

Oculus

Robert F. Wagner, Jr. Is Guest Speaker at Chapter

On Jan. 24 Robert F. Wagner, Jr., newly appointed Chairman, City Planning Commission, was guest speaker at the Chapter. He commented on several positions taken in the past by the Chapter and outlined what he thought to be the future at CPC. What followed was an informative and very positive dialogue.

This year is the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Planning Commission. The AIA has been quite active during the last two administrations providing the CPC with a constant flow of its opinions. Mr. Wagner is very much in favor of creating an even stronger liaison between the Chapter and the CPC than has had been experienced in the past. He plans to establish regular monthly meetings with the Chapter to maintain a steady exchange of ideas with a resultant deeper involvement of the AIA in CPC activities.

Highlights of the Wagner comments were:

● Convention Center

A firm decision will probably be made within the next two months.

● Westway

The Koch Administration is not in favor of Westway. If there is a mass transit trade-in, however, he does not want to



Robert F. Wagner, Jr. Chairman of the City Planning Commission speaking at Jan. 24th Chapter meeting. Seated from the left is Stephen Klimont, Chapter Secretary and Chapter President, Peter Samton. Photo by George Lewis.

see a minimum solution on West Street. Wagner feels strongly that the public should have access to the waterfront with a well designed road and park system.

● Housing and Community Development

Urban design will be a most significant factor in all CPC activities. Efforts will be made to see that federal housing funds are allocated to have maximum effect. Regarding the South Bronx project he indicated that the federal

government has most deliberate intentions to see something done. The City Administration has put forward a plan for the rehabilitation of the area. This plan is now being reviewed in Washington.

Mr. Wagner had met previously with chapter representatives the day he was sworn in, and at the outset of his tenure at CPC an excellent relationship with the Chapter has clearly been established. □

Mary Jane Clark

Evelyn McGrath at Chapter for Twenty Years



This month will mark Evelyn McGrath's 20th year at the Chapter. During this time countless members have been delighted with the way she has worked with them, exhibiting a seemingly endless display of skill and patience. She has not only provided the sole continuity through many changes of leadership, but she has at the same time brought up a family of ten, now ranging in age from 16 to 29. Cathanne Piesla who is also on the Chapter staff is her daughter. Photo of "Ev" is by George Lewis.

Miscellany

The Post has engaged a new reporter, Eric Fettmann, who will write on housing and related subjects. Peter Samton urged Rupert Murdoch to give more coverage to housing and planning issues.

The Chapter will review a proposal of the Fisher Brothers to build behind the Racquet Club.

The AIA convention will be in New York in 1982, and it is none too early to develop plans for what should be the greatest architectural conference ever held anywhere.

New York Chapter
The American Institute of Architects
20 West 40th Street
New York, New York 10018
212/730-1221
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Cathanne Piesla
Chapter Staff Member

Candidates for Membership

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

AIA Member

Charles G. Brodie
James A. Carr
Alan Gaynor
Laurence T. Goldberg
Joseph A- Micali
Gerard F. Vasisko
Joel D. Zieden

AIA Associate

Handen N. McKay

New Members

The NYC/AIA Welcomes the following New Members:

AIA Member

William Bobenhausen
Donald L. Bostwick, II
Jack Gonchor
Peder H. Knudson
Sergie Waisman

Executive Committee Cuts Chapter Dues and Restudies Position on Relicensing

At its regular Jan. meeting the Chapter's executive committee voted to cut back first and second year individual dues for Chapter members to \$25 and \$50, respectively, from the current \$58 and \$72 (see story this page). The committee also agreed to review diverse approaches to continuing education and relicensing held by the NY State Regents, the NY State Board for Architects, NCARB and the state and local Chapters, and come up with a single, practical position to bring before the Regents.

In other actions, the committee voted to--

- hold a spring celebration in honor of Philip Johnson, '78 recipient of the AIA Gold Medal

- adjust the Chapter's membership admission process to reduce current delays

- use a scheduled private meeting with Robert F. Wagner, Jr., new chairman of the City Planning Commission, to exchange views on Westway, the Museum of Modern Art expansion and other city-shaping issues within Mr. Wagner's power to influence. Meetings will also be sought with the five borough presidents.

