



1979 PRESIDENT



EDMOND J. WHITTENBERGER • IRON & STEEL SOCIETY

Sometime during the morning of February 26, 1979, at the New Orleans Marriott, Dr. Edmond J. Whittenberger will take over the reins of the Iron and Steel Society (ISS) of AIME. The new President is Area Manager, Steel Producing and Casting: USS Engineers and consultants, Inc., a subsidiary of US Steel Corporation. He has been an active member of AIME since 1951. In fact, it was a contact at an Annual AIME meeting in 1952 that brought Ed back into the steel industry.

Dr. Whittenberger has an undergraduate degree from Ohio State in metallurgical engineering. Following his graduation in 1942, he went to work at the US Steel's Gary Works in the Observation Corps. He served as an officer in the US Navy and after his discharge, entered Carnegie Mellon (then Carnegie Tech) in pursuit of a master's degree in metallurgical engineering. While at Carnegie, he received the Alcoa Fellowship and proceeded to work toward his Doctorate, which he received in 1952. During the latter part of his academic career, he worked at the Alcoa Foundry and Forging Research Division in Cleveland. In July of 1952, he accepted the position of General Supervisor-Metals Research at US Steel South Works. In 1954, he became Chief Development Metallurgist and in 1956, Asst.

Superintendent of the Electric Furnace Shop at South Works. He went on to Gary and was Assistant Superintendent of four of the five Gary Open Hearth shops. Dr. Whittenberger became Assistant Division Superintendent and Division Superintendent in 1966. In 1973, he transferred to Monroeville Research Center and served as Manager of Technical Services and subsequently Senior Research Consultant-Process until mid-1978 when he assumed his present position. During his tour of duty at Gary, the first BOF shop came on line in December, 1965, the Gary Caster in the spring of '67 and the Gary Q-BOP tapped its first heat about a month after Ed came to the Research Center in Monroeville.

Throughout Ed's professional career he has contributed much to AIME both in local section work and nationally. He has been Chairman of the Chicago AIME Section and Basic Oxygen Steelmaking (NOH/BOS) Section. He served eight years on the NOH/BOS National Executive Committee and chaired the Committee in 1976. A member of the Iron and Steel Society board of Directors in 1976, '77 and '78, he's been on the Executive Committee of the Society since 1977 and began a three-year term of office on the AIME Board of Directors in February, 1978.

As a member of the Iron and Steel Society Relocation and Building Committee, the I&SM staff took advantage of his visits to the building site last November to query the incoming president on his concepts of the direction and goals the Society should take during his tenure in office.

I&SM: Ed, what do you think the Iron and Steel Society's strongest point is?

WHITTENBERGER: Technical meetings. They're of great educational value. For instance, being able to listen to the early pneumatic steel pioneers like Bert Albaugh from J&L talking about his failures and successes. Cy Benton from Algoma, Jack O'Brien of US Steel.

They were members of the old Acid-Bessemer Committee. At one point I was superintendent of a duplex shop and had three Acid-Bessemer and three basic tilting open hearths. I was attending the AIME Acid-Bessemer Committee meetings and rubbing elbows with the real old timers who were already experts in pneumatic steel making. The plants that were heavily dependent on ingot production from the Bessemer converters obviously had great motivation for the move into basic oxygen steelmaking. It was at an AIME meeting in 1954 that John McMulkan gave his first paper on the BOF. You know, Dofasco had the first oxygen furnace. This is where I learned about pneumatic steelmaking.

I&SM: Are you saying that AIME was your prime source of technical information on basic oxygen steelmaking?

WHITTENBERGER: Yes, although now I'm referring to the National Open Hearth Committee as it was called in those days. Then it became known as the National Open Hearth and Basic Oxygen Steelmaking Committee (NOH/BOSC). And there were also the Electric Furnace Conferences. But maybe even more important were the local AIME section dinner meetings or the all day off the record meetings. This is where the bulk of the steelmakers meet and discuss steelmaking and developments, practices and so forth. One of our primary goals for the Iron and Steel Society must be to increase support of our local sections and their technical programs. These meetings are the only real opportunity for general foremen, melters, pit foremen and the like to rub elbows with their counterparts from other companies and plants. Steel technology is advancing so fast and in so many areas that this interchange of ideas is of vital importance.



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I&SM: Okay, these are benefits realized from local sections: What about on a national level?

WHITTENBERGER: Of course, the annual national meetings afford the opportunity to bend elbows with your counterparts and their lieutenants and sergeants from other parts of the country. It's an advantage to be on a first name basis with your peers and serving on committees and boards really cements those relationships. It's a good feeling to be able to pick up the phone and call someone personally when you need information. Frequently, a supplier comes in with some wonderful new product that's recently been developed and, if you don't believe it, call Don Sloan at Stelco because he's been using it for six weeks. Well, you know you are always suspect about enthusiastic sales pitches. In order to get a candid, objective appraisal, you need to talk to someone who's already used the product, so you do indeed call Don. I know for a fact that this telephone communications network of professional colleagues is used in the operating fraternity almost on a weekly basis. Half the battle is knowing the guy. No one likes to give cold, hard facts to a stranger, but when you're on a first-name basis, it becomes a "we're all in this together" kind of thing. There's just no other way except through a technical society such as ours to get to know our peers; they just don't live next door anymore.

I&SM: Are there any other membership benefits?

WHITTENBERGER: Oh, technical presentations, whether they're given on a local or national level or published in the magazine or transactions. A tremendous asset. I've been filing them for years. My wife complained long and loud because I brought my AIME Journals all the way from Chicago to Murrysville on our last move. They're of great value to me. Also, the Society magazine, I&SM, provides abridged papers from the four national conferences to members who are unable to attend all of our conferences. The

Conference Proceedings published by the Society provides members with an on-the-shelf reference of papers given at each conference. A member in good standing has the benefit of receiving these publications at cost.

Then there are reference texts. The BOF Monograph Series, the two-volume Electric Furnace Steelmaking Reference, which is currently being revised. It is my understanding that the Society is going to publish a text on Direct Reduction by early next year. If you're working in a related area, these texts can be quite valuable.

The Society's initial efforts in continuing education provide a service not available anywhere else. Over 200 people have attended our two-day short course on continuous casting. Courses such as this one are an outstanding example of using the expertise of members to teach and share experiences with members unfamiliar with a specific process in the iron and steel industry.

I&SM: What do you think should be the Society's goals for the coming year?

WHITTENBERGER: Certainly I think we should be concerned with increasing our membership. Belonging to a technical society is a two-way street, you know. The society benefits from a strong membership, and its members benefit from the opportunities presented by the society which help them in their career advancement. We've got a good thing going here, and proof of that is the fact that our membership has increased 50% since the Society was formed four years ago. It seems to me we should publicize our fine track record. Communication is vital. For the recent Electric Furnace Program, we sent out 300 personal letters to plant managers, vice presidents of companies. It was a one-page letter in which we told them about the conference, gave a brief summary of what the themes were and then asked for their company's support in sending representatives. As the attendance records show, blowing the horn helped get the fine turnout we

experienced in Toronto. The same ideas can be used in building our membership. One problem in any kind of membership drive is getting the attention of the right person. If we can reach the vice president of operations, work manager and so forth and get him thoroughly enthusiastic about our cause, he could do a lot in getting his troops to the rally. I want to make sure everyone has the opportunity to see what the Society has to offer.