



NEWSLETTER

First, a big thanks to our continuing members for renewing and a welcome to new members who are joining us for the first time. We still have a long way to go to meet our 2009 target of 100 members and I would encourage you to help by spreading the word and recruiting new prospects. Let us know if you need any materials or would like us to send information to anyone.

At our inaugural meeting last November we agreed that it was necessary to craft a statement that clearly explained a vision for CHSA and in particular how we differentiated ourselves from other construction history related societies now active in America. Here is a first draft for comment:

While there are several societies devoted to one aspect or another of construction history, such as public works or architectural history, this new organization will act as a forum for those interested in any aspect of the history of all sectors of the design and construction industry. The Society is based on the belief that the study of design and construction history should encourage interaction between all disciplines and fields of enquiry, none of which individually can present a comprehensive view of the subject. It is recognized that it is by a combination of planning, architecture, engineering and construction, supported by other skills, that the end products of the industry are delivered.

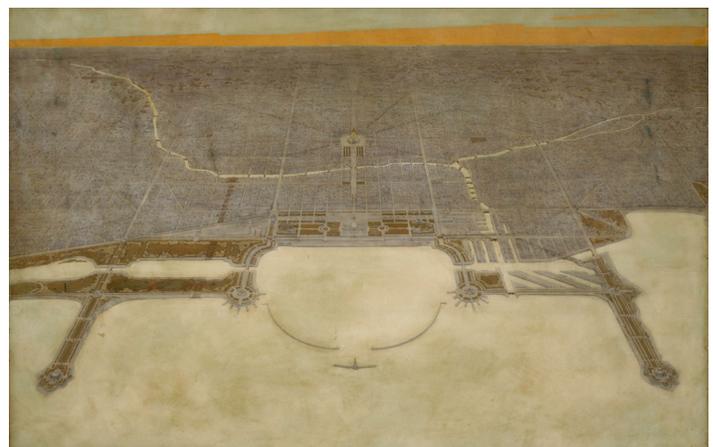
In May 2009 the Third International Construction History Congress will be held in Cottbus, Germany. Over 200 papers will be presented (just 20 of them from the US). Our delegation will be making a proposal to hold one of the next congresses in Chicago in 2014 or 2015. I would urge as many of you as possible to join us there. Air fares to Germany are very reasonable at that time of year.

Brian Bowen, Chairman
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Thanks to our Institutional and Corporate Members:

- * Associated General Contractors of America
- * Auburn University
- * Canadian Centre for Architecture
- * CH2M HILL
- * Clemson University
- * Construction Management Association of America
- * Georgia Institute of Technology
- * Levine Construction Company

CONTENTS	
The National History Committee of the Canadian Society of Civil Engineering	2
<i>Alistair MacKenzie</i>	
1909 Burnham Plan for Chicago	3
<i>Tom Leslie</i>	
American Council of Engineering Companies Celebrates its Centennial	4
<i>Gerry Donohue</i>	
Balfour Beatty Centennial 2009	5



- * Old Structures Engineering
- * Skanska USA Building, Inc.
- * Structures North
- * Texas A&M University
- * The Sullivan Company
- * Turner University
- * University of Pennsylvania

THE NATIONAL HISTORY COMMITTEE OF THE CANADIAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERING

The Canadian Society for Civil Engineering believes that a tangible record of significant and historic civil engineering achievements should be preserved as part of the heritage of the people of Canada, and in esteem of the civil engineers and others responsible for them. To this end, the National History Committee of the Canadian Society for Civil Engineering was established in 1983.

