



Vol. IX No. 12

O C U L U S

August-September, 1948

NEW YORK CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS
115 EAST 40th STREET, NEW YORK 16, N. Y.

HAROLD R. SLEEPER, *President*
DANIEL SCHWARTZMAN, *Vice President*

WILLIAM POTTER, *Treasurer*
FRANCIS W. ROUDEBUSH, *Secretary*

DOROTHEA WATERS, *Executive Secretary*

MORTIMER E. FREEHOF, *Editor*

CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

The 80th National Convention of the A. I. A. was held at Salt Lake City, June 22nd to 25th inclusive. Details have been published in the July issue of the Bulletin.

At the Chapter luncheon meeting on June 8th, our delegates were instructed in certain matters to be discussed. Accordingly, a group of seasoned representatives were well prepared to add to the interest and vitality of the proceedings. It was gratifying to find that many of our resolutions had been anticipated and were incorporated into the Report of the Board of Directors. Among these topics were: 1. The Journal and the Bulletin (the Chapter's resolution was discussed and a further resolution adopted covering this item); 2. Fees; 3. Housing Criteria (Arthur Holden helped to prepare a resolution with regard to FHA procedure, local interpretations and powers); 4. Building Costs; 5. Educational Programs (The N. Y. Times' article concerning the work of the Chapter's Educational Committee on veterans' training was read and received much favorable comment); 6. Graduated Dues (a resolution was adopted, based upon recommendations of Arthur Holden).

Many of our Chapter delegates participated in the introduction of the resolution for the proposed award of a gold medal to Frank Lloyd Wright. This resolution was at first merely referred to the Board of Directors for further consideration. Pietro Belluschi, (recently awarded a Fellowship), arose to represent a large group of younger delegates who asked for an immediate vote. Morris Ketchum also spoke in favor of the resolution and it was adopted ultimately, with only one dissenting comment.

Many of the Chapter's activities were discussed, including our proposed Exposition at the Museum of Science & Industry. A fresh and stimulating note was introduced by the seminar sessions which were conducted during the course of the regular convention meetings. Criticism might be made on the ground that speakers were permitted discussion too detailed on specialized subjects for a general audience. The result was a falling off of interest in the question and answer periods which followed. It was the agreed opinion that while the policy was excellent, its administration should be revised in future to permit the introduction of subjects on general bases and the retiring into smaller groups for those with specialized interests. One of the best of the seminars was conducted by Edgar Williams, on the subject of architectural aesthetics.

CONVENTION SIDELIGHTS

At the height of Mormon dominance in Utah, the incidence of polygamy was not more than three percent of the population. This fact has nothing to do with the Institute Convention except that a possible analogy could be made with respect to architects and their professional principles and attachments. Perhaps only three percent of the architects have practiced monogamy, but of course this is a guess.

Only a few years ago a large part of each Institute Convention was taken up by routine matters, such as calling the roll of delegates and arguing controversial points about credentials. This year's convention was practically one long seminar. You became educated or else. Education is sometimes a painful process induced through the mind.

There is, however, a connection between the mind and parts of the body which is not merely tenuous but insistent. Witness the following resolution, adopted with all the gravity of more facetious subjects:

Whereas, the Corpulent Institute membership wholeheartedly desires to get at the seat of all its troubles; and Whereas, the seat of its troubles is the obvious increase in the unit live load of its individual members; and Whereas, said load, alive or dead, broadly speaking, should be integrated; and Whereas, the designers of convention chairs have been too conventional in regard to this aspect of form versus function; therefore, be it Resolved, that the Institute institute an institute to undertake immediate research into the shape, size and conformation of foam rubber cushions to be provided at each annual convention, or rump convention.

Water is flowing over the dam swiftly these years. The old forms which were the alphabet of architectural design have somehow or other slipped unnoticeably out of sight. Walking to the Hotel Utah about dinner time one evening I stopped to listen to a group of Texans staring up at the cornice and arguing. The question: what was the name of the form presumably holding up the cornice. Nobody could think of it. I still believe it is called a console.

Now forgetting terms is not the best measure of a forward-looking spirit or mind, but the incident indicates that the minds of the group I mention were not chained to dogmatic precedent. These fellows were typical of the men and women at the 1948 Convention. It seems to me a healthy sign. Pretty soon the boys who want to preempt to themselves all the

glory of thinking freshly and contemporaneously will find no one to denounce in their bitterness.

