

***Spectrum History Corner Article: by RW Simmons, CSI, CDT***

*As part of the History Corner series I wanted to share the next four articles on the History of CSI as recorded and written by Walter Damuck, FCSI, Honorary Member, AIA. This history has been shared with other regions for publication to show where we came from in 1947 and our expansion across the country since.*

***The Regions: Part 3 of 3–***

The amalgamation of members, all with a common cause, and anxious to join, expanding this fledgling with a demand for new nests all over the country. By the end of 1956 there were 10 chapters scattered from the east to the west and from Canada to Mexico. It became obvious that the then construction terms and practices would vary from area to area and that a type of “zoning” would group members with kindred problems together. This emphasized the urgent and immediate need for geographical area designations and a system of governance. While this was being done in 1957 and 1958 “Baby Boom” swelling of enrollments added another 20 chapters. 1957 was when CSI attended AIA’s Convention in Washington, DC; 16 Chapters were represented. Pleased at what they experienced, CSI decided to have their own National Convention; Cleveland, Ohio was selected. Each year the “show” became larger; today they are the country’s largest construction trade show and have had membership registration in 5 figures. The country had been divided in 12 Regions, each administered by an “Active” member whose only recognition was that of a messenger. [The northeast area had 3 Regions: New England comprised Region 1; New York and New Jersey were in Region 2 and Region 3 included Washington DC, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia.] They met periodically with the Executive Committee advising them of local problems and bringing back the recommendations from the Institute. Regions had no autonomy – they were just names establishing location.

In 1960 the Institute set up ten Technical Committees to coordinate new problems generated by chapter growth and their Technical interest. One of these was charged with the development of a national format. We still have ten: Awards, Certification, Convention/Conference, Education, Finance [Treasurer], Membership, Planning, Publications, Specification Competition and Technical.

1960 was also the year of the first multi-chapter Conferences. [Here, I am most familiar with those chapters in the northeast corridor megalopolis string. I know similar gatherings were taking place in the other two crowded sections of the country: San Diego to San Francisco and around the shores of the Great Lakes.] There were five chapters in the northeast in order of chartering: Metro New York, DC Metro, Boston, Philadelphia and Buffalo-Western. The venue of this first “Tri-Regional” exchange of ideas was in Atlantic City, NJ. The exchange of differing problems and the spectrum of their solutions helped everyone attending. It was so successful and beneficial to all there that it was decided to make it an annual affair. The next one was held in Boston where the newly formed Baltimore chapter joined us.

Somewhere in the early 60’s “Active” membership was changed to “Professional” and “Associate” members were recognized as “Industry” members and permitted to chair or serve on committees; and hold any office except for the Presidency. Board of Directors composition was recommended to favor “Professional” over “Industry” members. The total composition of Officers and Directors was to have a majority of Professional members. Now was the time to put the Industry members in the field to work.

So 6 “Areas” were formed including anywhere from 1 to 3 Regions. These administrators conferred with the Directors and met with them at the Institute Office. 1962 was also the year when Pittsburgh and Richmond chapters joined us in Buffalo for a Conference. The 11<sup>th</sup> and last, a

Tri-Regional Conference [1971] was held in Philadelphia, PA with 27 chapters represented. A year earlier, in **1970, Region I** decided that their eight chapters could benefit more by concentrating on native concerns.

They held their first Region 1 Conference in Cambridge MA, freeing the time involved with construction aspects of the other 19 chapters and 2 Regions that would not be familiar to them. This is not to say that there wasn't a significant element of common ground to come away with. They were more matters of a nature of direction than in investigative discussion that were presented, and would most likely be published.

1971 was the year that "Areas" were discontinued and the 12 Regions were reduced to 10: Northeast, Middle Atlantic, Southeast, Gulf States, Great Lakes, North Central, South Central, Southwest, Northwest [including Alaska], and the West Region [including Hawaii]. [Some boundaries were juggled in 1975.] Each Region had Institute Directors, [a Professional member and an Industry member] nominated [preferably two] by chapter designates members at Region Conferences, and voted on by Institute Ballot. They served three-year terms with a one-year stagger between their elections.

Characteristically, Region Directors, helped by calling two guidance meetings a year on at the Regional Conference and the other in the spring of the following year at a geographically central area near an airport. These normally were dual-purpose sessions:

- 1) Designated "Presidents' Council" [at which Presidents, and hopefully President Elects] were able to review chapter problems and exchange successful elements and ideas, and
- 2) Workshops where Region Committee Chairs and co-chairs [representing the 10 standing committees] would input and confer with chapter chairs on woes and goodies. Workshops are still a strong feature of Region Conferences.

In the early '70's the Institute strongly recommended that chapters incorporate and insure themselves. Finally, in 1993 the Institute officially recognized Regions and had them incorporated. The senior Institute Director became President of the Region and the junior Institute Director was the Vice President. The Region Treasurer and Secretary [active members well familiar with the Institute, Region and its Chapters are elected by the Board] fill out the Executive Committee of the Region.

Effective July 1994 each chapter designated a "Region Director" [a person of experience in Region and chapter affairs – preferably not a chapter President, who already has a full-time job] for a non-successive 2-year period to complete the Region Board. The "Board" meets at the Region Conference and in the following spring. Chapter Presidents also meet with the Institute Directors at Region Conferences and on a different day from the Board meeting in the spring.