

HOLING THROUGH

NEWS BULLETIN OF **THE MOLES** • 11 W. 42ND STREET, NEW YORK 18, N. Y.

An Organization of Tunnel and Heavy Construction Men

JULY, 1950

How Do We Select Award Winners?

SOON THE MOLES will make the year's most important decision: We will choose two men for the construction industry's most famous and highly-prized individual recognition, The Moles Award.

Whether or not we choose wisely depends on the effectiveness of our selection process. And that effectiveness depends on every Mole.

HOLING THROUGH, believing that a review of the Moles Award selection process is timely, presents it below.

The actual decision on the awardees is made by the Award Committee, under the chairmanship of former award winner, John S. Macdonald. This committee is made up of our elected officers and trustees, as well as the members of all standing committees. In all, about 50 Moles sit on the Award Committee.

The committee sits three times, once in June, once in August and once in September. At the June meeting, committee members first hear the minutes of the previous year's final Award Committee meeting. One of the purposes of the reading is to get the names of previous-year candidates. Then committee members present additional names, together with resumes of the men's careers, accomplishments and importance to the construction industry. These names are originated either by the committeemen themselves or by any Moles who have communicated the information to the committeemen.

Now here is an important point for Moles who have names to suggest today. NO ACTION IS TAKEN ON THE NAMES PRESENTED AT THE JUNE MEETING. Additional names will be presented at the August meeting; on August 14, that is. If you think of anyone who should receive an award, give the dope on him to an Award Committee member between now and the 14th of August.

At the August meeting, names previously presented are reviewed and ad-

Award Committee, consisting of officers, trustees, and members of all standing committees, makes the choice; depends on all Moles for guidance

ditional names are placed on the slate. Then a preliminary weeding-out begins. The weeding-out is unofficial and its results are not recorded; rather they are committed to memory by the committeemen. THE GATE IS STILL OPEN, so if you don't see an Award Committee member until Clambake time, you can still get your oar in.



Jim Salmon Takes Reins As New President

AT THE ANNUAL DINNER, James F. Salmon became 1950-51 president of The Moles, succeeding Carlton S. Proctor. Jim is New York Manager for the Arundel Corporation. He has been in heavy construction since 1912, with Arundel since 1921, and is a past president of the New York Chapter of the Society of American Military Engineers.

The September meeting will take place on the 26th of that month. Additional names will be presented and discussed in the light of the previous meeting's weeding-out discussion, then the final discussions will take place. The result of these discussions will be the important choice, the important decision—THE NAMES OF THE TWO MOLE AWARD WINNERS FOR 1951.

Names will remain secret until shortly before the Annual Dinner, in November, when they will be released to the Press and to the construction industry.

Award qualifications are simple, but they must add up to the caliber of men like our previous Award winners. On qualification the By-Laws say: "The Committee shall not be bound by any specific rules of eligibility but shall consider candidates who, in its opinion, have made outstanding contributions to construction progress."

Ted Prentis Honored

OUR OWN EDMUND A. PRENTIS has been reaping honors right and left: Columbia University pronounced him "distinguished" in May; American Standards Association countered with an "outstanding" in June.

The first award, from the university's School of Engineering, was the Egleston Medal for distinguished service in Engineering. There's no need to tell The Moles the many things Ted has done to merit this recognition. The second award was a certificate for outstanding service in standardization, presented by the American Standards Association. Ted was president of ASA in 1939-40.



RALPH ATWATER, right, acknowledges Carl Proctor's announcement that Ralph has been elected Life Honorary President of The Moles.

Ralph Atwater, Life Honorary President

IF WE couldn't honor him one good way we could honor him a better way. That's about the best way of summing up Ralph Atwater's election May 3 to the original position of Life Honorary President of The Moles.

For this man, who probably has served The Moles more effectively than any other member, had never taken the organization's presidency, despite repeated pressure to do so.

One Mole told the following story to illustrate Ralph's reluctance to become president: A nudist-colony recruiter called at a house, was met at the door by the lady of the house. She was naked, so he thought he had a sure-fire prospect. Just as he was about to go into his spiel a dozen or more children crowded around mamma. The recruiter gulped, backed away and said, "Hell, Lady, you're no nudist. You've just been too busy to get dressed."

Minute books tell the story. Just how busy Ralph has been with the Moles is told in three black notebooks at The Moles headquarters. They're the minute books and they go all the way back to Oct. 29, 1936 when a bunch of New York and New Jersey Construction Co. (Degnon interests) men held a reunion dinner. Those fellows had such a good time they decided to do it again. Soon four of the men, Alex Stagg, Harry Leeuw, Albert Sielke and Jim Fitzgerald,

started talking about forming a group. On May 13, 1937, Leeuw suggested The Moles as a name, and on Jan. 15, 1938, an organization meeting was held at the Great Northern Hotel. Soon the group elected officers, with Leeuw the first president. Enrollment totaled 56, by mid-

year to become 100 (these men frequently are called "The original 100.")