Charles Maginnis proved to be the young optimist. If you haven't read his speech in the Journal do so as soon as possible. Following Maginnis at the banquet was the speaker of the evening, one of Salt Lake City's brilliant men. His speech eulogizing the Mormon pioneers never got going. One of our Institute stalwarts, puzzled by the misfire, went out to find the reason. He found it:—Maginnis. Charles was that good!

All who attended the 1948 Convention bring back happy memories, the substantial quality of the City, of the fine looking people, of the beautiful mountains and of Western hospitality unsurpassed.

Edgar Williams

MAINTENANCE EXPOSITION

The New York Chapter was given a booth at the Building Maintenance Supplies Exposition held at Grand Central Palace August 2 to 6. This booth was designed by the New York Design Group and was manned by members of the office staff, who answered questions and gave out literature.

It was interesting to note that many spectators paused to read in detail the display panel explaining the objectives of the New York Chapter or carried away copies of "The Value of the Architect", "Design for Safe Living", "One Hundred Books on Architecture", and "Services of the Architect".

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

At the first seasonal meeting of the Membership Committee, held in August, Alonzo Clark, Chairman, outlined a program based on making every Chapter member automatically a member of this Committee. Mr. Clark stressed the fact that only by increased membership can the A. I. A. be truly representative of the profession.

The Committee plans to send out a letter enlarging upon its program and policies. Subsequent letters of encouragement are to augment the first, and are to explain the categories of membership, dues, and privileges. The aid of the Oculus will be enlisted to further this campaign. The Committee also intends to spare no effort in acquainting potential members with Chapter activities and benefits of membership. Mr. Clark states that his Committee is getting off to an early, active start and points out that it can only be successful by having wholehearted support. Here is a challenge extended. Let's meet it.

EAST MIDTOWN PLAN

At a luncheon on August 13th our Civic Design Committee, through its Chairman, Geoffrey Platt, presented to Robert F. Wagner, Jr., Chairman of the City Planning Commission, its program for the redevelopment of the East Midtown Area. Mr. Platt stated that our Committee urges the Commission to consider its proposals at this time because the recent passage by Congress of the \$65,000,000 loan assures the building of the United Nations headquarters and is bound to have a profound influence on the City.

The presentation was made in the form of an attractive booklet entitled "East Midtown Manhattan" and gives details of the comprehensive proposals promised to the Mayor last October.

The program includes many projects already recommended by various public organizations over a period of five to twenty years. Its adoption involves no public expenditure. The Report states that in order to make worthwhile the City's expenditure of \$15,000,000 for immediate street changes, assurance is required of the eventual comprehensive program outlined. The program would provide:

1. Adoption by the Planning Commission of a Land Use master plan for the entire area from the Queensboro Bridge to the Midtown Tunnel approach, and from Lexington Avenue to the East River.
2. Early enactment of the remaining zoning changes, already studied and proposed by the Borough President, necessary to guide the development of this whole area and to prevent undesirable speculation and construction that would conflict with the City's plans.
3. Widening of Second Avenue as an express thoroughfare, with central parked strip and several underpasses, at the same time that the Second Avenue subway is built.
4. Eventual extension of the proposed First Avenue truck traffic tunnel from 41st Street to a point north of the Queensboro Bridge, instead of coming to the surface at 47th Street, as now proposed, in order to give Beekman and Sutton Place residents the same protection afforded the United Nations.
5. Removal of the Third Avenue El, thus relieving traffic on Lexington Avenue which could then allow parking to aid retail shops.
6. Creation of several residential neighborhoods (in addition to the existing ones such as Beekman Hill, Turtle Bay, Tudor City, Murray Hill, etc.) by the closing of occasional cross streets to through traffic, providing lo-

cal parks, shopping centers, schools and playgrounds.

7. A new station of the IRT-Astoria line at First Avenue and 42 Street.

8. A new station of the Long Island RR at or near 34 Street and Second Avenue.

9. A new airline terminal at or near the Midtown Tunnel Approach, 37 Street and Second Avenue.

10. Creation, by private investment funds, aided by public condemnation powers, of a new East-West artery, linking the Grand Central and United Nations zones, midway between 46th and 47th Street, overpassing both First and Second Avenues.

11. Encouragement of the development of the superblocks thus created, from 45th to 48th Street, with hotels, theatres, concert and convention halls, as well as office buildings for press, publishing and other activities related to United Nations affairs.

12. Extensive public parking facilities, many of them underground, at the Mid-town Tunnel and Queensboro Bridge approaches, as well as in connection with the proposed new East-West artery, between the United Nations site and Grand Central Palace.

