

WAA, AIA Begin Bicentennial With Civic Center Tour; Scholarship Fund To Benefit

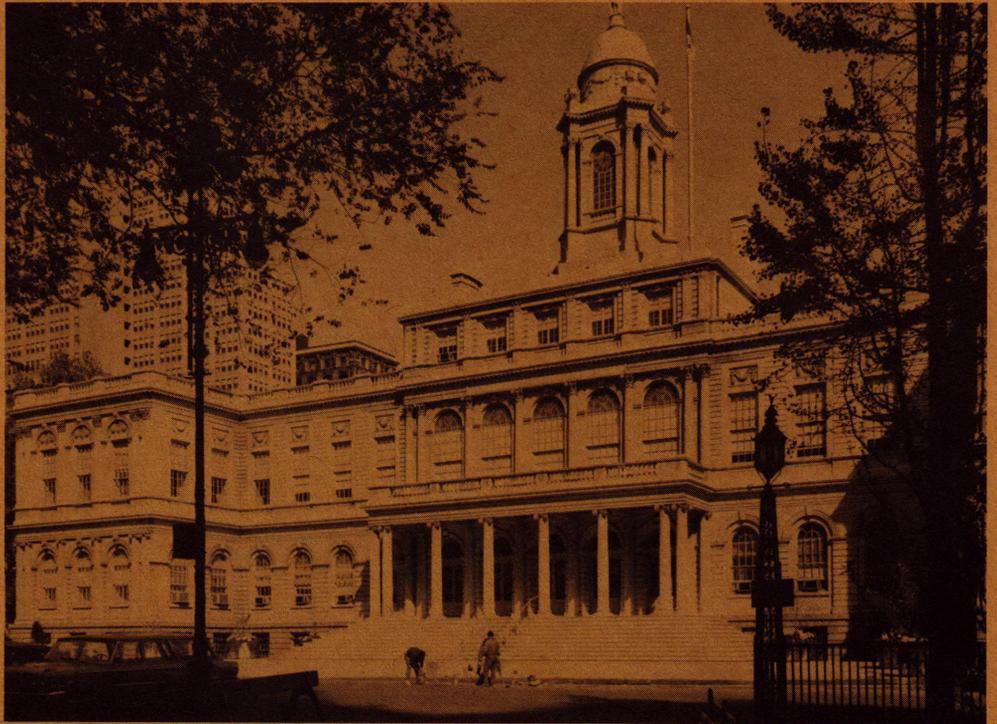
"Two centuries of architectural history in 2½ hours" is the theme of the guided walking tour being organized by the WAA and the AIA for Saturday afternoon, May 3, to mark the beginning of the Bicentennial. The rain-or-shine tour, scheduled to start at 1:30, will include many of the distinguished historical and contemporary buildings in New York City's Civic Center and will concentrate on the area immediately surrounding City Hall.

The "Civic Celebration," the afternoon event's official title, is this year's fund-raising function for the WAA Scholarship Fund, which for 16 years has helped students in New York City architectural schools.

Brendan Gill has promised some pithy comments for the gathered tourists to start off the afternoon.

At the end of the tour route, there will be a cash-bar reception at Miller's a well-known Civic Center landmark in its own right.

The Civic Celebration Committee is a joint WAA and AIA project. Mrs. David Paul Helpert is its chairman. Committee heads are Mrs. John Burrows, Dale Chodorow, Mrs. Saul Edelbaum, Arthur S. Douglass, Jr., Mrs. Douglas Haskell, Charles Hughes, Mrs. Morris Ketchum, Denis Glen Kuhn, Mrs. Ralph Leff, Henry Raemsch, Mrs. R. Jackson Smith, and Mrs. Robert Yom. Architectural historian Selma Rattner is the tour's technical consultant. The "script" is being professionally prepared by John Hammond.



City Hall

Photo courtesy of the Landmarks Preservation Commission

New York City Mayor Abraham D. Beame and Mrs. Beame accepted the invitation to be Honorary Chairman of the event.

Tourists will be guided in small groups by a distinguished corps of architects, architectural historians, city planners and architecture buffs. At each building that will be entered, there will be an expert who will discuss the structure. On view will be the interiors of St. Paul's Chapel, New York's only remaining pre-Revolutionary building; the Woolworth Building; City Hall; the New York Court House (popularly called the "Tweed"); the Surrogate's Court/Hall of Records; the U.S. Customs Court; the New York County

Courthouse; the U.S. Courthouse and the new Metropolitan Correctional Center attached to it (the jail is not yet open for use); and the new Police Headquarters.

