



CONSTRUCTOR

THE MANAGEMENT MAGAZINE OF THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

William E. Dunn,
Editor and Publisher

N. Taylor Gregg,
Editor

M. J. Davis,
Associate Editor

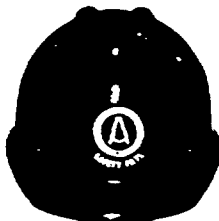
Booth Mooney,
Consulting Editor

Elizabeth Money
Production Mgr.
Patricia Melt
Editorial Asst.
Vaughn Smartt
Chapter News Ed.

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Charlson I. Mehl, James M. Sprouse, Arthur Hintze, Travis Brown, Don Giampaoli, Dale Witcraft, Arthur L. Schmuhl, Anne Raynor, Grant S. Shetwell, Richard M. Bowie, Richard C. Creighton, Joseph P. Ashooh, John Bunyan

CONSTRUCTOR



COVER: The Hard Hat—symbol of the construction industry's safety program

ARTICLES AND FEATURES

Page

First AGC National Safety Conference: Contractors, safety engineers, labor leaders and government representatives will explore new methods for improving safety within the construction industry 24

The development of hard hats is traced from the turtle shell worn by Neanderthal man to the fiberglass helmets of today 28

Construction men and women whose lives have been saved by wearing hard hats talk about their exclusive organization, The Turtle Club 32

Explosives are technically safer, but blasting accidents are still caused by the same old safety violations 37

Women in Construction: what they stand for and what they do 44

Legislative Outlook for 1968 48

DEPARTMENTS

President's Page	7	Calendar	49
Trend and Outlook	9	What's New	50
Labor Notes	10	Chapter News	56
Business Briefs	15	New Literature	63
Legal Sidelights	20	Classified/Advertisers' Index . .	66
News of the Month	26	AGC Forms and Publications . .	67

JANUARY 1968

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COVER: Steel erection for ice arena in Squaw Valley, California

ARTICLES AND FEATURES

Page

Survey indicates major hospital building boom in the near future 26

ACC refutes damaging statements about the construction industry contained in a textbook written by a Yale University Professor 30

CONSTRUCTOR interviews T. A. Strawser, an artist, with something to say about "the men who build" 32

CONSTRUCTOR presents a special preview of the 1968 Convention Exhibit, the largest ACC Exhibit to date 42

DEPARTMENTS

President's Page 7
Trend and Outlook 9
Labor Notes 11
Business Briefs 15
Legal Sidelights 19

News of the Month 37
Chapter News 62
Calendar 70
Classified/Advertisers' Index . . 70
ACC Forms and Publications . . 71



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CONSTRUCTOR



COVER: Grouping of Dallas Scenes, the setting for AGC's 49th Annual Convention/Exhibit

ARTICLES AND FEATURES

Page

"Big D" Welcomes AGC Convention/Exhibit 30

CONSTRUCTOR Reviews AGC's First National Safety Conference 34

CONSTRUCTOR SPECIAL REPORT: The Maze of Federal Agencies, Forms and Regulations that Control Equal Employment 41

DEPARTMENTS

President's Page 7
Trend and Outlook 9
Labor Notes 11
Business Briefs 15
Legal Sidelights 20

Calendar 28
News of the Month 38
Chapter News 53
Classified/Advertisers' Index .. 70
AGC Forms and Publications .. 71

MARCH 1968

1



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CONSTRUCTOR



COVER: AGC's new National President Fred W. Mast of Waterloo, Iowa

ARTICLES AND FEATURES

Page

Profile of AGC's 49th President, Fred W. Mast 24

Complete Convention Roundup 29

Joint AGC/Union Effort Trains Laborers In
Baltimore 44

DEPARTMENTS

President's Page 7
Trend and Outlook 10
Business Briefs 12
Legal Sidelights 17

News of the Month 48
Chapter News 52
Calendar 70
Classified/Advertisers' Index .. 70
AGC Forms and Publications .. 71



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COVER: Federal Reserve Board
Chairman William McChesney
Martin, Jr.