The plan for the East-West artery provides for:

1. A strip of land 570 feet wide from Lexington to First Avenue to be assembled by the City and resold to private developers.
2. Making the East-West approach to the United Nations Headquarters 150 feet wide, connecting Park Avenue with Lexington Avenue by one-way streets north and south of Grand Central Palace.
3. Two or more levels of possible store frontage, like Rockefeller Center.
4. Providing a wide central mall between Lexington Avenue and the point at which traffic flowed underground, continuing the 150 foot wide upper level as a park strip with pedestrian walks to join the United Nations Plaza.
5. Protection of residential neighborhoods like Turtle Bay and Beekman Place. It does not touch them, but provides a buffer of hotels or restaurants, retail and office, or institutional buildings on the north side of the new street — keeps all amusements to the south side.
6. Extensive parking areas under the center strip of the new street and at the lower level of the super blocks.

The Committee's proposal for the East-West artery involves the use of private capital and construction. All other proposals are projects that have already been studied, planned and discussed by public agencies.

It is stressed that all points be related and carried out step by step with the whole program in mind, even if actual construction is delayed because of lack of funds. The Committee highly commended the comprehensive plan prepared by the City Planning Commission for Downtown Brooklyn and for the Manhattan Civic Center, claiming these are both important steps in the proper direction for overall planning.

Schnall and Krug Associates, our Public Relations Consultants, are to be congratulated on the excellent press notices given to the Committee's program and its presentation. Copies of the booklet containing the program are available at the Chapter Office. Members and others will find this booklet interesting and informative. It is being distributed to City Officials gratis, but in order to defray the considerable expense of preparation, a nominal charge will be made to others. Cost to members will be Fifty Cents, with the limit of one copy to a member at that rate. Additional copies and copies to non-members will be charged at \$1.00 each.

TOMORROW'S WORLD

Under this title, from October 1st to 30th, inclusive, the Chapter will present an exhibit of the work of its members at the New York Museum of Science and Industry, Rockefeller Center. Details have already been furnished to the membership by separate announcement. Any additional information required may be obtained from Eleanor Pepper, Chairman of the Exhibition Committee, or from Albert G. Clay, Chairman of the Public Relations Committee.

The prime purpose of the exhibit is to show members' work to the public in such manner as to bring home the fact that it is the architect who makes homes liveable, commercial buildings more healthful and efficient, and people's lives more pleasant in the varied spaces which house all types of human existence and endeavor.

The exhibit will be grouped around a 3 dimensional model of a neighborhood representing an area of approximately 20 square miles. This model will attempt to illustrate the importance of the proper integration and relationships of community activities.

The point is stressed that the exhibit is primarily for the lay public. To this end, it is intended to highlight modern human values by a multitude of interesting details calculated to emphasize the careful consideration given by ar-

chitects to the everyday working and living problems of people.

COMING EVENTS

A resolution was passed at the AIA Convention stating that it was the sense of the meeting that the Annual Gold Medal of the Institute for 1949 be awarded to Frank Lloyd Wright.

It was not within the power of the Convention to make the award as this Medal must be awarded by the unanimous vote of the AIA Board members.

William G. Kaelber, our Regional Director, has asked this Chapter for an expression of opinion on this subject to guide him in his action at the next AIA Board meeting. We are therefore making this matter a subject for discussion at the Chapter meeting on Sept. 28th.

At a Chapter meeting in 1942 the Chapter passed a resolution stating that it would surrender its Charter and apply for a new Charter for a Chapter to be known as the Metropolitan Chapter, when and if the other New York Architectural Chapters and Societies agreed to unite as a new Chapter.

The Committee on Unification was asked to approach the other organizations to this end. The Committee has been at work at this task continually since this meeting and is now ready to make its report on the progress and recommendations to effectuate this unification.

This matter also will be discussed at the Chapter dinner meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 28th.

On Oct. 5th will be held the first of the season's Technical Committee luncheons. On Oct. 26th there will be a cocktail party for new members and student associates. Put down these dates, pending further notice of details.

OBITUARY

We note, with deep sorrow, the passing of Emery Roth, who died August 20, 1948. His practice covered a period of fifty years of prolific accomplishment. Among his better known works were the St. George Hotel in Brooklyn, Ritz Tower Hotel, Mayflower Hotel, Eldorado Apartments, and many other residential developments, as well as work in other fields. During his long career he was honored with many awards of merit and recently won the N. Y. Chapter Medal for the best apartment building over six stories high.

