

Journal of The American Institute of  
**ARCHITECTS**



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A Young Texas Architect in Japan

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Rededication of The Octagon

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Competitions • Books • They Say:

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PUBLISHED MONTHLY AT THE OCTAGON, WASHINGTON, D. C.

# JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

WITH THE AIM OF AMPLIFYING  
AS THROUGH A MICROPHONE  
THE VOICE OF THE PROFESSION

APRIL, 1956

VOL. XXV, No. 4

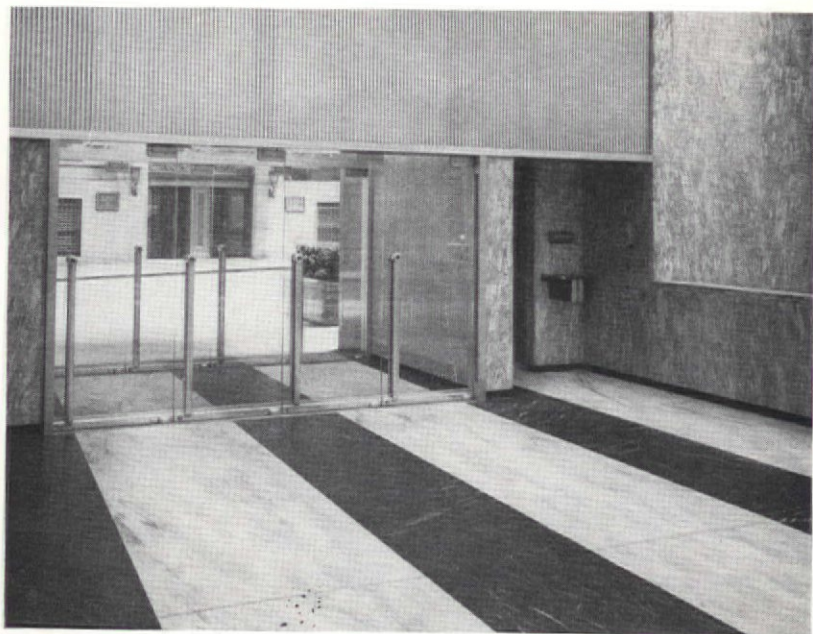


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Cover spot: Recessed stone-cut diaper pattern from Rochester Cathedral

The *Journal of The American Institute of Architects*, official organ of the Institute, is published monthly at The Octagon, 1735 New York Avenue, N. W., Washington 6, D. C. Editor: Henry H. Saylor, FAIA. Subscriptions in the United States, its possessions, and Canada, \$3 a year in advance; elsewhere, \$4 a year. Single copies 35c. Copyright, 1956 by The American Institute of Architects. Entered as second-class matter February 9, 1929, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Change of address: Notify The Octagon, giving both old and new addresses. Allow four weeks for change to go into effect.



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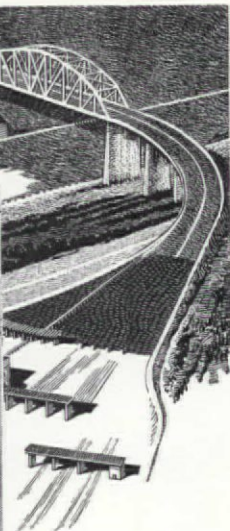
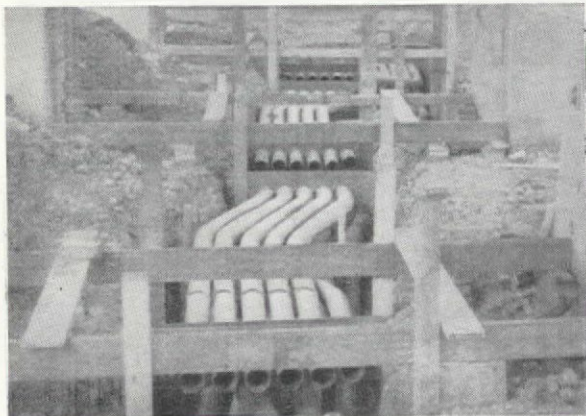


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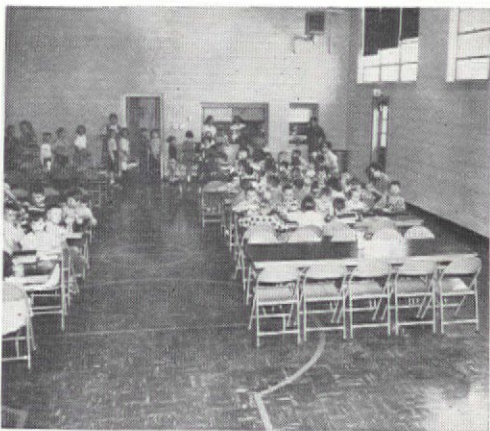
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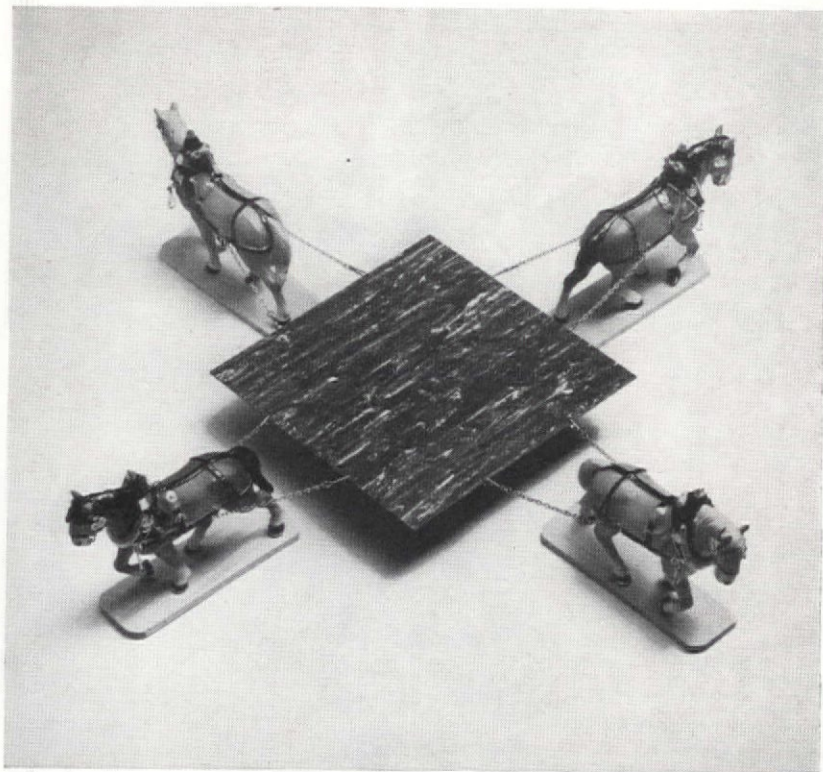


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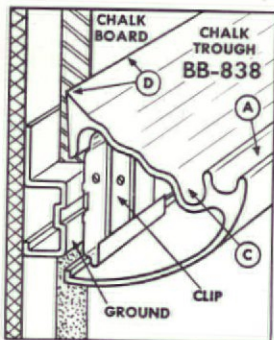


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## A Young Texas Architect Looks at Japan

IN TWO PARTS—PART I

Excerpts from "Important Comments on Japanese Life and Architecture," published serially in *The Texas Architect*, reprinted by permission of the author and the publication.

*By Tom W. Shefelman*

"**Y**OUNG ARCHITECTS, forget Rome. Go to Japan!" So Walter Gropius is quoted after his return to Cambridge, Massachusetts, from his recent visit to the Far East.

My wife Janice and I have not had time to think about Rome. Japan is too rich an experience by itself for now. Nor is the experience purely of architectural significance. Temples and houses are but the beginning of this mystery around us. So much has yet to be seen and understood that we have postponed our departure well beyond the original date. Now we find that this still is not enough time. We will resign ourselves to a departure which leaves too many things unexplained. Already the application of Western logic has failed us so many times. For though there are many outward

displays of Westernization, this is still but definitely the *East*.

This ancient nation is having her deep and troublesome problems in the process of keeping up with the West. Tokyo is faced with many of the same overwhelming social problems as the other great overcrowded metropolises of the world. This is a burden in itself. But, in addition, the Japanese must struggle with the serious social and spiritual conflicts in his double life as simultaneously an Eastern and a Western man.

The mystery here is not purely the stereotyped mystery of old Japan. Rather it is the mystery of a nation which doesn't yet understand what is happening to it. There is a new Japan in the making.

The attempts to go forward often appear childish and super-

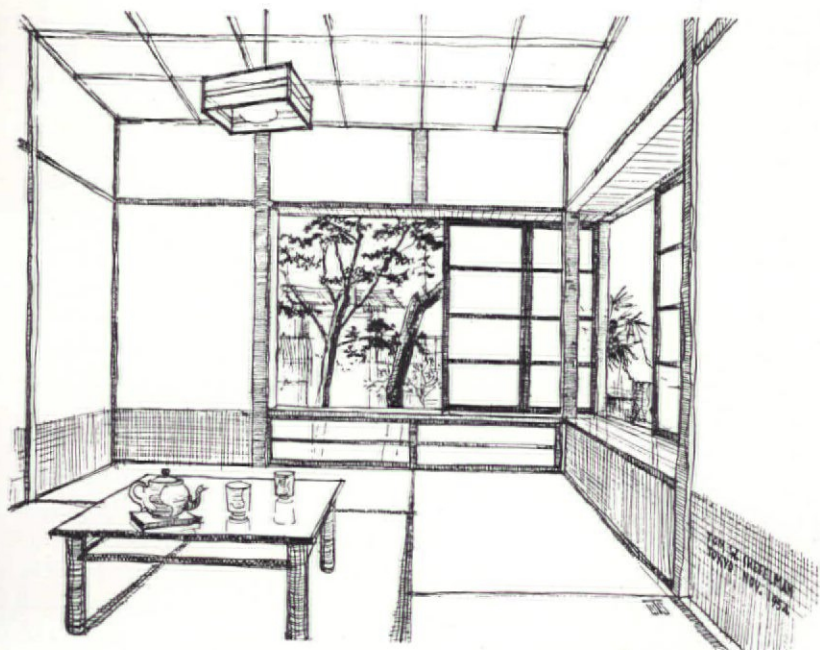
ficial to us Westerners; but a return to old Japan is impossible, no matter what its peculiar charm may have been. Yet up from under the unsettled film of Western civilization we see constantly the seepage of old Japan. Often the dynamics of a civilization—sometimes enthusiastically, sometimes resentfully, sometimes with total resignation — undergoing such change and growth are painful to watch. The foreign observer is defied to analyze or to make valid generalizations. Therefore, the descriptions and comments which follow should be taken as the product of our own spontaneous reactions to what we see and hear.

