

Detroit Chapter – ASM International History

The year 1988 marked the Diamond Anniversary (75th) of the ASM International that sprung from a group organized by William Park Woodside* called the Steel Treaters Club. Their first meeting was held on October 4, 1913 at the old Fellowcraft Club (Robinson Furniture Co. Bldg.). The following men were guests of Mr. Woodside:

H.J. Lawson	C.L. Bockus	Ed Haines
John Ethier	James Graves	William O'Brien
William Gibson	Ed Jackson	Jack Daily
Paddy Macklow	William Tatro	William Brain
Freeman Glenn	Louis Barre	Anthony Hoensheid
B.B. Miller	Dale Bauer	Charles Leeman

The club was organized to further the concepts of sharing metallurgical and technological advances and began admitting technical members in 1915. In 1918 the name was changed to Steel Treaters Research Society of Detroit and the first standards activities were started. This effort led to publications that described the proper heat treatment practice necessary to produce the desired physical properties in steels.

By 1919, the group had expanded to 13 states with 236 members and the exchange of information between the members was growing. In the following year, Col. Albert E. White of the American Steel Treaters Society of Chicago combined his group with the fledgling organization and the name of the Society was changed to the American Society for Steel Treating. In 1933, the name was changed to the American Society for Metals which remained the same until 1987 when it was changed to ASM International.

During the 1920s typical discussion topics included: Furnaces; Classifications and Uses of Tool Steels; The Effect of Control in the Steel Making Process on Results in the Automotive Plant; and What the Steel Makers are Doing for Consumers. Also, the data sheets and handbooks were first published in the 1920s.

In the 1930s, grain size, normality and hardenability of steels were popular subjects. During this time the Detroit Chapter had both Ferrous and Non-Ferrous sections which held joint meetings and individual meetings on topics such as The Machine Age of 1950, Practical Routine Testing of Automotive Materials and Manufactures and Uses for Metallic Bellows.

The William Park Woodside Lecture was first established by Executive Committee resolution on June 30, 1943. Rosters of the Detroit Chapter during this time included the "Saginaw Valley Group" and "Toledo Group." Also, a War Production Advisory Committee was in operation to support the War effort. The 1948 June outing was held at the Bloomfield Open Hunt Club.

In 1946, the Executive Committee established a chapter office and Miss Charlotte Gorney was selected to

manage this facility. In 1949, Miss Margaret Sawyer became assistant secretary for the Chapter with the office being located in the Book Building.

In 1951, Detroit was host to the first World Metallurgical Congress. Walter Jominy was National President. The June party was at Bonnie Brook Golf Club.

In 1953, Miss Betty Morgan became Assistant Secretary. In 1955, the tenth Executive Committee "Publicity" was added. In 1959, the monthly meetings were moved from the Rackham building to the Piemontese Club on Puritan. Winter parties were held at the Elmwood Casino in Windsor and Latin Quarter while the golf outing was held at Glen Oaks. The Executive Committee established a goal of 1800 members.

The National Metals Congress was held at Cobo Hall in October, 1961. Membership was growing at 130 per year. A Climax donation of \$1500 was made to the W. P. Woodside Memorial Fund. An MEI course on Heat Treating was offered. Miss Sadowski became the new Assistant Secretary in 1965. Vladimirs became the meeting place in 1966. The Toledo, Jackson and Saginaw Chapter programs were listed in the Detroit Yearbook. Cleda Ringel was named the new Assistant Secretary in 1968. In 1969, the Detroit Chapter won best Chapter Award. Co-sponsors for social hour were started.

Fellows were established by ASM in 1969 with some of the first Fellows named in 1970 from Detroit, Bogart, Frey, Garwood, Harwood, Herzig, Jominy, LaBell, Siebert and Thomson. There were four 50-year Chapter members, Glen Coley, Herb Shippy, Bethlehem Steel and Stanley Sawder were honored. Doug Fraser addressed the group during a 1976 monthly meeting. Popular meeting topics included: Heat Treatment, Materials, Gas Turbines, Mines, etc. Robert Shoemaker was named President of ASM in 1976. Other past presidents included Albert White (1921), William Woodside (1939), Alfred Boegehold (1947) and Walter Jominy (1951). A total of 40 Fellows were named from Detroit by the end of the 1970s.

The 1980s were designated as the Diamond Decade for ASM. In Detroit, monthly meeting program subjects varied from "The Physics of Toys" and "Monday Night Football" to "Taguchi Methods" and "Materials Science in Space." Blacksmith tools of W.P. Woodside were presented to ASM headquarters for display by the Park Chemical Company. The site of the first Bessemer Steel Mill in the U.S.A. was recognized in May of 1980. The Council of Fellows and Past Chairmen was organized. The Chapter subsidized the Detroit Science Fair for High School students. Chapter By-Laws were revised and approved. The John H. Shoemaker Award was started for the outstanding metallurgical executive.