CONFERENCE OF BUILDING OFFICIALS

As we go to press, we are looking forward to the Conference of Building Officials of America, planned for Sept. 13 to 16, inclusive, at the Hotel New Yorker. Matthew Del Gaudio has been working in a liaison capacity with Arthur Benline, Superintendent of the Department of Housing & Buildings, Manhattan, in preparation of agenda. A report will be published in our October issue, covering subject matter discussed and action taken at this conference.

CANDIDATES

According to the By-Laws of the Chapter, names of candidates for membership shall be submitted to all members before consideration by the Committee on Admissions. Information received regarding the qualifications of the following candidates will be considered confidential:

Corporate Membership:

1. James Byron Bell
Sponsors: Otto Teegeen
Alonzo W. Clark
2. Louis Bubeck
Sponsors: John H. Bennett
Ralph Walker
3. Lathrop Douglass
Sponsors: Malcolm G. Duncan
Charles A. Bradbury
4. Henry A. Dumper
Sponsors: William Lescaze
Perry Coke Smith
5. Abraham Grossman
Sponsors: Samuel A. Hertz
Matthew W.
Del Gaudio
6. Samuel Juster
Sponsors: Anthony J. DePace
Benedetto Ferrara
7. John J. O'Connor
Sponsors: Calvin McCormick
Cecil C. Briggs
8. Hubert Ernest Reeves
Sponsors: Frederick C. Genz
Alonzo W. Clark
9. Roger Gilbert Spross
Sponsors: Alonzo W. Clark
Ralph Walker
10. Fenwick W. Wall
Sponsors: Richard Boring Snow
Philip G. Bartlett

Associate Membership:

11. Howard H. Juster
Sponsors: Anthony J. DePace
Benedetto Ferrara

WHAT WILL IT COST?

Cubage: 58,532 cu. ft.

Cubic foot cost: \$1.00.

Type of building: Parish House.

Number of stories: one story and basement with stair to future second floor Sexton's Apartment. Heating system sized for Sexton's Apartment and future Auditorium.

Type of Construction: frame over modular cinder block basement.

Location: Smithtown, Long Island.

Date when bids received: June 22.

Philip G. Bartlett and Francis W. Roudebush, Associated Architects.

STATE CONVENTION

The New York State Association of Architects will hold its 1948 Convention on Oct. 28, 29 and 30 at the Colonie Country Club located on Route 5 between Albany and Schenectady. Plans include an Exhibit of the work of N. Y. State architects, roundtable discussions, prominent guest speakers, business sessions and, "relaxation". Notices in greater detail were issued in July. This is by way of reminder.

HOUSING COMPETITION

The N. Y. State Division of Housing has announced two competitions to close on Nov. 15th. One is for a single-family house and the other is for a multi-family dwelling. Copies of both programs can be obtained from N. Y. State Division of Housing, 270 Broadway, New York 7.

NEW YORK CHAPTER, A. I. A.

115 East 40th Street

New York 16, N. Y.



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ANNUAL MEETING

At the noonday meeting on June 2nd, after due report of the Nominating Committee, the following were elected to office for the next season: President: Harold R. Sleeper Vice-President: Daniel Schwartzman Secretary: Francis W. Roudebush Treasurer: William Potter

New committee members elected were:

Executive (to 1951):

Aaron N. Kiff

Geoffrey Platt

Professional Practice:

Frederick G. Frost, Jr., Chairman

Frederick J. Woodbridge

Ben John Small

Fellows (to 1951):

Philip L. Goodwin

Ralph Walker

Jury for Medal of Honor:

Max Abramovitz

Thomas H. Creighton

Ely J. Kahn

Morris Ketchum, Jr.

Harold S. Buttenheim was introduced by Philip Goodwin and was inducted as an Honorary Associate Member. Mr. Buttenheim spoke briefly on the early days of public housing, and was given a spontaneous acclaim.

Medals were awarded to Emery Roth & Sons for the year's best apartment building over six stories, and to Louis E. Ordwein for the best one under six stories.

President Sleeper thanked and commended the various committees, also Miss Waters, Mrs. Barker and Mrs. Wood, for their work during the past year. Reports of committees were condensed by the President into a general summation, outlining the ground covered and missions accomplished or in progress. A review of this work will be found elsewhere in this issue.

Mention was made of the Chapter's need for a legal advisor and funds with which to pay for his services. In this regard, the importance of increasing

the membership took on added significance as an aid in meeting this expense.

The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks and appreciation to Harold Sleeper for his outstanding work and zeal as President.

