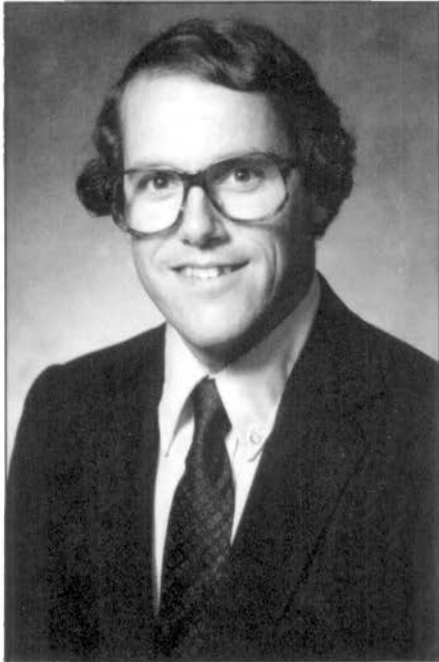


The State of the Society



James B. Roberto

MRS has taken significant new initiatives in public affairs and education.

The Materials Research Society had a challenging but successful year in 1991. The Society responded well to the realities of a general economic downturn, controlling expenses while maintaining vitality and important services. Overall growth was slower than in previous years, but the year ended on a particularly positive note with a record-breaking number of abstracts submitted for the 1991 Fall Meeting. Significant new initiatives were undertaken in public affairs and education. The Society is healthy and well positioned for a successful 1992.

MRS faced an awkward situation in 1991. While indicators of Society activity continued to be positive, a worrisome trend of growth in expenses outpacing growth in revenues had developed over several years. Unchecked, this trend could have threatened our financial stability. Ironically, much of the problem was related to the extraordinary success of *Journal of Materials Research*. The *JMR* page count simply grew too fast to provide the Journal to members within the existing dues structure. Replacing *JMR* by *JMR Abstracts* as a member benefit in 1992 will correct this situation and allow the Journal to grow without becoming a burden. Additional actions were taken in other project areas to bring expenses and revenues into balance. These actions have reversed the negative trend and provide a sound financial basis for the future.

MRS achieved significant growth and impact in its public affairs activities in 1991. The MRS Office of Public Affairs in Washington, DC sponsored a meeting of the Congressional Advanced Materials Caucus, arranged a briefing by Representative George Brown (Chairman of the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee) at the Washington Materials Forum, and coordinated MRS responses to proposed materials and ethics legislation. The first Washington Materials Forum was organized by MRS in conjunction with the Spring Forum of the Solid State Sciences Committee of the National Research Council. This successful meeting was co-sponsored by eight materials-related societies. MRS members played a leading role in preparing a report for the President's sci-

ence adviser on the results of the regional meetings held to find ways to implement the recommendations of the National Research Council's comprehensive science and engineering study. This report, *A National Agenda in Materials Science and Engineering*, was published by MRS.

MRS volunteers continued to lead the Society in exciting new directions in 1991. Activities in several committees to promote precollege interest in scientific and technical careers were combined in a Grassroots Education Effort. This group, open to all members, has adopted the aggressive goal of having at least 500 MRS members productively involved in the enhancement of local precollege science education by 1995. Other volunteers completed the MRS-2000 Long Range Plan, providing a roadmap for the Society's development over the next decade. A significantly enhanced awards program was undertaken, and the first MRS Outstanding Young Investigator Award was presented. More than 200 symposium organizers continued the MRS tradition of delivering exceptional technical programming.

1991 was the year when the success of *JMR* almost busted the budget while the *MRS Bulletin* strengthened its position as the premier technical forum for the interdisciplinary materials research community. And behind the scenes, MRS Headquarters continued to ensure that the whole enterprise ran smoothly. This is no small feat when you consider that in 1991 MRS published 3,000 pages in *JMR*, 12 issues of the *MRS Bulletin*, and 45 books, in addition to supporting 3 major meetings, 12 standing committees, the Executive Committee, the Council, and over 10,000 members.

It has been a great pleasure to serve as MRS President in 1991, observing the mighty MRS volunteer engine at work and experiencing the vitality of the Society. I would like to personally thank the hundreds of volunteers and the dedicated professionals at Headquarters for providing an outstanding service to the materials community. Our future is our members, and it is a bright future indeed.

Jim Roberto