

GROUNDBREAKING AT THE NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR 1964-1965

OCTOBER 2, 1962

THE PAVILION OF AMERICAN INTERIORS

S. Robert Elton, chairman of the board of the Pavilion of American Interiors at the New York World's Fair 1964-1965, is joined by guest of honor, Mrs. Jacob K. Javits, wife of the senior Senator from New York, in the official groundbreaking ceremonies for the multiple-exhibit home furnishings building.



REMARKS BY WORLD'S FAIR AND PAVILION
OF AMERICAN INTERIORS OFFICIALS AT THE
PAVILION OF AMERICAN INTERIORS GROUND-
BREAKING CEREMONIES, NEW YORK WORLD'S
FAIR, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 2, 1962.

NATHAN ANCELL [Chairman of the Advisory Board Pavilion of American Interiors]: This must be a great occasion to warrant such a beautiful day and to attract this distinguished audience so early in the morning. I couldn't help but conclude as we drove out here that I had discovered the reason why Bob Elton said he only invited imaginative people. After hearing Mr. John Young, in his Fair briefing this morning, I realize the importance of imagination. Five or six months ago, at the original meeting of the Advisory Board, I made the mistake of turning my head away from the meeting. When I turned back, I found someone had made me Chairman of the Advisory Board. That's why I'm here now.

I'd like to welcome all of you very warmly on this special occasion, and at this time I would like to introduce an old friend of mine. It is always a pleasure to introduce him. He has been involved in the home furnishings industry for many years and with McCall's magazine for 19 of those years. He has been a member of the Pavilion of American Interiors Advisory Board since its inception and

is now consultant to the management. I am very happy to introduce to you Thomas Bresnahan.

MR. BRESNAHAN: I am not going to let Mr. Ancell get off quite so easily — he's one of the most distinguished gentlemen in the home furnishings field and has just recently been elected president of the National Association of Furniture Manufacturers. We are very proud and happy to have him as Chairman of our Advisory Board.

I think I should start by quoting a remark made by one of our guests today as she viewed the diorama of the World's Fair. She said, "it's two years away and my feet are already hurting from just looking at this model."

One evening last week I attended a neighborhood supper party with about a dozen couples. It was a scene of American life such as Norman Rockwell might paint — a typical group, representative of our consumer public. We chatted about the New York World's Fair and I displayed a copy of the latest Progress Report. I wish you could have seen and heard them. They were fascinated and plied me with questions. Their genuine interest suddenly revealed to me that these are the people we are aiming at. They represent the America that loves a Fair. These people and millions like them are coming — in fact, they can hardly wait to get here and see the latest and best of everything.

World's Fairs have a way of reflecting life around us.

You all remember the wonderful Fair of 25 years ago on these grounds. It's easy to recall its delight, its excitement, its amusements, but great as that Fair was, it lacked one big thing: there was no home furnishings building such as our Pavilion of American Interiors. There was no handsome showcase to present a brilliant cross-section of American products and ideas in the field of interior decoration to millions of people. There was no home furnishings exhibit at the 1939-1940 Fair, great as it was. However, this modern-as-tomorrow working edifice, the Pavilion of American Interiors, to be constructed for the greatest of all Fairs in 1964-1965, will be the last word in beauty, thanks to the imagination and perseverance of S. Robert Elton and to the loyal support of his Advisory Board, a Board which includes a score of the great names of this industry.

I repeat, at the last New York Fair home furnishings were conspicuous by their almost complete absence. Possibly, the public was not quite ready at that time. Home furnishings were only just beginning the rapid rise to the high place they now occupy in the hearts and minds of American consumers. The great speed-up of communications in the past quarter century has brought to the general public a consciousness of interior design. In 1939, TV had just been introduced. The miracle of high-speed color printing, which makes possible the impressive color

pages of today's magazines, was in its infancy. The women's pages of the newspapers had not reached their present degree of influence. Now, the stage is set, and the timing could not be better for the appearance of a Pavilion of American Interiors where all can see the results of an industry cooperating to put its best foot forward for a public ready and eager for a better home environment. Every segment of the home furnishings industry and the decorating profession will be here to implant indelibly, dependable brand names on the minds of Fair-going consumers, day after day, evening after evening, for two big years — 1964 and 1965. I say big years, because the economists, the commentators and the journalists have been dinning into our ears the fact that the mid-sixties will be years of plenty for home furnishings. During the two six-month Fair operational periods this international exposition will attract a majority of the new generation of home owners which has exploded, as they say, since the start of World War II. The Pavilion of American Interiors will dramatically highlight the fantastic product advances of the past 25 years. Just to touch upon a few, we can now offer the variety and beauty of new furniture woods and finishes, style interest — a primary merchandising force — new dyes, new fibres, new fabrics from the world of chemistry, radically improved new vinyl floor coverings and sensationally successful



S. Robert Elton (left), board chairman of the Pavilion of American Interiors, looks on as contract for space is signed by John B. Stevens, vice president of The International Silver Company.