Full text of the minutes are available at the Chapter office. □

Stephen Kliment

Philip Johnson to Receive AIA Gold Medal Chapter to Celebrate Event in the Spring



Philip Johnson pictured recently above at his office will receive the coveted AIA Gold Medal at the May '78 AIA Convention to be held in Dallas. The Chapter plans to hold a spring celebration of this event. Photo by Denis Glen Kuhn.

First and Second Year Dues Slashed In Chapter Campaign for New Members

In a move it hopes will attract new members to the ranks, the Chapter is reducing first year individual dues from \$58 to \$25 and second year dues from \$72 to \$50. Applicants who submitted their forms before the reduction will receive partial refunds.

The reductions are in sharp contrast to today's pattern of constant inflation.

The cuts will also make more attractive the current \$85 bonus in supplementary dues offered by the national AIA to firms for each AIA architect in their employ. As membership committee chair-lady Sarelle Weisberg said in her Dec. 13 letter to firm principals, firms will come out ahead in their net total of supplementary dues even if

they do pay their employees' individual dues as an incentive to join the Institute.

The Chapter's lowered dues will reduce the dues load on cooperating firms since individual members pay dues not only to the national AIA but also to the state and local organizations.

A move is now underway to bring down the state association's dues for first and second year members from the present \$42.50 to a lower figure. □

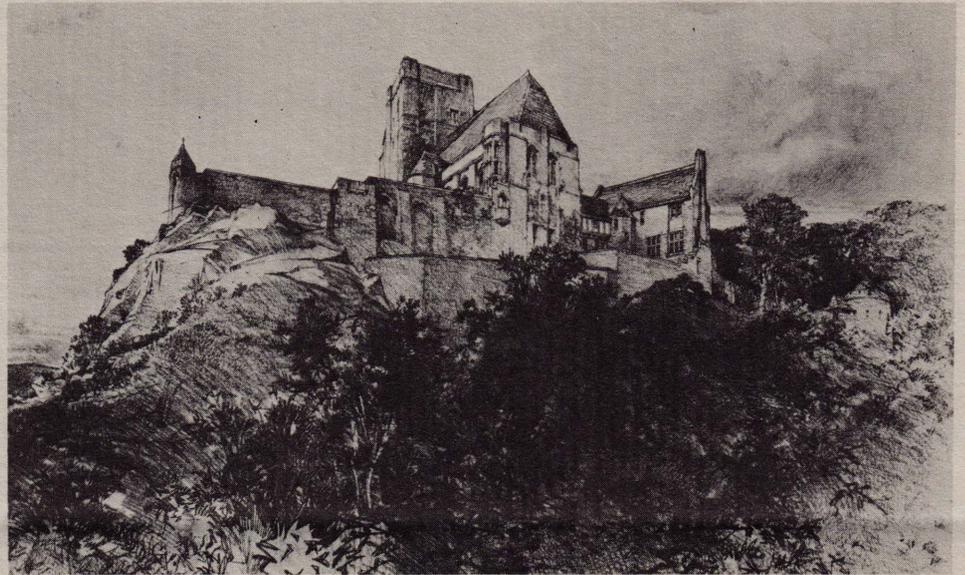
Stephen Kliment

Chapter's '77 Brunner Scholarship is in Use to Support a Re-Evaluation of Bertram Goodhue's Work

Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue (1869-1924), for a growing number of us, stands out as an Architect so sure of his images and his purpose, and evidently so secure as a person, that he could proceed to develop an astonishingly original architecture that at once encompassed modernism, tradition, and fantasy. In a time of dramatic changes, Goodhue felt no obligation to remain a complacent conservative, like Ralph Adams Cram, nor any desire to thunder zealously - like a born-again Christian - into the "Modern" camp, like George Howe. That the prestigious Brunner Scholarship should, at this time in particular, be used to support a re-evaluation of Goodhue's work seems, therefore, altogether appropriate.