ARTICLES AND FEATURES

Page

Wages, Prices, And The National Economy:
An Examination Of The Country's Financial
Ills And Their Relationship To The Con-
struction Industry 25

A Construction Consultant Describes Systems
Building In Europe And Measures Its Poten-
tial In The U.S. 33

The Award Winning Restoration of Ford's
Theatre In Washington, D.C. Is Accom-
plished By Coe Const. Co. Inc. (AGC) 42

DEPARTMENTS

President's Page	7	News of the Month	38
Trend and Outlook	9	Chapter News	48
Business Briefs	15	Calendar	70
Legal Sidelights	21	Classified/Advertisers' Index ..	70
		AGC Forms and Publications ..	71



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COVER: Tower of the Americas at Hemisfair '68, the Texas World's Fair in San Antonio.

ARTICLES AND FEATURES

Page

The Story of Hemisfair and The More Than \$100 Million Worth of Construction Put in Place to Create It 13

A Leasing Consultant Examines The Pros and Cons of Leasing Construction Equipment ... 24

Gilvin-Terrill, Inc. (AGC) Makes Safety Pay By Awarding Trading Stamps 28

A Look at Marine World, The New Multi-Million Dollar Recreational, Educational and Scientific Complex Built By Williams & Burrows, Inc. (AGC) 32

Part I of A Two Part Report on the AGC National Labor Conference 42

DEPARTMENTS

President's Page 7
Trend and Outlook 9
CONSTRUCTOR Camera 38
Labor Notes 41
News of the Month 46
Business Briefs 48
Chapter News 50

What's New 54
Legal Sidelights 60
Manufacturers' News 63
New Literature 64
AGC Forms and Publications .. 66
Calendar 68
Classified Advertisers Index ... 68

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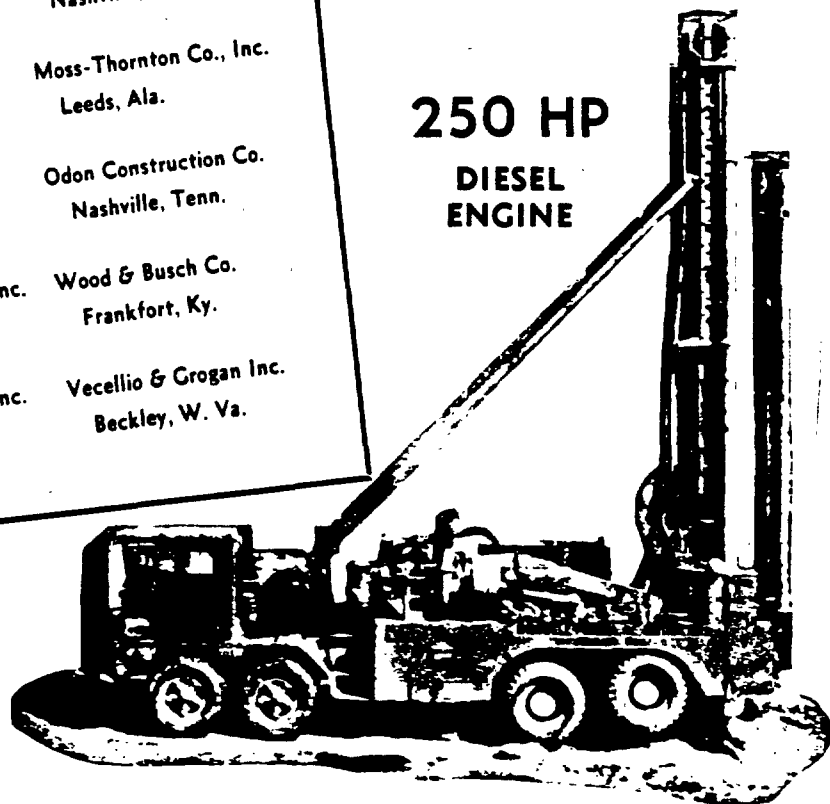
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JULY 1968

