

IN MEMORIAM

JOSEPH ROBERT BUFFLER

Died December 7, 1955

Joseph Robert Buffler was born in Philadelphia July 22, 1903 of an old Pennsylvania family. He received his preliminary education at Germantown High School, Philadelphia, and entered the University of Pennsylvania in 1921, graduating as a Bachelor of Architecture in 1925. From 1925 to 1927 he served as instructor in the University of Pennsylvania School of Architecture at the same time continuing his academic work in the graduate school and receiving the degree of Master of Architecture in 1927. From 1927 to 1928 he worked with Harry Sternfeldt, Architect, and George Harding, Mural Painter of Philadelphia. In 1928 he left for a year's travel in Europe and North Africa returning in 1929 to the United States to resume his position at the University of Pennsylvania.

Following his marriage in 1930 to Esther Mary Rogers of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, Mr. Buffler returned to the School of Architecture of the University of Pennsylvania. He entered private practice in 1931, and for the next five years he was associated with the Architectural Research Group, the City Planning Commission, and Thomas, Martin and Kirkpatrick) Architects of Philadelphia. But Robert Buffler's primary interests were always in education and in 1936 he accepted the offer of a teaching appointment in Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. After five years in Troy, New York, he came to the University of Texas as Assistant Professor of Architecture in 1941.

During his fourteen years of service at The University of Texas Robert Buffler's academic, professional, and civic contributions were manifold. His teaching lay principally in the areas of architectural design, theory of architecture, and garden design, but, from time to time, he served on various university committees, including the General Faculty Committees (Public Relations, Schedules, and Student Living Accommodations); Special Committees (Committee to study graduate curriculum for the Department of Art, Committee to study curriculum for the School of Architecture, Graduate Committee for Study of American Civilization, and Campus Financial Drive); College of Engineering Committees (Special Committee on "Up or Out" rule for Architecture and Engineering). He was actively interested in the Christian Faith and Life Community. Promoted to associate professor in 1946, he became full professor in 1951, and from 1951-1953 he served as Assistant Director of the School of Architecture. He was a registered architect in the State of Texas and an active member of the Central Texas Chapter of the Texas Society of Architects and the American Institute of Architects. He served as Secretary of the Central Texas Chapter from 1943-1944, and as President in 1945. He was listed in the Directory of American Scholars and Who's Who In American Education. He was the architect of residences and housing developments in New York State and Vermont.

In Austin he was professionally associated with Mr. Carlton Brush in the design of numerous residences and church projects, including the Shoalcrest Baptist, Kinney Avenue Baptist, Hillcrest Baptist, Baptist Student Center at The University of Texas, and the Tarrytown Baptist Church. His design of the University Baptist Student Center in which sculpture and mural painting were incorporated has received national recognition and is one of the outstanding projects of its kind in this section of the country. An occasional contributor to the journal of the American Institute of Architects, he had recently become associate editor of the Journal of the Collegiate Schools of Architecture.

Robert Buffler's death was tragically premature. As an educator, he will long be remembered by those who enjoyed his guidance. By temperament he was enthusiastic, reserved, inquiring, a compassionate teacher, and a discriminating critic whose wide reading and liberal sympathies were apparent in all his judgments. Susceptible to landscape, social comedy, the nuances of history; curiously fascinated by theological problems; immensely intrigued by liturgical forms; he brought something of all these interests to bear upon the formation of those students for whom he was responsible. For many years to come his influence will continue to be felt in the State of Texas.

Mr. R. Gommel Roessner, Chairman
Mr. H. L. McMath
Mr. Colin F. Rove
Mr. D. T. Starnes

Filed with the Secretary of the General Faculty by Mr. R. Gommel Roessner, Chairman of the Special Joseph Robert Buffler Memorial Resolution Committee, May 9, 1956.

Distributed among the members of the General Faculty by the University Stenographic Bureau, May 24, 1956.

A.W.C., Manager