One day Janice and I were standing cold and wet but entranced on the observation platform opposite the base of Kegon Falls, the only outlet of Lake Chuzenji high in the Nikko Mountains. Mystery was all around us. The 97-meter-high silvery ribbon disappeared, reappeared, then disappeared again through the dense mist of the mountain clouds which engulfed us. The relentless roar from the falls and echoing cliffs was amplified by the white cataracts which tumbled away underneath us in an urgent rush for the sea.

Time stood still for us as we surveyed the misty walls around us—more like undersea mountains, so much was hidden. How such lush vegetation of so many species could cling with jungle-like density to those tumbling slopes is one of Nature's secrets. The rich green was highly seasoned with the brilliant colors of autumnal leaves. This was not the weather for the color film in our camera. But how could any film have done such a scene real justice? We simply wished desperately to paint some sort of picture in our minds and take it with us.

At our elbow a slightly greying gentleman, neatly dressed in Western style clothes awakened us with the comment, "Very beautiful!" and an enthusiastic nod. We acknowledged the nod, as was the only thing to do. We knew by then that any complicated reply we might be tempted to give in English usually would not be understood. His statement was quite simple, but it was enough to remind us of a characteristic common to so many Japanese.

This characteristic is the amazing sensitivity they seem to have for the wealth of natural beauty in their own compact nation. As a matter of fact, we find at least



Our room in a Japanese home located in Meguro-Ko, Tokyo,  
with the maple tree and gate glimpsed outside

an outward display of sensitivity to anything large or small which can have the word beautiful attached to it. Sometimes this outward display achieves a formality which seems insincere.

The extreme, perhaps, is the tea ceremony, in which the garden, the hanging scroll in the *tokonoma*, the tea bowls, etc., are each admired according to specifications. Yet this pleasure is often expressed in very unsophisticated ways.

By all outward indications the

Japanese people should be extremely familiar with their country. They can travel under the sponsorship of one of the most highly organized tourist systems of any nation in the world. Punctual trains, caravans of sightseeing buses, Japan Travel Bureau hotels, professional guides, road maps, shrine maps, even the most detailed trail maps for the popular pastime of hiking through the densely forested mountains which make up most of this overcrowded country

—all of these forces are constantly herding crowds of people past our bewildered eyes anywhere we go in any weather, during any time of the week. We selected one sunny weekday to hike through some of the relatively secluded temples, shrines and scenic spots in the colorful mountains overlooking Kamakura, two hours by rail from Tokyo. There was no danger of getting lost, however. We could simply follow the crowds back to civilization.

People tell us this phenomenon of crowds constantly on the move is to some degree a postwar development. There is such freedom of movement compared to times past, and these crowds express it. But the phenomenon also must express in some way that purely esthetic pleasure derived from the beautiful and the sacred in nature, or in man's interpretation of it. We might be tempted to call it a form of reverence.

It was not always so easy for a Japanese to see nature in all its glory in the mountains or on the seashore. But the ability to do this was an essential part of his being. So it became the Japanese genius to bring all of this in either condensed or suggested form to within sight of himself and his

guests as they knelt before a bowl of tea. Hence, the misty landscape painting; the meaningful arrangement of flowers, leaves and twigs; the isolated art object, sometimes in itself suggestive of some natural form, all become concentrated in a single "viewing alcove" called the *tokonoma*. And this display became so controlled as to be but a complement to a condensed landscape visible through the simple sliding doors.

This brings us to the garden, which in itself contains a subtle message for the young Western architect. As might be expected, the art of landscape gardening was first the privilege of priest and noble. With suggestions that influence from China was prevalent, we are told that as long ago as the Nara Period, in the seventh and eighth centuries, the Imperial Court was benefiting from an already highly developed landscape art. Essential was the technique of mastering nature, of even modeling it, in such a way as to suggest on a small scale the abundant and dramatic beauty of the countryside or the seashore. The landscape garden soon crystallized into basic elements each with particular meaning—the pond, lake or



sea; pebbles, seashores; mound or boulders, mountains, etc.

In the Edo Period, from the seventeenth century until the Meiji "Reformation" in 1867, the artist achieved the peak in his ability to compose these elements into a variety of gardens both large and small. Two schools of thought developed, the "Hill Garden" and the "Flat Garden" schools. The former succeeded in carrying to a stunning extreme the "unreal" realism of a beautiful and varied Japan into one complex picture. The latter school is famous for its abstractness. White, raked sand became the sea, twin boulders the waterfall, flat stones islands; and the real landscape beyond the garden wall often played a vital part in the picture which the observer's imagination was supposed to complete.

During this same period the art became a popular one as did the simple, highly refined "tea house" architecture which complemented it. It became, we might say, not only the privilege but the duty of the common man to "appreciate" beauty in the many ways becoming available to him. Today, if we dare generalize, there still appears to be some unseen compulsion which makes the Japanese continue to

appreciate. So, the crowds in the country, in the parks, in the temple and shrine grounds; so, the exclamation "Very beautiful!" at our elbow; so, too, can we wander among some of the most squalid houses and shops in the city of Tokyo and see everywhere small well-pruned trees twisting above provoking cedar or bamboo fences and above stone walls.

Today it seems the Japanese gift to the world to isolate the tiniest plot of ground completely from the distracting world outside. Tiny that plot of ground must be, for land is dear both in price and availability. The last big front lawn we saw was in California. Instead, out of the damp, dark soil is created a spot of timeless beauty with tiny gnarled trees and shrubs, boulders, moss, gravel and a few flowering plants—almost a mathematical reduction of the particular countryside the individual had in mind.

We must add, regretfully, that there is quite a gap between the general attitude toward beauty and order behind these walls and fences and the attitude outside of them. The citizen of Tokyo is proud and a frequent user of the numerous parks and shrine grounds in his city. These spots are rich

in the unique Japanese sense of the beautiful in nature. Yet we find these but islands in a sea of civic chaos. Tokyo is notorious for lack of order in street organization, zoning, and any city planning whatsoever. The new and the big is growing too rapidly over the fabric of the old and the small.

The Japanese garden has become a part of our own lives. As soon as the sunshine breaks through the clouds we slide open our great frosted glass windows so that the whole room seems like a porch. The bright red leaves of the little maple tree framed in one of the window openings glow as the warmth of the precious sun reaches us. Widely spaced stepping-stones, sunk in the wet, mossy, black earth, stagger by a variety of shrubs, some sub-tropical plants and outcroppings of boulders.

These stones finally follow a sharp curve which disappears through an almost shrine-like gateway in a split-bamboo fence. Outside of the fence there is only a small vegetable garden.

This room has been our temporary Tokyo quarters for a month. It is cheap, 7000 yen or about 20 American dollars per month. It is refreshing in its simplicity and so clean we can eat off

the floor. No shoes in here, please. Any time we clutter it up with our misplaced belongings or fail to dust and wipe the polished wood-work in the morning, we feel our own lives cluttered and unclean. Indeed, Shinto taught one ethic well—be clean! This teaching meant not only elimination of dirt and filth but of clutter. Even if one must possess objects, each is to be either isolated for its usefulness and beauty, or is to be put away out of sight. In the private life of many Japanese, this well-ingrained teaching is still clearly evident. Sometimes, perhaps, it is carried to painful extremes.

This little room of ours is also cold. Central heating is far from common in even the more expensive houses. Neither are we blessed with a *kutatsu* or foot-warming pit in the middle of the floor. We have seen these in some houses, usually located in the principal family gathering room next to the kitchen. Even the latest houses are not good examples of insulation. Insulation is not one of the advantages of the two-inch plaster wall panel, the  $\frac{1}{3}$ -inch exterior cedar siding, nor of the generous use of sliding paper-and-glass doors. The *hibachi* or charcoal urn is still

the usual means for keeping warm in these cold little houses during the winter. Around this we huddle to warm our hands while the rest of our body must depend principally upon warm clothing. It seemed fantastic to us at first to discover that even a small gas stove is considered quite an investment by most Japanese. It seems not so fantastic now. The average salary in an architectural firm we are well acquainted with here amounts to roughly 40 American dollars per month. And in view of the present economic situation in Japan, these boys are lucky to have jobs.

As for bathing, it would have been quite inconvenient to use the household bath in our landlady's residence. Whenever we could not conform to the family's bathing hours, we would have to buy our own charcoal and fire up the hot-water heater ourselves. Automatic central hot-water heaters are a luxury in most homes. The deep wooden tub is still the most commonplace among families which can afford a private bath. Sometime before bathing time it is filled with cold water, and the wood or charcoal fire is started in the adjacent hot-water heater. A single pipe circulates the cold water



Co-existence

through the fire and out again into the tub. This process continues until the several bathers using the bath on any given day have been accommodated. In both the private family bath and the public bath all soaping and rinsing is done outside of the tub, and the water is near boiling. So the last in line is not supposed to concern himself with thoughts of sanitation just because the same water had simmered several bodies before him.

### The Architects' Trek to Japan

THOSE MEMBERS expecting to join the Architects' Trek to Japan described in the March JOURNAL will be interested in news since received.

The Far East Society of Architects and Engineers invites the members of the Trek to attend a convention and technical conference while the group is in Tokyo. Delegates are expected from the Japanese architectural societies, the Philippines, Taiwan, Okinawa,

Guam, Thailand, Indonesia, Australia, Hong Kong, Singapore and India. Mr. Nathan Harris, President of the Far East Society, has expressed the hope that there will be a goodly number of American architects in attendance to meet these colleagues from the Far East.

## Welcome to Los Angeles and the Southland

*By Walter L. Reichardt*

**T**HE 88TH CONVENTION of The American Institute of Architects in Los Angeles, this coming May, offers many of you a chance to return to a familiar city, while for others it will provide the first opportunity to see and visit a city and region that is known only by reputation. No matter into which group you may fall, we believe that the well known tourist attractions as well as the great physical changes of the past ten years will provide many things of interest to see and study. May has proven to be one of our fine Spring months, and we believe you may be assured of good weather in which to conduct your expeditions, be they concerned with the subject of architecture or with less serious matters.

Geographically, this area is isolated from all other major popula-

tion and production centers by mountains, desert, ocean, and great distance. It is essentially a subtropical desert area with a mild Mediterranean-type climate, made productive and livable for the almost five million people in the County by water and energy brought here from hundreds of miles away. The combination of geological faults, low rainfall, temperature inversion and concentrated population makes such things as water supply, flood control, transportation, residential and industrial development, recreation, etc., problems that can be solved only by planning for the entire region.

The period of fabulous population growth began with the coming of the railroads, and their subsequent rate wars in 1885. This ended our isolation and marked

the beginning of the real-estate-boom period. During the period of 1900-10 the County population tripled and the citizens struggled to get a harbor, more water, to industrialize, and to build homes. Between World Wars I and II another period of growth began, and since the end of World War II tremendous physical changes have taken place because of the industrial expansion accelerated during the war years and because of population increases that have averaged almost 250,000 people annually. This in turn has required an attendant increase in housing, schools, factories, highways and freeways, public utilities and other facilities. As a result, we are provided with almost every problem known to planners. The existence of 47 independent political subdivisions in the County has not made the coordination of regional planning an easy matter to achieve. However, it is the addition of this vast number of new people annually that has generated the great vitality that is probably the outstanding characteristic of the region.

