January 12, 2017

“In Memory” Omer W. Blodgett Announcement

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Omer W. Blodgett, P.E., Sc.D, who passed away yesterday at the age of 99. He was a world renowned authority on the design of welded connections and was with Lincoln Electric for more than 60 years, retiring as a Senior Design Consultant and Lincoln Electric’s “Employee of the Century.” During his tenure, he authored numerous manuals and textbooks for the arc welding industry and his seminars on welding were known throughout the welding industry.

Mr. Blodgett became involved in welding at the age of ten when he struck his first arc with his father’s Lincoln Stable-Arc welding machine in Minnesota. Through his high school years, he worked as a welder at his father’s company and became certified as a welder for high pressure applications in 1938. After obtaining a Bachelor of Science in metallurgical engineering and a Master’s degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Minnesota, Mr. Blodgett became a welding superintendent at the Globe Shipbuilding Company. Under demanding war-time production conditions, Mr. Blodgett learned firsthand how to solve welding-related problems such as distortion and cracking and met James F. (“JF”) Lincoln, with whom he would share a lifetime friendship.

Following World War II, he joined Lincoln Electric at the urging of “JF” and served as a technical representative and later as a design consultant - working in both the mechanical and structural fields. In this role, he became the primary presenter of the Lincoln Electric Welding Design Seminars which continue today and are named in his honor. Additionally, he was a frequent speaker on welding design at the American Welding Society (AWS) sectional and national meetings and conducted welding design seminars all over the world.

During his career he authored numerous technical articles and handbooks on design, including Design of Weldments and Design of Welded Structures. He was a licensed professional engineer in the State of Ohio, a fellow of the ASCE (American Society of Civil Engineers, ASME (American Society of Mechanical Engineers) and the AWS. Other affiliations include Tau Beta Pi and Sigma Xi.

Mr. Blodgett was a long time member and contributor to a number of organizations including the AWS D1 Structural Welding Committee, the American Institute of Steel Construction (AISC) Committee on Specifications, and the Welding Research Council (WRC) Task Group on Beam to Column Connections. His contributions were recognized by AWS in 1962, 1973, 1980 and 1983, when he was awarded the A. F. Davis Silver Medal for his work in structural design. From the AISC, he received the T.R. Higgins Lectureship Award in 1983, the Engineering Luminary Award in 1997 and AISC’s Lifetime Achievement Award in 1999. In 1995, LeTourneau University awarded Mr. Blodgett an honorary Doctor of Science degree, in addition to naming the Welding Engineering chair in his honor. In 1999, he was named by Engineering News-Record as one of the construction industry’s top 125 innovators over the past 125 years, a distinction also given to John Roebling, Buckminster Fuller, Thomas Edison, Frank Lloyd Wright and R.G. LeTourneau.

We are indebted to Omer who was a mentor to many, left a lasting legacy in our industry, and who will be fondly remembered with great honor. We extend our heartfelt condolences to his family.

Arrangements will be handled by Chambers Funeral Home in North Olmsted, Ohio and details will be made available at: www.chambersfuneral.com