

## Lyons, Eric Alfred 1912 - 1980



Eric Alfred Lyons [commonly known as Eric Lyons] was born in London on 12 October 1912 and attended evening classes at Regents Street Polytechnic. After qualifying, he worked for T.P. Bennett and, In 1936-37, for [Walter Gropius](#) (1883-1969) and [E. Maxwell Fry](#) (1899-1987) in London.

In 1937, with [Geoffrey Paulson Townsend](#) (1911-2002), whom he had met at Regent Street Polytechnic, he formed an architectural partnership and subsequently worked on small housing schemes. The practice closed during World War Two. Following the war Lyons designed flat-pack furniture for Tetra. His partnership with Townsend was also reactivated in 1945. Initially they worked on the restoration and repair of bomb-damaged buildings. In 1948 they completed Oaklands a housing scheme in Whitton which comprised four maisonette blocks set within landscaped grounds. The partnership with Townsend was dissolved in 1954.

In 1953 Townsend founded his own development company, Bargood Estates, in conjunction with Henry Cushman, an agent for the Alliance Building Society. In 1954 Townsend, Cushman and Leslie Bilsby (who had acquired some land in Blackheath) formed Priory Hall Ltd. In 1957 they formed SPAN Developments Ltd, with Lyons as consultant architect, Townsend and Bilsby as joint managing directors. Ivor Cunningham (1928-2007) subsequently became a partner in Eric Lyons's practice and worked for Span on landscaping schemes

By the end of the 1960s SPAN had been involved in over seventy development schemes in London, Kent and East Sussex. and had built over 2,000 houses, however, in the early 1970s they ran into financial difficulties and Townsend, Bilsby and Lyons withdrew from the company. Townsend then worked as an independent developer for a number of years before forming SPAN Environments Ltd., with Lyons and Cunningham acting as architectural consultants.

In addition to his work for SPAN, Lyons acted as a consultant or architect for various housing schemes including the London County Council Frampton Park Estate in Hackney and a development in Vilamoura, Portugal.

Lyons was elected a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects (FRIBA) and was a Member of the Society of Industrial Artists (MSIA). He was President of the Royal Institute of British Architects from 1975 to 1977. He died at Hampton Court in Richmond-upon-Thames, Surrey, on 22 February 1980.

Worked in  
UK  
Works

See: UK Modern House [*link below*]

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#### Links

- UK Modern House [http://www.ukmoho.co.uk/html/architect/Eric\\_Lyons.html](http://www.ukmoho.co.uk/html/architect/Eric_Lyons.html)
- Wikipedia [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eric\\_Lyons](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eric_Lyons)
- ART UK <https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/eric-alfred-lyons-19121980-priba-216464>
- The Modern House <https://www.themodernhouse.com/directory-of-architects-and-designers/eric-lyons/>
- Span Kent <http://www.span-kent.co.uk/profiles.html>
- YouTube. Animated documentary Life of Eric Lyons, Span architect [Informative short film about the life of Span architect Eric Lyons, created by Year 4 students at Reay Primary School, facilitated by Chocolate Films]  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RIFSDHh6nCw>
- YouTube. Eric Lyons and SPAN <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PqrfhRVE6Ks>