Tickets are \$10 each and two for \$15; this is a tax-exempt contribution. Detailed information will be mailed early in April. If you want to be the first to reserve for the tour, you can write a check to the WAA Scholarship Fund and mail it to Mrs. Saul Edelbaum, 190 East 72nd Street, New York City 10021.

If you want to be part of the Committee or would enjoy being a guide, call the Chapter, 565-1866.

Executive Committee Actions

March 5, 1975

- Resolved to submit a resolution to the AIA Convention calling for rescinding the Institute's \$53 fee for reinstatement of terminated membership.
- Appointed Arthur Seckler, chairman of the Building Code Committee, Max Kandel and Joseph Kiell to be members of a city-wide Building Code Committee representing all city AIA chapters and the Society.
- At the request of the Fees & Contracts Committee, resolved to request selected firms to submit data on the calculation of overhead. The Committee intends to study the relation of rising costs of doing business to the use of rigid multipliers by public agencies.

Newly Elected Fellows

These four Chapter members were among the 61 AIA members elected to the AIA College of Fellows this year:

George A. Dudley
Ezra Ehrenkrantz
Romaldo Giurgola
Peter Samton

The newly elected Fellows' investiture will take place at the Annual Convention in Atlanta on May 19.

Welcome to New Members

The NYC/AIA welcomes the following members:

Corporate

John Charles Fondrisi
Stanley Kennedy
Norman Cicelsky
Martin Bloom
Anthony Moody (Readmission)
Kenneth A. Soldan
Alexis Popov
Roger Lovstrom
Theodore Liebman
Daniel A. Lazaro
Shelly Kroop
Karl Hess
Howard J. Cohen

Professional Associate

Carl Kaiserman
Sal Americo
Lenore Lucey
Robert R. Feitl

Associae

Miorica Demlin
Hans Mulyatera
Janet I. Harris
Richard A. Carlson

Candidates for Membership

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

Corporate

Adrienne Green Bresnan
Richard S. Condon
Theoharis Lambros David
Eugene Janiss
Raymond W. Jean
Henry Lewis Meltzer
William P. Scott, III

Associate

Alan Feld (AIA)

"Can You Give Me The Names Of Some Architects?"

This is a frequent question asked of the Chapter staff, and it is usually attached to a building type: "Can you give me the names of architects who do libraries?"

The staff does *not* give out names, but it does invite the questioners to look at the file of members' work maintained at the office. This file is cross-indexed by 40 building types, and each firm's folder can contain whatever the firm wants to put in it. The staff clips magazine and newspaper articles to the extent that it is able, but each firm should keep its folder current.

So, all Chapter offices are again reminded that the file is there for their use; you are urged to update your folders. Contact Evelyn McGrath or Cathanne Piesla.

New York Chapter
The American Institute of Architects
20 West 40th Street
New York, New York 10018
212/565-1866
George S. Lewis, Executive Director

Executive Committee
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Robert F. Gatje, 1st Vice President
Alexander Kouzmanoff, Vice President
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Ralph Steinglass
Linda Yang

Employment Down 55% In Architectural Offices

Recognizing the increasingly depressed state of the profession, the Chapter and the New York State Employment Service have been working hand in hand to help locate jobs and place qualified personnel.

At a recent meeting of the newly formed sub-committee on Emergency Employment at the Chapter, Lynn Wallach of the Employment Service revealed that unemployment in the New York area has reached unprecedented heights.

Employment right now is carrying an active list of 850 applicants; 200 or 300 was normal in previous years.

Ms. Wallach reports that she has only averaged 10 placements a month so far this year; 4 to 50 were normal in previous years. Private agencies are also making fewer monthly placements, according to Ms. Wallach.

Figures compiled by the Chapter, although not fully updated, indicate that total employment in N.Y. City architectural offices is only 45% of comparable figures in 1969.

At the Chapter's business meeting in January, an employee member made an impassioned plea to fellow AIA members not to forget about the increasing numbers of unemployed colleagues.

How can the profession really do anything about unemployment, at a time when many established firms are having difficulty staying in business, while others have laid off staff at record numbers in order to survive?

The answer has to be "yes." The question is "how?"

NYC/AIA has officially endorsed the New York State Employment Service.

If firms contact Lynn Wallach directly she could then function more effectively when jobs became available.

