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1980-1981

New President's Message

Two years ago I spoke to a group of MIT Civil Engineering alumni on the theme, "What a Great Time to be a Civil Engineer". As the Boston Society of Civil Engineers Section of ASCE enters a new decade and its 133rd year of operation that theme continues to be appropriate. Exciting challenges are presented to all civil engineers by many of today's great problems such as energy, toxic waste disposal, transportation, and urban redevelopment; i.e., the provision of basic human needs which is at the heart of all civil engineering practice. The scale and complexity of these problems and the environment in which they must be addressed in the 1980's challenge us to provide the highest level of technical and professional civil engineering expertise of

which we are capable. If we meet that challenge successfully, the next two decades could rival the turn-of-the-century's Golden Era of Civil Engineering.

The BSCE Section provides many opportunities for local civil engineers to strengthen their ability to meet these challenges. Our numerous technical meetings which have long been the mainstay of Section activities help keep us abreast of new methods and major projects. Our lecture series programs which are now established on a regular schedule provide a convenient vehicle for continuing education and updating in specific technical areas. A biannual refresher course helps young engineers prepare for the important step of professional registration. During the past year a monthly luncheon meeting was established to provide a forum for presentations and discussion of topics of professional interest. The past year's accomplishments in these and related areas are well documented by our outgoing President William Zoino in his report which follows. I hope that during the coming year there will be even greater participation in these activities which the Section provides and which are so important to the maintenance of a healthy civil engineering profession.

There are other steps we must all take to ensure that we meet the challenges of the 1980's. Of great concern to me personally is the potential decline in our attitudes toward professionalism and maintenance of our public image. Recent well-publicized events have caused the public to question whether the civil engineer is truly concerned with the maintenance of public trust and equity in meeting basic human needs. It will be incumbent on each member of the BSCE Section to make renewed efforts through personal example to ensure that we uphold the spirit of professionalism to which we have all subscribed.

My own plans and priorities for the Section are outlined in the June Newsletter. I invite you to review those and to offer your suggestions for making the BSCE Section more responsive to the challenges presented to the civil engineering profession. With your initiatives and willingness to participate, we can enter the 1980's with confidence and enthusiasm.

Frank E. Perkins
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