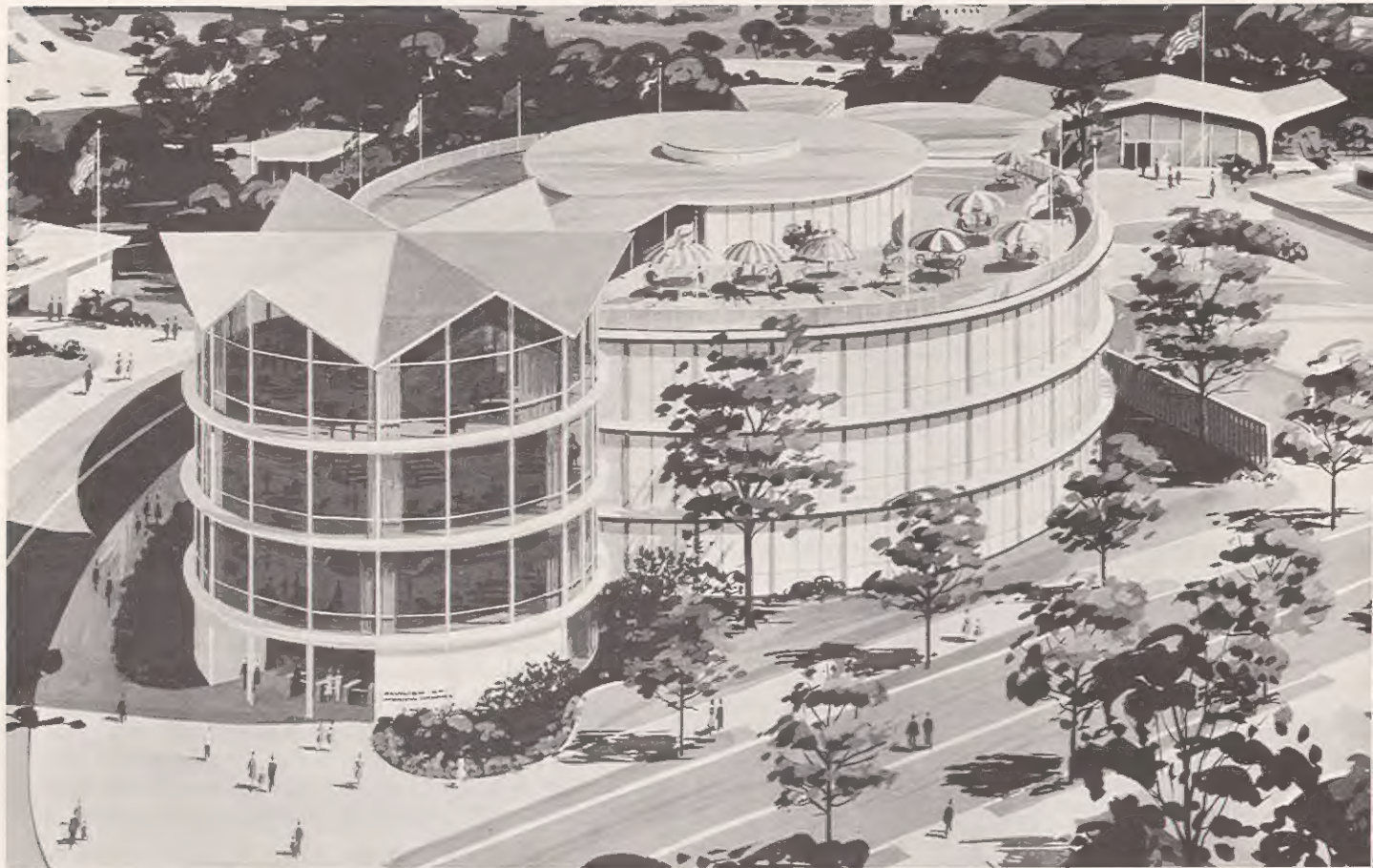
tufted broadlooms which have made the carpeted home a way of life for the many instead of a luxury for the favored few. So for these two important years, 1964 and 1965, this Pavilion will prove to a waiting world that attractive home furnishings have become an accepted necessity of today's living. In the so-called service magazine world, I have witnessed the American woman's craving for better family living grow steadily during the past quarter century. These women — your customers — are ready and waiting for the Fair. This beautiful Pavilion, for which we break ground today, provides the assurance that the Fair will be ready for them.

MR. ANCELL: Thank you Mr. Bresnahan.

There has been an enormous amount of work done out

here, with most of the initial construction completed. I'm sure that all of this would not have been accomplished had it not been for the driving, dynamic gentleman who is going to speak to you next. He is the vice president in charge of operations for the New York World's Fair Corporation, Stuart Constable.

