

BOOK REVIEW:

Detailing for Steel Construction

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First impressions are not always accurate, or even fair. When I first started to delve into *Detailing for Steel Construction*—the new AISC detailing text which is geared to the 8th Edition of the *Manual of Steel Construction*—I have to admit that at first I was not very impressed.

The new text looks very much like the book that it has replaced; however, it is a lot less comprehensive. It was designed this way for a purpose. It was prepared as a guide for schools, or for the on-the-job training of steel detailers. It contains sample drawings, examples and reference data keyed to the needs of a beginning detailer with the equivalent of a high school education and a basic knowledge of math and trigonometry.

In short, the new book has not been produced for the experienced detailer who has a number of projects behind him. At least, that is what I thought, until I started to compare the two editions.

Granted, the new book is not as comprehensive as the older text; it is not an inferior product, and it updates a lot of information (deleting almost all references to rivets and other outdated procedures) that has become obsolete. After reading it, you have to acknowledge that this book is a standard in the construction industry.

The new book contains eight chapters and four appendices, versus the eleven chapters and six appendices contained in the old edition. Although a substantial amount of material has been deleted, almost 90% of the material in the new edition remains unchanged.

The first four chapters have been updated to show present day rolled sections and bolting and welding techniques. The first and the third chapters have been switched. There does not seem to be any apparent reason for this change.

Chapter 5, which deals with bolted connections, has new charts which incorporate the new bolt values and

which allow for cleaning. Chapter 6, which covers welded connections, incorporates shielded metal arc welding; gas metal arc welding; and electrogas welding. It also includes entirely new material on nondestructive test symbols.

The chapters that deal with columns and with framing are basically the same, but have been condensed and rearranged.

The first two appendices are really valuable design aids dealing with predesigned bolted framing angle connections and with single plate framing connections. They are almost worth the price of the book themselves.

On the whole, I really liked this new product. There are, however, two suggestions I would like to see incorporated when the next edition is prepared. The old edition used to highlight important terms in boldface type, the new italicized print is not very effective. The graphic art at the end of the chapters is attractive, but I would much rather have seen pictures of prize-winning bridges and buildings, with accompanying photos of their structural skeletons.

Some people feel that detailing is like riding a bike in that once you learn it you never unlearn it. My comment is; "Oh yeah, when's the last time you rode a bike?" In today's economy, most offices in our profession have to maintain a competitive edge. Reading the new edition of this volume provides an inexpensive way to review new material as well as to update your skills.

Detailing for Steel Construction is complemented by the recently released book *Engineering for Steel Construction*. As a result, this can only be a partial review of a more comprehensive effort. I can say, without qualification, that this new edition will continue to be a must for every detailing office.

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