Atwater Originates Clambake

Ralph Atwater was No. 17 in the list of members. He got into the minutes with a bang on June 16, 1938, when he recommended that the group hold a summer outing. Ralph became Program Committee Chairman, charged with arrangements for the outing.

This outing, our first Clambake, was held Aug. 24, 1938, at Karatsonyi's, Glenwood Landing, N. Y. A steamer picked up 260 Moles and guests at the Battery, took them to Glenwood Landing for the big day, and brought them back alive. Ralph's work on this affair included making up the historic green-ink invitation that had a full-page picture of a thinly-disguised nude, who was to be our first Honorary Member.

Ralph's next big idea almost boomeranged because of the superb job he did on invitations for that affair. The affair was a Winter Dinner, suggested by Ralph and promptly made Ralph's responsibility. March 3, 1939, was the date, and Ralph found some more art, wrote some spicy copy and assembled an invitation designed to whet the appetites of the most jaded Mole. A copy of the invitation (the affair was called "Speakeasy Days") got into the hands of the hotel where the dinner was to be held. Whereupon the hotel got stuffy and tried to call off what, judging from the invitation, obviously was going to be a rowdy affair. Ralph talked fast, convinced the management that a

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Bring Your Guests to the Clambake August 16



WILL THEY CATCH THEIR EGGS? Well, they'd better, if they expect to stay in the running for this outstanding (and hilarious) event of the Clambake. Come and find out, August 16 at Travers Island. And find out who wins the Public Works-Moles ball game; who drinks the most beer; who sits at the front row at the show; who wins the door prizes; and who goes home the happiest! It's a great day for the races—and you know what race we mean.

At the Annual Business Meeting



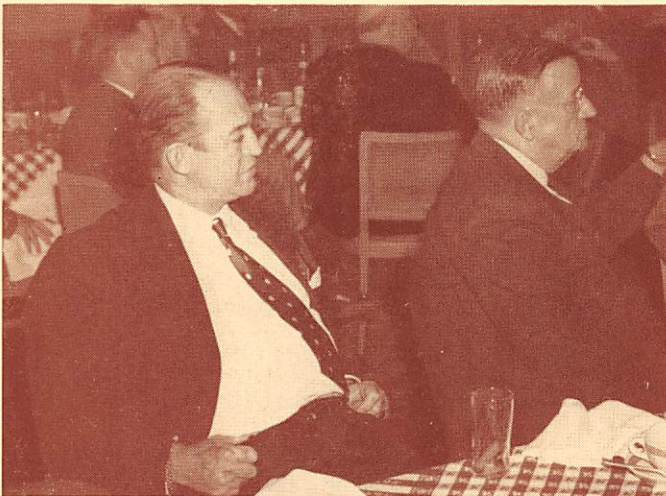
THEY LEND THEIR EARS—Attentive Moles at the head table listen to committee reports. In this picture are (l. to r.) Jim Salmon, incoming president, Dick Hyland, Dave Bonner, George Walker and Charley Spencer.



THEY APPLAUD—Committee report or new officer, each got the hand-claps deserved at the Annual Dinner, March 3 at the Roosevelt Hotel. Here are Holmes Crimmins, Frank Loughman and Al Warwick.



SERIOUS BUSINESS—How The Moles fared publicity-wise is reported by the Publicity Committee's outgoing chairman, Harold Richardson.



NEW MEMBER, OLD MEMBER—Clifford Strike, left, attends his first Moles meeting, still a bit on the rocky side after his tragic airplane accident. Frank Barnes is back with us after a prolonged vacation out in Arizona.

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WE ALL LOOKED UP—A couple of Moles, (Connie Vermont, for one) may be taller than this gal, but all looked up when she gyrated with her pint-sized partner. This was just one of several fine acts.



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sense of humor was no sin, saved the day. In the meantime Ralph had become first vice-president, in the second annual election. He was being primed for the top spot, but events were to convince him to stay in the background.

Award Dinner his baby, too. A year later, after the 1940 Winter Dinner, the minutes show that Ralph suggested that we give an annual award—that we honor achievement in a field where official recognition is rare indeed. The group contained enough knowledge of the national and local construction game so that the award would be authoritative. At the same time, by establishing the award, we would give ourselves a mission that was even better than the admittedly laudable one of having a good time.

