

# Newsletter 8/ 99

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## ASSE NEWSLETTER – AUGUST, 1999

### **Letter sent to the King of Sweden**

Membership cards have recently been sent to all the members of ASSE. In particular, it was with great pleasure that we sent King Carl XVI Gustaf his membership card with a letter of gratitude for his continuing support and grace to be a patron and honorary member of our society. ASSE recognizes that His Royal Highness's service in representing the Swedish people and, of particular interest to us, Swedish engineering talent is a tremendous benefit.

Swedish engineers have a long tradition of producing manufactured goods of high quality and of being on the cutting edge of technological development. His Royal Highness's support is not only vital in promoting Swedish engineering in the US, it encourages our members to continue that tradition and to maintain their responsibility to quality technology.

### **ASSE donation to Omform**

In Newsletter 9/97, we wrote about a project at Chalmers Institute of Technology, in which students planned to present their own design for a special entrance hall to their department building, a hall that would offer a "meeting-place" where students, guests, visitors and professors could assemble and congregate. The Chalmers students asked ASSE to endorse the project. At a meeting in March '99, ASSE's board of directors decided to donate \$1,500.00 to the project. Marianne Hultin, a member of ASSE, volunteered to visit Chalmers in Gothenburg during her visit to Sweden this summer in order to deliver ASSE's check made out to Omform, the name of the project.

In her e-mail of July 21, 99, Marianne reported that: "Omform, Tomas Holst and his staff were very grateful and will invite ASSE to the inauguration of their re-modeled and rebuilt facilities at Chalmers. This event will most likely be in October or November. All the planning had been accomplished, walls had been demolished and they had started to look at furniture for their new meeting area. Everything is GO".

And we are delighted to have helped.

### **From the old record books of ASSE**

I have had the good fortune and privilege to browse through some of ASSE's old records. They are a treasure. The oldest records date from 1891 and show the past amount of dues paid by members. The accounting books for 1891 through 1895 show that quarterly membership dues were around \$3.00, with some members paying more and others less. To put this amount in perspective, I used a cost of living calculator found on the internet at <http://www.newsengin.com>. The calculator, however, cannot create a cost of living index for dollar amounts before 1914. In that year the \$12.00 ASSE membership fee had the same buying power as \$212.73 has today. In 1933, the annual ASSE dues of \$12.00 were worth \$152.00 in today's terms. In 1935, because of a weak financial situation, the society decided to raise its annual fee to \$36.00, which corresponds to \$435.72 now. And in 1938, annual dues were once again made \$12.00, or in 1999 terms, \$144.25. In 1952, the dues were raised to \$20.00, which is worth \$130.48 today.

This brief history of past dues indicates how highly members have valued ASSE in its goal of promoting "the Arts and Sciences connected with Engineering and Mechanical Construction and to promote Scientific progress by Readings, Lectures and Discussions", as expressed in Article 1 in our by-laws. Another expressed goal of ASSE at the turn of the century was the promotion of close relations among the members for their mutual help and benefit. Even though not formally expressed in our current by-laws, this goal is still valuable to keep in mind and stated in today's language is that ASSE, by its very existence, acts as an important tool for networking among its members.

An excerpt from a monthly meeting held in September 28, 1934.

### **Dues for 1999**

Talking about membership dues in the past gives me an easy segue to the next subject. In a recent mailing, we asked you to support ASSE with your dues for 1999 and we warmly thank each and everyone who has contributed so far to maintain our old and prestigious society.

### **Updating the membership list**

We also requested in the recent mailing that you please notify us of changes in your address and phone number. These days when time is precious and distance no hindrance to direct communication, we especially value receiving your current e-mail address. Many members do not have an e-mail address listed while e-mail sent to others have been returned for "Address Unknown". We kindly request that you send us your e-mail address if you have not already done so by e-mailing it to [ulf@usscgroup.com](mailto:ulf@usscgroup.com) or by enclosing a note with your dues payment.

## **New Art for the Millennium**

A new form of art called Rart™ has been developed and trademarked by ASSE member Jan Aminoff at A-Square, Inc. I am not a computer literate, so in order to bring full justice to his creation, I urge you to visit his site at: <http://www.rart.com>

### **Closing**

Everything is impermanent; that is the reality of life. And that goes for books as well. Reading the hand written notes from 1891 and on, I hold onto the history of a group of people who created a scientific and professional society that survived two world wars and a severe depression. Going through the old books and records of ASSE, I am convinced this material merits interesting research. But time is taking its toll. How can these be restored or at least best preserved in order to save them for the future? Such an effort will cost money, but to know that preservation is needed is a good start.

**With best wishes for an enjoyable rest of summer**