

## **Skinner, Francis 1908 - 1998**



Russell Thomas Francis Skinner [commonly known as Francis Skinner; also known as 'Freddie' Skinner] was born in Kuala Lumpur, Federated Malay States [now Malaysia] on 13 October 1908 and moved to England at an early age and in 1927 entered the Architectural Association in London. He was elected an Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects (ARIBA) in 1933.

In 1932, with [Berthold Lubetkin](#) (1901-1990), [Godfrey Samuel](#) (1904-1982), [Valentine Harding](#) (1905-1940), [Anthony Merlott Chitty](#) (1907-1976), Michael Dugdale (1905-1970), and [Lindsey Drake](#) (1909-1980) he formed the architectural partnership [Tecton](#).

Projects by Tecton in which Skinner was involved included several buildings for London Zoo, including the Gorilla House, the Penguin Pool, a refreshment bar and the Elephant House (1932-37); two houses at Whipsnade Zoo in Bedfordshire (1933-36); High Point I and II Flats in Highgate, London (1933-35, 1936-38); a prize-winning house for the Gidea Park Modern Homes Exhibition (1934); buildings for Dudley Zoo in Dudley, Worcestershire (1936-37); Finsbury Health Centre in Finsbury, London (1938); and the Spa Green housing estate in Finsbury, London (mid-1940s).

Between 1937-39, Tecton developed an Air Raid Shelter Plan for Finsbury which was published as 'Planned A.R.P. Based on the investigation of structural protection against air attack in the Metropolitan Borough of Finsbury' by TECTON Architects (London: The Architectural Press, 1939).

Tecton was dissolved in 1947 and the following year Skinner joined Lubetkin and Douglas Bailey in a new partnership - Skinner, Bailey & Lubetkin. By 1950 Bailey was no longer a partner in the practice which had been renamed B. Lubetkin & F. Skinner (Lubetkin & Skinner). The partnership was dissolved in 1955 and Lubetkin withdrew from architecture and turned to farming in Gloucestershire.

Skinner's address was given as 22 High Point, North Hill, Hornsey, Middlesex in 1939; and 115 Mount Street, Grosvenor Square, London in 1950. In the 1970s he retired to Suffolk and died on 6 January 1998. His death was registered in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk

Worked in

UK

Bibliography

Allan, John. 'Last founding member of Tecton dies aged 90' [Francis 'Freddie' Skinner]. *Architects' Journal* vol. 207, no. 2, 15 January 1998 p. 19

Links

- Wikipedia [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis\\_Skinner\\_\(architect\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis_Skinner_(architect))
- John Allan. 'Obituary: Francis Skinner' Independent 17 February 1998 <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/obituary-francis-skinner-1139173.html>