(Reader Service No. 246)



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THE MANAGEMENT MAGAZINE OF THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

AUGUST, 1968

ARTICLES AND FEATURES

Page

CONSTRUCTION EDUCATION

- | | |
|--|----|
| (1) Company Management Training Program Pays Off For Ryan Inc. (AGC) | 17 |
| (2) Introductory Courses In Construction Replace Old "Shop Classes" In Selected Junior High Schools Around The Country | 20 |
| (3) AGC Chapters Meet Educational Needs Of Members In Imaginative Ways | 26 |
| (4) AGC Suggests Curricula Guidelines For Teaching Building And Heavy/Highway Construction | 33 |
| (5) Success Of Michigan State U. Construction Engineering Education Program Shows What Cooperation Between A University And Local Contractors Can Accomplish | 39 |
| Delaware Memorial Bridge Twin Span Nears Completion | 29 |
| 15-Ton Crane On The Roof Top Of A 44-Story Building Facilitates Construction | 49 |

DEPARTMENTS

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|----|---------------------------------|----|
| President's Page | 7 | What's New | 56 |
| Trend and Outlook | 11 | New Literature | 63 |
| Labor Notes | 13 | Manufacturer's News | 65 |
| CONSTRUCTOR Camera | 49 | AGC Forms and Publications .. | 66 |
| News of the Month | 46 | Classified Advertisers Index .. | 68 |
| Chapter News | 54 | | |



CONSTRUCTOR

THE MANAGEMENT MAGAZINE OF THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

SEPTEMBER, 1968

ARTICLES AND FEATURES

Page

A Look At What Seven U.S. Cities Are Doing To Solve Their Mass Transit Problems	17
Traffic Demands Of Expo '67 Catalyze Ultra-Modern Highway Facilities In Canada	28
BART Contractors Accomplish Massive Construction Feats In Record Time	33
Tribulations Of A Transit Authority: Appropriations Cuts And Public Protest Delay Groundbreaking Of Rapid Rail In Nation's Capitol	41

DEPARTMENTS

President's Page	7	Chapter News	60
Trend and Outlook	11	New Literature	63
Labor Notes	12	Manufacturer's News	65
News of the Month	48	AGC Forms and Publications ..	66
What's New	56	Classified Advertisers Index ...	68



CONSTRUCTOR

THE MANAGEMENT MAGAZINE OF THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

OCTOBER, 1968

ARTICLES AND FEATURES

Page

PREFABRICATION: An Examination Of Projects Using Types Of Prefabricated Components	17
1. Precast Box—Allen Villa Project Continues Zachry Methods	21
2. Uniment—Chemical Prestressing Reduces Unit Weight	23
SYSTEMS BUILDING: A Look At Four Complete Building Systems, and Prefabricated Components They Employ	25
1. Componoform—Rigid Frame Structure Offers Interior Flexibility	27
2. Techcrete—\$6.23 Per Sq. Foot Said Possible For System	30
3. CEBUS—Component Factory Building In Maryland ...	32
4. SCSD—Calif. Schools Project Was First Large Scale U.S. System	36
UNION RESTRICTIONS: An Analysis Of Labor Union Efforts To Prevent Various Forms Of Technological Advance In Building Methods	41
BATTELLE REPORT: Preliminary Comments Concerning Both Manpower And Building Methods	43
CONTRACTOR REVIEW: The First Report Of A New CONSTRUCTOR Feature; A Contractor Reviews New Equipment And Materials	48
SEASONALITY AND WINTER CONSTRUCTION: Canada's Experiences With The Subject Of An Upcoming National Conference Sponsored By The AGC	56

DEPARTMENTS

President's Page	7	What's New	72
Trend and Outlook	9	Chapter News	77
Labor Notes	13	New Literature	81
Calendar	69	Manufacturer's News	83
News of the Month	70	Classified Advertisers Index ..	84



