



HOLING THROUGH

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An Organization of Tunnel and Heavy Construction Men

JANUARY, 1952

Award Dinner Plans Complete

Ferris will preside; Admiral Moreell will present Non-Member Award to Steve Bechtel; Dick Dougherty will make Member Award presentation to Charlie Spencer

On February 6 The Moles will add one more illustrious occasion to a long string of successful get-togethers when more than a thousand Moles and their guests gather at the Waldorf-Astoria Grand Ballroom for the 1952 Moles Award Dinner.

Chairman George Ferris and his Award Committee have completed the arrangements, and all we're waiting for now is the time. Festivities start with a general gathering in the Astor Gallery and the East Foyer, where ample bar facilities will be set up to satisfy the most ardent entertainer.

Once again the Award Committee has urged that pre-dinner entertainment take place where the whole gang is. That's the place where The Moles maintain their outstanding character — the spirit of fellowship and oneness. Room parties are dandy for many organizations, and they might be a swell idea after the festivities, but before the dinner there's one real place for the gang to get together — in one big happy session.

Two former award winners, Admiral Ben Moreell and Richard E. Dougherty, will make the presentations to the award winners. Admiral Moreell, wartime chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, as well as of the Seabees, will present the Non-Member Award to Stephen D. Bechtel, president of the Bechtel Corporation, San Francisco. Admiral Moreell was the Non-Member Award winner in 1943, and now is president of Jones and Laughlin Steel Co.



GEORGE F. FERRIS
Award Committee Chairman

Gen. Clay to Speak

The principal address at The Moles Award Dinner will be given by an old friend of The Moles, General Lucius Clay, chairman of the board, Continental Can Company.

Dick Dougherty will present the Member Award to Charles B. Spencer, president of Spencer, White and Prentis. Dick, formerly vice-president and chief engineer of the New York Central Railroad, now is a member of the New York consulting engineering firm of Seelye, Stevenson and Value. He won the Member Award in 1950, sharing honors at the Award Dinner that night with Herbert Hoover, former President of the United States.

Credit for arranging this
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A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

It is my sincere wish to tell you of my deep regret in having been unable to serve you actively and in a much more personal way during this year.

My absence from the Spring and November member dinners through illness, and now the coming Award Dinner for the same reason, leaves me with the feeling of having lost the opportunity of doing something that I had most wanted to do — to be of real service to The Moles while your President.

However, the great sense of loyalty and cooperative spirit which is so much a part of The Moles has most certainly come to my assistance at all times and in every way.

I wish to extend my grateful thanks to all the officers, chairmen and members of all of the standing committees, together with my fellow Moles for being at all times so helpful and understanding during the year just past.

RICHARD V. HYLAND

Membership Committee Speaks

Growth of waiting list, consisting of well-screened and eminently-qualified heavy-construction men, inspires Holmes Crimmins to discuss admission policies

A. Holmes Crimmins, capable chairman of The Moles Membership Committee, has written the following letter to the editor of *Holing Through*. It gives a real picture of the membership problems of an organization as popular as The Moles, and it suggests how every member can help the Membership Committee by doing a little pre-screening of the applications he is thinking of sponsoring.

Sir: The Moles Membership Committee would like to tell all Moles about the current condition of our membership.

We have at present:

- 325 Resident members
- 78 Non-resident members
- 1 Armed services member
- 11 Honorary members
- 3 Inactive members
- 418 Total

This is a new high. One that we can be proud of. But with this success there are some embarrassments.

By our next committee meeting we will have a list of some 15 or 20 men whom we have carefully screened and are ready to recommend for election. Under our present limitation of 325 resident members, some of these men may have to wait a year or so. Yet all are personally desirable and "now or formerly engaged in the construction of tunnels, subways, foundations, marine, subaqueous or other heavy construction," which is required by our By-Laws.