THE ARCHITECT AND THE LAW

At the luncheon meeting on May 18th the legal side of architectural practice was ably propounded by Nathan Walker. Mr. Walker is an attorney whose clientele includes many architects.

The presentation was divided into three headings, and covered, 1- the architect's fee; 2- his responsibility; 3- disputes. Some of the highlights are presented in brief.

1. Fees. Services must be requested and not volunteered. In the absence of a specific contract an architect becomes dependent upon the interpretation of others as to the evaluation of services. When the fee is broken up into installments, the contractual obligation, too, is subdivided into parts of the whole. The architect can collect damages (loss of profit) if the client deliberately prevents the performance of the contract. The courts have interpreted the Standard Form of Contract to permit the client to discontinue the architect's services and pay only the proportionate amount of the fee. The architect may not insist on completing his services if the client does not so desire. The courts have ruled that if a contract does not so provide specifically, the client need not pay any additional fee for revisions or extra services. In order to collect his fee, the architect must deliver the drawings to the client but need not have them accepted physically. Provisional contracts are valid only if the specific provisions are carried out. Courts have ruled that when the architect has implied a warranty as to maximum cost of construc-

tion the client is not obligated to pay the fee if such cost is exceeded.

2. Liability. There have been many court cases involving alleged negligence. The architect does not guarantee the perfection of the drawings or of the contractor's performance. Supervision is held to be an attempt to protect the client. Where there is evidence of normally frequent inspections the architect is not held responsible for omissions or errors in execution of the construction. The burden of proof of negligence rests upon the client. It is important for the architect to keep a written record of inspection trips and decisions made in conference.

3. Disputes. Despite the contract wording, the architect's decisions are not necessarily final. They must be based upon reasonable interpretation and made with evidence of good faith. The contractor is not responsible for faulty results arising out of faulty requirements. The issuance of a certificate authorizing payment does not constitute a waiver of the contractor's warranty.

Among the points brought out in the discussion period were the following: The architect may re-use his own plans and specifications for other work unless prohibited by contract provision. When drawings have been made public by municipal filing or otherwise, they are open to use by anyone unless copyrighted. Reference to documents not attached to contracts is not generally considered binding by the courts. All such documents must be clearly in evidence.

REGARDING THE CONVENTION

At this writing, the AIA Convention is in full swing at Salt Lake City. The highlights, the Chapter's instructions to our delegates and how they fared, will be published in our next issue.

EXPANDED SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

At North Carolina State School of Agriculture and Engineering, Raleigh, N. C., the present Department of Architecture has been expanded into a School of Architecture. Henry L. Kamp-hoefner, formerly of the University of Oklahoma, is dean of the new school. He has arranged an interesting curriculum, with certain innovations calculated to be of great help to the students. The faculty has been augmented by personnel from key spots throughout the country, who will bring to Raleigh a cross section of diversified architectural thinking. Lewis Mumford will hold a series of seminars on the social aspects of architecture.

Students may be present at judgments in order to gain the benefit of the juries' review of their own work as well as of others. Problems will be graded on considerations of site, general solution, planning, esthetic merit, and presentation.

Additional facilities and space are being provided. The authorities hope to develop this school to the point of accreditation within a period of two years.

CODE LEGISLATION

James Newman, Chairman of the Building Code Committee, conducted the lunch meeting on May 25. He said that building officials have held many meetings on the subject of a unified, national building code, but that, to date, no way had been found to make such a code brief, concise and comprehensive.

Harry Prince spoke on the Multiple Dwelling Law. He advised us that the Mitchell Committee has introduced many important bills in the State Legislature. In this connection there has been much expression of opinion from social and other groups, but little from the architects. Inasmuch as the pending legislation affects us directly, and since our informed opinions should carry weight, Mr. Prince urged that we analyze the bills and report upon them to our legislators.

The Mitchell Law was passed in its original form due to lack of time for adequate study, and is not enforceable. Architects should study this law in its amended form and voice their opinions and recommendations.

The current program includes study of a State-wide Multiple Dwelling Law. The present M. D. L. applies only to New York City. The new bill is to provide jurisdiction in all cities, with special provisions for New York City. Mr. Newman has arranged for a review of the proposals by his committee

and for a report of findings to the Governor.

Mr. Prince cited as an example of the importance of architects' comments the fact that, due to lack of proper clarification, the Governor had recently vetoed an amendment intended to correct an error in the M. D. L. in regard to stair requirements. Certain interested civic groups had presented arguments which might have been combatted successfully by adequate architectural representations.

