Meeting Reports

37th Annual Denver Conference on Applications of X-Ray Analysis
August 1-5, 1988
Steamboat Springs, Colorado, U.S.A.

The Denver Conference this year was held at the Sheraton Steamboat Resort and Conference Center at Steamboat Springs in the Rocky Mountains. The conference center was the site of the displays of more than 30 exhibitors. All the fluorescence workshops and paper sessions and a few diffraction sessions were held in rooms adjacent to the exhibit area; most of the diffraction workshops and papers were given in a cafeteria area which was somewhat remote from the exhibits.

Attendees at the conference might not have been able to determine that the conference emphasis (which alternates between fluorescence and diffraction) was on fluorescence this year. The numbers of workshops and papers assigned to sessions in each area were approximately equal, and two paper sessions and several other papers addressed both techniques. As has become so common, many attendees had to choose between sessions or papers they wanted to attend, or attempt to travel between sessions (usually the two that were farthest apart) to hear the papers of their choice.

Eleven workshops were held on Monday and Tuesday. The fluorescence workshops included XRF Quantitation for Beginners I and II, New IUPAC Nomenclature System, XRF Sample Preparation I and II, and Interfacing XRF/XRD Equipment to PCs. Diffraction workshops were Random and Systematic Errors, Use/Abuse of XRD Standards, Microdensitometer Methods, Diffraction Peak Broadening, and Monochromatization Techniques.

A high point of the conference, literally, was the Plenary Session on High Brilliance Sources and Applications held at the Thunderhead Upper Gondola Terminal. Conference attendees rode the Silver Bullet in gondola cars which could carry eight people up the mountain to the Upper Terminal, a three-story structure with magnificent outlooks down the mountain and some of the ski trails. The session, held on the third story of the terminal, began with the presentation of Barrett award to William Parrish and the presentation of the Birks award to Eugene Bertin. As Dr. Parrish was thanking those who had been helpful to him and near the close of his acceptance speech, he mentioned his wife, whereupon a female voice from the audience said, “Louder”. Dr. Bertin’s acceptance speech, in which he thanked his employer for letting him do what he enjoyed, X-ray fluorescence, had the same excitement about the subject that many of us have heard in his lectures at the Albany X-Ray Clinics. The invited speakers of the Plenary Session and their topics were: Boris Batterman, What is Synchrotron Radiation? Dean Chapman, Synchrotron Radiation Facilities; J. M. Newsam, H. E. King, Jr. and K. S. Liang, X-Ray Diffraction Using Synchrotron Radiation; and John V. Gilfrich, XRF Using Synchrotron Radiation. Concurrent sessions in fluorescence and diffraction followed. Session Topics were On-Line X-Ray Analysis: XRF and XRD; Thin Film Applications of XRD and XRF; Applications I and II (XRF); Applications of Digitized XRD Patterns; X-Ray Stress Analysis I; X-Ray Stress Analysis II: Texture; Handling Techniques in Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis (XRD); Mathematical Models and Quantitation (XRF); and X-Ray Tomography, Imaging, and Topography. The Poster Session on Wednesday evening featured more than 20 papers in XRF Instrumentation and XRD Instrumentation, Experimental Techniques, and Specific Applications.

Conference Chairman Paul Predecki reported that the number of papers submitted for this year’s conference was higher than in any preceding year. Conference Secretary Lynne Bonno reported that more than 400 people registered; this number does not include many of the manufacturers’ representatives.

The weather during the conference was generally very nice - warm days and cool nights - but a few afternoon thunderstorms and morning fog dampened some extracurricular activities such as hot air ballooning. The Conference Banquet, held Thursday evening, was notable for good food, more of Predecki’s daffy X-Ray definitions, quartet singing by The Powdersmen (including some special lyrics honoring Paul Predecki’s tenth year as Conference Chairman), and an audience sing-along.

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