

SPOTLIGHT

on the Mine Metallurgical Managers' Association of South Africa

by A. BUNCOMBE*

In March 1984, two years' work by senior metallurgical personnel from the six major mining groups culminated in the formation of the Mine Metallurgical Managers' Association of South Africa. This Association has joined a group of specialist Associations operating within the South African mining industry whose aims are to uphold the standards and promote the interests of their various professions.

History

It had long been mooted among mine metallurgists that an association of the senior personnel specializing in this discipline was desirable within the mining industry. During 1982, contact was made with the Chamber of Mines and the secretariat managing the affairs of the other Associations and, in November 1982, Mr I.G. Thomas of the Anglovaal Group wrote to the Chamber proposing the formation of an Association under the auspices of the Chamber. In February 1983, the Chamber accepted the proposal in principle, subject to the preparation of a suitable draft constitution.

In May 1983, a provisional Council of the Association was formed that consisted of representatives from all the major mining groups and from the four districts proposed for the Association. The provisional Council formally contacted the Chamber of Mines in November 1983, seek-



The new President of the Association, Mr Alan Buncombe, making his inaugural speech

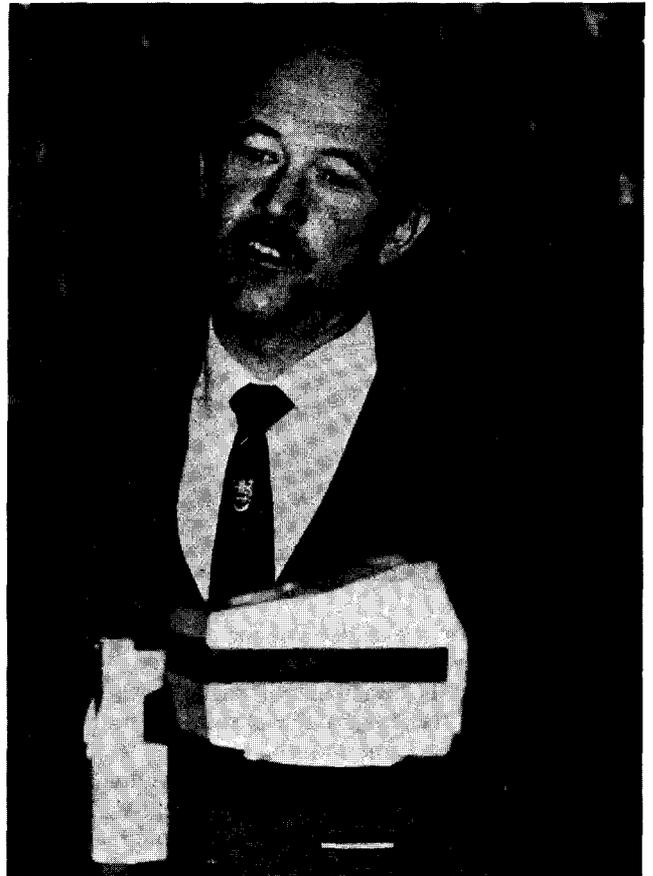
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Vice-President of the Association, Mr Roger Kelley, presenting an Association tie to Mr Peter Gush, President of the Chamber of Mines