Goodhue's prolific career included some of the most splendid commissions of the day: lavish churches in New York, Chicago, and elsewhere; the influential "Spanish" buildings for the 1915 Panama-California Exposition in San Diego; the Los Angeles Public Library; and the state capitol of Nebraska at Lincoln. Nevertheless, Goodhue's work has remained underappreciated since his death, due in large part to the lack of a sympathetic theoretical and critical framework to accommodate the work. The histories and criticism of the past fifty years have focused almost exclusively on a set of forms that appeared to be new, and which also disavowed any connections with the past, and with architectural tradition.

But surprisingly, Goodhue's last buildings - especially the Capitol and the Library - were hailed as modern and ori-

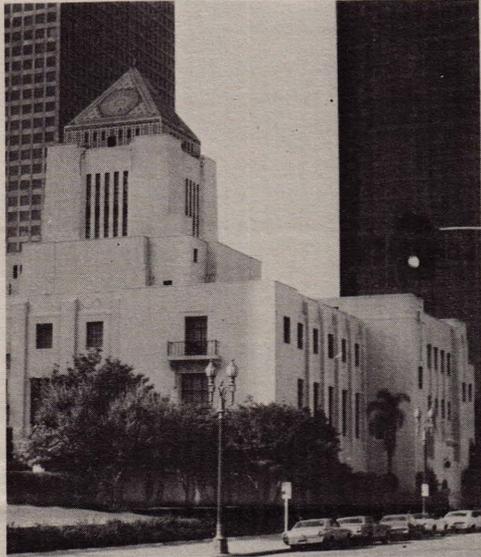


Drawing by Bertram Goodhue of his Peterson House - Westchester, New York project. The drawing made in 1915 is in black crayon and pencil and is owned by John Rivers, Goodhue's grandson and photographed with his cooperation by the Cooper-Hewitt Museum for their 200 years of American Architectural Drawing exhibition.

original. Indeed, with the Library, Goodhue intended to "give them a building that will make them sit up and scratch their heads." Yet his buildings each possess features in plan, section, elevation and detail which are undeniably traditional. Towers, rotundas, and eclectic imagery were employed for the power they hold over the eye and mind of the viewer, rather than any desire to be "correct." There are even elements, like the tiled pyramid atop the Library, which spring from the world of fantasy and from Goodhue's fertile imagination. Therefore, one of the interesting aspects of his buildings now is that they pose a challenge to our standard notions of originality. For most of this century, originality has been nearly synonymous with novelty and with the surprisingly - even shockingly - unfamiliar. Goodhue's buildings, by con-

trast, suggest that originality in fact emerges from a context of tradition and precedent.

Consider the Los Angeles Library. The plan, shown on p.5 has a clarity of organization one expects from a Beaux Arts building, or one by Louis Kahn: five noble reading rooms surrounding a great stack of books, the whole centered on a clerestory-lit rotunda. While the interiors are all exposed concrete, the richly tiled and ornately painted ceilings suggest the aura of sumptuous traditional rooms. The exterior is comprised of the sort of austere surfaces and volumes one would expect from an orthodox "Modernist," and the exterior is even covered with stucco, like the Villa Savoye or a thousand Southern California buildings. Yet the massing and central tower, the abundant sculpture by Lee Lawrie, the inscriptions composed by Hartley Burr Alexander, (photo facing page),



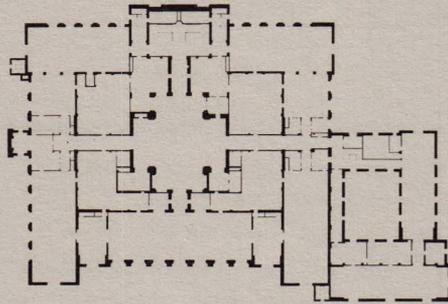
Los Angeles Library by Bertram Goodhue. Photo by author.

and especially the gently chamfering of corners and subtle battering of walls create an impression that the entire building has been lovingly sculpted. The result is generous, dramatic, and humanistic, the opposite of the "brutal images of impotence and pretension" which Vincent Scully claims to see, or, for that matter, the opposite of the machine imagery usually associated with modernism. The Library is a mature and assured combination of the sensible and the ceremonial, the austere and the decorated, at once romantically picturesque and rigorously well-organized, original and yet familiar, serious and full of ineffable fantasy.

