

OBITUARY

HALIL KAYA GEDIK

(1933-2012)

The IIW family mourns the loss of a pillar of the international welding community, Halil Kaya Gedik, who passed away suddenly on August 14th, 2012, in Istanbul, Turkey. Mr Gedik was undeniably a towering personality, who will long be remembered for his many years of dedicated service and commitment to the industry. With a professional career spanning more than five decades, he was extremely well-known and esteemed among the global materials joining fraternity.

One of the first international welding engineers in Turkey, he graduated from the Machine Technician Department of Istanbul's Yildiz Technical School in 1953.

He continued his education in Germany, graduating from the Mechanical Engineering Department of Staatliche Universitat Konstanz, later receiving a welding engineering diploma from DVS (German Welding Society) in Frankfurt. During this period, he was employed in various departments of MAN, but his professional career was really launched in Turkey in the welding section of Eskisehir Government Railways Factories in 1957.



In 1963, what was later to be acknowledged as his trademark entrepreneurial spirit led Halil Gedik to establish his own private sector operations, GEDIK Welding, comprising electrode, casting, valve and welding machine production facilities. The hard work and dedication of the industrialist bore their fruit and resulted in the expansion and diversification of his companies under the umbrella of GEDIK Holding, founded in 1983. Up until his untimely demise at 79 years, Mr Gedik was a driving force behind GEDIK Holding, steering the group from strength to strength with singular determination, in pursuit of its ambitious 21st century vision based on people-centred leadership and core values of responsibility, integrity and respect. He was a firm believer in the importance of teamwork and lived by the tenet that one should continuously strive to improve on the previous day's work performance. Echoing his own work ethic, he advised the younger generations not to rest on their laurels, but "to work with an unending energy and to continuously go after new targets."

Mr Gedik published and translated numerous valuable books and articles about welding science and technology and undertook a leadership role in the growth and development of the Turkish welding sector. In particular, he was a renowned champion of education, investing much time, effort and funds to make International Welding Engineering Education readily available in Turkey, and in those specific fields where expertise was most needed. Based on his personal philosophy of "giving back to society," he set up Gedik Education and Social Benefits Foundation (GEV) which has provided innumerable educational and training opportunities via its non-profit welding training centre, and benefitted almost 40,000 people since 1994.

After GEV became the IIW's Responsible Member Society for Turkey in 2008, Mr Gedik was instrumental in the creation of the Turkish Welding Technology Academy (TKTA), founded as a network to serve the Turkish welding sector for the transfer and development of technology among its members and for the exchange of knowledge. His dream for TKTA was not only to federate those involved in the Turkish welding industry so as to collectively examine pertinent issues, but moreso to unite these multiple national organizations and institutions so that they could benefit from GEV's membership in the IIW. Indeed, the IIW owes a great debt of gratitude to Halil Gedik who unhesitatingly accepted the great organizational and financial challenges for GEV to host the 63rd IIW Annual Assembly and International Conference in 2010, relocated at the last minute to Istanbul.

Through GEV, Mr Gedik distinguished himself as a devoted philanthropist, undertaking several "social responsibility projects" in his country. His enduring altruism included the construction and donation of primary, secondary and vocational schools and dormitories as his "contributions to the Turkish education system." In partnership with GEDIK Holding, the Gedik Vocational School of Higher Education opened its doors for the academic year 2010-2011 and is a true testament to successful and strategic cooperation between industry and academia. More recently, Gedik University

was inaugurated, with Welding Technology offered as a major subject on the curriculum. In 2012, Gedik University was accepted as Turkey's third IIW Member Society and it has now taken pride of place among the long and impressive list of Halil Gedik's legacies to his country.

For his numerous charitable works, he received several accolades, including the "Outstanding Service Medal" from the Turkish Grand National Assembly in 2007 and an Honorary Doctorate degree from Usak University. He was also posthumously granted the "Golden Valve Award" by the 3rd Turkish Energy Summit Gas & Power 2012 in recognition of his significant contributions to the education and training of young people in Turkey. In his honour, the "Halil Kaya Gedik Golden Electrode Award" will be presented for the first time during the 2013 IIW Annual Assembly in Essen-Germany. It is most fitting that this new prize will be awarded to a scientist or engineer for outstanding contributions to welding science and technology in the development of consumables, the industrial implementation of arc welding, or the training and education of young people.

The IIW extends its sincerest condolences to his family, friends, employees and associates who survive him. May they find solace in the certain knowledge that Halil Kaya Gedik's lifelong contributions will not soon be forgotten, particularly by those thousands of people whose lives he touched.



Mr Halil Kaya Gedik (front centre), surrounded by students and teaching staff of Gedik Vocational High School