The objectives of the CSCE National History Program are to:

- a) Identify civil engineering works, which are of historic significance and to establish an inventory of these works.
- b) Promote greater public and professional recognition of works considered significant by such means as commemorative plaques and by disseminating information about location, accessibility and important features. To date plaques have been placed on over 50 National, International and Regional Historic Sites and later this year a further five sites are expected to be commemorated. Brief descriptions of these sites may be found on the Committee Web Site (<http://history.csce.ca>).
- c) Encourage study and research into historic aspects of civil engineering in general and in related fields such as industrial archaeology and preservation technology.
- d) Arrange for the preparation and offering of papers for presentation at meetings of the Society or other forums and to encourage the publication of articles of general interest about historic civil engineering works and the lives and achievements of civil engineer.
- e) Cooperate with other organizations, public and private, on all matters of mutual interest.
- f) Arrange for the preservation and safe keeping of historic civil engineering documents, artefacts and oral histories by appropriate public archives and museums or in private collections where permission for scholarly access has been covenanted.
- g) Encourage the preservation of historic civil engineering structures and works and public access to the sites, by providing expert advice and non-financial assistance as may be helpful to the owners.
- h) Record the contributions of notable civil engineers and others through oral history interviews. To date 14 interviews have been

recorded and these are currently being transferred from tape to digital storage.

The Committee administers the CSCE's "W. Gordon Plewes History Award". This award, named for the founder of the Committee, is made annually to a person who has made a significant contribution to furthering the knowledge of the history of Civil Engineering in Canada.

Eight members in the Toronto area constitute the "core" of the Committee and the remaining members are the Section Historians representing the CSCE Regions and Sections across Canada. The "core" group meets bi-monthly in Toronto and communicates electronically with the other members of the Committee.

In 2005, the Committee organized Canada's First International Civil Engineering History Symposium in Toronto and in 2009 will be participating in a Symposium commemorating the opening of the Water Works in Hamilton, Ontario in 1859. This project was designed by Thomas Coltrin Keefer, the first President of the original CSCE. The Symposium will be focused around Keefer's original Pump House building which is now preserved as the Hamilton Museum of Steam and Technology.

Canada's National History Society presents an annual award "for distinguished achievement in presenting Canadian history in an informative and engaging manner".

In 2002, this Award, now named the "Pierre Berton Award" after the famous Canadian Historian, was presented to the CSCE in recognition of the efforts and activities of the National History Committee.

The CSCE National History Committee is very pleased to collaborate with CHSA and anyone interested is welcome to contact the Committee at amackenz@ryerson.ca.



*Alistair MacKenzie
Consultant and lecturer
Ryerson University
Canadian Society of Civil Engineers*

1909 BURNHAM PLAN FOR CHICAGO

After a lean decade or two, Daniel Burnham's reputation is on the rise again, particularly in his adopted hometown. Chicago is recognizing the debt its fabric owes to Burnham and Edward Bennett's 1909 Plan of Chicago—a plan that was carried out only in small portions compared to the grandiosity of the original vision—with a number of citywide events and a rotating display of original watercolors and delineated plans at the Art Institute.



This exhibition has featured a particularly intriguing set of drawings recently, including early visions for a rail terminus on the west side that eventually became Union Station, and more technical drawings for port and infrastructure facilities on Chicago's waterfront. While the standard imagery of the Plan is of the enormous Civic Center on the west side (it would fit almost precisely into the Circle interchange today), these drawings show that Burnham and his ad hoc group of planners, businessmen, and financiers recognized the need for less visible works that would enable the automotive boulevards and economic growth they foresaw. Navy Pier resulted from an idea for a passenger and freight terminus near the riverfront rail yards of Illinois Central, for instance, and a great deal of effort went into finding areas convenient to rail transport that could be developed for industrial use. The 'working drawings' of the plan are thus fascinating, as they show a serious interest in the mechanics of circulation—boulevard plans, for example, were compared with street plans of European cities, and Burnham was fascinated by the idea of parkways that blended automobiles and planting in a gentle, if naïve, way.

Alongside these, of course, are Jules Guerin's sublime watercolors of Burnham's architectural vision of the central city re-created as a 14-story fabric of beaux-arts building, with the enormous Civic Center at its hub. This vision has long been an easy target for its retrograde aesthetics and authoritative vision, but the elements of the city that were spawned by this idea of the "city

beautiful" have added immeasurably to the city's atmosphere—in particular the reconstruction, along neoclassical lines, of Wacker Drive. This traffic artery along the Chicago river combines Burnham's late beaux-arts aesthetic with the automotive efficiency he dreamed of, and it is difficult to imagine the Loop without this vital route. Burnham and Bennett would no doubt approve of current work that will populate the lower level of Wacker with a continuous pedestrian promenade, restaurants, and cafes.