Goodhue's architecture, finally, reflects a congenial and productive alliance of the past and the present. Because historians and critics in this century have tended to view the past and the present as discontinuous and somewhat at odds, Goodhue's work has heretofore been particularly disconcerting to consider. As the



Detail view of sculpture over Los Angeles Library, c.'24, main entrance. The sculptures are by Lee Lawrie. Photo by author.



Plan of Los Angeles Library drawn from original working drawings by author.

critical framework by which we view architecture abandons this and other artificial distinctions, Goodhue's work will clearly be reinstated to its proper pivotal position. □

Richard B. Oliver

Oliver, Curator of Architecture and Design at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum was selected for the '77 Brunner Award to pursue his studies on Goodhue's work. Applications for this year's Grant must be submitted as indicated on page 8.

Feds Contacted on Problems Encountered in Overseas Work

The Overseas Practice Committee has begun contacting US Government officials in order to discuss with them the various problems encountered by service industries doing business over overseas, and the Government's role in these problems. The Committee would like information and suggestions from members regarding their experiences working abroad and how the Government was either involved or could be of assistance i.e. embassies, tax structure, loan policies, information, etc. Please send all information to Richard Roth, Jr., Emery Roth & Sons, P.C., 745 Fifth Avenue, NY 10022, phone: 753-1733.

The Committee would also like to recommend the purchase of the "Engineers Overseas Handbook," published by the US Department of Commerce, to those members who are either presently working overseas or contemplating doing so. The Handbook can be obtained from the Superintendent of Documents US Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20240, Stock Number 002-008-00178-5. □

Institute Grassroots Meeting Held : Mitchell Outlines a Way to Achieve a Better Built Environment , Ethics of the "Free Sketch" Debated and Continuing Education Requirements Opposed

Peter Samton, Charles Hughes and George Lewis attended the annual AIA meeting for chapter officers and executives, (north-eastern one-third of the country) in Washington Jan.12-14.

●Ehrman Mitchell, of the firm Mitchell/Giurgola, President-Elect, made a particularly fine impression. Here is some of what he said:

"Our greatest failing is that we don't talk enough about architecture to the public and not enough about architecture to ourselves. We all know that architecture comes before architects. It seems to me the first thing we need to do is broaden the public's awareness of architecture and the built environment. We must begin a major thrust in building a greater public understanding of what architecture is, what the built environment is. We must build a greater understanding of the public's role in shaping the physical environment, an understanding of how it comes to be, the discernment of its quality and the architects who design it.

"We should begin at all levels of society, in the secondary schools, colleges and universities, the non-professional degree curriculum, in adult education and, of course, through the public media with programs focusing on architecture and the built environment. It seems evident that a greater understanding of architecture in the public sector will create a public awareness of those of us who lay claim to giving it form, utility and delight. This is a long range commitment that must be sustained for it to produce an enlightened public and client

sector.

"In the area of public influence. Influencing decision-makers, particularly at the governmental level, AIA has a growing voice in matters affecting our profession. We have a golden opportunity before us as a new government is maturing, the opportunity to bring AIA's programs, ideas and policies to this Administration with a fresh, new approach, a positive, helpful one."

●There was debate over the increasing tendency of some owners selecting architects to ask several firms for design approaches. The AIA Code of Ethics prohibits free sketches, but the prohibition against AIA members entering non-AIA-approved competitions was withdrawn under Justice Department pressure. The present Code permits participation in competitions "only when sufficient information concerning the project and the client has been provided to make possible an adequate design solution." It was strongly felt by some that this guideline did not adequately indicate fair ground rules, and the Chapter intends to bring the matter to the AIA Board.

