

CHAPTER FOUR: THE MIDDLE YEARS - A Personal Impression
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My formal contact with C.S.I. began when I joined in 1964 and actively ended in 1977 when I retired from architectural practice. Since then, I have enjoyed attending special meetings and the Product Shows to renew old acquaintances and keeping up to date with the very informative Specifier. The progress of the Chapter over those years to the present has been remarkable and it is a pleasure to recall these memories as some small contribution to the celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the founding of the Chapter.

While I did not formally join CSI until 1964, I was informally in contact at an early meeting at the Deutcheshaus when Alan Gershon was President. Tom Smith, of Smith and Veale, who first interested me in writing specifications and I were interested in the possibilities promised and also as Alan Gershon had been a draftsman at Smith and Veale with no responsibility for specifications and now was winning national award for his work at Fisher, Nes, Campbell & Associates. The emphasis at that meeting was on standardized specs which was vigorously resisted by several government officials present including Morris Baker of the Baltimore County School office which was at that time engaged in a large building program for new schools. Shortly afterward Charlie Carroll invited me to attend a meeting of the Washington Chapter. I recall Carl Ebert presiding and asking the floor, "For whom do we write specifications?" My answer was "For the contractor in whose interest it is to use the cheapest materials and the least amount of labor necessary to complete the project". The response from the floor indicated I was on the right track and I never changed that objective.

By 1964, I was with Gaudreau, Inc. and writing specifications full time. When their CSI member left, I formally joined the Chapter. In that year Baltimore held it's first Tri-Regional Conference. My only recollection of those activities was becoming aware of the forceful personality and drive of Bob Simpson, our Chapter treasurer, who was shortly transferred. Baltimore lost a lot of potential as his rise to National Treasurer and Fellow showed, although we had our difference at the Convention in Chicago when he successfully resisted grass roots inquiry about the salary scales and expenses of the staff in Washington. Meetings in those years were outside the City primarily in Towson at Longley's, now Beefsteak Charley's in Towson Plaza and the Penn Hotel during it's best day's under Bernie Lee. There was a continual search for a better and less expensive place even though the meals were in the \$4-\$5 range. Eventually an attempt was made to establish a "home" at the Engineering Center as both meeting place and office. This held till the present day at the Governor's Club. Chapter activities centered on the technical reports and attempts were made to involve all members in those activities. In order to make the reports more permanent it was decided to publish them which resulted in the TR-1, TR-2, and TR-3. With Marty Janka as Chairman and Denny Still and Frank Gant issuing the reports and with the help of RTKL graphics department, national awards were consistently won for best technical report. These efforts culminated in the TR-5 which was an attempt by Frank Gant and Tom Heineman to tie the CSI specification numbering system in with the drawings. Despite the brilliant effort and attractive publication this system was never generally accepted.

Efforts at other than content were concentrated on a consistent numbering or number and letter breakdown within the now established 16 Divisions and a section format and numbering system. Ham Niles and Tom Heineman were the most articulate and erudite writers and speakers on the subject and Ham, Tom and Marty Janka worked at the national level with CSI in Washington to finally adapt the section numbering system and format that prevails today.

In 1967 I was elected to the Board of Directors and became aware of the details of the workings of the Chapter and its relation with National. Meetings were held at the ungodly hour of 7:30AM at Howard Johnson's in Towson and were very well attended. At that time the Chapter's problem was membership, cost of meals, meeting places, dues, relationship with National and budgets not necessarily in that order.

In 1968, I attended my first Tri-Regional in Williamsburgh hosted by the Washington and Richmond Chapters and put on by the genial representative of Buckingham State and learned it's not all work and no play. From the opening cocktail party to the final dinner dance it was quite a bash. Also got my first chance to play the Golden Horseshoe courtesy of some new found industry friends of the night before. Highlite of the final evening in addition to "I Left My Heart in San Francisco" was the banjo picking of Ham Niles with the added surprise of Jerry Semerard on the trombone. The next year was my first convention when I went to Houston to receive an award for a specification on a public housing project. It was an extra thrill to receive it from Kelsey Saint as National President.

