

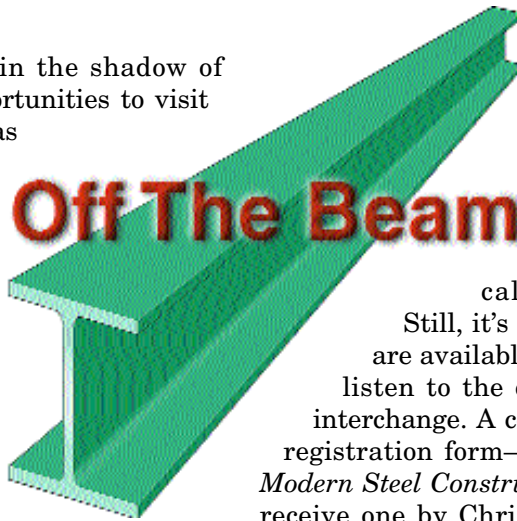
Growing up on Long Island in the shadow of Manhattan, I had plenty of opportunities to visit neighboring metropolises, such as Boston, Philadelphia and Washington, DC. But other parts of the country always held a mysterious allure, with three standing out in particular: San Francisco, Santa Fe and New Orleans.

When I did finally get to visit San Francisco, it was exactly as I pictured it: The bay, Chinatown, trolley cars and rolling streets. Santa Fe, though nice, was a disappointment; it was just too commercial. Ah, but New Orleans.

New Orleans was everything I expected and more. Walking through the streets was a marvelous and entertaining experience. Breakfast, lunch and dinner were all culinary delights. And each night I walked from venue to venue, listening to a myriad of musicians and imbibing perhaps just a touch too much. It was glorious.

So, as you can imagine, if for nothing other than spending some time in New Orleans, I'm looking forward to the 1998 National Steel Construction Conference (April 1-3). Though of course there is much more to the conference than just New Orleans.

I'm particularly excited by some of the welding sessions, especially one on welding solutions. Engineers and fabricators looking for information



they can use the day they get back into the office should check out the sessions on steel decks and on joists. The exhibit hall also offers a lot of information, though typically of a proprietary nature.

Still, it's nice to see what new products are available. And for a look at the future, listen to the discussion on electronic data interchange. A complete program—including a registration form—is already in the mail to all *Modern Steel Construction* subscribers. If you don't receive one by Christmas, fax 312/670-5403 and request one, or point your favorite web browser to <http://www.aisc.org>.

I'm also looking forward to seeing a lot of friends and sources at the show, many of whom will also be presenting sessions, including Duane Ellifritt, Duane Miller, Barry Barger, Jim Fisher, Tom Murray, Mark Saunders, Bob Shaw, Dave Ricker, Larry Griffis, and Dick Heagler.

And did I mention that I'm excited to be going to New Orleans? Even the conference dinner should be a blast. AISC has reserved the entire Aquarium of the Americas. A New Orleans-style dinner will be served and NSCC attendees can stroll through the aquarium at the leisure. And afterwards, there's always Bourbon Street.

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