*For more information on Mr. Woodside, please see page F-5 "Year in Review."

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By 1983, twenty-three members had joined the 50 year club (including five company members). Five Student Scholarships were awarded in 1983 at \$750 each, including the Freshman, Meritorious, AMAX Foundation and Continuing.

A delegation of metallurgists from China visited Detroit and was hosted by the Detroit Chapter. W.G. Wood was installed as National President in October of 1987. Also in 1987, a total of 58 Fellows were members of the Detroit Chapter. Presently, Chapter membership is well above 2,000.

The Yearbook, in 1988, emphasized the advancement of ASM International into its second century. It continues to be a valuable source of information for members, potential members, purchasing personnel, metallurgists, technicians, etc.

At the Annual Business Meeting held during the World Metals Congress, ASM International celebrated its 75th Anniversary. It was appropriate at this time to honor the 11 oldest Chapters of ASM, the Detroit Chapter being the oldest and the founding chapter. These Chapters were honored not only for their longevity, but also for their many contributions to their membership and the Society. As a memento of this occasion, each Chapter received an engraved gavel.

For the sixth year in a row, the Detroit Chapter has been recognized as the Five Star Chapter winner (1984-1990). Through strategic planning, three key objectives have evolved. They were: understanding and responding to members needs; increasing active participation in leadership roles; and modernizing Chapter operations. Fifty year individual members numbered 37 and there were 11 companies of 50 year membership. There were two 60 year members and 228 Life members. The Chapter presently has 66 Fellow members. Chapter meeting topics vary from "Gear Induction Hardening" to "Surprises in the Solar System."

In 1990 the Detroit Chapter hosted National Materials Week and had three members elected as Fellows of the Society and one to Honorary Membership. From 1991 through 1995 an additional 12 Detroit area Fellows were selected. Detroit Chapter membership was at 2080 in 1990 and slipped to 1890 in 1995. The most dramatic change was in individual membership with a drop of nearly 13%; however, during this period Life memberships increased 25%. It appears that our Chapter is aging and similar to any organization emphasis on new membership is essential. The 1995-96 Chapter year ended with 1959 members, a slight increase, but the trend is in the right direction. Some 61 members celebrated anniversary dates in 1996; 27 reached their 25th Year,

8 added to the 50 Year group, 6 new 60 Year members and 20 received their Life Membership Award. National conducted a membership drive and Detroit Chapter was honored to have added 26 members which was the largest increase at the National level.

During the early 1990's change appears to be the operative word; with a decrease in membership and increase in operating costs, needless to say this impacted our fiscal health. The good news is that the Detroit Chapter is not operating in the red and simply due to our Chapter size, largest in nation, we have the resources and momentum to overcome this concern. Detroit has been cited as a Five Star Chapter for the last 10 years. Obviously the best solution is increased membership. Another change came with the retirement of Cleda Ringel in 1993 after 25 years of meritorious service. During the next 2 1/2 years Joan Hayden served the Detroit Chapter under a new title "Chapter Administrator, which better reflected the duties of the position. However, due to the needs of her growing family, Joan resigned in 1995 and was replaced by Caryn Ruzich as of February 1996. In 1993 our longtime Chapter Photographer also retired; Paul Helner provided a valuable service to our group and was recognized with the Unsung Hero Award. He was replaced by David Masha in 1995

On a sad note, two distinguished members of the Detroit Chapter have passed on in 1994; Frederick P. Bens and Marion "Semy" Semchyshen. Among many awards, Fred received the ASM International Allen Putnam Service Award for more than 50 years of enthusiastic leadership to the Detroit Chapter, served as our Historian in recent years and Chairman in 1963. Dr. Semchyshen, fondly known as "Semy" was member of Detroit Chapter for 41 years with 16 years of service to the Executive Board. Memorial gifts resulted in additional scholarship money that was awarded in the memory of Dr. Semchyshen.

Between 1990-95 emphasis was placed on the Young Member and Student activities. The Detroit Chapter continued to support its eight scholarship and young member awards. An outstanding educational video for high schools was produced in 1991 titled, "Great Classroom Adventures in Metallurgy", which was honored by the Golden Cassette Award of Merit.

The Detroit Chapter established a web site at www.asm-detroit.org in the latter half of 1996. It contains many useful items about meeting schedules, conferences, resume services, scholarships, etc. Michael J. Vinarcik is the volunteer webmaster and updates the site regularly.

As Fred Bens use to remind the Executive Board "...history is in the making".