Today, this city has the greatest land area of any city of the world, a busy man-made harbor some 25 miles distance from the central

city, and an economy and industrial development that has kept pace with the population growth. Since 1900 the city has grown from 36th in the nation to the 3rd city (1955 special census). The single-family residence predominates over all other urban uses here and as a result there is a low population density. Because of plentiful and relatively cheap land and the desire to get out of the city and into the country, great decentralization has taken place—and said “country,” unfortunately, is decreasing with each new tract development. Los Angeles is one of the new large cities whose growth is inseparably connected with the automobile, and the auto is still a primary source of movement as well as cause of planning and transportation problems.

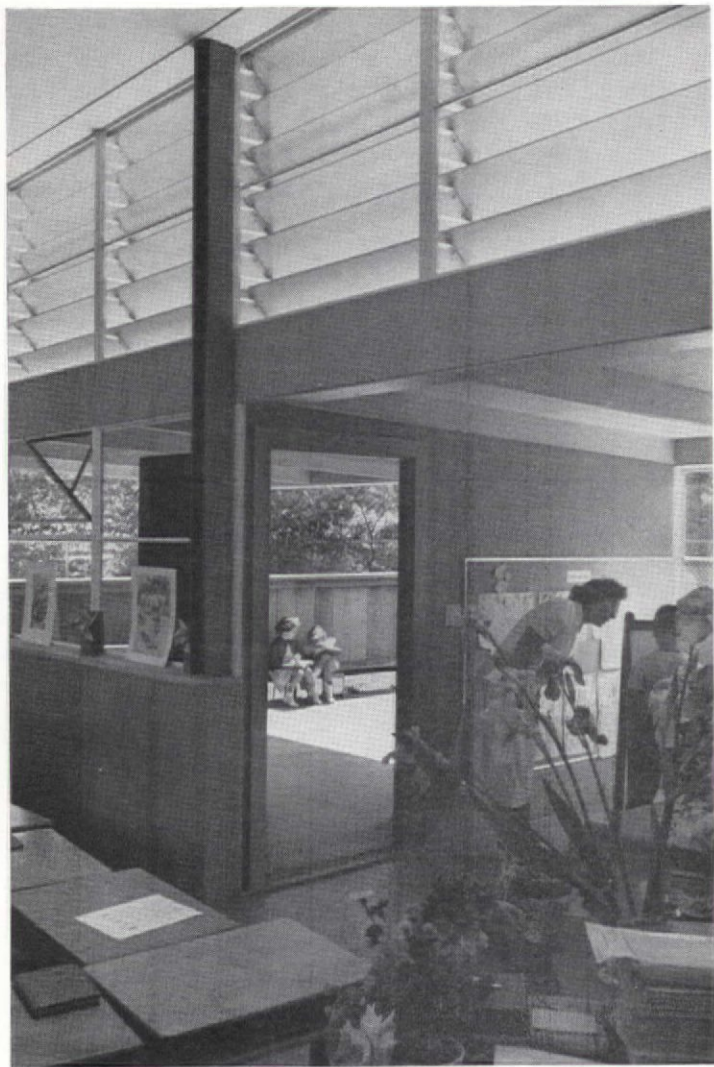
Architecturally, a succession of influences have been felt, starting with the Spanish padres and the Missions they built up the coast, the Mexican, and followed later by the New England Colonial, the Victorian, and by the many versions of all period styles. At the turn of the century the now familiar one-story bungalow of simple roof lines, wide eaves and generous porches became popular for smaller houses. The work of Greene &

Greene in the Pasadena area is an outstanding example of this California school. This type of architecture was temporarily bypassed by the introduction of the Spanish Colonial style in the Panama-Pacific Expositions in 1915 and by the Mediterranean types which followed. In the 1920s a number of Frank Lloyd Wright houses were built and their influence has continued to grow. In the 1930s the influence of contemporary European work made itself known, primarily by the work of Neutra, Schindler, Davidson and others. These men have had a strong influence on all types of architecture in Southern California and elsewhere. We also have felt the influence of architects in the area whose training varies from that of the Beaux-Arts school to that of the Bauhaus, Wright, Gropius and Mies. Their structures have a variety that is often enjoyed by the layman and argued about by students of architecture. The freedom that characterizes so much of the work here is due to a number of reasons: the climatic condition that makes it possible to build lightly and with much glass; the willingness to experiment with new materials and construction methods; the desire of newcomers

to have "something different"; plus the strong influence of showmanship. Those of you who have followed the architectural publications the past ten years know that a number of fine structures have been erected in the various fields and have won a fair share of awards.

For those interested in general sightseeing, the number of things to see and do is endless. Some things that come to mind are horse-racing, "live" television and radio shows from Hollywood studios, fine shops and fashion shows, the visiting of the Plaza and Chinatown areas with their eating-places, golfing, fishing, night clubs, etc. The Chapter Hospitality Committee is planning tours to a Hollywood motion picture studio, to the fine residential areas of Los Angeles and Beverly Hills, to the neighboring communities of Pasadena, Santa Barbara and San Diego. There will be special interest tours to schools, churches, hospitals, housing developments—even to a Hollywood première!

It has been said that you can find anything you want to look for in Southern California. Come and let us help you find what you are looking for. We are awaiting you with pleasure.



*Photograph by Hans Brady*

MONTECITO SCHOOL (Built 1949), MARTINEZ, CALIF.

JOHN LYON REID AND PARTNERS, ARCHITECTS AND ENGINEERS

Favorite Features of  
recently elected Fellows:  
John Lyon Reid, FAIA

*Journal  
The AIA*

# The Architectural Historian and History in the Curriculum

*By Pasquale Mario Torraca*

PROFESSOR OF ARCHITECTURE, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

WE ARE LIVING in a dynamic period of civilization and this dynamism is reflected in all of our educational processes and thinking—from the nursery school through general college and professional education. Things of the past seem to hold no interest for us, so engrossed are we with the problems of the present and of the future. Architectural education, which has undergone revolutionary changes since the early 'thirties, reflects this attitude—and especially with regard to the study of architectural history. Of what value is it to the student of architecture and to the architect of today? Some critics would have consigned it to limbo long ago. And yet those same persons want the curriculum loaded with general education subjects, ignoring the fact that a subject like architectural history should and can be one of the best course materials for the general education and culture of the architect.

Fortunately several distinguished educators have upheld its importance through the pages of

the JOURNAL, and recently the Burdell commission has taken a firm stand in advocating its real importance in architectural education.

The value of the study of history and theory is based upon the premise that a thorough and critical study of these subjects will develop in the students a strong desire—

First—to build upon and expand their own cultural background;

Second—to develop in them a profound intellectual understanding and comprehension of the complex forces of civilization which produced the masterpieces of the ages;

Third—to apply their own critical understanding of those forces to the solution of their own problems in architectural design, structures, and community planning; to enable them to formulate and develop their own theories of esthetics and design, based upon sound reasoning and motivation. Thus they may be better able to make a positive contribution to contemporary architecture and



community planning for the ultimate purpose of creating a more optimum physical environment for mankind.

If, then, these premises are valid and sound, the realization and crystallization of them in terms of student achievement in the classroom, and eventually as practitioners of a noble profession, can be accomplished through a systematic, orderly, imaginative and dynamic study of architectural history and the theory of architecture. The social, economic, political, and religious philosophies, the technological and esthetic factors which made possible the great masterpieces of the ages would be analyzed and comprehended. Thus the professional growth and maturity of the students would be assured.

The manner and methods of successfully implementing this study would envisage, in my judgment, the following: visual aids including motion pictures, design analysis, sketches, theories of esthetics, study of the nature and influence of materials, discussions and study of the theories of community planning, landscaping, interior and industrial design, sculpture, painting and the crafts. This indeed presents a formidable chal-

lenge to the students, educators, administrators, and practitioners. Especially with reference to planning theories and philosophies, more emphasis must be placed on these in the architectural curriculum than heretofore.

An awareness on the part of the students that architects will be increasingly concerned in the future with planning and designing large groups of buildings, neighborhoods, and communities rather than with only single isolated structures, will develop in them a healthy regard for and understanding of the problems and philosophies of city planning—a subject which many architects completely ignore today or regard with utter disdain.

Having thus briefly posed the scope, objectives and the manner and methods of the study of history and theory, I will confine the additional remarks of this paper to the most vital question of all, if we want this subject to be put across successfully—namely, the history teacher and the qualifications that he must possess.

He must be a trained historian. Obviously a tyro cannot do the job well enough. There is no doubt in my mind that the person engaged to handle this work should

be a trained historian—a dedicated and devoted scholar, a keen critic, a psychologist and philosopher. He should be one who is thoroughly schooled and experienced in historical research, writing, analysis and criticism. And if he is an architect also, so much the better! We may designate that type of person a *specialist* in art and architectural history and theory of architecture. That word specialist is anathema today with some educators but the fact of the matter is that we are living in a world of great specialization and it will remain that way for a long time to come. The Burdell report states: "At the present time unfortunately a true understanding of historic monuments and their meaning can only be gained from a competent architectural historian."

The failure of many schools to teach history and theory successfully has been due to the fact that, no matter how well intentioned and conscientious they may have been, most faculty members of an architectural faculty simply are not adequately prepared by training experience and temperament to teach it. Also, it is possible that very often the administrative heads of the department have been too

much concerned with balancing the teaching loads of their faculty, and to rotate them into the various courses, to satisfy either their own prejudices or those of the higher university administration. And, too, some administrators are obsessed with the idea that every member of the faculty must be a "jack of all trades," equally competent to teach any and/or all phases of architecture. Specifically, how can one hope to do a competent and thorough job of teaching history and theory if one has not traveled far and wide to study historic buildings and cities *in situ*; if one has not delved into the theories of esthetics, psychology, and philosophy, if one has not studied world history in its many ramifications, and if one is not versed in the methods of historical analysis, research, investigation and interpretation?

It is not enough that a person make a whirlwind trip to foreign lands and to return with a satchel full of Kodachromes, thinking that by this magical process he becomes, ipso-facto, an art and architectural historian, a theorist and critic. Too often the study of buildings and communities is superficial and the actual time that is spent in analyzing them by the

traveler just about equals the time that is needed for the camera to take the picture, with perhaps a few extra moments walking in and out and around a building and rather hastily traveling through a community.