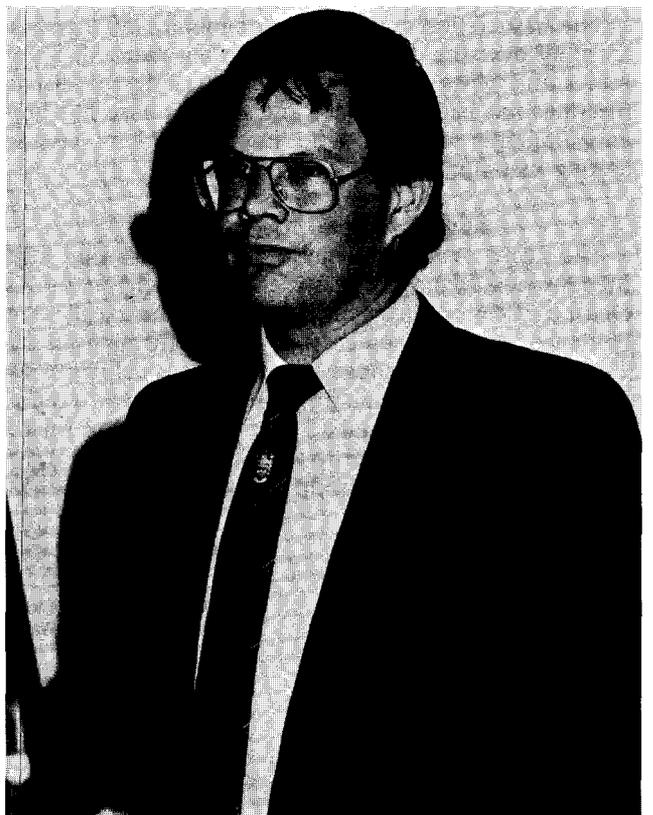
Mr Bob Freeman presenting his paper on the operation of the three Freegold Flotation Plants



Mr James Bowles presenting his paper on the Pyrite Gold Plant



Mr Malcolm Hampshire, who presented a paper on the New Gold Plant at President Brand



Mr John Whillier presenting his paper on the President Brand Uranium Plant



Delegates from Rustenburg enjoying a pre-lunch drink. L. to R.: Messrs Trevor Parry, Tony Jones, Walter Muir, and Rupert Calcott

ing approval for the establishment of the Association, which was duly granted on 22nd February, 1984.

The provisional Council met officially for the first time on 7th March, 1984, and the enrolment of members started during the same month.

Over 100 members attended the first Annual General Meeting of the Association, which was held at Zinc Corporation of South Africa Ltd on 31st October, 1984, and the provisional Council was unanimously elected to serve for the first full year of the Association's life.

Present Day

The Association now has approximately 450 members from all over the country, representing many different mines and types of mines. A regular series of district meetings has been initiated, and the response has been encouragingly positive, resulting in excellent contact among metallurgists all over the country.

Annual General Meeting, 1986

The third Annual General Meeting of the Mine Metallurgical Managers' Association was held on the 31st October, 1986, at President Brand Mine. An excellent attendance of 152 people from mines throughout the Transvaal and the Orange Free State was achieved. Mr Eric Beaumont, as the outgoing President, gave a report on the activities and finances of the Association for the year, before handing over to the incoming President, Mr Alan Buncombe, who introduced the Vice-President, Mr

Roger Kelley, as well as the members of Council and the area representatives for 1987.

Mr Ivor Thomas, the Association's first Honorary Life Member, was presented with his certificate.

After the Annual General Meeting, four papers were presented. The first of these was 'The New Gold Plant at President Brand' by Malcolm Hampshire. This dealt with the design and operation of the 390 000 t/m run-of-mine milling and carbon-in-pulp plant, which was commissioned in April 1986. James Bowles spoke on 'The Pyrite-Gold Plant', a 6000 t/m plant for the ultra-fine milling of pyrite by Vibro-Energy Mills and subsequent recovery of gold by carbon-in-pulp. Bob Freeman described the operations on 'The Three Freegold Flotation Plants', which produce pyrite concentrates, recovering gold, sulphur, and uranium from monitored tailings.

John Whillier gave the final paper on 'The President Brand Uranium Plant', including an account of the innovations made in recent years to reduce operating costs.

Plant Visits

Plant visits were organized to the New Gold Plant and the Joint Metallurgical Scheme. After lunch, the association was addressed by Mr Buncombe, who introduced Mr Peter Gush, who was present in his capacity as President of the Chamber of Mines. Mr Gush stressed the growing management role of metallurgists and the responsibilities that this incurred, and the need to be entrepreneurial and cost-conscious in the changing conditions in South Africa.