Unfortunately this will not create new projects and therefore new jobs.

Perhaps all that can be done is to continue the AIA's efforts to convince government officials at all levels that a crisis condition exists in the architectural profession with drastic implications for the rest of the economy.
RS

Overhead Cost Survey

The Fees & Contracts Committee, Roy Friedberg, chairman, is currently surveying 20 NYC/AIA member firms to examine their overhead experience for 1972, 1973 and 1974. The firms selected are of various sizes.

Overhead costs are to be determined, for this survey, by utilizing direct technical salaries (without benefits) rather than direct personnel expense (salaries & benefits). Each firm has been requested to prepare overhead calculations on a comparative basis (standard overhead and standard overhead with deletions required by government agencies).

New commissions have fallen off while overhead costs have gone up—resulting in lower profit margins. A large portion of future work will involve government agencies which utilize multipliers to determine fees. The results of this survey will be presented to government agencies in an effort to increase the multipliers now used in contract negotiations.

The present multipliers were developed many years ago and are no longer accurate, technical staffs are smaller and overhead costs have increased due to continuing fixed costs and the increased complexity of the practices.

MJC

Fees & Contracts Committee Needs More Members

This committee, of which Roy Friedberg is chairman, has an agenda too heavy for its relatively few members. It is currently concerned with:

- Liaison with the U.S. Postal Service concerning contracts and procurement policies (see March **Oculus**).
- Survey of selected Chapter firms' calculations of overhead in relation to public agencies' rules for setting fees through multipliers (see article in this issue).
- Review of the Institute's new Manual on Cost Based Compensation.
- Assembly of data for the Institute's new Manual on Cost Based Compensation.
- Assembly of data for the Institute's Man Hour Data Bank.
- Proposed Federal Forms 254 and 255.

The Public Agencies Committee chaired by Martin Raab is concerned with issues closely related to the above as they apply to architects' services on City projects. For example, an immediate issue for discussion with the Comptroller's office is reimbursement for principals' time. There are many others to be taken up.

These committees are performing vital services for Chapter firms. Help is needed. Members who would like to contribute their time should communicate with George Lewis.

An Oculus Exclusive: AIA President Describes Practice in Atlanta

Atlanta is the Host Chapter of the National Convention in May. Oculus wondered if Atlanta architects were feeling the same pressures that we are in New York and asked Atlanta Chapter President M. Garland Reynolds, Jr., who is Senior Vice President at Welton Becket & Associates, to fill us in. Following is his answer.

Atlanta is in trouble! More than 33 per cent of our architects are out of work and, for the moment, our city is overbuilt. We have too much office space, too many hotel rooms, scores of empty condominiums and even more apartments and private homes than we need. But we also have courage and what I call realistic optimism.

This AIA 1975 convention city has been an on-again, off-again "boom town" since the railroads first arrived here. The Sixties were perhaps one of our greatest boom periods. We were going full blast. Now our romanticized city must once again catch up with itself.

We can be sure, however, that Atlanta won't stay quiet long. In February ground was broken for the huge MARTA (Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority) rail rapid transit line, a project that is providing needed work for many local design firms. This work and an expected upsurge in local government projects will enable the better managed firms to weather the storm.



Atlanta skyline around Peachtree Center.

Aside from its immediate benefits to architects, the MARTA project will bring great change—and great opportunities—to the city. Stretching out in four directions from downtown Atlanta, the MARTA lines will enable us to become a city no longer dependent upon the automobile for survival and will serve as the spur for the development of areas bypassed in the great development thrust to the north in the Sixties. We will grow like we've never grown before and the firms that remain and prepare for this growth will reap the benefits.