●There was criticism of the AIA for offering a plan which could be used in localities where continuing education is being considered or is in effect; some of those present demanded that the AIA oppose this development.□

George Lewis

Chapter Plans for Participation In Solar Show on "SUN DAY"

May 3'78 has been designated "SUN DAY" by a national coalition of environmental, professional and civic organizations. "SUN DAY" in New York will actually be a series of area wide events which will occur from May 3-6 with the goal of stimulating public awareness and convincing opinion-makers and consumers that solar energy and energy conserving design are viable options for many purposes.

Through its Energy & Environment Committee, the Chapter has the opportunity to participate in the public exhibition at the Custom House, as well as other exhibits, seminars and related activities to be held at various museums, galleries, and schools in the New York City Area.

From all indications to date, New York City is planning the most extensive "SUN DAY" program in the nation, with events that will attract hundreds of thousands of metropolitan residents and coverage by local and national news media.

During February and March, the Energy & Environment Committee will be actively requesting from the chapter membership, contributions of energy-conscious architectural design and related work for the public exhibition in May.

Guidelines as to scope, quality of the work and presentation requirements will soon follow. For information in the interim please contact the Chapter.□

Jan Kalas

Chapter to Host Report on China-The Impact of the New Social Order on the Physical Environment



Photograph of Peking Housing. Photo by Judith Edelman

On Mar.1 Judith Edelman, Annette Kwok and Jean Mah Wall will report on their recent 28 day professional tour of the People's Republic of China, sponsored and arranged by the Architectural Society of China.

The 19 architects, planners and historic preservationists in the delegation are members of the Women's China Study Group on Environmental Issues, founded in '74 by architects Marjorie Hoog and Dimon Liu. The Chinese Society extended the invitation in order to promote exchange of information about architectural issues and mutual understanding. Opportunities were provided to see housing, open

space programs, city planning, health environments and restoration of historic buildings.

The delegation included women from New York, California, New England, Tennessee, Washington, D.C. It was led by Lynda Simmons, architect and Vice-President and Development Director of Phipps Houses. Other delegation members from the New York area were Adele Chatfield-Taylor, Amy Beth Cohen, Judith Paine and Val Schliecher-Woods.

See the calendar for information on time and program.□

Judith Edelman

Book Review

John Milnes Baker, AIA, How to Build a House with an Architect, with a section on remodeling, J.P. Lippincott, Co., Price \$14.95.

The architect/author wrote this book to make the whole process of working with an architect an enjoyable, productive, and stimulating experience. The book includes a section on effective home improvement, a glossary of architectural terms, and an appendix which thoroughly covers the whole subject of the architect's fee.

According to C.Ray Smith, Architect/Author/Critic - "John Baker's book makes the process of architecture clear and understandable...a guide not only for laymen but also for every architect to introduce his clients to."□

Arnold W. Brunner \$7,500 GRANT

The New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects invites Architects, or those in related fields, to submit an advance study in some special field of architectural investigation which will most effectively contribute to the practice, teaching, or knowledge of the art and science of architecture.

Jury

Bartholomew Voorsanger, Architect
Chairman
I. M. Pei & Partners

James Byron Bell, Architect

Samuel Brody, Architect
Davis Brody & Associates

Peter Eisenman, Architect
The Institute for Architecture
& Urban Studies

Percival Goodman, Architect

Ada Karmi-Melamede, Planner
Columbia University

Morris Ketchum, Jr., Architect

Nancy Miao, Architect
Twitchell & Miao

Leslie E. Robertson, Structural Engineer
Skilling, Helle, Christianson, Robertson

Arthur Rosenblatt, Architect
Metropolitan Museum of Art

Thomas L. Schumacher, Architect
Princeton University

William C. Shopsin, Architect

Carl Shulman, Electrical Engineer
City University New York

Non-Jury/Executive Committee Liaison
Robert A. M. Stern,
Robert A. M. Stern Architects

Applications from Chapter to March 1, 1978.

Proposals may be submitted to April 3, 1978.

Awards announced Summer, 1978.

Eligibility: open to any United States citizen engaged in the profession of Architecture and its related fields who has a professional background more advanced than is implied by four or five years of architecture training.