In many schools, also, extra-curricular activities—outside practice and participation in community affairs—encroach upon a teacher's time, leaving him little or no time or energy to prepare adequately for the proper presentation of his subject to the students. Perhaps some administrators may regard extra-curricular activities and committee work as being more important than doing a good teaching job! Sometimes, too, the educational philosophies of the administrators themselves are a hindrance to the successful teaching of history—such, for example, as giving students reading assignments with some guiding questions, subjecting them occasionally to an illustrated talk (or seminar, to be more up-to-date!), permitting some discussions, and then exposing them to periodic tests. Can this approach be stimulating, dynamic, critical, analytical and successful? Can the student develop to a maximum de-

gree his critical powers of observation, of thinking, and of judgment and thus soar to great intellectual heights? I believe not. Indeed a complete about-face must be made in many schools if the study of history and the theory of architecture is to have real meaning and significance culturally and professionally for the students, teachers and the profession at large.

The starting point for this about-face must be with the teacher—a trained expert historian. The average faculty member is not trained to do the job competently. We need more Edgells, Kimballs, Porters, Hitchcocks, Hamlins, Newcombs, Hudnuts, Mumfords, Giedions!

The school and university administrators must recognize the high place the true historian should occupy on an architectural faculty. More young men, preferably with an architectural background, should be given incentives to prepare themselves for the career of a historian, critic and author, and there must be a demand for their services which should be substantially remunerated. When the importance of the qualified architectural historian is truly recognized, when every architectural faculty in all the colleges of architecture

insists on having on their staffs a thoroughly trained and competent historian and critic, it is very likely and probable that more men will dedicate themselves to that area of learning. When such highly skilled historians direct the study of history and the theory of architecture in our architectural schools, the aims, objectives and nature of study hinted at in this paper and so ably stated in the Burdell report will be realized. The revisions and rewriting of textbooks so urgently needed will naturally follow, and many other problems relating to the study of architecture in general and of history and theory in particular will be resolved. Half measures will not suffice. If these ideals are to find realization, educators, administrators and practitioners must do more than merely talk about them. Such

a course of study as envisaged in this paper will improve the quality of the end product, and the students' ability to think critically, imaginatively and creatively will be enhanced. And perhaps the great tonnage of architecture that will be created by the future practitioners of a great art will be more inspiring than it is today.

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NOTE: The following contributions to the JOURNAL bear on the aims outlined by Professor Torraca: History of Architecture, by Leopold Arnaud, FAIA (October 1948); History and Architecture, by Sir Bannister Fletcher, FRIBA (June 1949); The Teaching of Architectural History, by Robert Furneaux Jordan, FRIBA (August 1949); The Society of Architectural Historians, by Walter L. Greese (November 1950); The Function of History in the Contemporary Curriculum, by Robert W. Talley (July 1951); History in Brick and Stone and Mortar, by The Honorable Felix Frankfurter (February 1951).



## Honors

BENEDICT FARRAR of St. Louis was one of fourteen alumni of Washington University to receive the University's Alumni Citation "in recognition of outstanding achievements and services which

have reflected honor upon the University."

DONALD BEACH KIRBY, FAIA, has been appointed a member of the City Planning Commission of San

San Francisco—the first time in some years that an architect has been a member of this group.

WALLACE DIBBLE of Springfield, Mass., has been appointed by Governor Herter to a five-year

term on the Massachusetts Board of Registration of Architects.

WALDRON FAULKNER, FAIA, has been elected president of Inter-Society Color Council, an organization of 23 Member-Bodies.

## Memorializing Great Architects

*By Edwin Bateman Morris*

HORACE PEASLEE, of Washington, always a thoughtful and speculative person, wrote me a while ago suggesting that possibly we did not, by outward and visible sign, as well as by our inward feelings, pay worthy tribute to the great architects of the past.

He spoke of the fact that, not so many years ago, the architects of the period, in Washington and in other cities, for several years assembled at the graves of Mills, Hoban, Strickland, Medary and others, to listen to commemorative talks by pre-selected persons, and finally to place a wreath on each grave.

These services were arranged upon the important premise that "if we do not show respect to the memory of the men who have distinguished themselves in our profession, we cannot expect the general public to do so."

Horace went on to say that the reason for commemoration of the architects was actually not for any such ulterior motive as publicity or public relations, yet there was no reason not to perform such acts, satisfying to ourselves, which might at the same time have a good publicity coefficient.

The idea of publicity for the fine men of the past is of high importance: it is the method which requires very deep thought. For the appeal, the emotional returns must be understandingly appraised in relation to the effort required to obtain them. If appeal does not compensate for effort, the occasion does not achieve longevity.

The reason for the discontinuance of these admirable commemorative occasions is, I believe, their difficult method of operation. Architects, and others of this very admirable human race to which

we are fortunate enough to belong, give awfully deep thought, adulterated always with not a little reluctance, to the idea of *going anywhere*. Sometimes they are pre-committed to such mundane and culturally useless things as golf, lawnmowing, motoring, fishing or the reclining chair upon the lawn.

I do not claim nor assert that there is anything dearer to the heart of the architect than architecture; nor that in general and in theory there would be any act higher in his approval scale than the commemoration of former great men in his great profession. But he has a human ability to do just so much. The successful architects we know find their time taken up almost to the point of distraction. The moments, or the hour that can be stolen from the three C's—clients, construction and controversy—are precious and not too many. They should, with some selfishness and yet with justified consideration for the welfare of body and soul, be given in proper proportion to living and to resting the tissues.

This human factor, which cannot and should not be ignored, does not militate against the worthy and glorious paying of respect to our great dead. But the

fact that our previous methods of paying that respect may have been too difficult should merit our consideration.

It is the prime rule of our profession that when a practice or procedure in our design or construction proves unsatisfactory, we discontinue that practice or procedure. But as soon as possible we put into effect a better method. In that spirit, since the commemorating of our great names has become unsatisfactory to the point of discontinuance, it is possible with some study we may find a satisfactory procedure and thus revive the custom.



By way of diagnosis, therefore, let us say that the time and energy of the modern architect are becoming more and more important, that his responsibilities are ever-widening. It then follows that, without lessening the value of the men who are to be commemorated, the *method* should be tailored to fit the duties of the living architects, to make them feel that the tribute to the past is not a difficult duty but an inspiring privilege.

How do you do that? I do not presume to say with finality; but

I think there has been much procedure and much hard method in the past—the going to a cemetery, finding parking, walking to a hallowed spot, returning, unparking; and then going to another and another and another, with attendant parking, unparking and searching for hallowed spots. The final over-all result may well have been fatigue, rather than uplift.

Perhaps one cannot instantly present an instantly successful substitute performance to replace the one that has been discontinued. However, the suggestion has been made—and I think it has merit—that, in any city where there may be commemoration, *one* central performance be arranged. As a part of this performance, or service, there would be one or two persons at each famous grave, who at an exactly given hour would place a wreath; and at a certain grave, rotating doubtless from year to year, there would be, at that exactly given hour, a service. This might consist, after reading of honored names, of a short speech by a well-known person, architectural or otherwise, or singing, or both, to become a valuable and uplifting occasion to architects—and, hopefully, to the general public.

Perhaps I may be permitted to make a tentative, somewhat nebulous, suggestion. The thought has arisen that there might be a widespread set of celebrations, in distant geographical locations, at a simultaneous moment. I like to think that might be possible—and I would be willing to give my effort to bring it about—to have services in England for Sir Christopher Wren and others, in America for Thornton, Mills, Strickland, Medary and so on, at exactly simultaneous moments, giving attention to time zones. It could originate this year at the AIA Convention in Los Angeles. In Los Angeles, the short service would, let us say, be at nine in the morning, on the Atlantic seaboard at noon, in England at five in the afternoon.

There could be words by distinguished persons, perhaps a hymn. I could see the possibility of a recording disc prepared beforehand, and copies thereof sent to places where commemorative services were to be held. I know of financial support. At any rate it is interesting to think about. Things you think about which come off are exciting. Also things you think about which do not come off are still exciting.

## Rome Prize Fellowships Awarded

JAMES KELLUM SMITH, FAIA, President of the American Academy in Rome, has announced the award of twelve Rome Prize Fellowships for one year each, beginning October 1, 1956. The total value of each of these fellowships

is approximately \$3,000. Award in Architecture, to David J. Jacob, Alexandria, Va., educated at Syracuse University and Cranbrook Academy of Art; in Landscape Architecture, to Eric A. Svenson, Cornell University.



### Ayrault House, Newport, R. I.

THROUGH THE GENEROSITY of Mrs. Andrew Chalmers Wilson, the Institute has received for its archives, plans and photographs of Ayrault House, which house incorporates important architectural details of the Stuyvesant House, New York. The latter historic building, built on the east side of Second Avenue between 9th and 10th Streets, was razed about 1915.

Through the interests of Cross & Cross, Architects, certain architectural features of the old house were saved and incorporated in the house originally built for Miss Hoyt at 45 Catherine St., Newport, R. I. The accompanying photograph of the stairway illustrates the high quality of the original architecture. Unfortunately,

the name of the architect is not recorded.

In addition to the stairway, Cross & Cross had saved the wood enframing of the front door, ornamental panels with palmettes from the front vestibule, certain doors, and the mantelpieces now in the drawing-room, library, and dining-room of Ayrault House. The architects had also taken measurements and templates of the cornices of the Stuyvesant House and had carefully reproduced these features in the house at Newport.

With photographs of the transplanted architectural features, Mrs. Wilson has given the Institute for its records a resumé of the history of Governor Peter Stuyvesant's descendants who occupied the New York house.





*Photograph by Haskell*

The main stairway recovered by Cross & Cross, Architects, from the Stuyvesant House, New York, built about 1810; now incorporated in Ayrault House, Newport, which was the residence of the late Reverend Andrew Chalmers Wilson.

*Journal  
The AIA*

# Know Thyself

IN TWO PARTS—PART II

By *Edward L. Wilson*

SECRETARY OF THE AIA

An address before the Annual Banquet of the Architecture Department, Texas A & M College

I SUPPOSE that most of you hope to enter private architectural practice sooner or later, and that is certainly a commendable ambition. Too many, however, think that all that is necessary is a simple decision to make the break. It's not that easy. There's the little matter of clients; and jobs; and know-how. A young friend came to see me the other day, unhappy because he had been out of school for five years and wasn't in practice for himself. I asked him some questions. What had he done to fit himself for the broad requirements of practice? What had he done to make people think of him when they needed an architect? Why did he think that anyone should have enough confidence in him to entrust to him the spending of large sums of money? How active had he been in club and civic work? and many more questions. Had he cultivated the attitude of a professional man, or was he thinking of himself merely as a hired employee? Incidentally, whether a man is on someone else's payroll, or working

for himself, I believe he can practise architecture and "be in business for himself." If he adopts this viewpoint, perhaps he will grow naturally into the state of mind of an independent practitioner and, having thus grown, will find himself eventually, and perhaps soon, with his own office and practice.

