



# NEWSLETTER

THE SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIANS

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## CHAPTER NOTICES

Houston Chapter "Thornton House, A Living Book of History" is the topic of an illustrated talk to be given before the Houston Chapter by James A. Nonemaker on November 28 at the Fondren Library, Rice University.

## ORGANIZATIONS

Architecture -- with emphasis on the esthetics of architecture -- has been much in the news this Fall, with strong moves to stimulate better design from both the federal government and the American Institute of Architects. Several of our architect members figure prominently in these developments. Items of special importance:

President Kennedy has called for a "dramatic transformation" of Washington's Pennsylvania Avenue, and appointed a distinguished ten-member Advisory Council to make recommendations for its redevelopment. Among our members on the council: Paul Thiry, Ralph Walker, Douglas Haskell, Daniel Kiley and Frederick Gutheim. The new council launched its program at the White House, where it met with Arthur J. Goldberg, then Secretary of Labor, who played a major role in drawing up the Report on Federal Office Space which later became the President's policy statement. The report contained the directive for redevelopment of Pennsylvania Avenue, as well as sweeping new "Principles for Federal Architecture" which declared that government buildings should embody "the finest contemporary American architectural thought."

It also appears that Washington's pleasant Lafayette Square will be spared the horrors of massive new federal office buildings, according to final plans for its redevelopment by Architect John Carl Warnecke. Lafayette Square has been threatened with rebuilding for decades, and as recently as six months ago it appeared doomed. Then, it is reported, President and Mrs. Kennedy took a personal interest in the "front yard of the White House."

The Public Housing Administration has appointed a national panel of consultants in a program to improve the design of low-rent housing. SAH architect members appointed to the panel were Richard L. Aeck and O'Neil Ford.

Leon Chatelain, Jr., FAIA, of Washington, D.C., former I. A. president, has been appointed a member-at-large of the National Research Council in the division of engineering and industrial research.

Following months of study and activity by the American Institute of Architects, the Board of Directors has prepared a memorandum to all AIA chapter presidents urging the establishment of Chapter Design Committees "to develop and execute programs with the aim of improving design within the profession and creating a public appreciation of design which will lead to an assumption of esthetic responsibility by the community." Development of the AIA Board's recommendations goes back officially to the Institute's 1961 Philadelphia convention, when a two-man Board Committee on Design was set up to study the subject. SAH members Morris Ketchum, Jr., FAIA and Arthur Gould Odell, Jr., FAIA were named to this committee.

New York City has been the focus of much architectural history news this year -- and with good cause, as the importance of their architecture and community concern over its study and preservation has increasingly reached the action level, as this Newsletter has several times reported. This present concern and activity, coupled with the threat of indiscriminate urban renewal, and hope for the future, has been ably put forth by Ada Louise Huxtable in the influential English magazine, The Architectural Review, for August, 1962. Mrs. Huxtable writes on "Preservation in New York," with credit to SAH, incidentally, for its part in the effort. Other SAH news from the New York area: In the Fall, 1962 number of Pace, the Pace College magazine, Geoffrey Platt, New York architect, SAH member, and Chairman of the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission writes on "What New York City is doing to Protect its Landmarks." Jane Davies tells us that James Grote Van Derpool recently lectured on "A Cavalcade of Architecture on the Island of Manhattan" at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Professor Van Derpool, Executive Director of the Landmarks Commission, is being assisted by SAH member and past president Agnes Gilchrist and Mrs. Justin Haynes in a broad-scale survey of historic buildings in Greenwich Village.

At Columbia University, Robert Branner and George R. Collins have received Guggenheim Fellowships for 1962-3. Professor Branner will work on 13th Century Gothic architecture in North France, and Professor Collins will study ideas influencing the development of the city, 1880-1920. Mr. Collins has also received a grant-in-aid from the American Philosophical Society for foreign travel in connection with this project.

On Long Island, the Heckscher Museum in Huntington has announced the appointment of SAH member Eva Ingersoll Gatling as director. Miss Gatling was formerly Curator of the Des Moines Art Center.