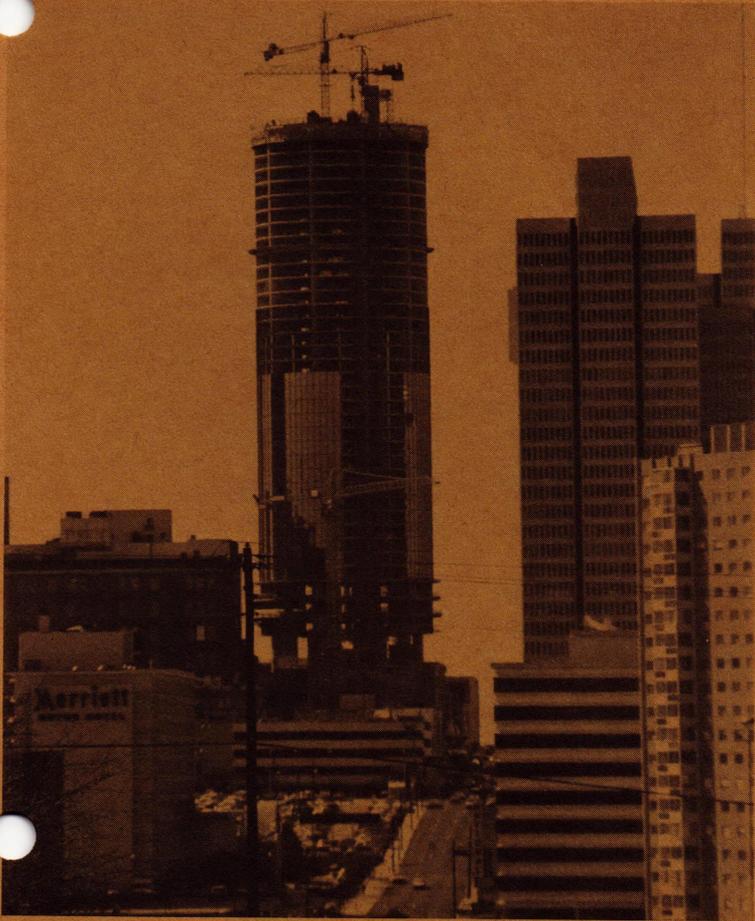
Unfortunately, the immediate future is not as bright. In all likelihood metropolitan Atlanta will have fewer architects and fewer firms in operation by the start of 1976. But we have not given up. The Chapter, for example, has arranged with MARTA to accept proposals from smaller firms which have joined together to compete for certain assignments. For the individual, we have programs that range from actual job placement through our Chapter reference service to guidance in obtaining food stamps.

One question seems inevitable in any discussion of architecture in Atlanta: What is the influence of John Portman. The answer may be given in a single word: tremendous.

John Portman brought the city good, exciting architecture while giving the designer new horizons for the interrelationship of interior and exterior spaces.

He was catalyst for the Hyatt Regency, Peachtree Center and the circular 70-story hotel now rising in the same area. They are the dramatic answers to the question.

I hope to be able to welcome many New York AIA members to Atlanta in May. It is a beautiful city in spring—the perfect time to visit everything from Underground Atlanta to Stone Mountain.



Portman's 70 story hotel - 23 stories to go.



Dorothy Spence, Executive Director and Garland Reynolds, Jr., President Atlanta Chapter, AIA. Behind them, Regency Hyatt Hotel Lounge.



Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority bus — rail line's on it's way.

In Response To The Many Queries From Our Readers . . .

The first monthly "leaflet of information" published by the NYC/AIA carried an October 20, 1938 date-line and a 115 East 40th Street address—but no name.

Stymied as to an appropriate name, Editor Ward W. Fenner announced an invited competition that had neither formal approval from the AIA nor a professional advisor. Lèse majesté.

A month later, with dazzling speed rare to most AIA competitions, the Vol. 1, No. 2 issue was proudly christened "**Oculus**". The following article, reprinted in its entirety, was Page One copy.

The list of entries in our unauthorized competition to select a name was most gratifying. Some forty entries were submitted, some coming from the West Coast. The jury chose "Oculus" after much debate as to whether there still remain any architects who have the classical education to appreciate it.

The oculus is the circular opening admitting light through the top of a dome (as in the Pantheon in Rome). The name was chosen as symbolizing the function of this leaflet in shedding light on the activities of the Chapter. Its slight similarity to "Octagon" was considered an asset.

Unknown to this day: Who was on the jury? Who submitted the winning entry? Did that winner receive the promised reward: a "handsome combination T-square and sword-cane or some other suitable trophy?"

IMA

Plus Ça Change, Plus C'est La Même Chose

The same two 1938 premier issues described in the column to the left carried the following news:

The Membership Committee urges all members who are employers to encourage their assistants to associate themselves with the Chapter, not so much to combat the current trend in the unionization of draftsmen as to make it unnecessary in A.I.A. offices.

Gerald A. Holmes, chairman of the committee on Civic Design has informed us that through the good offices of Wallace K. Harrison the Chapter has received a gift of one thousand dollars from Mr. Nelson Rockefeller.