Samuel Kurtz, of the Code Committee, mentioned that there have been approximately forty new laws introduced. Among those already passed are the following: Modification of fire assemblies for walls; reduction in thickness of non-bearing walls; changes in hour ratings; revisions of requirements for pipe connections; waterproofing for sub-grade residence walls; changes in metal lath weights. Among changes under consideration were reduction of fire protection on steel; use of vermiculite for fire retarding partitions; plaster furring and lath modifications; redefining of Class II and Class VI construction; extermination of rats before demolition permit is issued.

Some of the structural revisions pending are changes in fiber stress, borings, test pits, bearing values of soil, and foundation and footing requirements.

Harry Rutkins, also of the Code Committee, has assembled a list of local law revisions. The Committee has this data available for those interested, and the City Council has a calendar prepared for consideration of these changes.

THE CATCH BASIN

To the Editor:

One practical method of imparting useful information to students is to make it possible for them to study drafting techniques on working drawings. This idea met with enthusiastic response when the Education Committee suggested it to Otto Klitgord, Director of the N. Y. State Institute of Applied Arts and Sciences. Chapter members are asked to send discarded blue prints to this school, at 300 Pearl Street, Brooklyn 1, New York. Specifications also make good reference material.

The two year term will end next February, when 18 students will become available as apprentice draftsmen, for filing, building department work, and the like. The school would like to place these men. You are welcome to review their work at the school with a view to future employment.

Ben John Small

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ANNUAL REPORTS

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Albert G. Clay, *Chairman*

This year the usual directive to the Committee on Public Relations was backed by a vote of confidence by the Chapter in the form of an appropriation of \$2500. With this fund reinforcing the amount budgeted for our committee work we have felt justified in setting in motion a program broader in scope than had been possible heretofore, yet based on our experience of the last few years.

Upon our recommendation the Chapter employed as consultants the firm of Schnall & Krug Associates, specialists in Public Relations. Our first contract with them was for a trial period of four months. This contract has been completed, and we are happy to state that we were able to report to your Executive Committee that in our opinion the work accomplished during this short time demonstrated success. Accordingly, it was voted to continue the services of Messrs. Schnall & Krug to the end of 1948.

The efforts of the P. R. Consultants have been devoted to bringing architects and the Chapter before the public. In the following paragraphs they have outlined the manner in which their firm attacks this problem:

"Before the public can recognize any group, the press must be made aware of the organizations strength, attitude and willingness to be heard as a wide-awake and sound thinking group. We are attempting to carry this out by personal visits and letters to both the newspaper and magazine press, and also by issuing releases at regular intervals on current questions, chapter information, reports, etc.

"Another method of making the public aware of a group is through the printing and distribution of literature concerning the organization and the profession. We are attempting to do this through the East Midtown Area Book and the booklet on Architects.

"We have contacted numerous civic and educational organizations and museums to bring the architect, his work and his organization before the public through speeches, forums and exhibits."

To coordinate the work of the Consultants with the work of our own sub-committees and to act as a clearing house for ideas your P. R. Committee has followed the custom of holding bi-weekly meetings, on the Monday afternoon when the Executive

Committee is not sitting. These meetings, which are quite apart from the numerous meetings held by the sub-committees and which are always attended by Mr. Schnall or Mr. Krug, are developing into a vital link in our program. We suggest that the chairmen of other committees avail themselves of this opportunity to bring their work to our attention. Do not forget that the results of committee work form one of the prime sources of publicity.

Public Relations Sub-Committees Architect & Governmental Relations

Ralph Walker, *Chairman*

This Committee, which was organized to support action through the national body under the Chairmanship of Mr. J. Frazer Smith, has not been very active, and no call has been made by the national body.

A request, which was repeated twice, for the names of members of the New York Chapter who either knew or had a means of approach to our Representatives and Senators, brought forth only one response.

Editorial

Mortimer E. Freehof, *Chairman*

The members of this Committee believe there is much which needs doing in the editorial field. The little we have accomplished is soon told.

One of our jobs is the OCULUS. We have tried to make this publication interesting, informative, and mildly amusing. To this end, we have appealed to the membership for contributions, and have requested the chairman of each Chapter committee to inform us periodically of their respective activities. The response has been meager, but interest seems to be improving. In order to offer space for personal opinion, controversial subjects, and individual letters, we have provided a heading called "The Catch Basin." Also, we have devoted space regularly to the subject of Public Relations, in order to keep constantly before the Chapter the importance of work in this sphere.