CONSTRUCTOR

THE MANAGEMENT MAGAZINE OF THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

NOVEMBER, 1968

ARTICLES AND FEATURES

Page

VALUE ENGINEERING: Questions And Answers About Participation And Non-Participation In This Corps Of Engineers Program	17
ARBITRATION VS. LEGAL ACTION: The Results Of A Study Into The Time And Money Involved	24
IMPACT OF MDTA: An Evaluation Of The Acceptance Of Manpower Development And Training Act Programs	26
TRUCK FLEET THEORIES: A Leasing Industry Spokesman Advises Contractors Against Ownership	30
FIBERGLAS FORMS: Two Contractors Experiment With The Use Of Fiberglas Forms To Obtain Complex Concrete Shapes	33
WOULD YOU STRIKE?: An Answer To This Provocative Question That Isn't Just Theory	36
ACCIDENT PREVENTION: A New Program For Contractors Seeking Accident Prevention Aids	40
TRUTH IN NEGOTIATIONS: Critics Charge Misunderstanding, If Not Abuse, Of This Act	41

DEPARTMENTS

President's Page	7	Constructor Camera	54
Trend and Outlook	9	Chapter News	56
Letters	10	What's New	60
Labor Notes	11	New Literature	67
Legal Sidelights	15	Manufacturer's News	69
News of the Month	46	AGC Forms and Publications . .	70
Calendar	52	Classified Advertisers Index . .	72



CONSTRUCTOR

THE MANAGEMENT MAGAZINE OF THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

DECEMBER, 1968

ARTICLES AND FEATURES

Page

HIRING THE HARDCORE UNEMPLOYED

Part I: Definition And Programs	17
Part II: The St. Louis Experience	20
Part III: Interview—Face to Face	25

SEASONALITY: Why Many Contractors Don't Do Winter Work	33
--	----

LABOR LAW: A Case For Reform	36
------------------------------------	----

THE NINETY-FIRST CONGRESS: An Appraisal Of The Legislative Year To Come	38
--	----

NIXON AND THE NEW ECONOMISTS: An Analysis Of Previously Noted Economic Preferences On the Part of the President-Elect	40
--	----

A CONTRACTOR REVIEWS: Introduction Of A Silenced Air Com- pressor	43
--	----

DEPARTMENTS

President's Page	3	Calendar	48
Letters	7	Chapter News	52
Trend and Outlook	9	What's New	56
Labor Notes	10	New Literature	63
Legal Sidelights	15	Manufacturer's News	65
Constructor Camera	30	AGC Forms and Publications ..	66
Contractor Review	43	Classified Advertisers Index ..	68

Contractors "Get Tough" In Safety Problem Action

IMPROVED SAFETY METHODS and how to apply them—before the federal government steps in with safety regulations of its own—was the prime topic at AGC's first National Safety Conference held last month in Washington.

More than 300 contractors, safety engineers, government officials and labor representatives gathered for the two-day conference to seek new methods of establishing a better safety record in the construction industry.

Opening the conference, AGC President B. B. Armstrong asked the delegates not only to develop ideas among themselves, but to take the ideas home and "get others committed" to safety.

"Action Shortage"

"There has been no shortage of words spoken about the subject of safety," said Mr. Armstrong. "In my opinion the shortage has been in the action needed to accomplish safety in our work and among our employees."

Massachusetts Governor John A. Volpe praised the AGC for sponsoring the safety conference but emphasized that unless the lost-time accident rate is brought down sharply "government is going to step in and do it for us . . . and when government does the job it always cost more. We must make it clear that management has a personal concern in the safety of each and every employee."

H. S. Latham, Chief Safety Engineer of the Bureau of Reclamation and panel speaker on "How to Make a Safety Pro-

gram Work," agreed that the thrust of an effective safety program must come from top management.

"Top management—and I mean the boss—must personally spearhead the program, not only by words but by actions. Subordinates and employees pay more attention to what they actually see than to what they are told," said Mr. Latham.