After serving as Vice President under Denny Still in 1970 I assumed the Presidency of the Chapter and was delighted to learn that it was not tantamount to doing all the work as so often happens in other organizations. The technical report work, meeting notices and programs, contact with Washington and all the other affairs of the Chapter were in the capable hands of Chairman and committees which left the President to preside and enjoy the results.

On the lighter side at that period were our June "Stag" outings which varied from place to place but the most memorable was "Jakes", a little blue collar bar under the Hanover St. Bridge where we had crabs and fish sandwiches. They were not large affairs really mostly the officers and board members but they were a worthwhile break from the more serious business of C.S.I. Also, at the suggestion of Joe Thomas CSI golf tournament was initiated. I arranged for the first one at Hunt Valley followed by two successive years at Eagles Nest arranged by Bud Redmer. It served to involve several original members, no longer especially active including Bob Bond, back in contact with the present group.

This was also the period when the National in Washington was enlarging the goals of CSI and proposing to change the name of the organization. I don't believe any proposed action by Washington aroused more controversy and antagonism than this attempted change. Some of us felt that the national officers were too much under the influence of the staff of the Institute although the suggestion came from the officers Long Range Planning Committee headed by Kelsey Saint. The matter came to a head at the Chicago Convention in 1970 when the national Board of Directors asked for approval of their resolution stating that the name CSI should be changed. This effort was repudiated by the delegates by a large majority and the Baltimore delegation was in the forefront of that action. After the convention, the matter was kept alive during the summer and fall when the Board of Directors voted 9-2 and the members by a 3-2 margin against any change. At that point we were advised that further action had been dropped in Washington.

Another important subject on the agenda of the Chicago convention was the status of Industry Members. At its inception, the founders of CSI as professionals realized that Industry Members would outnumber professionals, and could not be certain that they would share their ideas and goals for the organization. As a result, Industry Members were restricted to holding the lesser offices at both the national and chapter level and had no vote on By-Law changes which could, of course, radically change the character of the organization. Their status had come up numerous times in Chapter Board Meetings and Membership discussions. By 1970 CSI was almost 15 years old and the Chapter 10 and during those years the "professional" attitude adopted by industry members negated the logical concern of the founders. The time was ripe for removal of the "second class membership" stigma and Chicago was the place for it to happen. A mild change of status strengthened in a motion from the floor and seconded by the Baltimore delegation was accepted by the delegates. The first major action by the Baltimore Board of Directors was to amend our own by-laws in line with the convention action and unanimously elect Bob Brosseau as second Vice President Industry. It is to the credit of all CSI members and Industry Members in particular that in the 30 years of the national organization and 25 years of the Baltimore Chapter there has never been an allegation or even a rumour of undue influence between an industry and professional member. I personally can state unequivocally that despite the hospitality accepted from and my friendship with industry members both within and outside chapter activities, I was never asked to specify or approve any product on other than merit of the product itself. The record of CSI can not be matched by many, other organizations, government agencies and unions. It is a record of which we can all be proud.

In the period covered by this recollection members of the Baltimore Chapter were exerting their influence on the National scene and receiving recognition for their efforts. To give names is to risk omitting those most deserving but I am sure they will get recognition elsewhere in this edition. As previously mentioned Denny Still and Frank Gant were receiving publication awards for their TR-1 thru TR-6. In 1968 Ham Niles was National Chairman of Publications. In 1970 Tom Heineman was selected by Sweet's Catalogues to aid manufacturer's in preparing catalogues and also was awarded the prestigious Ben Small Memorial Award. As far back as 1968, Marty Janka was working with Washington on numbering and section titles and eventually served on the committees which adopted the present section format essentially as conceived in the Baltimore Chapter by Ham Niles, Tom Heineman and Marty.

This period had its sad moment too when in 1969 Dick Dumpert died shortly after attending the Houston convention as a delegate. Dick was a very active and influential member even though not formally an officer or board member. Perhaps his most lasting influence was in allowing his associate Bob Brosseau what must have been a considerable amount of "company time", to handle his various chapter activities. A Memorial Fund was set up by the Board and after several false starts books were donated to the Urban Design Center and eventually a design award at the newly founded University of Maryland School of Architecture.