The Industry Joins the Celebration

The wall and ceiling industry was out in full force this past summer at the 32nd annual CSI show held in Washington, D.C.

By Denise McGiffin

The wall and ceiling industry was well represented when the Construction Specifications Institute (CSI) officially celebrated 40 years of service to the construction industry this summer at its annual convention and exposition. Numerous members of the Association of the Wall and Ceiling Industries-International (AWCI) and other industry professionals participated in the annual two-day conference.

Held at the Washington Convention Center in Washington, DC, the CSI Convention attracted 9,845 architects, engineers, specification writers, contractors, material suppliers, construction managers, and others affiliated with the nonresidential construction industry. The program included over 42 concurrent educational sessions addressing such topics as construction administration, management and marketing, and construction law.
Rebirth of Ornate Plastering

Several leaders in the wall and ceiling industry participated as featured speakers at some of the educational sessions. Heading up the session “Ornate Plastering—Rebirth of a Dying Craft” was AWCI member Jim Novinger of Novinger’s Inc., Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Novinger presented a case study on the work his firm did on the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building. Accepting the task of duplicating the ornate plaster work on the original Capitol Building, circa 1906, Novinger explained how his firm was faced with a number of challenges, including: duplicating the molds long since destroyed; dealing with seasonal temperature variances; finding talented craftsmen to accommodate the huge project; and completing the intense layout work and lathing requirements.

Coakley and the Willard

AWCI member Cornelius Coakley of C.J. Coakley Company, Inc., Merrifield, Virginia, participated in the session titled “The Willard Hotel: Restored to Its Original Elegance.” Once destined for the wrecker’s ball, the Willard Hotel now stands on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, DC, as a national landmark and a tribute to the art of restoration. Having catered to presidents, statesmen, its rich oak interior, scagliola columns, mosaic tiles, and elegant decor conveys prestige and power.

Coakley’s firm was responsible for the drywall and plastering where the interior had to be recreated as closely to its original appearance as possible.

An Introduction to EIFS

In the session “Exterior Insulation Systems,” Buck Buchanan of STO Industries, Inc., Rutland Vermont, an AWCI member and Exterior Insulation Manufacturers’ Association (EIMA) president, discussed the history and current use of exterior insulation in the U.S.
Lou Zabbo manning the Senergy booth.

On the topic of designing with exterior insulations systems, with the assistance of Steve Collins of Insul/Crete Company, Inc., McFarland, Wisconsin, Buchanan explained fire-ratings, special shapes, and installation problems of hard and soft coat systems.

IILP: Representing the Industry

As is traditional, the International Institute for Lath and Plaster (IILP) participated in the program as an exhibitor.

“This is our tenth year exhibiting at CSI and we find it a great way to promote our industry,” said Walter Pruter, IILP President. “We consider it our chance to show the construction industry as a whole, what we in the light gauge steel framing, lath and plaster, and drywall segments of construction have to offer. Our presence at this event consistently generates a lot of interest in the form of inquiries, especially from architects and specifiers. Many of them express their appreciation that someone is still promoting the trade.

Taking advantage of their time in Washington, IILP representatives Pruter and Clint Fladland, Executive Director of IILP, contacted several federal agencies and related organizations to assist them in updating their guide specifications. This included the American Institute of Architects, the Navy, the Army Corps of Engineers, HUD/FHA and the General-Services Administration. The IILP is funded through four regional trade promo-
Domtar Gypsum shows off its Porsche.


CSI’s next Annual Convention and Exposition will be held June 23-25, 1989, in New Orleans, Louisiana.