



Hannskarl Bandel.

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1925-1993

By Anton Tedesko

Hannskarl Bandel, creator of imposing structures, was born in Dessau, Germany, on May 3, 1925. His father was an architect, owner of a construction firm. His mother's maiden name was Brechtel and she came from the family of the well-known German construction company called Brechtel. Hannskarl studied civil engineering at the Technical University of Berlin under the famous Professor Dischinger. Under Professor Sattler he earned his doctorate in engineering. After design and research experience with several firms in the German steel industry, he became an assistant of Professor Sattler, who suggested that he visit the United States to widen his experience with suspension bridges. Bandel, however, moved up the ladder with his work on building structures in the New York office of Fred Severud (former National Academy of Engineering member). Severud was so impressed by Bandel's creativity and outstanding structural design ability that he made him his associate. Three years later, he was made a full partner of the firm, subsequently known as Severud, Perrone, Sturm, Bandel.

It can be said that the reputation that the firm thereafter acquired was, to a great extent, due to Bandel's dynamic personality and his innovative vision. Personally, he was a shy and modest man who judged the work of others fairly, but he would speak out against poorly conceived solutions. His coworkers

considered it a privilege to be involved in his efforts and were quite often astounded by the breadth of his ideas and his inventiveness.

During his years with Severud, he designed the Marina Towers in Chicago; with architect Eero Saarinen, he designed the 630-foot-high Jefferson Memorial Arch in St. Louis; and he worked on the cable-suspended Madison Square Garden arena roof in New York City; the Place St. Marie in Montreal; the Toronto City Hall; the Ford Foundation headquarters building in New York City; the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.; and the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, California.

In 1978 he was elected a member of the National Academy of Engineering.

After Fred Severud's retirement, the firm, despite Bandel's objections, was bought by a Hungarian engineer. Bandel left the firm and became the senior vice-president of DRC Consultants, working on cable-stayed bridges and various other structures, following his original design ideas.

He was offered the chair of structural engineering at the University of Graz, Austria, in 1980, but graciously turned down the offer because the daily challenging assignments of his professional life in America were much more important to him than a highly visible, prestigious professorship in Europe.

Dr. Bandel recently conceived and developed the feasibility study making use of an arch to strengthen the cantilever truss on the Mathews Bridge in Jacksonville, Florida. He was involved in providing construction engineering services for the cable-stayed Sunshine Skyway Bridge in Florida and the cable-stayed Glebe Island Bridge in Sydney, Australia.

His ideas for the rehabilitation of deficient structures and in the retrofitting of long-span bridges will have repercussions for American infrastructure in the years to come. Structural engineering of the highest level was applied in his work on the National Aeronautics and Space Administration-commissioned study for the Pathfinder (man-to-Mars mission). This assignment encompasses the design of joints for a three-dimensional

truss built in a zero-gravity environment without tools to subsequently sustain the loads associated with entering the atmosphere of Mars.

On December 29, 1993, as countless times before, he was on the ski slopes of the Aspen Highlands at Aspen, Colorado. His wife was with him when he suddenly suffered what seemed to be indigestion. The ski patrol placed him on a toboggan and rapidly descended with him to lower altitudes. But Hannskarl lost his oxygen mask during the trip and died due to heart failure. He had never been ill before and his friends observed that this was the way he wanted to go.

He will be missed by his many friends. He is survived by his wife, the former Irmtraut Sitter, living in Carbondale, Colorado.