During 1940 The Moles worked up award criteria, selected suitable plaques. On Feb. 5, 1941 the first Award Dinner was held.

At the same time Ralph declined the presidency, feeling that if he were secretary-treasurer he could work harder and more effectively on tightening The Moles organizational structure. He was elected secretary-treasurer, holding that position until 1944, when Bill Hanly became secretary. Ralph continued as treasurer until last year, when Howard Maxton was elected to that office.

One other fact, highly important, but not revealed by single acts in the minute books, is that as treasurer, Ralph steered our finances to a sound basis—a logical part of our growth to maturity from the youthful struggling days when fatherly contractors underwrote every big affair. Today we pay our way!

Ralph would be the last one to ignore the parts, great and small, played by every Mole in the creation of this substantial organization. But everyone will agree that if one man is to be recognized for outstanding service to The Moles, that man is Ralph.

THE MOLES CONGRATULATE

NEW MEMBERS elected since the last issue of *HOLING THROUGH* include:

JOHN P. BARNES, Construction Superintendent, Tully & Di Napoli Inc.

JEREMIAH J. COLLINS, Vice-President, Raymond Concrete Pile Co.

ROBERT CRIMMINS, Secretary & Engineer, Thomas Crimmins Contracting Company.

HUGH E. CRONIN, Engineer, Underpinning & Foundation Company.

HORACE S. EVANS, Executive Director, New York State Flood Control Commission.

GERALD G. GREULICH, Consulting Engineer, Specialty Division, Carnegie-Illinois Steel Corporation.

FOSTER A. HAGAN, Salesman, Universal Atlas Cement Company.

RICHARD A. HILL, JR., Vice-President, S. A. Healy Co.

RAGNAR A. HUMMEL, President, Lone Star Cement Corporation.

ROBERT B. JEWELL, Resident Manager, Silas Mason, Co., Pickstown, S. D.

ROBERT C. JOHNSTON, Associate and Prof. Engineer, Moran, Proctor, Freeman and Mueser.

HAROLD H. KRAMER, Engineer and Job Superintendent, Thomas Crimmins Contracting Company.

DONALD B. MCKINLEY, General Superintendent, Spencer, White & Prentiss, Inc.

STANLEY S. REICH, Engineer—N. Y. & N. England Area, The Arundel Corporation.

KIRBY SMITH, Vice-President, Raymond Concrete Pile Company.

SAMUEL D. STICKLE, Assistant to Division Manager, Great Lakes Dredge & Dock Company.

ARNOLD THURBER, Structural Engineer, J. Rich Steers, Inc.

RICHARD A. TOWER, Superintendent, J. Rich Steers, Inc.

PAUL M. WENTWORTH, Associate & Principal Assistant Engineer, Moran, Proctor, Freeman & Meuser.

Ted Avery . . . The "Toughest Mole"

IT LOOKS AS IF Ted Avery qualifies hands-down for the title, "Toughest Mole", judging from the way he's snapped back after that shellacking he took in an auto accident last winter. After seeing Ted before he got out of the hospital a few weeks ago, Jim Salmon said he believes Ted's wonderful spirit and will power pulled him through. Ted will be managing the ball team at the Clambake, as usual.



Robert K. Tomlin

ROBERT K. TOMLIN, a Mole, and consulting editor of *Construction Methods and Equipment* magazine, died July 4, age 64. He had been editor of the publication from 1927 until his partial retirement in 1945 due to ill health. He also had edited *HOLING THROUGH*.

Mr. Tomlin worked on the Pennsylvania Railroad's East River tunnels and on the Catskill Aqueduct. He served as managing editor of *Engineering Record* and of the combined *Engineering News-Record*, and was its war correspondent in France in 1917—the first U.S. engineer to serve in that capacity. Later, as a Corps of Engineers captain, he was cited by Gen. Pershing for his work.

Harold Smith Dies

HAROLD H. SMITH, Mole and former mayor of Middletown, N. Y., died April 25. Alex Stagg says Mr. Smith used to be an ardent attender of Clambakes and Frolics.

Albert H. Anderson

ALBERT HARVEY ANDERSON, former Mole, who worked on Board of Water Supply projects, died May 16. He had formerly been with Poirier and McLane Corp.

Paste This In Your Hat!

You won't want to miss any of The Mole's coming events, so clip this list and paste it in your hat. It's important enough so that Moles without hats should buy them. We'll supply the paste.

CLAMBAKE

Wednesday, Aug. 16th, 1950

FALL MEMBERS' DINNER

Wednesday, Nov. 8th, 1950

AWARD DINNER

Wednesday, Jan. 31st, 1951

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

Wednesday, May 2nd, 1951