has 60 members with the following serving as their officers: Eugene Oranchak, President; Stanley Veyhl, Vice President; Seymour Remen, Secretary-Treasurer. It is hoped that these 141 new members will avail themselves of the opportunities afforded through Chapter activities.

ARCHITECTURAL EXHIBIT

"The New Churches of Germany", an exhibit consisting of photographs and colored stereo views, is now on view at the Goethe House, 120 East 56th Street. Arranged by G. E. Kidder Smith, noted architect and critic and member of the New York Chapter, the exhibit includes 12 churches, most of which have been built in the Rhineland. The exhibit is open to the public without charge through December 14th.

NEW BOOKS

Work Place for Learning
by Lawrence B. Perkins
Reinhold Publishing Corp. - \$4.00

High Schools - Today & Tomorrow
by Charles W. Bursch & John Lyon Reid

Builders Homes for Better Living
by A. Gurney Jones & Frederick E.
Emmons
Reinhold Publishing Corp.

Native Genius in Anonymous Architecture
by Sibyl Moholy-Nagy
Architectural Book Publishing Co. - \$ 7.50

Aluminum in Modern Architecture
Volume I - Buildings - by John Peter
- \$10.00

Volume II - Engineering -
by Paul Weidlinger - \$17.50

A pamphlet entitled "Contemporary Architecture and City Planning in West Germany" is now available from The Librarian, The Cooper Union Library, Cooper Square, N.Y. 3, N.Y. The text, including photographs, is based on a lecture given at the Cooper Union by the prominent German architect, Werner Hebebrand.

CANDIDATES

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

Corporate Membership

Russell Cumming Cecil
Harry Edward Christian
Costas G. Machlouzarides
Sydney Hart Moore

Paul Daniel Nelson
Rishon Seymour Rosen
Warren Huntington Smith

Associate Membership

Herman Joseph Boehm
Anthony Ralph Filazzola
Sebastian Louis LaBella
John Carris
Peter Kuempel

Sponsors: Peter S. Van Bloem and Victor J. DeMasi
Sponsors: Lester G. Abramson and Benjamin Goodrich
Sponsors: Benjamin Lane Smith and Ralph Walker
Sponsors: P. E. Isbell and Miss Berta Jobin
Sponsors: Myron S. Hurwitz and John Harold Barry