The Plan was not, of course, a charitable exercise. The Commercial Club, its sponsor, was full of vested interests, and it will surprise no follower of Chicago politics that its recommendations would have benefited many of its members economically. Rarely noted, however, is that the plan's emphasis on Grant Park and Michigan Avenue directly benefited Burnham himself. The office in which the Plan was conceived and drawn, on the top floor of the Railway Exchange, was at the far southern end of the Avenue's commercial area. It was not only tenanted by D. H. Burnham & Co., but Burnham himself was part of the syndicate that built and owned the structure. When Michigan Avenue was widened and the park adjacent to it improved, the Railway Exchange, and thus Burnham's home office and investment, ended up at the center of the city's most desirable commercial avenue. No little plans, indeed!



*Thomas Leslie, AIA
Iowa State University*

CONSTRUCTION HISTORY JOURNAL OF THE CONSTRUCTION HISTORY SOCIETY

Again, there is an appeal for submittal of papers on American topics to this journal.

See notes for contributors at:
www.constructionhistory.co.uk

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES CELEBRATES ITS CENTENNIAL

In 2009, the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) celebrates its 100th anniversary of service to the engineering industry. With more than 5,000 member firms employing half-a-million professionals, ACEC is the engineering industry's largest and oldest business association.

The Council began as the American Institute of Consulting Engineers (AICE) in New York City in 1909. Rather than form a technical organization, the few dozen members created AICE to represent and advocate for engineers in private practice. Among its initial steps were creating a Code of Ethics and a Code of Just Charges.

In its early years, AICE was largely a New York City organization, with more than half of the members located there, but in 1913 Chairman Alfred Noble urged that the group "strive to be a truly national society." To that end, AICE supported the creation of the U.S. Army Engineers Officer Reserve Corps in 1917 and spoke out against federal government competition through the use of publicly employed engineers.

During the Great Depression, the Institute, which at this point had about 125 members, was an early and vocal supporter of the Roosevelt Administration's plans to build grand public projects to trigger an economic recovery. Many AICE members served on advisory boards to the Administration.

Engineering blossomed in the 1950s, with the number of consulting engineering firms doubling during the decade. With this explosive growth, industry leaders determined that the profession needed a truly national organization and formed the Consulting Engineers Council in 1955. By 1960, CEC had 29 state organizations and more than 1,000 member firms.

AICE and CEC worked in tandem throughout the 1960s to advocate for the engineering industry. The organizations were active in the courts, successfully supporting engineers in several landmark cases. In 1972, CEC won its most important legislative victory with the passage of the A-E Selection Procedures Law, which established Qualifications Based Selection (QBS) as the procurement standard for most federal agencies. Less than a year later, the two organizations merged to form the American Consulting Engineers Council.

As ACEC's membership grew—Council rolls topped 4,500 by 1990—so did its clout on Capitol Hill. The organization has

continued to champion industry interests, specifically buttressing and expanding QBS and limiting government competition.

In addition to its legislative focus, the Council has rapidly expanded its educational capabilities, now providing dozens of programs during the year on a wide range of business management issues.

Today, ACEC stands as the preeminent business association of the engineering industry and its primary voice on Capitol Hill.



*Gerry Donohue,
Senior Communications Writer
ACEC, Washington, DC*

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS:

May 20-24, 2009

Third International Construction History Congress,
Cottbus, Germany www.ch2009.de

December 2, 2009

Construction History – A One-Day Exploration, National
Building Museum, Washington, D.C.

November 2-6, 2009

The Association for Preservation Technology International
Annual Conference, Los Angeles, CA www.apti.org

May 20-22, 2010

Construction History Society of America Conference,
University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA

BALFOUR BEATTY CENTENNIAL 2009

In 1909 George Balfour, a Scottish mechanical engineer, and Andrew Beatty, an English chartered accountant, joined together to form Balfour Beatty. The company described itself as “general and electrical engineers, contractors, operating managers for tramways, railways and lighting properties and for the promoting of new enterprises.”