This gift is for the use of the Committee on Civic Design in cooperation with the Architects' Emergency Committee to make studies and surveys which will be of use to the City and the Chapter.

The committee on the LeBrun prize reported that due to the present economic uncertainty, it would be unwise to assume that it would have sufficient funds to award the prize next year, and that therefore no prize will be offered.

Members have seen recently an advertisement of Gimbel Bros., which offered "blueprints and samples of the *Ladies' Home Journal* Dollar House Plans which show how you can build a home complete without the services of an architect."

President Harmon has written to Mr. Gimbel stating the Chapter's point of view. The *Ladies' Home Journal* disclaims any such intent: "We do not believe that houses should be built without architects when architects are available and affordable."

04m 75
The first statewide convention of all New York State registered architects was held in New York in October of 1938. Such a meeting was the brainchild of NYC/AIA President Arthur Loomis Harmon. State Senator Desmond favored the meeting with this warmly received message, reprinted in the "**Oculus**":

"There is already entirely too much bureaucratic government in Albany, Washington and elsewhere. We should try to lessen the number of employees in such bureaus, not increase them. New York State, New York City and other municipalities should employ from time to time private independent architects, whenever needed, instead of trying to increase governmental bureaus for such work. Architectural work for governmental units can be done better and more cheaply, in the long run, by the intelligent use of the occasional services of established, independent architects, not by trying to restrict architectural work to bureaus of permanent governmental employees."

For whatever it's worth, not all history repeats itself. Witness this small item:

At the December meeting an amendment to the by-laws will be proposed and voted on. Its effect will be to lower associate members' dues from \$15 to \$10.

IMA

Illustrated Guide To OSHA For Design Professionals

One year ago, Congress assigned responsibility for improving occupational safety and health standards in the U.S. to the Department of Labor. Since then, OSHA authorities have sorted and combined endless quantities of safety and health regulations from all areas of industry and commerce. Concurrently, Peter S. Hopf, former Chapter member now in California, has extracted and organized for architects, engineers and builders those rules which he believes are of greatest concern to them.

Designer's Guide To OSHA (McGraw-Hill, \$17.50) is intended both to improve awareness of occupational safety and health aspects of building construction and to assist those responsible for complying with the many regulations taking effect under OSHA. (The Occupational Safety and Health Act concerns *only the health and safety of people at work.*

Mr. Hopf points out that, even without a worker injury, the design professional may be held responsible for changes before, during and after construction, if his plans fail to satisfy new federal standards for safety and health. This is similar to his liability at the local and state level for structural integrity and fire protection. He is responsible also for the safety and health of his own employees.

With a brief background of OSHA intent and procedures, the book includes graphic illustrations, an outline of occupational safety and health standards and their sources, local OSHA addresses, a copy of the Act, and a quick-reference guide.

It would appear that other elements of the construction industry are attempting to transfer their own OSHA liability, project by project, to architects and engineers. Resisting this move will require a clear grasp of the law. This book should help.

JRM

Women's School To Open: Two Weeks In August

Seeking alternatives in professional practice and in education, a group of women in the design professions has announced plans for the Women's School of Planning and Architecture. Scheduled for two weeks in August, 1975, the school will be held in the relaxed vacation setting of a small college campus on the coast of Maine.

The Women's School will explore new ways of thinking about the built environment, new ways of working in the design professions. The concentrated two weeks are intended to promote a meaningful interaction among participants, and an essential grasp of existing and alternative design philosophies, techniques and idiosyncrasies.

Admission is open to women of any stage of their education or continuing education. The only requirement is that students be working or studying in some area of the environmental design professions. The number of students will be limited to 60, to permit small classes and workshops, as well as school-wide interaction.

Cost of the two-week session will be about \$400 (including room, board and tuition). Child care will be available. For further information, prospective students should send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to The Women School of Planning and Architecture, Box 311, Shaftsbury, Vermont 05262.

Participating as full-time "faculty members" are Katrin Adams, Kathryn Allott, Ellen Perry Berkeley, Noel Phyllis Birkby, Bobbie Sue Hood, Marie Kennedy, Joan Forrester Sprague, and Leslie Kanes Weisman.

Stopping by The Chapter On a Rainy Evening

As torrents of rain pounded the midtown pavements, a substantial crowd packed the Chapter Meeting Room, Wednesday, March 19, to hear an informal talk on architectural writing.