One of our new members is the Colonial Philadelphia Historical Society, organized five years ago to "cherish, uphold and protect" the old colonial section of Philadelphia that is centered in "Society Hill." Edwin C. Moore, 244 S. Third Street, Philadelphia 6, is President; their dues range upwards from \$2.00 a year, depending upon the type of membership.

Plaster and Terra-cotta ornament from Louis Sullivan's Garrick (Shiller) Building have been made available to institutions by the Commission on Chicago Architectural Landmarks. The ornament was preserved by the commission, working jointly with the Chicago Chapter, AIA, when the building was razed. A large collection of the ornament has been given to the Art Institute of Chicago and other pieces are being distributed to schools and museums. Requests should be sent to Joseph Benson, Secretary of the commission, Room 1005, City Hall, Chicago 2, Illinois. Incidentally, we understand that a rather disagreeable parking garage now occupies the Shiller site.



The Fall meeting of the Central New York Architectural Historians was held on October 20, at Cornell University, in Ithaca. The all-day gathering included talks by Kermit C. Parsons, Edith Fox and A. Henry Detweiler in the morning, and a tour of Ithaca buildings following a group luncheon. Some of our organized Chapters might well emulate this informal group!

#### NEWS OF MEMBERS

Jane Cayford, now curator of the Historical Society of York County, Pennsylvania, has been appointed as Curator and Acting Director of the New Hampshire Historical Society, in Concord, starting December 1.

Ernest A. Connally, of the University of Illinois, writes that he is Visiting Professor of the History of Architecture and Urban Design at Washington University, St. Louis, this Fall. In February, Dr. Connally will sail for Australia where he will be a Fulbright Professor in Art History at the University of Melbourne. While in Australia he will lecture on the history of American architecture and conduct seminars for staff and graduate students in the preservation and restoration of historic buildings.

Architect Ambrose Cramer of Rockport, Maine, has been elected Chairman of the League of Maine Historical Societies and Museums. Mr. Cramer, AIA Preservation officer for Maine, has long been active in the study and preservation of Maine's historic buildings.

The director of the American Museum in Britain, Ian McCallum is in the United States lecturing on this new museum, located near Bath. We were very interested to hear Mr. McCallum report on their considerable success in acquainting the British public with American architecture and decorative arts. We also understand that their visitors have shown considerable enthusiasm for the American style gingerbread they are treated to on the tour.

In the August, 1962 number of The Architectural Review, we note an article by MIT's Henry A. Millon on Bernardo Antonio Vittore. The Review states that Professor Millon's article on the 18th Century Italian Architect is the first to appear in English.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation's Director of Education, William J. Murtagh, writes that he led the Trust's tour to Hawaii following their October meeting in San Francisco, and then continued to Japan to lecture on American architecture and preservation at Nippon University on the invitation of the Architectural Institute of Japan.

James Phillip Noffsinger, SAH director and Associate Professor of Architecture at the University of Kentucky, has been named to the Kentucky Historical Society's Sites and Shrines Committee by Kentucky Attorney-General John B. Breckinridge, Society President. The committee has been set up to evaluate and recommend sites worthy of historical preservation.

Architect Charles E. Peterson and Clemson College Professor Harold N. Cooledge, Jr. were the featured speakers at a "Symposium on 19th Century Architecture" held in Richmond, Virginia, on November 9 and 10 at the Valentine Museum. The symposium was sponsored jointly by the Historic Richmond Foundation and the Richmond Section of the AIA. The conference draws welcome attention to the increasing recognition now being given to nineteenth century architecture in the United States -- a period perhaps too long eclipsed by a national passion for the "Colonial" style.

#### COURSES AND GRANTS

The National Trust for Historic Preservation has announced a short course for historic museum personnel, to be given January 21 - February 1, 1963. The program, limited to fifteen conferees, will be given at Woodlawn Plantation, a National Trust property at Mt. Vernon, Virginia. It is primarily designed to provide workers of historic house museums and other history museums with the opportunity to discuss some of the problems of museum function and administration. It will be given by members of the staff of the Trust, the National Park Service, the Smithsonian Institution, the National Gallery of Art, and other organizations. Applications should be made before January 3 to William J. Murtagh, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 815 17th St., N.W., Washington 6, D.C. The registration fee is \$85, which includes tour transportation, room (at Woodlawn), meals and entry to exhibition buildings.

