

*As the Presidents See It...***Excitement, Exhilaration, and Exhaustion****R.P.H. Chang, 1989 MRS President**

Being an MRS president during a phase of rapid growth in the Society was an experience I could afford only once in my life. I can only describe it as a combination of three Es: exciting, exhilarating, and exhausting. Out of the seven days in my "workweek," four were dedicated to MRS business.

In 1989, the Society was challenged by several major issues: (1) providing MRS with more visibility and recognition, (2) enhancing our role in the leadership of national materials policy and our service to the materials community at large, (3) internationalizing the MRS concept and organizing an MRS world body, and (4) determining whether the rapid growth of the Society would be detrimental to its financial stability.

To meet the first challenge—assuring that the exciting activities of MRS were reported by the major wire services and other media—the Society hired David Sours to work on publicity. Together with an outside consultant and members of the Public Relations and Publicity Committee, which was then chaired by June Passaretti, MRS launched a dedicated effort aimed at promoting and publicizing its activities. The seeds they planted four years ago are certainly bearing fruit today. Now, when MRS calls, reporters listen and respond—quite a change from the "old days"!

To be considered seriously as a leader among the national materials research societies, I felt it was inevitable for MRS to be present in Washington. After a concerted effort among the External Affairs Committee (then chaired by Kathy Taylor), the Executive Committee, and the Council, the Society established an office in Washington. Elton Kaufmann contributed significantly toward finding the office and the personnel to manage it. The important decision we made in 1989 marked the beginning of our serious commitment to the service of our nation.

Since 1985, with my appointment as the Chair of MRS International Relations, I have been working steadily with other MRS colleagues to develop an international network of MRS societies. We started by organizing international conferences, such as the International Conference on Advanced Materials (ICAM) and the International Conference on Electronic Materials (ICEM), which rotate to various locations around the world. Through close interaction with our international colleagues worldwide, we have encouraged

the establishment of many MRS societies around the globe. During this process I had to learn quickly how to be a good diplomat and how to coordinate what sometimes seemed to be impossible tasks.

In the fall of 1990, with the cooperation and support of all of our international colleagues, we were able to establish the International Union of Materials Research Societies (IUMRS). Many MRS members contributed to this success, but it was the MRS Council and the Executive Committee who gave me the encouragement, trust, and support to carry on with the mission. The involvement of MRS in IUMRS has just started.

An important financial decision the Society faced during the 1988–1989 period was

whether to increase the number of pages in the *Journal of Materials Research*, and the frequency of its publication from six to 12 times a year. The Society made an expensive decision then; today *JMR* has become a premier international materials journal.

Countless other MRS activities claimed my attention during 1989, but I would like to mention one in particular. I had the honor of picking the design of the MRS lapel pin we all proudly wear today.

In summary, among the many MRS advancements I was fortunate to be involved with, what I really enjoyed most was the friendship I developed with MRS colleagues around the world. The success of MRS lies in the fact that the Society is willing to support volunteers with good ideas for the enrichment of MRS and the materials community worldwide. I certainly hope that all future MRS leaders continue this fine tradition.

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**MRS: Growing Up****John Baglin, 1988 MRS President**

For some MRS members, 1988 will be remembered for the incredible Spring Meeting in Reno, where the slot machines and the tables at the garishly ornate Bally's Grand Hotel competed with technical sessions for the attention of materials scholars; where the meeting included an exhibit of "natural" art ("MicroScapes") consisting of spectacular materials micrographs (courtesy of AT&T); and where expert guides were needed if you wanted to find the Equipment Show (you could be photographed with the MGM lion on the way!).

Since that time, our Spring Meeting has nearly trebled in size, and we have moved to the spacious San Francisco Marriott. We haven't had any more art shows, but we continue to experiment with new ingredients to enrich our meetings, including forums, workshops and late news sessions—without losing the focus on high-quality, well-coordinated technical symposia. In 1988, MRS was in fact facing the joys and growing pains of its adolescence. The Society at that time was entering a period of growth and transition: building a strong foundation for its approaching adulthood while exploring new ideas, learning quickly by experience what works well for us, and grappling with the dynamic growth of meetings, membership, budget and aspirations, while trying to preserve the suppleness and adventurous spirit inherited from our youthful

years. Throughout the subsequent period of evolution and growth, MRS has remained justifiably confident in the validity of its primary mission: to facilitate and stimulate interactions within the materials research community.

*What were some of the issues and events of 1988 that best represented that time of growing-up and preparation for an ambitious future?*

- Predicting the growth of both the Boston and West Coast meetings, we examined alternative formats and logistics, and negotiated hotel contracts through the next decade.

- MRS took over production of the *Journal of Materials Research* from AIP, and *JMR* grew rapidly and stably, showing every sign, as we all hoped, of attaining high stature. (We did not suspect then how this expansion in *JMR*'s page load would come to threaten the financial stability of the Journal in later years—another learning experience that we have survived.)

- We celebrated publication of Volume 100 of the MRS Proceedings series (we are now moving beyond Volume 300).

- MRS membership rose by 20%, to 8,000.

- Materials societies fashioned on the MRS model and established or proposed in Europe, Japan, China, India, Australia, Mexico, and other countries, together with MRS, established the International Materials Research Committee, forerunner of today's International Union of Materials Research Societies. The first International