How does one cultivate such an attitude? One of the first requirements is to be responsible. Think of every task as being your sole responsibility. No one is going to check it—it is finished, and it is your own job. Play for keeps, just as though there may be no second chance. Remember someone has to take the responsibility for it, you or the boss. Let it be you. Be responsible for your design. Will you want to claim it after it is built? Would you want to spend your own money to build it—maybe all you had or could borrow? Are you thinking in terms of a school design problem, or in terms of stone and steel—a picture that cannot be turned to the wall or thrown away. Let it

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be the ultimate of your ability and responsibility. And the carrying out of the construction of this design, let it be in a manner to obtain for the client his money's worth.

Now although most of you, I am sure, have ambitions to become independent architects, experience has shown that this will not necessarily be the case, and I am not so sure that this is not all right. The proper appraisal of one's abilities and personal qualifications may reveal that he can accomplish much by setting himself into an important niche in some other architect's organization. No doubt most of you will start out as draftsmen and hope to attain the status of an independent architect as soon as possible. There are many architectural organizations throughout the country in which the greater part of the actual work is being performed by persons who are thoroughly experienced and educated in architecture, but who have found it more attractive and remunerative to assume responsible positions in these organizations. There is much work in the building field which requires the diverse talents of a group rather than the concentrated efforts of one man.

Construction has become so complex that it is rare indeed to find in one person the complete list of talents requisite to do a top job in all phases. Therefore it becomes necessary to assemble an organization, large or small, whose combined efforts can produce a completed and well-rounded job. What I am saying is that if one naturally finds himself in such a position, or deliberately prefers his career to shape itself into lines other than those of the independent practising architect, he should not feel that he has fallen short or failed to achieve the ultimate in practice. Those who do not have the desire to undergo the rigors of private practice or assume the risk are no less successful as part of an organization, provided they do a good job.

There is an impression too often encountered that design is the principal ingredient of good architectural practice. I think this impression is gained in the schools where, the time being short, great stress is laid upon the development of designers. This is good because perhaps only in the schools can this phase of architecture be successfully developed. However, after one launches into practice and engages in it for a few years he finds

that although good design is of the essence, there is much more to the successful practice of architecture. Our profession is working and spending money to overcome the concept the public has of architects as visionaries, picture makers, arty folks, and I have observed in the general practice of architecture that the clients judge us more often on the basis of day-to-day performance in the practical conduct of our work than by the design accomplishments. Later, perhaps, the young architect gains a niche in history by the superior design quality of his completed works, but in architectural practice, just as in business, it is essential to have a complete and well balanced performance in all aspects. The young architect should, therefore, not concern himself only with the attractive phases, but should strive to dig out the facts concerning the general conduct of his practice, and become expert as rapidly as possible in the art of business as it relates to architecture. He should quickly get in position to serve his client in a truly professional manner, assuming his share of responsibility for the conduct of the business and administrative details of the work, responsible supervision and safe-

guarding the clients' funds. He should assume a position of leadership in the management of his projects and truly earn his fee in a manner to win the commendation of not only the man who appreciates good design, but also the hardest-headed business man. I think it may be true that where one architect succeeds through outstanding design, a thousand others must depend upon the down-to-earth general integrity of their practice to win approval.

Wherever we are, we should not think of ourselves as victims of circumstances or environment. Circumstances and environment in themselves are not powerful; it is our attitude toward them and our acceptance of them that count. Actually we make our own mental environment. It consists of the concepts and attitudes we have toward the world we live in. If our mental environment is good, our physical environment will be good. I am reminded of the story of the two fishes. One was a large fish and the other a small one. They were placed in a glass tank with a glass partition separating them. After many attempts by the large fish to devour the small fish, he gave up. The glass parti-

tion was then removed and they lived together happily—ever after, I suppose, until some person ate them both. Sometimes we are so close to the circumstances under which we work that we fail to adopt the broader attitude and the enlarged concept of things which will enable us to overcome these circumstances.

Now in conclusion I would remind you that as you engage in the process of knowing yourself, you should not allow it to make you discontented or anxious. I have known young people who spent so much time worrying about things in the future and condemning themselves because of their apparent lack of progress that they failed to see the opportunities right at hand. This, of course, is a mis-

take. Self-condemnation and lack of confidence are to be avoided.

What are the opportunities in architecture? I believe we have not even scratched the surface. The field is wide open. We have heard it said by pessimistic people that the frontiers have been exhausted. Others know that this is not so. The climate for the practice of architecture was never better. Our profession is at the peak of its prestige. The need for good architecture was never greater. We live in the greatest and best country on earth under the fairest and most enlightened government, and in an era of great progress and accomplishment. Let us be sure that we keep ourselves constantly prepared to make the best possible use of our opportunities.

### Exhibition of San Francisco Bay Region Architecture

FOLLOWING its exhibition at The Octagon, the attractive panels of this show are at present scheduled to appear elsewhere as follows:

*March 25-April 15:* University of Florida, College of Architecture and Allied Arts, Gainesville, Fla.

*May 8-31:* Columbia Museum of Art, Columbia, S. C.

*June 15-July 31:* George Thomas Hunter Gallery of Art, Chattanooga, Tenn.

*October 1-22:* Yale University, School of Fine Arts, New Haven, Conn.

*November 4-25:* The Lamont Art Gallery, Phillips Exeter Academy, Exeter, N. H.

Other showings may be added.



*Photograph by Joseph W. Molitor*

OAK COURTS HOUSING DEVELOPMENT (Completed 1952), GREENFIELD, MASS.  
SARGENT-WEBSTER-CRENSHAW & FOLLEY, ARCHITECTS

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Favorite Features of  
recently elected Fellows:  
D. Kenneth Sargent, FAIA

## They Say:

**Walter P. Reuther**

*(In an address given in Detroit at the Third Annual Progressive Architecture Design Awards Banquet)*

Cities represent tremendous investments in the way of schools and churches and utilities and commercial establishments and many other things. The problem is to meet the challenge of decay at the core. How can we preserve the great cities as cultural centers and yet make them compatible with this new freedom of mobility?

We came to the conclusion that the only way you could resist the trend to escape the cities was to provide within the core of the city a wholesome, healthy, attractive neighborhood that could give people the things they ran out of the city to find, to provide those things in the city in close accessibility to the cultural advantages that the big city offered.

**George Boas**

*(From a panel discussion on "Theories of Art and Aesthetics" at the 37th Annual Meeting of The American Council of Learned Societies held in Washington, D.C., January 26-27, 1956)*

Taste, to be of use in criticisms, must be general; that is, it must be plausible that all normal men have the same taste. The eighteenth century exhibited its taste obviously

in its works of art. But many of these works were made to satisfy the taste of the upper classes. This was certainly true of the novel, poetry, painting, and music. It would be next to impossible, as far as I know, to find works of art which were made so as to appeal to the taste of the working man or peasant. The notion of the dignity of labor and of all social classes is relatively speaking a mid-nineteenth-century notion.

**Prof. Roland B. Greeley**

*(At a conference on metropolitan planning at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, September 1, 1955)*

Moves to establish metropolitan-wide planning for Boston have started regularly since 1873, but have never been realized. No one has raised serious objections to the principle; nor has anyone shown any substantial reason why it could not or should not be done.

**Osbert Lancaster**

*(From "Pillar to Post," first published in London in 1938)*

With the advent of Mr. Ruskin, whose distinction it was to express in prose of incomparable grandeur thought of an unparalleled confusion, this divorce from reality became complete, and in less than no time the whole theory

of architecture had become hopelessly confounded with morals, religion and a great many other things with which it had not the least connection; while its practice went rapidly to pot . . .

. . . despite the gallant efforts of Mr. Ruskin, embodied in a score of thick volumes, the precise reason why any one style of building should be Truer than another remains impenetrably obscure.

**Albert M. Cole**

*(In an address designating 1956 as "Home Improvement Year" in Washington, D.C., January 16, 1956)*

With the Housing Act of 1954 and its subsequent amendments, a new philosophy came into being

and began to be translated into action. The Act itself introduced entirely new concepts of housing and home financing. It extended and expanded others. And it took brand-new recognition of a long-hidden but shockingly true element in broad-scale urban renewal: clearing slums was literally a hopeless job; it could not be accomplished; municipal bankruptcy was facing the Nation—the richest nation on earth would inevitably become the richest slum on earth—*unless* the flood of new slums could be brought under control by rehabilitating middle-aged homes and other buildings of sound construction.

## Books & Bulletins

*The Institute Library asks us to call attention to the fact that Institute members have the privilege of borrowing books through the Library's mail service*

ARCHITECTURE. AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY AND THEORY OF THE ART OF BUILDING. By W. R. Lethaby. 252 pp. Text; 10 pp. Illustrations. 4¾" x 7¼". New York: 1955: Oxford University Press. \$4.25

Lethaby's work is now offered with a new preface by Basil Ward, FRIBA. Mr. Ward's preface and epilogue, taking almost one-third of the space occupied by the orig-

inal Lethaby, hardly seems necessary in acquainting us with an author whose work was reprinted regularly from its original appearance in 1911 through 1937.

THE RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE OF RICHARDSON BROGDARD OKIE OF PHILADELPHIA. Compiled by Ronald S. Senseman, Leon Brown, Edwin Bate-man Morris and Charles T.



Okie. 60 pp. 8¼" x 11". Washington, D. C.: 1955: Obtainable from Ronald S. Senseman, 7705 Georgia Avenue, N. W., Washington, D. C. \$2.50

These architects have rendered the profession a great service in bringing together this brief record of an architect who can be said to have understood the early architecture of Philadelphia with unusual understanding and sympathy. Here in Okie's hands was a present-day adaptation of one of the most distinctive vernaculars of American architecture.

7 ARTS. Edited by Fernando Puma. 254 pp. text; 48 pp. illustrations. 4⅞" x 7¼". Indian Hills, Colo.: 1955: The Falcon's Wing Press. \$2.95 cloth; 95¢ paper

Chapters by various authorities on painting, sculpture, writing, the stage, etc., all protagonists of the various arts. Of architecture, Sigfried Giedion's essay on the original approach to contemporary architecture has been chosen.

#### URBAN RENEWAL BIBLIOGRAPH.

The Public Library of the District of Columbia has published a supplement in manuscript form which is available to those who send a request, together

with a self-addressed envelope stamped with 6c postage to The Librarian, Public Library of the District of Columbia, Washington 1, D. C.

L'ÉCOLE ET SES PROBLÈMES. Report by Union Internationale des Architectes. 76 pp. 8¼" x 11¾". Lausanne: 1955: U.I.A. Fr. francais 600

THE FLOOD AND NOAH'S ARK. THE TOWER OF BABEL. By André Parrot. 76 pp. each volume. 4¾" x 7¼". New York: 1955: Philosophical Library, Inc. \$2.75 each

The author is a distinguished French archaeologist, now Curator-in-Chief of the French National Museums. The two titles of his delve into the foundations of the Bible stories of the flood and the Tower of Babel. An extensive display of these foundations has been revealed by many modern efforts in archaeological research.