#### RESEARCH

Paul Sprague, a graduate student at Princeton University, is preparing a Ph.D. dissertation on the architecture of Louis H. Sullivan. Mr. Sprague would appreciate hearing from readers who may know the whereabouts of Sullivan papers, writings, drawings, architectural designs, or pieces of ornament (from buildings demolished prior to 1950). Mr. Sprague may be reached at the Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University, Princeton, N.J.

Information concerning the work of the 19th c. Philadelphia architect, James H. Windrim, would be appreciated by John C. Poppeliers, HABS Architectural Historian. Following a master's thesis on Windrim for the University of Pennsylvania, Mr. Poppeliers is now continuing his research on the architect of Philadelphia's Masonic Temple. Address: c/o HABS, 143 S. Third Street, Philadelphia 6, Pa.

#### PUBLICATIONS

Marcus Whiffen, now professor at the Arizona State University in Tempe, Arizona, tells us that he has been appointed Editor of the Journal of Architectural Education, the organ of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture. Appearing as part of the Journal of the American Institute of Architects, Mr. Whiffen's first issue of the JAE (for October, 1962) has two articles of historic interest: Harlan E. McClure, "Fifty Years of the ACSA," and Howard Dearstyne, "The Bauhaus Revisited." We understand, incidentally, that Professor Dearstyne is the only American to hold a diploma from the Bauhaus.

There have been several recent articles of architectural interest in the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts' attractive magazine, Arts in Virginia. Carroll L. V. Meeks writes in the Spring, 1962 issue on the Richmond City Hall, an important late nineteenth century monument now threatened by demolition. Professor Meeks speaks strongly and effectively for its preservation.



In the Fall, 1962 number is Finis Farr's account of the work of Frank Lloyd Wright in Virginia, the "Countenance of Principle," and in the Winter, 1962 issue is an article on decorative cast iron work in Richmond by Mary Wingfield Scott, "Cast Iron Ornament in Richmond." Formerly sent only to museum members, Arts in Virginia is now available separately at \$4.50 per season, or \$2.00 a single number. Editor William Francis tells us that AIV has a continuing interest in architectural history, and that many articles on Virginia architecture are planned for future issues.

A new volume by Samuel Chamberlain has been released -- The New England Image, a tastefully-chosen selection of the New England photographs for which Mr. Chamberlain is widely known. As may be expected, many of the views are concerned with historic buildings, both the famous and the little known.

Joseph A. Baird, Jr.'s exhibit for the National Trust Meeting, "Time's Wondrous Changes, San Francisco Architecture, 1776-1915," as noted in the September Newsletter, has resulted in a book of the same name published in a limited edition of 1,000 copies by the California Historical Society. The book is available from the Society, at 2090 Jackson Street, San Francisco 9, for \$5.00, or \$4.00 to members.

John Maass writes that the Saturday Book No. 22 contains three illustrated essays on vernacular architecture: "American Gothic," by John Maass, "South African Rococo," by Desiree Picton-Smith, and "English Suburban," by Olive Cook and Edwin Smith. John comments that the article "English Suburban" should be something of a revelation to most American readers.

We were very pleased to see Peter Blake's survey of architectural books currently available in paper-back editions that appeared in the New York Times Book Review for October 14, 1962. Mr. Blake, who is managing editor of the Architectural Forum, proffered concise reviews of 25 books ranging in price from \$.50 to \$3.95 including both original works and reprints.

Historic Annapolis, 18 Pinkney Street, Annapolis, Maryland has a digest of the second Annapolis Roundtable conference, "The Growth of Historic Towns" for sale at \$1.00. The conference, sponsored jointly by Historic Annapolis and the Washington Center for Metropolitan Studies, was concerned with the failure of urban renewal programs to contribute to historic preservation in our cities. We also understand that Historic Annapolis has received a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation to complete design proposals for the conservation of Annapolis' historic assets in the city's development.

