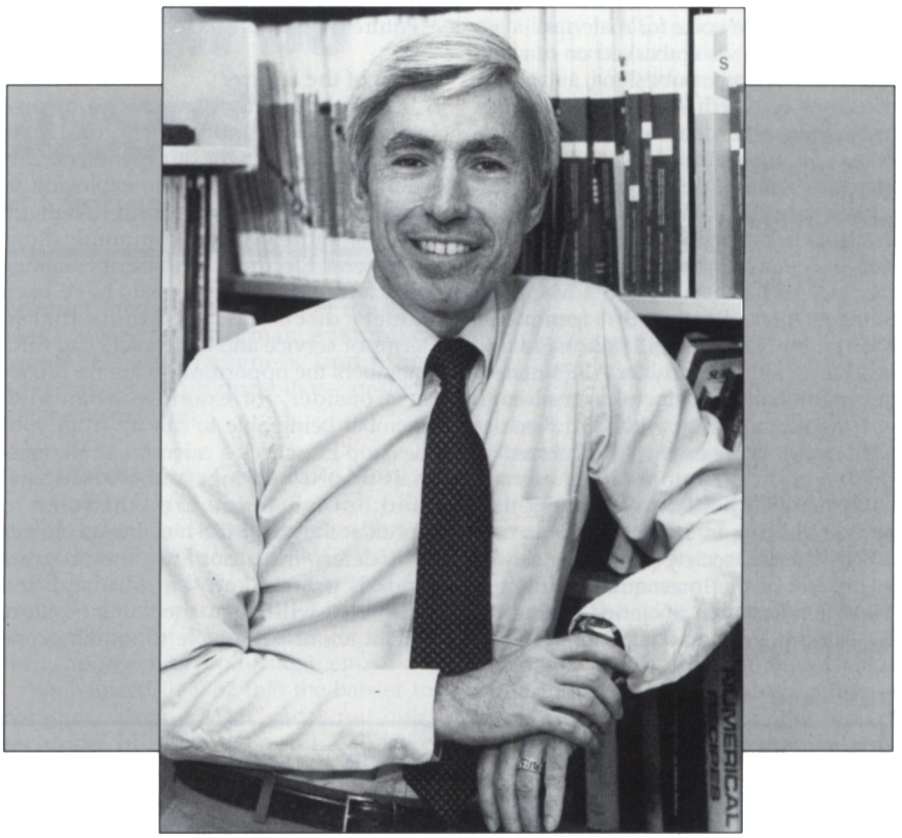
20 Years of Excellence ...



As the Materials Research Society completes its 20th year, we have adopted the theme "20 years of excellence in materials research." Without a doubt the many volunteers, headquarters staff, and officers who have dedicated their efforts to the Materials Research Society this past year have done so with the highest standards, truly befitting our theme.

Status of the Society

Things are going very well for the Society. Attendance at our 1992 Fall and 1993 Spring Meetings held essentially constant at 3,900 and 2,400 despite difficult economic times, again confirming the relevance of our interdisciplinary focus on topical symposia covering the latest developments in materials research. Membership has reached 11,600 and is presently increasing at 5% per year. Our awards program recognizes outstanding accomplishments in materials science at all stages, from outstanding student work through career achievement, and the level of competition is truly impressive. Book sales, driven especially by proceedings orders, have grown at a surprising 15% over the first nine months of this year, attesting to our strong technical programming and the timely execution of a quality product. The *MRS Bulletin* is gaining rapidly in prominence, to the extent that it is being emulated by others. *Journal of Materials Research* has achieved financial stability and the number of its library subscriptions continues to increase. Finally, careful business planning and cost controls implemented over the past several years are providing a positive basis for financially sound growth. We expect to achieve sufficient return on revenues this year to establish a more secure level of emergency reserves and to begin to endow our awards.