HOW TO DECORATE AND LIGHT YOUR HOME. By E. W. Comery and C. Eugene Stephenson. 256 pp. 7¼" x 10". New York: 1955: Coward-McCann, Inc. \$6.75

A basic volume written largely for the client's understanding, set-

ting forth the principles of interior decoration with particular emphasis on the possibilities of lighting. Here are no photographs of "successful" interiors, but a clear diagrammatic presentation leading to achievement.

EUROPEAN ARCHITECTURE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. VOLUME II, PART III. THE ERA OF FUNCTIONALISM. 1924-1933. By Arnold Whittick. 288 text; 96 pp. illustrations. 7 $\frac{1}{8}$ " x 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". New York: 1955: Philosophical Library, Inc. \$10

With the cooperation of the Incorporated Association of Architects and Surveyors, the author is in the process of analyzing European architecture during the first half of the twentieth century.

### Tour of Hospitals in Ireland

THE IRISH HOSPITALS COMMISSION has invited the members

of the International Hospital Federation to join in the Federation's Fourth Study Tour in Ireland this year. The tour will begin in Dublin on the morning of Monday, May 21, and will end there with the final banquet Thursday, May 31.

Over the past twenty-five years hospital construction in Ireland involved expenditure of some £30,000,000 in a wide variety of new hospitals.

Participation in the tour is open to members of the IHF and their families. Non-members, however, may be allowed to take part if numbers permit. Total participants are restricted to 150.

Registration fee for IHF members is £3, and for non-members £4. Further details and application forms may be had from Capt. J. E. Stone, Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, International Hospital Federation, 10 Old Jewry, London E.C.2.

## The Atomic Architect

By *Goldwin Goldsmith*, FAIA

I am of late quite up to date;  
Design is but a vain illusion.  
First I debate, then concentrate  
Either on fission or on fusion.

APRIL, 1956

## Rededication of The Octagon

**D**URING the annual meeting of the Board of Directors at The Octagon, a service of rededication was observed on Tuesday, February 28. The members of the Board and staff gathered in the foyer to hear the following invocation by Dr. C. Leslie Glenn, rector of St. John's Church, Washington:

"Except the Lord build the house, their labor is but lost that build it.

"Let us now praise famous men and our fathers that begat us. The Lord hath wrought great glory by them through his great power from the beginning.

"O pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and plenteousness within thy palaces."

President Cummings spoke as follows:

"Now that The Octagon is to serve a broader purpose than its builders foresaw, it seems fitting that we dedicate it anew to this purpose.

"Originally designed as a town house for one of General Wash-

ington's friends—a prominent figure among our American pioneers—it passed through a half century of life as a dwelling, including a year or more as the President's official residence. Then followed another half century of public, rather than private, use by Government and others who found enduring shelter within its sturdy walls of brick. And now it has served another half century of use as the Institute's national headquarters.

"Like its sister, the White House, in time it came to need a measure of structural reinforcement, a freshening of its interior appearance, and some minor changes in partitions to adapt its plan to the role it is now to play. We hope it will now serve as a formal liaison between the people of this community—the people of this country, in fact—and The American Institute of Architects. Not only are the rooms about us to serve in this way, but on the floor above are two enlarged galleries in which it is hoped to offer to the public a series of exhibitions which will show the progress being made in architecture and her sister

arts in the march toward creating for mankind a better and more rewarding human environment.

"Thus we may approach the chief aim of the Institute as set forth in its by-laws; namely, to make the profession of ever increasing service to society."

Dr. Glenn followed with this prayer and benediction:

"Let us pray

"O God whose spirit in the beginning didst brood upon the face of the waters, and in every age dost lead men to desire thy perfection, to seek for truth and to rejoice in beauty; we thank thee for the heritage of architecture into which we have entered, especially now for this national headquarters of The American Institute of Architects.

"May its members strive to create beauty as well as order, character as well as safety, spiritual value as well as convenience. As we dedicate this building, grant that this Institute may continue to make the profession of greatest possible usefulness and benefit to our society today, and pass on to the succeeding generation the full and fine discipline of architecture, enriched because of the dedication of each of its members. Help us all to live nobly to thine honor and glory and to the good cheer of our fellow men. Amen.

"The Lord bless us, and keep us. The Lord make his face to shine upon us, and be gracious unto us. The Lord lift up his countenance upon us, and give us peace, both now and evermore. Amen."



## Architects Read and Write

*Letters from readers—discussion, argumentative, corrective, even vituperative*



YESTERDAY AND TODAY

BY H. DALAND CHANDLER, FAIA, Boston, Mass.

THE OTHER DAY while riffling through the pages of the *American Architect and Building News* for 1895, I turned up under the date of August 31 a handsome full-

page photogravure of the façade of the Suffolk National Bank Building at 60 State Street, Boston, designed by Edward C. Cabot, a perfect exemplar of the Greek adapted

Ionic order (magnificent volutes), four fluted engaged columns in antae, with tall, severe windows in two stories between them set on a rigid flat base forming the entrance floor. All in granite right from Quincy (10-cut patent hammered finish), and of exemplary stereotomy throughout. Except for the glazed sash, Ictinus himself could take no umbrage.

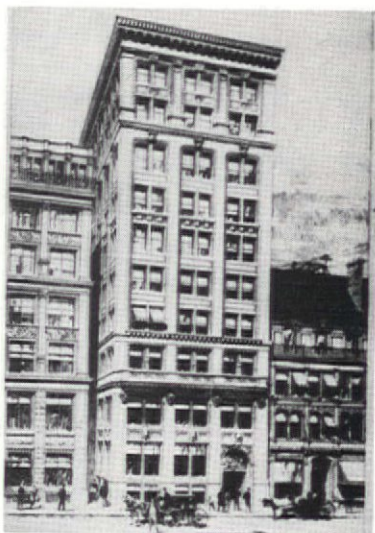
This façade had long cast its elegance on "the Street," virginal and in perfect taste and bestowing the luster of tranquility and security and the cachet of permanence on the organization that it sheltered. But nothing is lasting, and we discern from the notices pasted in the lidless sidewalk windows

that the bankers have moved on and the building in all its classic perfection is slumbering its last before the wreckers cut it down.

On the opposite page is this significant paragraph:

"The Suffolk National Bank  
Building  
Sixty State Street

"Ten years ago this building might have been taken as typical of the architecture of the banking quarter on State Street, and as it is one of the latest to give place to the high, modern office building it seems worth while at this time to make a record of a type of building and phase of architecture which have lived their day."



I turned a few more pages to find my eyes unexpectedly delighted by a crisp pen-and-ink perspective by my old and much admired teacher at Tech, in this craft, David A. Gregg, a perspective of the very latest new-look in buildings, soaring to ten stories among its attendant pygmies—altogether novel and fresh: "Richardson-on-classic" and designed by Mr. Cabot's successors for the same spot and for the same bank. Circular-headed entrance—off-center, too; the orders have disappeared, and stylised carving frames all openings, though still behind the design of the façade can be discovered the influence (it took quite a number of years and two world wars to obliterate that), of pedestal, column and entablature. Spirited horses and handsome barouches are drawn up at the curb, while Mr. Gregg's nimble and soigné citizens dash in and out to deposit and withdraw.

Well, that is that, *sic transit* . . . and I lay aside the *American Architect and Building News* to refresh my memory with the August number—just sixty years later—of our own AIA JOURNAL and scrutinize, with more attention, "one of the five first honor awards in the Institute's National Honor Award program for 1955"—the United States Embassy in Stockholm, Sweden. And frankly I'm

puzzled to find in this building any suggestion of embassy, or character, or of United States . . . I cannot help but wonder what are the schools teaching, what concepts, what ideals, what imaginations are they stirring, what convictions, discriminations; in fine, what scholarship? Perhaps there will develop some three-color combinations like our automobiles, and according to occupancy and use, each building will be painted in happy stripes and patches.

Back a page or two I find five well-respected architects busy in their selections of these awards. Does this particular example represent their honest thinking? Then why our perpetual hurly-burly over the encroachment of the engineer? I submit that already we have gone over to their camp pretty nearly lock, stock and barrel. We build buildings, we do not design architecture. You will tell me that in this pressure of time and costs there is no chance for fitness, commodity and delight. Ah, well, but still we wonder how long Frank Lloyd Wrights, the LeCorbusiers and the Walter Gropiuses and their apprentices will live before they too see the paragraph above written against their devotion?

(Editor's Note: Mr. Chandler, not wholly satisfied with the above expression of his thoughts, put into my mouth the following words, which I am passing along as offered: "The above meditation only points up the rapidity

of change and the arthritic condition of a genial old fogey's cerebral functionings. How, alas, it dates him! Everyone's youth was the best youth, the most glorious, the soundest, and each generation would bend the next to

acknowledge that. But even a little black bow tie, wavy white hair and a nimble tongue can't hold the dam forever—nor the obtrusive cawings of a crow. Nothing is more permanent than change.”)

### TEMPORARY WINDOW COVERING

By TYLER S. ROGERS, Toledo, Ohio

**R**EADING The Editor's Asides in your January JOURNAL I was interested in your comment on Rutgers University's use of a polyethylene film as a temporary covering for window openings during construction. I have just had conversations with some of the executives of The Visking Corporation that makes this film urging them not to promote this particular use of their very desirable product, because we all seem to have forgotten that buildings should be dried out during the construction period and not sealed up with a wonderfully effective vapor barrier film.

When you and I were younger, you will remember that window openings were always covered with muslin on light scantling frames, and the muslin was kept in place for at least thirty days after the plastering was finished. Nowadays window sashes are put in place, promptly glazed, the building closed up and then salamanders lighted to keep the workmen warm as well as to keep the plaster from freezing.

What we have forgotten is that from every 1000 square feet of concrete floor slab, 4" thick, 4 tons of water must eventually be evaporated; from every 1000 square feet of plaster 1165 pounds of water must go into the air; from a poured-in-place gypsum roof or an equivalent poured-in-place gypsum floor slab, approximately 1.75 tons per 1000 square feet. And then we forget that for each 1 gallon of oil burned in a salamander 1.3 gallons of water is generated by the combustion. I know that this is putting technical matter into your beloved JOURNAL, but I hate to see architects wondering why their buildings are troubled by condensation, at least during the first year of occupancy, when the principal source of trouble is that they tell their contractors to close in and heat the buildings as promptly as possible but forget to require that the building be ventilated and dried out. The new polyethylene film is a good product where vapor resistance is wanted but here is a place where it should not be used.



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## Art

*By Hubertus Junius*

"I know nothing of Art," he said,  
"But I know what appeals to me."

The Curator laughed  
And the Critic sneered  
and the Artist wept  
Behind his beard,  
But the Devil grinned  
For he knew they feared  
The likes of you and me.