Another of our activities has been the conduct of a campaign to obtain mention of architects in connection with publication of their work. In this we have had some success. Such recognition is now general in most New York City newspapers. In this connection a vigilant watch is maintained by our Committee and several Chapter members have lent their cooperation. We believe this campaign should be augmented by an attempt to get papers to change the customary language

of by-lines to something more adequate than the term "built from plans by."

In the absence of specific direction as to the duties of our committee, we have viewed our job with the assumption that any and all activity in the field of Public Relations might take the form of the written word. With this as our premise, we have presumed to extend the scope of our discussions and thinking to include phases which are possibly beyond the limits intended by the word "editorial."

Exhibitions

Eleanor Pepper, *Chairman*

The following are four major accomplishments of your Exhibition Committee:

1. Exhibit of New York Chapter members' work at the Convention of the New York State Association held at the Commodore last October.

2. Joint exhibition in the State Museum at Trenton, N. J. held early in the Spring. This was seen by 8897 persons including 33 groups of students and adults who made a special study of the exhibits.

3. Exhibition designed for the Chapter meeting sponsored by the Professional Forum Committee in May 1948. This exhibit "The A.I.A. Journal — Past, Present & Future" served as a focus for the evening's discussion, the results of which have been sent to the National Convention at Salt Lake City.

4. The exhibition to be held next October for one month at the N. Y. Museum of Science & Industry at Rockefeller Center.

Paraplegics

William Potter, *Chairman*

A Test Unit, illustrating the ideas and designs to help paraplegic veterans, evolved by the joint efforts of the members of this Committee and the Paralyzed Veterans Association, Halloran Division, was erected on the grounds of Halloran Hospital. The costs were paid principally by the George A. Fuller Company and its subcontractors and also by the American Red Cross.

Our recommended details for paraplegic homes were modified by changes worked out in the Test Unit and were further augmented by perspective renderings, 1/8" scale plans, and elevations of 2, 3, and 4 bedroom houses incorporating our suggested rooms.

We feel the culmination of our efforts has been reached with the publication and distribution of these drawings to all the people who have requested them. The American Red

Cross has defrayed the expenses of publishing and is now distributing them. Approximately 850 sets have been mailed out to all parts of this country and also abroad.

In December 1947 the Certificate of Merit of the New York State Association of Architects was presented to the Paraplegic Sub-Committee by Mr. E. James Gambaro, Chairman of Exhibition Committee of 1947 Convention.

The drawings were a feature of the Chapters Exhibit at the New Jersey State Exhibition at the Trenton Museum in March and April.

CHAPTER REGISTER

Robert S. Hutchins, *Chairman*

Our work was finally completed in January of this year with the distribution of the new Year Book and Register to our members, to the AIA and to many allied groups including the Societies of the Landscape Architects, Engineers, Mural Painters, Sculptors, Designers, Decorators, as well as the Department of Public Works, the various Housing Authorities and the City Planning Commission.

We believe our efforts and those of the Chapter members in making this book possible have been worthwhile. So far the comments and criticisms received have been generally favorable.

It has been voted that the Year Book and Register be revised and republished at regular intervals and accordingly the Executive Committee has decided to proceed with a 1949 issue.

BRUNNER SCHOLARSHIP

Robert B. O'Connor, *Chairman*

Consideration is being given to the interesting idea of recommending that the next scholarship project take the form of a text book on architecture for use in public schools.

This Committee is investigating the probability of publication and use of such a book before submitting the recommendation to the Executive Committee.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Robert Allan Jacobs, *Chairman*

Our Committee has been informed that some 75 people listed as architects in the New York Classified Directory are not registered in this State. An investigation of this matter will be made.

We have also been successful in resolving several professional disputes among architects during the past year.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Ben John Small, *Chairman*

The major effort of this Committee was centered on the investigation of local drafting schools which revealed that:

(a) Veteran and civilian graduates of such schools were unqualified as draftsmen in that their draftsmanship was poor and that they indicated insufficient knowledge of construction.

(b) In some instances, graduates had been led to believe that their earnings would be considerably greater than those which they actually obtained in the few cases where they found employment.

(c) Proper vocational guidance on the part of the Veterans Administration was lacking.

At a meeting on January 20, 1948, the entire problem was discussed with Dr. Irwin A. Conroe, Assistant Commissioner of Professional Education of the State Education Department which licenses these schools. On February 18 Dr. Conroe advised us that he was seeking to present the problem, together with the results of the investigation, to the proper authorities in charge of the schools, but no action had been taken at the time of filing this report.