In our last issue we mentioned Carnegie Institute's exhibit of the work of the late Pittsburgh architect Frederick G. Scheibler, Jr., and we have now seen the attractive exhibit catalogue and James Van Trump's eye-opening article in the October Charette: "A Prophet of Modern Architecture in Pittsburgh: Frederick G. Scheibler, Jr." Very little known outside of Pittsburgh, Scheibler was a talented and creative designer, and one of our few proto-modern architects. Scheibler's work should be more widely known, and we hope this article and exhibit will result in the recognition he rightly deserves.

#### EXHIBITIONS

A number of architectural exhibits are available from the American Federation of Arts, writes Robert H. Luck, head of the Department of Special Programs. Among their fine exhibits we note: "Four Centuries of Architectural Drawings from the RIBA Collection" (150 running feet, \$300-\$350.); "Style and Security -- 4,000 Years of Locks and Door Ornamentation" (700 sq. feet, \$95-\$110, the collection of the Yale and Towne Manufacturing Company); "Preservation, the Heritage of Progress" (150 running feet, \$50-65, organized by the National Trust for Historic Preservation); "Achievement in the Building Arts" (350 running feet, \$200-250, the 1962 National Gold Medal Exhibition of the Building Arts, organized by the Architectural League of New York); and "Three Centuries of Architecture in New York," (110 running feet, \$15), sponsored by the New York State Council on the Arts).

The work of Fiske Kimball, 1888-1955, as a museum director is interestingly set out in George and Mary Roberts' Triumph on Fairmount (Philadelphia, 1959) and the impressive list of his writings may be found in A Bibliography of the Works of Fiske Kimball, by Mary Kane, edited by Frederick Doveton Nichols (Charlottesville, 1959). Little known, however, are his younger days, and we are most fortunate to have these remarks by one of Mr. Kimball's Harvard classmates, Edgar T. P. Walker, A.I.A. Mr. Walker is a practicing architect at Hingham, Massachusetts, and a consultant to the Boston Historic Shrines Commission. He restored Hingham's famous Old Ship Church in 1929 and recently made a set of careful measured drawings of it for HABS.

#### I REMEMBER FISKE KIMBALL

- Edgar T. P. Walker, A. I. A.

These reminiscences tell about the years from September, 1905 to June, 1909, when I shared the companionship of Fiske Kimball as one of his classmates in the Architectural School at Harvard. During the first days, at the beginning of our Freshman Year, our friendship was very close. But it is impossible to write about Sidney Fiske Kimball without discussing facts in my own life at that time. Sidney, as he was known by the students, brought with him, as a roommate from Dorchester Heights a fine-looking boy named Myron Morris. They were as different in looks, in manners, in aptitudes as roommates can be. Myron was fair, handsome, and very chatty -- but in a lightweight manner. He was somewhat athletic and had a fine figure. Sidney, like me, was six feet or more tall, weighed less than 150 pounds. He had long, dangling legs and arms, an overlarge mouth, very lucid, penetrating, bead-like eyes, drawn checks, dark streaky hair, that was far removed from the close clips of the students of today. He was very articulate and his ideas were logical and constructive.

The three of us lived in the so-called "woods," a half-mile north of the College Yard -- the Divinity School (not a very lively place) and the museums to the east -- Holmes and Jarvis athletic fields to the west, and boarding houses to the north.

Sidney and Myron roomed together in Perkins Hall on Oxford Street and I slept in an attic room on Mellen Street. We all joined the Randall Hall Dining Association, operated in all its details of management by the students. For poor students, waiting on table, or in the slides, was a popular job because it could be carried out without interference with classes. Many of us were able to pay our entire food bill by such work. Those were happy but hard days for me. Not all of us chose to wait on table and I don't recall that Sidney or Myron felt obliged to do so -- but we were a sympathetic and democratic group -- representing Harvard as a great school for the poor as well as for the rich.



Food was cheap for those days and good enough. Our breakfasts averaged 10 to 20 cents, lunches 15 to 20 cents, and dinners 25 to 35 cents a day. I mention these details because of a big deal which I carried out with Sidney. He was very, very fond of corn bread. He had also conceived the idea that a strip of lead about sixteen inches long and one-half wide would be bent around a cornice, architrave, or base moulding in order to draw an accurate profile of the moulding. I wanted very much to have one of his several lead strips and paid for it by giving him nine pieces of corn bread, costing but one cent each, served three at each of three meals.