In order to hold the waiting list to a reasonable number, we must have on our list only those who can meet the most rigid requirements. Many applicants are men of character and wonderful personalities, but they have to be turned down as not qualified. It would save them and ourselves needless effort and embarrassment if Moles would exercise as much care as possible in sponsoring new members.

Here's a little background on our membership qualifications:

At the founding of The Moles it was felt that the engineering profession had its societies, the

contractors had their associations. But a large group of men — such as superintendents, master mechanics, etc., who were a vital part of the construction industry — had no similar place to turn to.

As The Moles grew, other men associated with construction came in. In order to interpret the present requirements the following was offered to the Executive Committee in 1950 and approved as a guide that the Membership Committee could use in screening:

"Younger members should be sought. They should have a reasonably bright future in the heavy construction industry so that they may grow in stature and interest in The Moles.

"Those with technical training should be favored because the trend into the future is in that direction. However, to have actually worked in the hole and gained a livelihood that way, should be a basic requirement."

A. Holmes Crimmins,
Chairman
The Moles Membership
Committee

It's cold up thar . . .

Rod Doremus called the *Holing Through* editorial office the other day. Said he was getting a breath of civilization during the holidays. Up in the Minnesota wilds, where he's project manager for McGraw Construction Co., of Middletown, Ohio, Rod says he's pouring concrete at 29 degrees below zero. Heats the mixing water to 180 degrees and claims none of the concrete has frozen yet. Lou Miller is up there with him.

A little farther away, the beavers do the engineering as well as the construction. We have it on good authority that seven Manitoba beavers, released in new territory by Manitoba conservation officials, traveled a hundred miles before they settled on a damsite. The site was only 20 feet away from one

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Annual Business Meeting May 7

The next All-Mole get-together is the Annual Business Meeting, to be held at the Roosevelt Hotel May 7. Built around the election of officers, committee reports and the installation of new officers, the meeting will include plenty of bar, fine food, good talk and entertainment, as always. See you there!

New Member

Holmes Crimmins isn't kidding when he says the membership situation is tight. Only one new member has come in since the previous issue of *Holing Through*. He's:

WALTER F. CONLIN
Turner Construction Co.
Louisville, Kentucky.

DeSimone New MCS Head

Ralph DeSimone, Moles Trustee, who has been with Merritt-Chapman and Scott since 1916, now is president of the company. He succeeds Raymond Kopp, who had been president for a year. During this time Ralph was vice-president and general manager, a post in which he was in overall charge of the company's operations in industrial, building, marine and heavy construction, as well as marine salvage and heavy hoisting. Our congratulations, Ralph.

Strike becomes a Kentucky Colonel

Many distinctions have come to Moles over the years, but we believe Clifford Strike is the first to become a Kentucky Colonel. (Not that heavy construction men can't take their bourbon with the best). In recognition of his firm's construction of the Paducah Atomic Energy plant, Strike, president of F. H. McGraw Const. Co., received his commission in December from the Governor of Kentucky. He was one of three to make it in 1951 (another was a movie actress.) We're proud of you, suh!



ROLLING THE BALL — Here's where the party got started — in the foyer outside the Roosevelt's main ballroom. The drinks were free and the canapes handy. It didn't take the place long to fill up, either. Harder to empty it when dinner was ready.

185 Attend Members Dinner

Despite competition from at least two other functions of vital interest to many Moles, the November Members Dinner, on the 7th of that month, had a mighty fine turnout — 185.

Principal business of the evening was fun, all the way from the social hour before dinner to the show and another social hour or so afterwards. As soon as the

coffee was gone, George Ferris got up and made the one important announcement of the evening — the identity of the 1952 Award Winners. Appropriately, copies of *Holing Through* detailing the announcement and giving dope on the winners were distributed to the diners at the same time.

Those present agreed that the

show was one of the best yet — a fact that pleasantly surprised many members who are hep to show business. They know that television has bid up the price of many good acts, so they were surprised to find that Dick Johnson's Program Committee could do so well on its budget. Trust Dick when it comes to bidding successfully on a job.



