

## IN MEMORIAM



JAMES P. BLACKLEDGE (1920-1991)

We report with sadness the death of James Patterson Blackledge, founder of the Annual Denver Conference on Applications of X-Ray Analysis, commonly known as the Denver X-Ray Conference, on June 10, 1991, after a brief illness. He is survived by his wife, Jean, of Denver, and three children.

He was born in 1920 in Council Grove, Kansas, and served with the Army Air Corps during World War II. He received a B.S. in Chemical Engineering in 1948 and an M.S. in Metallurgical Engineering in 1949, both from the University of Utah. In 1957 he completed coursework for the D.Sc. degree at the Colorado School of Mines. From 1949 to 1979 he held various positions at University of Denver Research Institute (DRI) including research engineer, assistant, associate and full professor in the Metallurgy Department, head of the Metallurgy Division, associate director of the Institute, director of the Office of International Programs, and honorary consul to Guatemala. From 1979 to his death he was president of the "Interamerican Corporation," a management consulting firm providing services to R and D institutes in developing countries.

Blackledge was an internationally known metallurgical engineer, a consultant, adviser and lecturer for R and D establishments in Asia, Africa, and particularly South America.

During his early years at DRI he recognized the potential for industrial applications of x-ray techniques and the need for communicating this information to the industrial and applied research sectors. In 1952 he organized the first conference, then called "Symposium on Industrial Applications of X-Ray Analysis Techniques" with the aid of Merlyn Salmon of the Metallurgy Division of DRI and Stephen Knight of Technical Equipment Corporation (the local Philips representative), on the University of Denver campus. Prof. I. Fankuchen, head of the Division of Applied Physics of the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn, New York, and American editor of *Acta Crystallographica*, was the featured speaker.

The first conference was organized in part to help support Prof. Fankuchen, who was being sponsored as a tour speaker by the North American Philips Co. At that first meeting there were three local speakers and a total of 78 attendees. Blackledge then arranged the appointment of Prof. Fankuchen as a visiting professor for the next two summers, and the conference became an annual event.

For the next two years attendance dwindled to 58 in 1953 and 50 in 1954. For 1955 Blackledge mounted a concerted effort to make the conference more of a nationwide event. This effort was rewarded by steady growth in size and stature of the conference to its present state.

Those of us who are presently associated with the conference as well as the many attendees, past and present, who have benefitted from the conference, owe a considerable debt of gratitude to this man, to his foresight, energy and determination in bringing the conference into being.

Paul K. Predecki  
Chairman, Denver X-Ray Conference  
October 31, 1991