Once, with our lead strips Sidney and I walked about the Yard, looking at the older buildings, for an Attic base or a suitable architrave to enable us to put his ideas into execution. As I recall this event, we may all see that early trait in his searching mind which developed into the powers of the art student and critic of his later years.

We sat together, at the same table, in Randall Hall. Each table represented a definite group who ate together from day to day, week to week, and year to year. In our group there were our own students from the Architectural School associating with students from the Engineering, Divinity, and Law Schools. We were all a poor group struggling for an education on limited budgets. We leaned on each other.

It was during our first year that Sidney invited me to have dinner with his father, mother and sister at their home on Tremlett Street in Dorchester. Sidney's father, principal of one of the Boston schools, was an academic type and his mother was very gracious. His sister, Theodora, like Sidney, was kind, thoughtful and studious. It was a pleasant evening, but Sidney never referred, in later years, to his family nor to any early events of his life at home or his earlier school days at Mechanics High School.

Our college activities were centered quite completely at Robinson Hall, the School of Architecture. Except for Engineering courses at Pierce Hall, lectures in English, Philosophy, and Literature at Emerson Hall, our courses in Architectural History, Stereotomy, Renaissance Painting, Pure Design and drawing kept us confined in Robinson Hall. We saw little of our classmates -- from the Gold Coast or from the Yard -- who were not taking architectural courses. We met as a class unit at our Class Dinner or at a beer night. Sidney always entered into these parties with tremendous zest and he loved to drape himself around the shoulders of a new acquaintance. I don't remember that he had a singing voice but he would be quick to join in a song or jig.

As our work developed into fuller expanses of history and design, we noted his great ability to remember historical facts and to interpret the meanings of architectural forms. I have always believed that Professor H. Langford Warren, Dean of the Architectural School, was one of the great teachers of architectural history. For four long years we listened to Professor Warren, one hour, five days a week. He gave us the history of architecture through the ages and Sidney Kimball was his outstanding student. We recognized the breadth and fertility of his mind and were never envious -- we admired him -- and I like to remember that he was kind and solicitous toward us and never gloated over his achievements. I do believe, however, that Professor Warren was his early inspiration -- and gave to him the excellent foundation which enabled him to dig always deeper into the realities of architectural form, the meanings of the great paintings, tapestries, and sculptures, and to become the great collector and accepted critic of all phases of the fine arts, and the outstanding historian of early American architecture. But in none of the writings about the life of Fiske Kimball have I seen any reference to the teachings of H. Langford Warren.

In the draughting and freehand drawing rooms, I do not recall that his work excelled that of many other gifted students. His design was meticulously correct, archaeological but not warm or imaginative.

I remember that we decided, in our senior year, to take a new course in Italian Painting, given jointly for the first time by instructors Arthur Pope and Martin Mower. In this small class were John Cutler, Ernest Ver Wiebe, Vic Kennard, and Bob White, all classmates of 1909, who were on the first football team to beat Yale in four years. They took the course because, may I say, it was not too difficult. But, also, in this class was Harold Edgell, who, with Fiske and me, was eager to learn more about the great painters of the Italian Renaissance. Imagine the courage Arthur Pope and Martin Mower must have had to teach Italian Painting to two stalwarts, even in their tender years, like Fiske Kimball and Harold Edgell!

In the fifty-five years, since our days together as freshmen, I have become very fond of my classmates of 1909 . . . Fiske Kimball attended our 40th reunion in 1949 -- but I believe this was the only reunion he ever attended. So the years have passed and I regret deeply that our friendship of early days at Robinson Hall didn't continue, so that I could have shared some of the pleasures of his later achievements. A great gulf seems to have formed between his early life and his years at Fairmount.

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Send the names of prospective members (either individuals or institutions) to Mrs. Rosann S. Berry, Executive Secretary, S. A. H., Box 94, Media, Pa., and a descriptive brochure (with application blank), indicating you have suggested them for membership, will be sent to each.

Name	Address
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