An Interview With Andrew S. Harshaw

2008 AIST President

Andrew S. Harshaw *began his career at Dofasco Inc. (now part of ArcelorMittal) in 1978, shortly after his graduation from McMaster University in Hamilton, Ont., Canada, with a bachelor of engineering in metallurgy. His work at Dofasco brought him to several different departments. After working for six years in the research department, Harshaw moved to Dofasco's primary area, first with the blast furnace operations and then with primary technology. In 1990, he moved to steelmaking, serving as general foreman of maintenance. He soon became manager of maintenance and, five years later, manager of operations in the department. His responsibilities at Dofasco expanded in 1998 when he was named general manager of manufacturing services, which provides services for all of Dofasco's expansive operations and facilities. His knowledge of operations at Dofasco led to his 1999 appointment to director of order fulfillment. He held this title until being appointed assistant general manager — finishing manufacturing, followed by general manager — finishing manufacturing. In March 2004, Harshaw was appointed works manager, and in November 2005, he was appointed vice president — manufacturing. In May 2008, he was promoted to chief operating officer of ArcelorMittal USA. Over the years, Harshaw has been an active member of several industry-related organizations, including AIST's executive committee and various committees of the American Iron and Steel Institute.*

Andrew Harshaw, the 2008 AIST president, recently took time out from his schedule to share his background and insights with *Iron & Steel Technology* readers.

Iron & Steel Technology: How did you first become interested in the iron and steel industry?

Harshaw: Growing up in Hamilton, Ontario, I was always aware of the industry due to the huge impact that Stelco and Dofasco had on the community. In the late 1970s, steel was growing, and as an engineer it was an exciting industry.

Iron & Steel Technology: How long have you been a member of AIST, including your years of membership with AISE?

Harshaw: I joined AISE in 1986, making it 22 years that I've been a member.

Iron & Steel Technology: Can you provide some history on how you became involved in the organization?

Harshaw: I became involved during a time when my career focused on blast furnace design. Dofasco began an extensive rebuild program in 1986 and, for me, AISE was a good source of peer review for new blast furnace technologies. I was elected to the AISE Executive Committee in 2002, and I have been a member of the AIST Executive Committee since inception in 2004.

Iron & Steel Technology: What are some of the personal benefits that you've gained as a member of AIST?

Harshaw: AIST provides a forum for engineers to share experiences with their peers. This enables our members to celebrate personal success through the presentation of technical papers at AISTech (the annual conference and exposition) or at various specialty conferences that take place during the year.

AIST provides members with broader perspective for process and engineering and access to entry level training for new employees. AIST also provides access to both process and equipment improvement that very few companies can match on their own.

By participating in social events, members can also enhance their skills and knowledge by networking.

Iron & Steel Technology: How do you view your role as AIST president?

Harshaw: My role is to facilitate the evolution of the AIST to better meet the needs of our members. It is important to keep pace with industry consolidation and provide a common front for engaging the next generation with the technical resources they need to be productive employees for our industry.

Iron & Steel Technology: While you are president, is there a strategy in the works to grow the membership of AIST?

Harshaw: AIST membership has increased each year since inception in 2004. We ended 2007 with 10,115 professional members, representing a 5.0% increase from the previous year. Our student membership at year-end was 4,162, also representing a high water mark for AIST. To further grow our membership and strengthen AIST, it is clear that AIST must take the lead in providing our industry's employees with an array of technical training programs and a network of contacts to enable them to solve problems and create solutions to the technical challenges that lie ahead.

Our plan has provided enhanced collaboration with other associations and societies to combine programs where feasible. This collaboration will allow our members to make efficient use of their time and money by minimizing programming redundancies.

In May, the AIST board approved a plan that will merge the AISI Manufacturing Committees into our association, which will remedy the redundancy between our two organizations. Our plan includes the restructuring of the AIST Technology Divisions to ensure value is retained for all current committee members from both AISI and AIST. In addition to improving industry networks and enhanced educational opportunities, the new AIST Technology Committees will also continue the industry benchmarking duties formerly administered by AISI. The new committee structure will take effect July 1, 2008.

Iron & Steel Technology: Can you cite a few specific examples of other industry collaborations you feel will benefit AIST members?

Harshaw: Other areas of industry collaboration being led by AIST include:

- Exchange activities with the German Steel Institute VDEh, including joint Oxygen Steelmaking committee meetings in Germany last November and — together with both German and Brazilian oxygen steelmakers — in the USA just last month.
- Cooperative planning with the Hot Briquetted Iron Association.
- Joint programming with the Steel Industry Systems Association.
- Our next safety conference to be co-located with the Nucor Steel Safety Meeting in Pittsburgh.
- Our Coke Producing committee will meet jointly with the American Coke and Coal Chemicals Institute in Washington.
- Potential program development with the Institute of Roll Design.

In addition, we seek to embrace collaborative opportunities between our own Technology Committees and Member Chapters wherever beneficial.

Iron & Steel Technology: How will global consolidation impact AIST?

Harshaw: Although 85% of our membership is in North America, technically, AIST is without any geographic border, so we are well poised as an organization to embrace global consolidation. As I mentioned, we have embarked on several collaborative initiatives overseas to raise the global awareness of AIST programs. We will also be expanding our global footprint with the inauguration of the AIST India Member Chapter this summer. In addition, AIST will be offering a metallurgical technology course in Australia and a crane maintenance course in Slovakia, both planned for later this year.

Iron & Steel Technology: Does AIST have a specific strategy for improving academic awareness for steel?

Left to right: Juergen Schachler, president and CEO, ArcelorMittal Dofasco; Andy Harshaw; and Rob Adoranti, manager, coke technology, ArcelorMittal Dofasco. This photograph was taken at the No. 3 Coke Plant in Hamilton, Ontario.

Harshaw: Through the AIST Foundation and our Material Advantage student program, we have been working to reconnect our industry to academia in order to cultivate the next generation of industry professionals.

Through these programs, including the numerous student activities at both AISTech and MS&T, the steel industry has taken significant strides to attract young people to our ranks. In May, we initiated our first-ever University and Industry Relations Round Table to discuss ideas to connect recruiting representatives from steel industry companies with university professors and university career services personnel. We intend to further this discussion at MS&T this October.

Iron & Steel Technology: What do you feel is the greatest challenge facing the steel industry or AIST in 2008–2009?

Harshaw: The steel industry is very cyclical. As an organization, we will need to be flexible to service our members while recognizing potential business downturns.

Iron & Steel Technology: What do you feel has been your key to a successful career?

Harshaw: Focus on doing your best in the job you are in today. Good companies will look after your next assignment.

Iron & Steel Technology: What insight can you share regarding the steel industry and its future?

Harshaw: Globalization will continue to drive improvements to emerging economies such as China, India, Middle East and Africa, as these regions seek to improve their standard of living. Together with industrialized countries, who will be going through a process of renewal, the world will require infrastructure that will be very steel-intensive. Demand globally should be strong, creating opportunities for both improvement projects and growth.

The future will be very bright for technical people in our industry.

Ultimately, our goal as an organization is to ensure our members are better informed. If we can enhance member expertise and knowledge, their employing companies will become more competitive, and competitive companies will drive a sustainable industry. ✦