



Robert E. Briggs, passed away peacefully with family at his side, on Saturday, May 5, 2018. Mr. Briggs was a founding member of Specification Writers of Canada (predecessor to CSC) in 1954. He served as a director in the early years and as treasurer from 1955 to 1958 and President 1958-1959. In his time as President he was in the group that developed the Building Construction Index (BCI), the forerunner to today's MasterFormat. He was elected to the CSC College of Fellows in 1972 and was awarded CSC Life Membership in 1998.

In the Spring 1959 issue of the *Specification Associate*, (predecessor to Construction Canada) Mr. Briggs wrote on the need for standards:

Once we approach the business of specification writing objectively, we immediately recognize the need to establish standards of materials and workmanship. Each standard can only be established through the joint efforts of the architect, manufacturer and contractor.

Recognizing the problems facing my profession, I joined with a group of fellow professionals to help found SWAC in 1954. It was the founders' belief that improved standards of specification practices could only be achieved through the collective action of an association comprised of all segments of the construction industry.

I have continued to be a member of the SWAC because in the short space of four years this association has proven by its activities, its growth and its recognition in the industry that it is the organization uniquely qualified to achieve its objective — the betterment of specification writing and practices. Its success is assured by the devoted efforts of its membership.

I know that by working with the SWAC I have the best opportunity possible to find better ways to write specifications. Above all, I can effectively participate in the national development of good standards for workmanship and materials and the establishment of better testing methods.

Through the work of the SWAC I look forward to taking part in the development of improvements in materials and construction that heretofore I would not have dreamed possible. Remember, as professionals we have no divine right to leadership — rather leadership is naturally assumed by earning it. By belonging to and actively working with the SWAC we have such an opportunity to give professional leadership.

In a 2003 interview Mr. Briggs recalled, *"I was on the Ontario Association of Architects' legal committee for about 16 years. We were members of a national association of architects, engineers and contractors that became the Canadian Construction Documents Committee (CCDC). We produced all of the standard construction documents.*

I remember convincing the committee, although it wasn't very hard, to add SWAC as a member. I felt profoundly that the most valuable committees to be involved in were joint committees that brought all the disciplines together. To this day we are still members of CCDC. As SWAC was a multi-disciplined organization, it did a very much-needed thing—that was improving and unifying our industry and professional skills."

At the Annual General Meeting in 1959 stated:

"Giant steps have been taken toward meeting the challenge of better specification writing practices. Our Charter has been obtained; active and associate members added; liaison established with the American counterpart of our association, the Construction Specifications Institute; the National Technical Committee was founded, three promising chapters established, as well as a national magazine."

During the 2003 interview when asked what he get out of being a member of CSC, he replied:

"A great deal of knowledge about specifications and construction and its administration; many wonderful friends whom I could call on for help and information, both in the architectural and engineering professions and equally important in the contracting, manufacturing and supply and service sectors of the construction industry."

On behalf of the CSC Membership, the Board of Directors, the College of Fellows and CSC President David Boyle, CTR our sincerest condolences to the Family and Friends of Robert E. Briggs, FCSC. Thank you for sharing him with SWAC and CSC.

For information regarding the service go to [Robert E. Briggs, FCSC](#)