

CHSA Construction History Society of America

100 Years: Building on Experience



THURSDAY, MAY 24, 2018 from 4:30 – 6:30 pm

Architecture Building
3835 Campus Drive, Room 1111
University of Maryland, College Park

This Program is Free and Open to the Public

One hundred years ago, in 1918, ninety-six general contracting companies from around the country met at the old LaSalle Hotel in Chicago to form the Associated General Contractors Association of America.

The Construction History Society of America, with support from AGC of America, celebrates this occasion at their 6th Biennial Meeting at the University of Maryland this May with a special celebratory session.



Brian Turmail

The program will be introduced by **Brian Turmail**, Vice President, Public Affairs and Strategic Initiatives, AGC, moderated by **Brian Bowen**, CHSA, and continue with the following speakers:

Kenneth D. Durr, Vice President, History Associates and author of a new centennial book: *100 Years, Building on Experience* will give the keynote address. Durr's remarks touch on the process of writing the 100-year story of the Associated General Contractors (AGC), share a few historical highlights, and close with some lessons learned about the development of general contracting and the legacy of the AGC.



Kenneth D. Durr

Kenneth D. Durr started with History Associates in 1991. He oversees a wide range of projects including books and monographs, on-line histories and time lines, chronologies, and oral history programs. Dr. Durr also has an extensive background in the history of U.S. financial regulation, particularly the Federal Reserve and the Securities and Exchange Commission. He earned a bachelor's degree in American studies at Kent State University and holds master's and doctoral degrees in twentieth-century American political and social history from American University, where he has also served as an adjunct professor.



Sara E. Wermiel

Sara E. Wermiel, Construction History Scholar and author of *The Rise of General Contracting in 19th Century America*.

Why is building called “contracting,” and when did “general contractors” first appear? In this presentation, these questions are answered, and the emergence of general contracting is illustrated through the careers of some early general contractors. Sara E. Wermiel is an independent scholar, historic preservation consultant, and teacher. Her specialties are the history of nineteenth-century American technology, industrialization, and urbanization. She has written many articles and a book on the main subjects of her research: structural fire protection and the development of new construction materials and assemblies in the nineteenth century. She received a B. A. from Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio; professional degree in urban planning from Hunter College, City University of New York; and doctorate in urban history and history of technology from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts.



William E. Reifsteck II

William E. Reifsteck II, Director of Preconstruction Services at ProWest who examines the history of Sollitt Brothers, the oldest general contracting company in America (since 1838).

Brief outline of the Oldest Known General Contracting Company in America

Bill has participated in projects in the Industrial, Healthcare, Higher Education and Public Sector. He has directed the industrial business unit of a multi-national Design-Build Contractor. Bill is the author of the critically acclaimed historical book on the construction of Notre Dame Stadium. He is currently Director of Preconstruction services at Webcor Builders, a Design-Builder and General Contractor. Expert consultant on large international industrial projects as well as working with multi-national construction companies.



Scott Lewis

Scott Lewis, Projects Editor, Engineering News-Record: Construction in America 1918 as seen through the pages of the ENR.

With the country’s manufacturing and transport sectors being transformed to serve wartime priorities, the construction industry that year was seriously disrupted. Water and wastewater systems were still not universal in scope, with public health implications. Methods and practices of public works departments received considerable coverage (whereas today they are outside the magazine’s scope). Scott Lewis produces quarterly features for ENR on world record structures. He has contributed retrospectives about the birth of the Interstate Highway System and the first New York City subway. He has been team leader on special reports about dream projects and workers’ voices. And he contributes market sector overviews to ENR’s Sourcebook issues. Before joining ENR he was a researcher with NBC Nightly News.

The event will be followed by a light reception sponsored by the AGC (room ARC 1111)
Ordering information for the AGC centennial book **100 Years, Building on Experience** will be available.

AGC of America

The Associated General Contractors of America (AGC) is the leading association for the construction industry. AGC represents more than 26,000 firms, including over 6,500 of America’s leading general contractors, and over 9,000 specialty-contracting firms. More than 10,500 service providers and suppliers are also associated with AGC, all through a nationwide network of chapters.

Construction History Society of America

The Construction History Society of America (CHSA) was organized in May of 2007 and 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 guide us in determining future directions.

More Information at <http://www.constructionhistorysociety.org>