Douglas Haskell, architectural critic and historian, Peter Blake, editor of *Architecture Plus*; Paul Goldberger of the *New York Times*; and Suzanne Stephens, senior editor of *Progressive Architecture*, were the guests.

Each participant talked for about 15 minutes discussing how they saw themselves as writers; what they thought was their function or impact. A question period followed.

Peter Blake spoke of his outrageousness; called it his function. Douglas Haskell spoke of his relationship to history and other architects. He also told some amusing anecdotes, such as how Frank Lloyd Wright had brought Mies Van Der Rohe to his attention.

Paul Goldberger spoke of the difficulties of working in the shadow of Ada Louise Huxtable; he sees his function as a bridge between profession and public.

Suzanne Stephens spoke about the function of architectural magazines.

An interesting comment was raised from the floor on why, with so much publicity, the public understands so little about what architects do.

NFL

Buildings Department Has a New Style And a New Wrinkle

A directive has been issued to all Borough Presidents by Commissioner Jeremiah T. Walsh stating that plan examination is to be restricted to examination for compliance with the zoning, egress and fire safety requirements, for all new building, alteration work, and building notice applications filed on and after March 3, 1975. (See the January **Oculus**).

There are two reasons for this directive. One is to speed up a slow and cumbersome examination process. The other is simultaneously to avoid the possibility of corruption by eliminating the need for preferential treatment.

Considering that legal responsibility for zoning, egress and fire safety is ultimately the architect's, one may assume that this edict will be helpful; the architect will now rely on his own judgement.

However, even if the Building Department does pass through a set of drawings after a cursory look, there still is no guarantee that a field inspector won't refuse part or all of the building during construction. This conflict could arise because a violation was uncovered in the field that might have been caught earlier, had there been a complete plan review.

Then we get into the grey area of who is to pay for the cost of redoing the construction work?

This is an area which we, as architects, must carefully study since the legal and liability insurance (presently skyrocketing) ramifications are extensive. The Construction Industry Advisory Commission, on which Martin Raab represents the Chapter, has requested from the Municipal Services Administrator that an ongoing policy of policing this new procedure and making known to the public its results be officially initiated in the Buildings Department.

DVR

Roosevelt Island Competition To Conclude With First Stage

About a year ago, UDC's then head, Edward J. Logue, Hon. AIA, saw a need for concern with certain housing issues including social interaction, livability, child supervision, maintenance and security. An additional interest was the design development of a high rise, high density, housing prototype.

On December 15, 1974, registration opened for a national, two-stage competition for 1000 units of housing. Since then, 1067 programs have been issued, and 725 competitors have registered. The registration covered 42 states. Twenty-eight percent of the respondents were from New York; California represented 11%

As the financial cloud settled over UDC, the competition faltered. A February 26th letter went out to all competitors, advising them to stop work and await further word.

UDC's Theodore Liebman, the Professional Advisor, issued a letter on March 12th. It announced that the competition would proceed thru the first stage only and that there would be no obligation to build the winning solutions. The prizes will be as follows:

First Prize	\$10,000
Second Prize	5,000
Third Prize	2,000
5 Honorable Mentions	each 1,000

It is believed that the eight winning schemes will receive national recognition in the architectural press. UDC also hopes that future urban housing will be helpfully influenced.

BI

Minority Scholarship Program In Fifth and Final Year

With a \$500 scholarship given to each of 31 students this year, the Chapter's Minority Scholarship Program will be concluded. The program was established on a five-year basis in response to the membership's belief in the need for aid to minority students seeking their first professional degree in architecture. Funds for the program have been obtained through assessments of each dues-paying member (\$10 per year) and member firm (\$3 per technical employee per year).

A Chapter meeting will be called in late April to discuss the possibility of future programs. Norval White, chairman of the Educational Committee, is currently evaluating the program, and he will be reporting his findings to the membership at that meeting.

In the past the program has been administered by the Minority Scholarship Committee, currently chaired by James Doman. The committee is made up of the heads of the five architectural schools in the City, a number of additional Chapter members and various student representatives. This committee reviews all applicants and selects recipients. The applications were previously screened by the schools for confirmation of student status and financial need. Each year somewhere between 30 and 45 students each received a uniform grant of about \$500.

So far as is known, this has been the only program in the city providing minority scholarships for architectural education.

The Women's Architectural Auxiliary has contributed to the Chapter's Minority Scholarship Program in the past, in addition to giving its own block grants directly to the schools for disbursement as they see fit.

CM