

Donald P. Van Court, FCSI

*"In acknowledgement of your distinguished contribution to construction technology in fostering improvement of ASTM standards during your many years of active participation as a member of the ASTM G 3 Committee on Durability of Nonmetallic Materials you are advanced to Fellowship in the Institute on the 27th day of June, 1992."
Atlanta, Georgia*



DONALD P. VAN COURT was born in 1926 in Mt. Vernon, New York. Shortly thereafter the family moved to Madison, New Jersey and Van Conn graduated from Madison High School in 1943.

After US Navy Boot Camp in 1944 Van Court became a "plank crew" member of the destroyer USS Charles P. Cecil (DD-835) having joined the then-incomplete ship at the Bath Iron Works. In 1946, he was mustered out as an Electronics Mate Second Class.

After gaining the degree of Mechanical Engineer from Stevens Institute of Technology in February 1950 and a Master of Mechanical Engineering degree from Cornell University in June 1951, his first job was as an industrial engineer. In 1955 he joined the Plant Design & Construction group of Western Electric Co. where he spent the next twenty-five years as an engineer. He was part of the headquarters consulting group which assisted Plant Engineering and Building Maintenance staffs at the company's locations. The company was then responsible for over 50,000,000 square feet of office, warehouse, laboratory, and factory space throughout the United States.

While at Western, Van Court became a Licensed Professional Engineer in both New York and New Jersey. He also was encouraged by the company to join CSI (1963) and ASTM (1968). He served in a number of positions within his chapter, region, and the Institute. At ASTM, he was active on Committee G-3, "Durability of Nonmetallic Materials" from 1968 until 1994. His service to that committee included six years as its chair.

After retiring from Western Electric in 1981, Van Court started a one-man consulting firm, specializing in non-structural building failure. He became a member of the American Consulting Engineers Council, and was active in its New Jersey affiliate. His client list included private owners, hospitals, and government agencies, owning buildings ranging in size from 10,000 to 1,000,000 square feet.

Off the job, a childhood interest in trains - big and small - grew into serious study of all forms of transportation. Following his historical bent, he also became a collector of the unique brass button designs created for uniforms of transportation organizations of all sorts the world over. His books on "Transportation Uniform Buttons" are considered by many to be the definitive works in the field.

Van Court passed away at his home in Madison, Wisconsin, 1 November 2012.

CSI Membership

Metro New York Chapter, 1963 to present

Chapter Offices

President, 1977-78

Awards

President's Plaque, 1990