The Critic sneered  
For he thought that he  
Controlled the taste of you and me.  
And the Curator laughed  
For he took his cue  
From the Critic's opinion of me and you  
But the Artist wept because he knew  
His chance of immortality  
Would come from people such as we.

But the Devil simply sat and grinned  
As he always has since the first man sinned  
For he knows he will always have a part  
When three men sit and talk of Art.

## News from the Educational Field

HARVARD UNIVERSITY is holding a Conference on Urban Design, April 9-10. It is intended to be exploratory—not didactic—in the effort to find the common basis for the joint work of the architect, the landscape architect, and the city planner in the field of urban design. Taking part in the Conference are Jose Luis Sert, Richard

J. Neutra, FAIA, Walter F. Bogner, Leon Zach, Sydney H. Williams, Reginald R. Isaacs, Douglas Haskell, Ladislav Segoe, Frederick Adams and Francis Violich.

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, in its School of Architecture and Planning, announces that Louis I. Kahn, FAIA, Professor of Architecture at the University of Pennsylvania, is Albert Farwell Bemis Visiting Professor of Architecture for five months beginning last February 1. Edgar Kaufmann, Jr., will be Albert Farwell Bemis Lecturer during the current term.

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO, Department of Architecture and Architectural Engineering, is conducting its fourth annual School Planning Workshop on the Boulder campus, June 18 through July 20. The Workshop is planned to serve school administrators, members of School Boards, practicing architects, and others in the design and building of elementary, junior and senior high schools. Further details may be had by writing Professor Thomas L. Hansen, Head of the Department of Architecture and Architectural Engineering, The University of Colorado, Boulder, Colo.

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY will bring more than 2,000 scientists, engineers, architects and executives to the 1956 Summer Session. Among the programs scheduled for the Session, June 8 through August 31, are "Tropical Hurricanes," "Orbital and Satellite Vehicles," "Molecular Engineering," and "The Artist, Materials and Technology." Further information from Summer Session Office, Room 7-103, MIT, Cambridge 39.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS announces the 25th annual consideration of candidates for the Kate Neal Kinley Memorial Fellowships. These pay \$1,300 for advanced study of the fine arts here or abroad. Details may be had by addressing, not later than May 15, Dean Allen S. Weller, College of Fine and Applied Arts, Room 110, Architecture Building, University of Illinois, Urbana, Ill.

CLEMSON COLLEGE Department of Architecture announces the reorganization of its curriculum under the direction of Professor Harlan McClure, head of the department. In this year the following are some of the visiting lecturers and critics: Professor Robert Newman, MIT, lecturer in acous-

tics; Dr. Thomas Howarth, University of Manchester, England, lecturer in architectural history; Roy Jones, professor emeritus, University of Minnesota, lecturer in professional relations; R. Buckminster Fuller, critic in design; Dean John Burchard, MIT, lecturer in architectural history; Dan Kiley, Charlotte, Vermont, critic in landscape design; and Professor H. K. Menhinick, Georgia Tech, lecturer in town planning. The Clemson Architectural Foundation, established by the state chapter of the AIA will also sponsor

other projects, including scholarships and travel grants in architecture and improved library and visual aids facilities.

RENSSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE announces the receipt of a grant of \$2500 from Aluminum Company of America Foundation, to finance a program which will bring eminent architects and outstanding men in allied fields to RPI for lectures and consultations. Rensselaer will inaugurate a series of lectures to be known as the Alcoa Lectures in Architecture.

## Competitions

The LE BRUN TRAVELING SCHOLARSHIP for 1956, as announced by the New York Chapter, AIA, will select by competition an unmarried man of age 23 through 30 with an architectural office experience of at least 1½ years. The scholarship pays \$3,000 for at least six months' travel in Europe. After nomination by a member of the AIA the candidates will compete in an architectural competition, the subject of which is "A Town Center." Programs available since March 15; *rendu* April 30. Requests for nomination forms may be made to Chairman, Le Brun Committee, New

York Chapter, AIA, 115 East 40th Street, New York 16, N. Y.

### THE NEW ENGLAND ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITION:

Initiated in 1954 with the cooperation of the AIA, the 1956 New England Architectural Competition is being held to adjudge work that will be shown at the 1956 Boston Arts Festival, held this year from June 9 to 24 in Boston Public Garden. Competition is open to any New England architect or architectural firm for work in one of the New England States done during the past five years. From plates and photo-

graphs submitted the jurors will select a limited number of projects for display in the Garden. Architects so selected will be invited to prepare models, enlarged photographs, or other visual material suitable for outdoor display.

Previous grand prize winners have been: Boston architect George W. W. Brewster, '54, for the Gibbs residence in Marion, Mass.; and Connecticut architect Philip C. Johnson, '55, for the Administration Building of the Schlumberger Well Surveying Corporation, Connecticut.

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY is holding an architectural competition for the design of its new library building, to be called the John M. Olin Library. Three local architectural firms, and three in other parts of the country have accepted invitations to take part. The competition will be judged by William W. Wurster, FAIA; David Charles, former director of libraries at the University of Pennsylvania; and Henry R. Shepley, FAIA.

THE NEW YORK STATE Association of Architects is sponsoring a Concrete Masonry House Competition, open to residents of the

State of New York and architects, draftsmen and students of architecture registered, employed or studying in New York State. Copies of the program may be had upon request from John N. Highland, Jr., Professional Adviser, 522 Franklin Street, Buffalo 2, N. Y. Closing date is May 15; three prizes, totaling \$3,250. Jury, three New York architects—William Lescaze, FAIA, Thomas Creighton, John A. Briggs.

IN A PORCELAIN DESIGN COMPETITION sponsored by Ferro Corporation of Cleveland, Ohio, and conducted by *Architectural Forum*, with prizes of \$5,000, \$3,000, \$1,500 and \$1,000, the jury, with John Lyon Reid, FAIA, as chairman, awarded the first prize to Henry S. Brinkers, a graduate assistant engaged in research in the University of Illinois. There were two categories in the competition, calling for design for an elementary school, and also for a community youth center.

In the first category the winners of prizes were: Horacio Caminos and Eduardo F. Catalano of Raleigh, N. C.; Stephen M. Goldner, C. Chadburne Shumard and Hanford Yang of Merion, Pa.; and Thomas Lam of Cran-

brook Academy of Art, Bloomfield Hills, Mich. In the community youth center category: C. K. Chen and L. C. Chen of Briarwood,

N. Y.; Cecil D. Elliott and George Matsumoto of Raleigh, N. C.; and Donald Goodhue of Cambridge, Mass.

## Hawaii and Beards

AT THE FORMAL INSTALLATION banquet of the Hawaii chapter, AIA, in Honolulu. Two of the incoming officers, Harry W. Seckel, president, and Richard N. Dennis, vice president, bolster their natural dignity with modest beards. The other officers shown in the

photograph: Robert M. Law, outgoing president, Harold L. Cook, the incoming secretary, and Philip Fisk, director, aspiring to the impressive dignity of Messrs. Seckel and Dennis, temporarily assumed beards that were even more luxuriant but not so deeply rooted.



Left to right: Robert M. Law, director; Harry W. Seckel, president; Richard N. Dennis, vice president; Harold L. Cook, secretary-treasurer; Philip Fisk, director

## Calendar

*April 12-14:* South Atlantic District Regional Conference, Washington-Duke Hotel, Durham, N. C.

*April 20-21:* Meeting of Executive Committee of the Board, AIA, Hotel Biltmore, Los Angeles, Calif.

*April 21-28:* Historic Garden Week in Virginia, the headquarters of The Garden Club of Virginia being the Jefferson Hotel, Richmond 19, Va.

*April 23-25:* American Institute of Decorators 25th Anniversary Confer-

ence, running concurrently with the Northern California District Chapter's national exhibition, "Decorators' Big Show," Sheraton Palace Hotel, San Francisco, Calif.

*April 25-May 6:* Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage. Headquarters 217 Sheraton-Belvedere Hotel, Baltimore, Md.

*April 26-28:* Regional Council Meeting (chapter presidents from the Middle Atlantic District, AIA) and seminars on chapter affairs and adult education. Dupont Hotel, Wilmington, Del.

*April 29-May 2:* Pennsylvania House and Garden Tour. Headquarters, Penn-Sheraton Hotel, 39th at Chestnut, Philadelphia, Pa.

*May 5-June 20:* Exhibition of Department of State Foreign Buildings, Recent Designs, The Octagon, Washington, D. C.

*May 11:* Pre-Convention meeting of the Board of Directors, AIA, Hotel Biltmore, Los Angeles, Calif.

*May 14-17:* Design Engineering Show, Convention Hall, Philadelphia, Pa.

*May 15-18:* 88th Convention of AIA, Hotel Biltmore, Los Angeles, Calif.

*May 18-19:* Virginia Chapter, AIA, Spring Meeting, Hotel Chamberlin, Old Point Comfort, Va.

*May 21-22:* Fifth Annual Meeting of the Building Research Institute, Sheraton-Brock Hotel, Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada.

*May 30-June 2:* British Architects' Conference, Norwich, England. Visitors from the U.S.A. are welcomed and should advise C. D. Spragg, HON. AIA, Secretary, Royal Institute of British Architects, 66 Portland Place, London W.1, England.

*June 6-10:* The 1956 Annual Assembly of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, Banff Springs Hotel, Banff, Alberta, Canada.

*June 7-8:* Meeting and Convention of the Minnesota Society of Architects, Hotel Nicollet, Minneapolis, Minn.

*June 24-25:* 57th Annual Meeting of the American Society of Landscape Architects, with the Kentucky-Ohio Chapter as hosts, Cleveland Hotel, Cleveland, Ohio.

*June 25-29:* Annual meeting of The American Society for Engineering Education, Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa.

*July 6-29:* The 5th Annual National Trust Summer School for the study of the historic houses of Great Britain. Representative for the U. S.: Frederick L. Rath, Jr., Director of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, 712 Jackson Place N.W., Washington 6, D. C.

*July 14-August 25:* Seventh Annual Design Workshop, Instituto Tecnológico de Monterrey, Mexico. Information and catalogs may be secured from Hugh L. McMath, AIA, School of Architecture, The University of Texas, Austin, Texas.

*September 13-15:* Central States Regional Conference, Omaha, Nebr.

*September 28-29:* North Central States Regional Convention, the Wisconsin Architects' Association, AIA, being host chapter. Pfister Hotel, Milwaukee, Wis.

*October 7-9:* 7th Annual Conference of the Gulf States District, Chattanooga, Tenn.

*October 10-13:* California-Nevada-Hawaii District Regional Conference, and California Council, Yosemite, Calif.

*October 18-20:* Western Mountain District Regional Conference, Salt Lake City, Utah.

*October 24-26:* New York District Regional Conference, Lake Placid Club, Lake Placid, N. Y.

*October 25-27:* New York State Association Convention, Lake Placid Club, Lake Placid, N. Y.

*October 31-November 2:* Texas District Regional Conference, Corpus Christi, Texas.

