



27TH CRANE SYMPOSIUM

By Emily Williams

After almost two years of delay due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 27th Crane Symposium took place 15–17 August 2021 in Pittsburgh, Pa., USA, at the Omni William Penn Hotel. Over two full days, presenters shared all there is to know about cranes, including automation, innovation and new technologies available.

The Symposium attracted attendees both new and old to the historic hotel, such as newcomer Mike Clark of Sumitomo Machinery Corp. of America, who wanted to learn more about cranes and how they operate.

“As a relative crane newbie, the Symposium learning experience was invaluable and greatly increased my level of the industry and application knowledge,” said Clark. “There were many nuances of crane operation, product details and safety consideration that I didn’t know existed or were of concern to the manufacturers and users.”



Steve Bohm, JNE Consulting, presented
"Technical Report No. 13 2021 Edition."

With more than 200 people in attendance, the conference was in full swing.

The conference started with two crane safety presentations: "Crane Safety — We've Done The Thinking So You Don't Have To," presented by Kevin Hoffmeyer of Whiting Corp. and "Fall Protection and Egress," presented jointly by Ross Muhleman and Thomas Cunningham of Simmers Crane Design & Services Co.

Both presentations included different examples, tips and ideas of not only how to improve crane safety, but also how to implement them in a real-life scenario.

The Symposium kicked off on Sunday with a welcome reception and attendees were thrilled to be back together in person again.

Monday morning began with an official welcome from Tom Berringer, Gantrex Inc. and Crane Symposium chair of the Cranes Technology Committee (CTC).

Kevin Hoffmeyer was happy to have the Symposium resume this year. "We gain connections with suppliers and users for future assistance and guidance. We all were educated as to the importance of runways being built to specifications and advances in efficiencies through automation," he said. "It's excellent to have a specific symposium to focus on overhead cranes and how we can improve performance."



The 27th Crane Symposium held 15–17 August 2021 in Pittsburgh, Pa., USA, drew 216 attendees.

Later Monday morning, Steve Bohm of JNE Consulting provided important updates to *AIST Technical Report 13: Guide for Design and Construction of Mill Buildings*, which was published earlier this year. He explained the various changes made to this version of the report and why they were made. While this report is heavily steel-related, he noted that a lot of different industries use and rely on this guide.

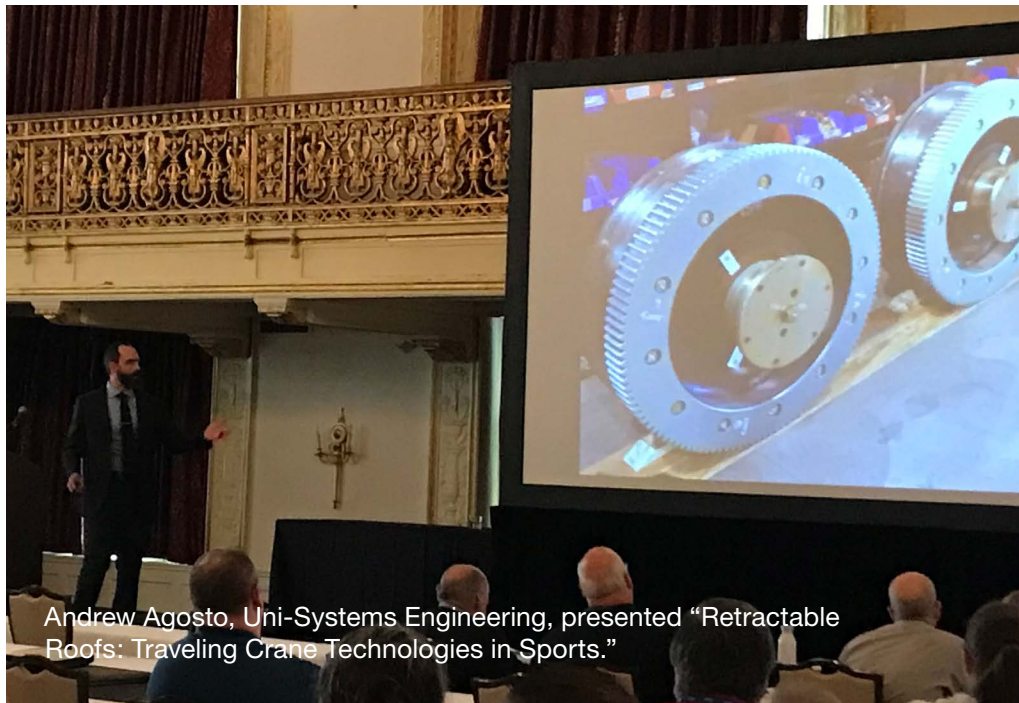
Throughout the rest of the afternoon, presenters discussed different aspects of cranes, but heavily focused on safety, design and maintenance. The first day of the Symposium concluded with the traditional dinner cruise on the Gateway Clipper, where attendees could eat, network and enjoy the sights of the city.

The last day of the Symposium was again opened by Tom Berringer and presentations resumed, where topics focused closely on automation and plant case studies.

Some of the real-life case studies focused on plants such as Nucor Steel Gallatin and Steel Dynamics Inc. – Flat Roll Group Columbus Division where automation and coil removal were highlighted.

A few presentations focused on unique uses of cranes; for example, in sports venues and arenas. Andrew Agosto, Uni-Systems Engineering, and his presentation titled “Retractable Roofs: Traveling Crane Technologies in Sports,” discussed the practical and technical use of cranes in sports arena roofing.

The Symposium concluded with final comments from Tom Berringer, where he thanked the attendees,



Andrew Agosto, Uni-Systems Engineering, presented “Retractable Roofs: Traveling Crane Technologies in Sports.”

presenters and sponsors for their participation and enthusiasm for the event. He also encouraged everyone to submit papers and ideas for the 28th Crane Symposium, which will take place in Milwaukee, Wis., USA, on 20–22 June 2022.

“You have the opportunity to forge the future of this conference by providing your ideas and perspectives,” Berringer encouraged.



The chairs of the Cranes Technology Committee were together again at the 27th Crane Symposium. Back row (left to right): Tom Berringer, Rich Warriner, Mark McGinley. Front row (left to right): Matt Bruels and Bill Schierenbeck.

Even after 27 years, the Symposium continues to be popular and valuable to those who attend.

“I am biased toward training programs in specific areas and applications in the steel mills that increase my knowledge base and potential face time with key decision-makers using equipment with gear drives,” Mike Clark of Sumitomo Machinery remarked.

The overwhelming feeling during the Symposium was how thankful everyone was to be back together again, even if it was for only a couple of days.

AIST thanks event sponsors Morgan Engineering Systems Inc., SES and Holland LP, as well as all of the meal and reception sponsors for their contributions and support. ◆



Monday night concluded with dinner on the Gateway Clipper where 138 people enjoyed the sights of the city.