

# Leon Chatelain, Jr.\*, FCSI

*"In recognition of your contributions to CSI, you are advanced to Fellowship in the Institute on this 6th day of May, 1959."  
Chicago, Illinois*



LEON CHATELAIN, JR. was born in Washington, DC, in 1902. He attended George Washington University from 1920 to 1926. During that period, he worked for several local architects in the Washington D.C., area before opening his own office in 1930. In 1956, he established the partnership of Chatelain, Gauger, and Nolan, which later became Chatelain, Samperton and Nolan in 1970.

Chatelain was a charter member of CSI, joining the Institute in 1948. Although never an officer or board member, Chatelain was an active participant during the early formative days of CSI, and was an early member of the Institute Advisory Board, serving as its chair in 1963.

Always active in local construction industry affairs, he served the Washington, DC, architectural community as president of the local AIA chapter for two terms in 1940 and 1941. In 1956, he was elected national president of AIA, and served two terms as its president.

The annual AIA convention was held in Washington, DC, in May of 1957 during Chatelain's first term as AIA president. Although there were only 12 CSI Chapters at the time, the timing seemed right, and, together with J. Norman Hunter, then CSI President, and the cooperation of the D.C. Metro Chapter CSI, Chatelain arranged for the first CSI Convention,

a one day affair, to be held in conjunction with the AIA convention.

In 1966, Lyndon Johnson, then President of the United States, appointed Chatelain chairman of the National Commission on Architectural Barriers. Following two years of intense preparation, the recommendations of that Commission were presented to Congress in 1968. Later that year Congress passed the 1968 architectural barriers law, a pioneering effort in barrier free design for the handicapped. In 1979, The National Easter Seal Society established the Chatelain Award to recognize his pioneering efforts and achievements in developing barrier free environments.

In addition to holding Fellowship in CSI, Chatelain was a fellow of the American Institute of Architects. He also was an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects, and a member of many other international architectural organizations. He received the Medal of the Conseil Supérieur of France.

In 1975, Chatelain retired from the practice of architecture. He passed away on 6 May 1979 after a brief illness in Washington, DC.

## **CSI Membership**

Member, DC Metro Chapter, 1953 - 1979

Member at large, 1948 - 1953

## **Awards**

Fellow, American Institute of Architects

Honorary Member, RIBA

Honorary Fellow, RAIC

Honorary Fellow, Philippine Institute of Architects

Medal of the Conseil Supérieur, France