Speaking on the same panel, Robert O. Nimmo, Peter Kiewit Sons Co., Omaha, said that management must continually work to overcome the tendency to overlook unsafe acts or conditions. He said that this tendency undermines the effectiveness of safety programs because it indicates to the men on the job that sincerity is lacking.

Mr. Nimmo advocated shutting down a job where conditions were especially bad: "Shutting down an entire job occasionally to correct particularly bad conditions is one of the best means that management has of letting everyone know that it is determined to have accident-free work."

Foremen Is Key

In the direct application of safety, panel members agreed that the foreman must play the key role. "If the foreman knows that his performance is being judged on the basis of the safety record of his crew as much as on the speed or quality of the work done, he will take pains to make his men aware of safety," said Joseph A. Courter and Co., New York. "All of the safety directors, posters and booklets are not worth one good

foreman dedicated to job safety," said Mr. Courter.

Incentives were discussed as one way to make safety interesting to the man on the job. Whether some kind of merit system, redemption stamp program, or special bonus, contractors agreed that incentive programs get results.

Personal Cost

But safety incentives alone won't do it, said panel member Clark J. Potter, Ruby Construction Co., Louisville. "Safety education is probably the most effective motivating tool available," said Mr. Potter. He said an employee must be taught what an accident can cost himself and his family, as well as his employer.

AGC President-elect Fred W. Mast said that discipline cannot be accomplished without continued safety education. "We are going to have to start with young men and make it part of their apprenticeship training," said Mr. Mast. "And it must be part of on-job-training." Contractors at the conference felt they should insist that safety training be part of all apprenticeship programs.

A panel led by AGC Vice-President Carl M. Halvorson examined the subject of safety devices on heavy equipment. Mr. C. E. Burks of the Construction Industry Manufacturers Association outlined the work that it is doing with other organizations in developing minimum performance standards for brake systems and rollover protection on heavy equipment.

The Corps of Engineers was

"We have to tell our superintendents and foremen that their ability to prevent accidents will be a measure of their worth to the organization as much as their ability to produce and do quality work."

—AGC President-elect
Fred W. Mast

"At this conference we are looking for new ideas and new concepts in safety, and I'm not really sure that we are going to find too many. There is no great influx of new ideas and new

concepts. We must learn by the lessons of the past. We must put these lessons to good use, and drive them home hour after hour, day after day, job after job."

—Massachusetts Governor
John A. Volpe

criticized for issuing premature regulations on rollover protection without telling the equipment manufacturers specifically what it wanted built into the equipment.

During this discussion, John Palazzi of the Palazzi Corp., New Hampshire, suggested that the manufacturers make uniform control layouts for heavy equipment. He proposed that the manufacturers standardize equipment controls and mark all levers clearly with a brass plate attachment.

J. J. Williams, Morrison-Knudson Co., led a panel discussion on Pre-Placement Physical Examinations. Panel speaker Dale Marr of the International Union of Operating Engineers in California said that his union was not only

ready to discuss pre-placement physicals with contractors but wanted to "get busy in the entire field of environmental health." The panel agreed that pre-employment physicals are imperative.

Of concern to all conferees were the bills before Congress that would impose federal safety regulations on the construction industry. The point was made repeatedly throughout the conference that safety cannot be legislated or effectively enforced by a third party.

Speaking for the California Operating Engineers, Dale Marr put it bluntly: "I personally think that we are foolish to let the government tell us one single thing. We don't need their help. But we do need the expertise represented by man-

agement."

"We have got to send knowledgeable people back to Washington and let our congressmen and senators know that we not only don't like it (Gov't. Regulation) but aren't going to put up with it."

In closing the conference, Mr. Mast recommended that the National Safety Conference be followed up with regional and local safety conferences. He said the AGC is ready to assist chapters that are interested in planning these safety conferences.

Mr. Mast said that the success of the meeting will not be measured so much by what was said but by what is done back home on the construction site.



MARCH 1968



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AUGUST 1968



**A
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