MR. CONSTABLE: Mr. Elton, it is my pleasant duty to present to you the World's Fair medallion. We are delighted to have this groundbreaking ceremony for the first of the multiple exhibitor buildings and we are certain that this is going to be a most successful exhibit. We are planning now how to handle the long lines of waiting people we expect to be outside your doors when you open. We shall see you all here in 1964.



The 4-story Pavilion of American Interiors where 125 manufacturers will exhibit furniture, floor coverings, lamps, draperies and other home furnishings in a series of tasteful displays. The Pavilion, which will cost more than \$2,300,000 to build, will occupy a 38,110 sq. ft. lot with 68,000 sq. ft. of display space in the Fair's Industrial Area.

MR. ANCELL: We have had a slight change in program which, of course, is wholly understandable to all of us since, with so many vital pieces of legislation appearing before Congress now, it was just impossible for Senator Javits to be with us today as much as he would have liked to attend. I have a few comments that I would still like to make even though the Senator is not with us. I would like you to know that Senator Javits is as famous for his deep-seated interest in consumer housing and home furnishings as he is for his political achievements. It was to a large extent due to his support that New York City was selected as the site for the forthcoming New York World's Fair. Furthermore, his efforts and support were essential in persuading Congress to allocate and approve funds for a Pavilion representing the United States Government. Of course, we are sorry Senator Javits cannot be here but we have with us this morning his wonderful and charming wife, who graciously consented to participate in our ceremony. I am very happy to present Mrs. Jacob K. Javits.

MRS. JAVITS: I want first to express my husband's deepest regrets at being unable to join you today. Only the most urgent Senate business prevented him from leaving Washington to be here. As I am sure you know by this morning's newspapers, the current Senate session is in its final week and its members are now voting on the

Foreign Aid Appropriations Bill. Since yesterday's voting on certain amendments was decided by only two or three votes, my husband felt it was his duty to remain in Washington. We appreciate your understanding in permitting me to substitute for him and to deliver his greetings.

Seventy million visitors, including ten million tourists from outside the United States, are expected to visit the New York World's Fair 1964-1965, doubling the number of visitors to the 1939 Fair. The Pavilion of American Interiors promises a visual and ideological impact especially meaningful to visitors from other countries who will gain great insight into the cultural and economic values of our free society. More importantly, these visitors will see these values illustrated in the American home.

One of the really concrete achievements of this new era has been due to the American public which is now recognizing and demanding not only quality in workmanship but, equally important, esthetically pleasing manufactured products. In many fields, the manufacturer has had to follow the dictates of his growingly sophisticated public in the home furnishings field. However, I believe it has been the designers and manufacturers themselves who have been responsible for educating the general public to a higher appreciation of and insistence on the well-made as against the shoddy, and the beautiful as against the vulgar.

When my husband and I visited Russia last year, one of the things that impressed us the most — or should I say *depressed* us — was the drabness of the Soviet life, not only in the crowded living quarters where several families lived in a claustrophobic environment, but in the lack of imagination or beauty surrounding their daily lives. Beauty and the appreciation of beauty is such an integral part of our growing-up process that I am afraid it is too often taken for granted. Here in our country the richness of home life is a paramount objective of our people and with increased leisure and increased life expectancy, the home has become the basis of our social culture.

The intelligently-planned, attractive home makes for a better and happier citizen. Education is abetted, and juvenile delinquency can be curbed. Our people have a great deal of unfinished business to accomplish in creating joyful and constructive environments. I feel certain that the home furnishings industry, through this beautiful Pavilion will play a vital role in helping Americans achieve their dearest aspirations.

NATHAN ANCELL: Thank you very much Mrs. Javits. Now we will hear a few words from the gentleman whose imagination and creativity inspired this building and the entry of the home furnishings industry into this Fair. He thinks broadly, is absolutely dogged in his determination, and is completely motivated by devotion to the

industry. I believe we all owe a debt of gratitude to S. Robert Elton, chairman of the board for the Pavilion of American Interiors.

MR. ELTON: I accept the official Fair medallion given to me a few minutes ago by Stuart Constable on behalf of all those present and the many who could not be with us on this significant occasion. Today's ceremony is a most momentous one because for the very first time in a great World's Fair the family of industries grouped under the heading of home furnishings will make a dramatic and powerful presentation. This has been made possible to a great degree by the exceptional cooperation we have received from manufacturers, particularly those of you present here today. We asked for your help and we received it. We will probably ask for more of your help and I know you will respond. For the Pavilion and its hard working staff, for our advisory board and its chairman, Mr. Nathan Ancell, for our design committee and its chairman, Miss Freda Diamond, for our ethics committee and its chairman, Mr. Roscoe Rau, we promise you that one year from today you will have a completed building in which to house your exhibits — a building to vie with the best at the Fair in architectural impact, impressive exhibits, prevailing mood and atmosphere. The Pavilion of American Interiors will be a joy to behold on opening day, April 22nd, 1964.



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PAVILION OF AMERICAN INTERIORS

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