Other Committee activities included the answering of letters from those seeking information regarding the study of architecture, the sponsoring of a meeting on registration for the benefit of architectural draftsmen and the assignment of Otto Teege and your Chairman to the New York State Institute of Applied Arts and Sciences as members of the Advisory Board for their Department of Structural Technology. This school will be one of a nucleus for the projected New York State University.

LEGISLATION

Aaron N. Kiff, *Chairman*

During the year a number of bills introduced in the State Legislature and the City Council, affecting architectural practice, claimed our attention.

Most important of these was the introduction of the perennial bill in the State Legislature to limit public work to Civil Service employees, except as might be approved by the Civil Service Commission. This year the bills were again defeated after the Chapter, together with the State Association, had voiced disapproval. Another bill defeated was the proposed change in the State Education law to allow veterans to obtain registration as Architects more easily than others.

The Chapter voiced its objection to certain changes in the City Administrative Code, after attention had been called to them by the Building Code Committee. The most important of these changes was the suggested inclusion of fines and possible imprisonment of Architects and Engineers, for the use of steel not carrying a written warranty by the steel manufacturer. The Building Code Committee and our Legislative Committee considered this measure unfair and against the interest of the profession, since it selected only one factor of a structure for punitive measures. Steps were taken to oppose its inclusion in the City Administrative Code. At the suggestion of the Building Code Committee, additional changes in the Code further raising the allowable fibre stress for structural steel were given the backing of the Chapter.

Your Chairman, at the request of Mr. Sleeper, represented the Chapter, and upon request of the National A.I.A. Tax Committee also represented that Committee, at two meetings held under the auspices of the New York City Bar Association. These meetings were called for the purpose of formulating new Federal legislation to modify the present income tax laws so that Architects, and other professional practitioners, could set aside a percentage of their yearly income which would be tax free. The purpose of this proposed legislation is to provide for retirement of professional people, or to set up a reserve for slack times. Various methods are now under consideration for implementing such a change in the income tax law.

ARCHITECTURAL CRITICISM AND AESTHETICS

Cameron Clark, *Chairman*

Your Committee on Architectural Criticism and Aesthetics got off to a slow start. It took some time for the Chairman to come to grips with two such formidable subjects as architectural criticism and aesthetics. After due consideration, the subject of aesthetics seemed more apt to lead to constructive action.

The subject was explored and a surprising unanimity of opinion developed among members of the committee that Architects can contribute to the pleasing appearance of our cities, towns and countryside by designing to fit in with the neighboring structures and landscape.

Only by such cooperative effort can we as a profession stem the tides of ugliness that comes from unrelated structures.

OTHER REPORTS

The Activities Committee, of which Daniel Schwartzman is Chairman, arranged a total of 34 events including four general meetings, a cocktail party for new members and an open meeting for all draftsmen in this area, sponsored by the Education Committee.

Chester B. Price's Committee on Admissions interviewed and recommended for election 53 new members, including three from Puerto Rico, who had been brought in by Albert Butt's Committee on Membership.

Leopold Arnaud's Committee on Awards has functioned well, as evidenced by the reports given in this and other issues of the OCULUS.

Theodore J. Young's By-Laws Committee has written an amendment to provide a new type of membership after discussion with the Student Associates Committee headed by Harvey Clarkson.

William Lawrence Bottomley's Committee on Fellows submitted nominations for action at the national convention.

Matthew del Gaudio's Unification Committee, in conjunction with representatives of the other chapters and societies in the New York area, is developing a plan for a major organization consisting of a single chapter with branches or sections in the various boroughs.

Geoffrey Platt's new Committee on Visiting Architects is undertaking to place certain students from abroad who wish to spend a limited time in this country and will also help visiting architects.

The activities of the Fees and Contracts, Fields of Practice, Housing, Le Brun and Technical Committees have been reported in previous issues of the OCULUS.

The Secretary, Francis W. Roubush, reports a net increase of 47 members over last year, making a total of 678 of which 625 are Corporate Members, 49 Associate Members and 4 Honorary Associate Members.

Treasurer William Potter reports receipts from dues and other sources of \$17,782.78 against disbursements of \$16,961.45, leaving a surplus for the year of \$821.33.

CANDIDATES

The following have applied for Institute membership—

Ida Brown Webster

Sponsors: Saul Edelbaum
Lawrence Moore

Associate membership—

Jeffrey Harlowe Livingstone

Sponsors: Frank G. Lopez
Ben John Small