Highlights of the Past Year

Highlights of the past year include the report completed by our Task Force on Manufacturing headed by Kathy Taylor. The Task Force identified manufacturing as a new dimension in MRS activities. Their work has stimulated increased involvement by MRS in materials-related manufacturing issues, including a Society-wide forum at the 1993 Spring Meeting, a special symposium (Developing Materials Processes for Manufacturing), individual sessions and talks at the 1993 Fall Meeting, and other efforts to increase the awareness and involvement of our members in manufacturing issues. We also established a Task Force on Unemployed Members chaired by Alan Hurd. As a result, the 1993 election ballot asked members to vote on a constitutional amendment to create an unemployed member category. This category, which was overwhelmingly approved by the membership, includes graduated student members who have not yet attained gainful employment as well as those who have lost employment.

Our involvement in the Washington public affairs area continues to be quite active. We offered recommendations for the position of director of the National Science Foundation. We provided requested input to the Department of Energy about how to improve integration of basic energy research, and also participated in a DOE panel to evaluate the integration plan. We participated on Erich Bloch's Ad Hoc Materials Advisory Committee of the Council on Competitiveness, which provided input to the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) on changes to the materials initiative. With the help of our Washington representative Ron Kelley, Slade Cargill and I met with NSF Director Walter Massey last December; Elton Kaufmann and I spoke at the Foreign Science Attachés April meeting; and I met with the new OSTP Associate Director for Technology, Skip Johns, in August. This last meeting allowed us to speak to the importance of maintaining a coherent materials program as the new administration proceeds with plans to integrate the previous Advanced Materials and Processing Program into an FY95 Manufacturing Initiative.

MRS officially endorsed numerous meetings this past year, including the 1993 Technology Summit and the 1993 Solid State Sciences Committee Forum. We also met and cooperated with representatives of other professional societies on several occasions, and are working

https://doi.org/10.1557/S0883769400038975 Published online by Cambridge University Press

with a coalition of materials societies to revive the Congressional Advanced Materials Caucus. Teaming with other professional societies will be increasingly important in the future if we are to provide an effective voice for materials.

During 1993, we embarked on our first project in electronic publishing, a database directory of North American materials researchers, their laboratories, and their research. The *Advanced Engineering Materials Research Profile*, a joint project with Synergistic Technologies Inc., will be available in the spring in paper and electronic formats. In the area of education, the Society has established a Materials Science Accreditation Subcommittee chaired by Slade Cargill. We have also become an affiliate body for ABET materials engineering and metallurgical engineering accreditation with Carl Koch as our representative on the ABET accreditation team. In the international arena, I have met with E-MRS colleagues at their Spring Meeting in Strasbourg, and with other materials society presidents as well as officers of the International Union of Materials Research Societies during the IUMRS 3rd International Conference on Advanced Materials (ICAM'93) in Tokyo the week of August 29. Perhaps the most challenging task I've had this year was the opportunity to present the opening talk for Symposium U at ICAM'93 entitled "Future Directions in Materials Research."

What of the Future?

One fascinating area which I believe presents a real opportunity to MRS is electronic services for our members. One cannot help but notice the explosion of electronic information services, bulletin boards, and electronic communications in general. Electronic manuscript submission and electronic journals have been widely discussed, yet I think that in terms of service and convenience to MRS members the opportunities are far broader. Consider, for example, as an MRS member being able to call up from your desktop PC, check a calendar of all materials-related meetings and contacts, and find out when you are scheduled to speak at the next MRS meeting as soon as it is determined (not after the program book is printed and sent out) and find who else will be in the same session. Think about being able to search previous MRS Proceedings, *Journal of Materials Research*, and other materials publications for key words to extract references on a specific topic. Consider accessing database information on materials researchers in specific areas or even setting up bulletin boards on fast-breaking materials topics. Or how about being able to access or share materials structure and properties databases, share software for materials characterization and analyses, or access a jobs bulletin board that would also be plugged into corporate affiliates? This is not to mention submitting abstracts, ordering proceedings, registering for meetings, and submitting manuscripts electronically. I believe there are real opportunities for MRS to be as innovative here as we have been with our meetings. We have already begun putting in place the necessary infrastructure of expertise and equipment. Now is the time for you, the members of MRS, to speak out on what services would matter most to you. Let us hear from you.

This past year has been a fantastic experience and I offer my thanks to you for the opportunity to serve as your president for 1993.

Tom Picraux

https://doi.org/10.1557/S0883769400038975 Published online by Cambridge University Press