TROUBADORS — During the cocktail hour this gang gave with the melody. The photographer must have been mad at the saxophonist.



SIAMESE TWINS? No, just a clever act in which the Raya Sisters are manhandled by an invisible guy named Dolinoff.



THE DELMARS — Symbolic of the ancient battle between the sexes, the gal is on top, but more precariously than usual.



WILLIAM P. McDONALD



MERTON T. STAPLES



HARRY B. FINNEGAN

Moles Lose Three Members by Death

In the past two months we all have been saddened by the passing of three men from our group. They are William P. McDonald, Merton T. Staples and Harry B. Finnegan.

William P. McDonald

William P. McDonald died November 20, 1951, at the age of 71. A real old-timer in construction, he had been at it continuously since he was 14. For 40 years he was president of the William P. McDonald Corp., of Flushing.

His other activities included the Mac Asphalt Corp. and numerous enterprises in Florida. Perhaps the most notable of the latter was the ownership and direction of what is said to be the second largest orange-growing and packing business in the state. Centered at Auburndale, Fla., the packing-plant property alone covered much of 1500 acres. There were loading facilities for 20 cars on the sidings of two different railroads. He had

a large quarry in Brookville, Fla., and was one of state's pioneer road builders.

Mr. McDonald was president of the General Contractors Association in 1943-1944, and also had held the presidency of the New York Highway Chapter, A.G.C. His widow, Adelaide S. McDonald, lives in Roslyn.

Merton T. Staples

Merton T. Staples died December 24 at the age of 52. A project manager for C. M. Guest Co., Anderson, S. C., he resided in Greenville, S. C. His widow, Lillian Staples, survives.

Mr. Staples worked from 1925 to 1928 with Oakdale Contracting Co., New York, on subway construction in Brooklyn, and on the Hudson and Manhattan tunnels. In 1928 he went with the Cornell Contracting Co., New York, staying with that firm until 1937. This work included a shield tunnel near Prospect Park in Brooklyn, and the Manhattan approaches to both the George

Washington Bridge and the Lincoln Tunnel. He is buried in Greenville, S. C., where Daniel W. Lenahan, as a personal friend and a Mole, attended the funeral.

Harry B. Finnegan

Harry B. Finnegan died January 7 at the age of 57. He was executive vice-president of General Builders Supply Corp. and a brother-in-law of Honorary Member James A. Farley.

Born in Haverstraw, N. Y., Mr. Finnegan was a graduate of Pace Institute. After practicing architecture for a time, in 1926 he became a partner in the newly organized building material firm of James A. Farley, Inc., which became a member firm in the merger in 1929 of five building material companies to form the General Builders Supply Corp. He also owned and operated a dairy farm near Lambertville, N. J. In addition to The Moles, he was a member of the New York Athletic Club and the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick. Mrs. Finnegan and two sons survive.

It's cold . . . (cont.)

chosen a year previously by two-legged engineers—for a real dam made of concrete.

But The Moles don't take a back seat to those beavers in the news. Called a "real mole", Columbus, Ohio schoolboy Bob Scholl has a job most of us will let him have, gladly. Riding on a dolly, he is inspecting and

patching the inside of a mile-long 15-inch sewer. He's 4 ft. 4 in. tall, weighs 74 lbs., and is no claustrophobe.

And to help thousands of youngsters less fortunate than our pipe-crawler, George Walker is handling the local heavy-construction industry's part in the annual drive for the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis. Jim Salmon did it last year.

Dinner plans . . . (cont.)

splendid annual affair is due to the Award Committee, which consists of The Moles officers, trustees and the members of all standing committees. At the core of this group, spearheading the arrangements, have been the chairman, George Ferris, and Dave Bonner, Dick Dougherty, Jim Salmon and Ralph Atwater.