The first contract was for a new tramway system in Dunfermline, Scotland and since that time the company has been continuously involved in railway work and power generation and distribution. Expansion into other fields of civil engineering took place and an international reputation was started in the 1920's with work in East Africa.

Their first foray into the USA occurred in 1986 with the purchase of Atlanta-based Heery and, more recently, Centex Construction. The firm is ranked 17th in the Engineering News Record's tabulation of Global Contractors for 2007.



Dunfermline Tram Barn, 1909

CORRESPONDING SOCIETIES:

We have established corresponding society status with two sister organizations dedicated to the historical study of important aspects of the construction industry:

Public Works Historical Society (www.apwa.net/about/sig/pwhs/)
 Historical Construction Equipment Association (www.hcea.net)

We plan to exchange information on our respective activities and explore the possibility of holding joint programs.

MEA CULPA:

In our last issue we published an article on the Kintai Bridge in Iwaktuni City, Japan by Eric Delony. We failed to acknowledge that a more detailed version of this appeared in *Bridge Design & Engineering* magazine. Our apologies.

BOOKS NOTED:

Bond of Union: Building the Erie Canal and the American Empire, Gerard Koeppel, Da Capo Press, Cambridge, MA, 2009

It traces the history of the canal from its initiation in the early 1800's to its completion in 1825 with emphasis on the political wrangles prior to and during its building, but also includes excellent and new details of the construction.

Drafting Culture: A Social History of Architectural Graphic Standards, George B. Johnston, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 2008

This is really two books in one. The first a history of the development of Architectural Graphic Standards, the bible of the draftsman, and the other a commentary on the position and role of draftsmen in architectural practices of the twentieth century.

Building St Paul's, James W.P. Campbell, Thames & Hudson, London, 2007

James is the current chairman of CHS in England, so it seems appropriate to cite his recent book here and a splendid one it is. Much has been written about the design features of this monument, but this book concentrates on the building of it – its contractors and workers, the stone quarrymen, the masons and carpenters and the whole process of construction, including its financing.

WHO WE ARE

The Society is dedicated to the study of the history and evolution of all aspects of the built environment—its creation, maintenance and management. It is a forum for scholars and professionals in the field to share, meet and exchange ideas and research.

Membership is open to a wide range of construction related disciplines involved in the planning, development, design and construction of buildings and engineering infrastructure, in addition to those concerned with their operation and preservation. Members share a passion for examining how our existing structures were planned, designed and built, with the purpose of using this knowledge to better preserve what we have and to guide us in determining future directions.

The US branch of the Construction History Society is a distinct entity catering to the historical studies and interests of its members here in America. Membership in the US branch includes full benefits in CHS at large, including receipt of the Society's Journal and newsletter and links to scholars in the field worldwide.

THANKS TO GEORGIA TECH COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE

We are indebted to and grateful for the financial support we received during 2008 from the College of Architecture at Georgia Tech. Their support enabled our initial organization. Please help us now to lay our own sound financial footing by joining CHSA.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Brian Bowen, Georgia Tech, Atlanta, Georgia

Dr. Anat Geva, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas

Dr. John Ochsendorf, MacArthur Fellow, MIT, Cambridge, Massachusetts

Jeff Beard, American Council of Engineering Companies, Washington D.C.

Donald Friedman, Old Structures Engineering, New York, New York

Tom Leslie, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa

Frank Matero, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Linda Ruth, Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama

Michael Ramage, Department of Architecture, Cambridge University, U.K.

We are compiling a list of any courses being taught that touch on any aspect of construction history, other than history or architectural design. If you are involved in, or are aware of, any such course, would you please bring it to the attention of Dr. Anat Geva (anatgeva@archone.tamu.edu). Thank you!

This is your newsletter and the only vehicle we have to keep in touch with one another.

So please use this to let us know:

- * your interests in construction history, your current research, précis of recent lectures, etc.
- * books, texts & articles that your fellow readers should know about
- * names and e-addresses of colleagues and friends that we can include on our mailing list
- * if you are willing to write a brief article for us.

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