*November 14-16:* Middle Atlantic District, AIA, Pennsylvania Society of Architects and Regional Council Meeting, Hershey, Pa.

## The Editor's Asides

THE URGE FOR STUDY is spreading rapidly. M.I.T. is to probe the upper reaches by the establishment of a school open only to Ph.D.'s. Andrew Harvey, president of a Kansas City electrical workers' union local, is having his men attend a course at the University of Kansas studying loafing. To study the ill effects, that is. To quote Harvey: "Some projects are more like a convalescent home than a construction job."

AN ARCHITECTURAL STUDENT, asked in examination what are the General Conditions of a specification, answered, "The part that always stays the same." Embarrassingly near the truth in too many offices.

THE BETTER THE BUILDING, the less the cost of heating or cooling it. How better and how much? Tyler S. Rogers has started two-year tests measuring the heat and cooling costs of dwellings built according to minimum FHA standards, as compared with houses in which: (1) large window areas are turned to north or south, or else shaded by screens or plantings; (2) adequate insulation is used in side walls and ceilings; and (3)

ventilation is provided for attic spaces. Mid-continent city annual costs of heating and cooling a standard base norm of 1200 sq. ft. conditioned floor area averaged \$127.30. Savings through (1), (2) and (3) were estimated at \$59.92, according to preliminary estimates on the first lot of houses submitted for the nation-wide, 125-house test.

THERE ARE A LOT of actions recorded at this point in what is loosely called civilization that puzzle us. One of them is that as we produce more and more automobiles and have less and less room for them to move about, the makers boast of increased length of this year's models. Another thing that puzzles us is that as we continue to set up new records of traffic accidents, exceeding our losses by death in Korea, the makers of this year's juggernauts boast of building the engines with more and more power.

ACCORDING to Dodge reports the single-family dwelling has been forging ahead over multiple-dwelling units and two-family houses. Contracts in 1955 for one-family houses in the 37 eastern states

reached \$8.9 billion—almost double the 1951 total. And the pity of it is that the architectural profession is still unable to find a way to serve the great bulk of this category.

HOME OWNERSHIP marches on. In 1940 the percentage of U. S. families living in homes of their own was 41%. Today it is said to be 57%.

A RECENT MEETING of the Washington-Metropolitan Chapter was given over to a broad discussion of "Legislative Control of Esthetics." Lawyers, educators, architects, judges and others participated in what was perhaps the most largely attended meeting in Chapter history. The arguments pro and con, extending over several hours, were heard, answered, weighed. A final sense-of-the-meeting vote was *against* such legislation.

THE WASHINGTON STATE CHAPTER has just put into effect an ingenious scheme for increasing attendance at Chapter meetings as well as encouraging national Convention participation. Every corporate or associate member attending all, or all but two, of the Chapter's 1955 meetings is eligible

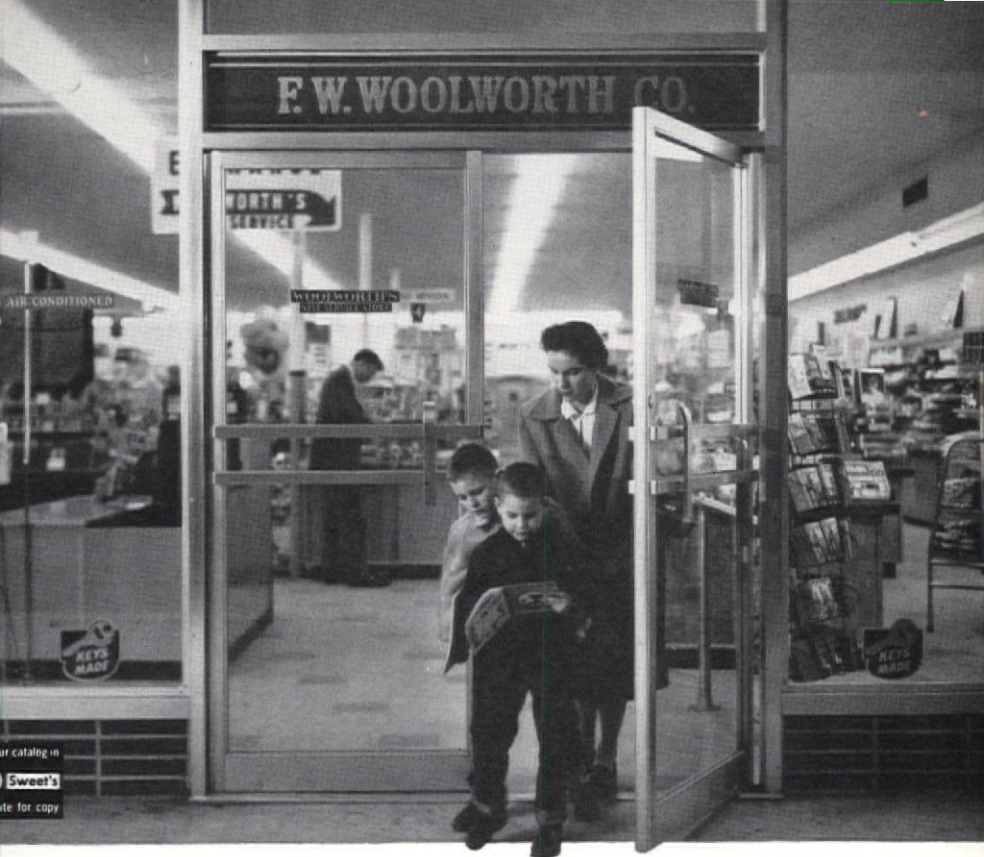
to draw lots for a \$300 travel allowance to attend the Los Angeles Convention in May.

IN THE OPINION of one of our Southern California members Bill Wurster made the most courageous statement of the year when speaking of the proposed million-dollar theater project for La Jolla: "I cannot stress too much the necessity of youth in this wonderful project. Experience is not the essence here, because too many architects become stereotyped as they gain experience."

IT IS BECOMING EVIDENT that there is a risk in giving people food for thought. Indigestion so often follows.

THE WORLD, it seems, is never content with the architect's equipment of knowledge and skills. Now it is Constantino Nivola, Sardinian-born sculptor, whose work is exhibited at the Harvard Graduate School of Design where Nivola is an instructor. "I think architects and planners should learn to paint, to carve, to cast, to work in all phases of design. One aspect of the visual arts is not enough." Referred to the architectural schools' faculties, if any, whose curricula is not already crowded.





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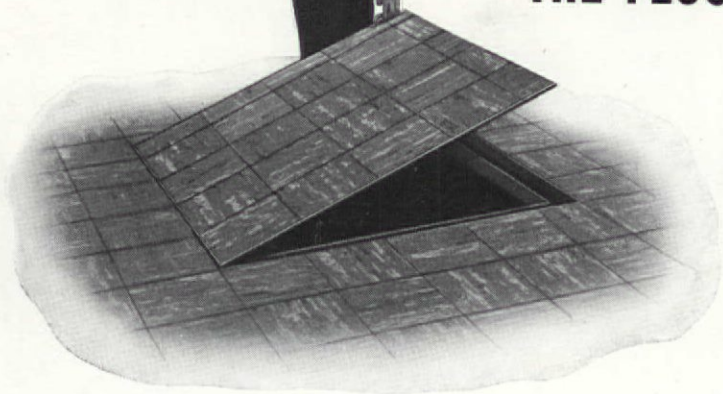


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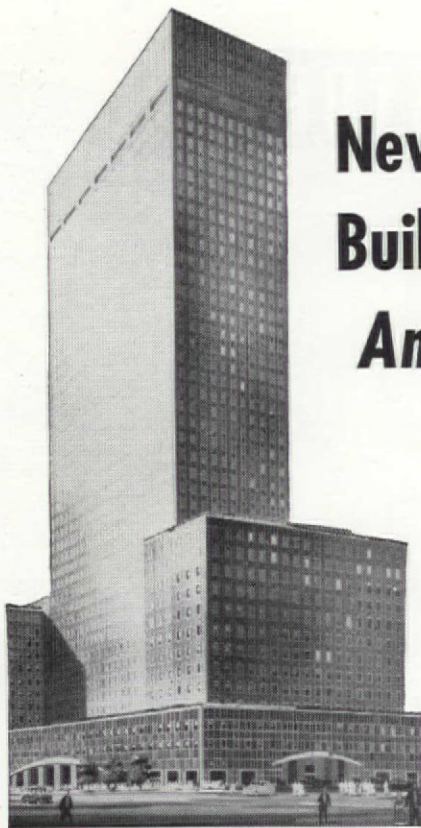
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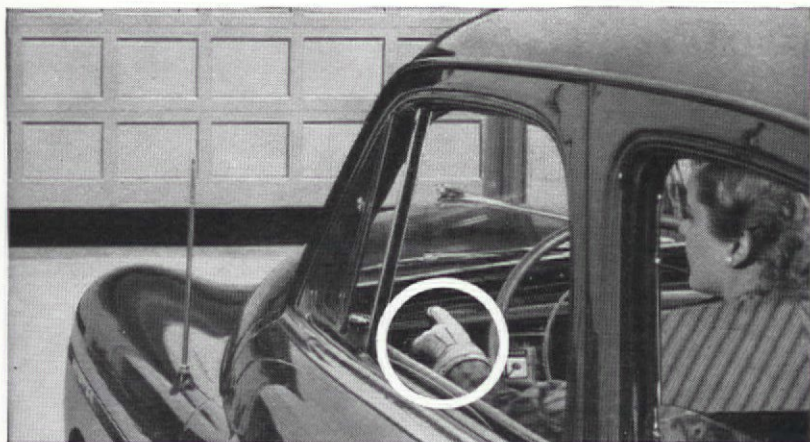
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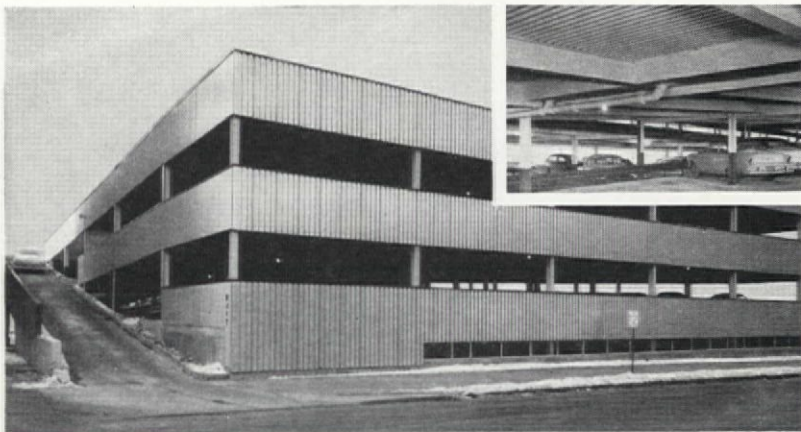
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