



*Karl G. Jellison*

## Karl L. Feters

1909-1990

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Submitted By The Nae Home Secretary

KARL L. FETTERS, metallurgical engineer and major contributor to the development of science and technology in the iron and steel industry, died on October 3, 1990, at the age of eighty.

Elected to the National Academy of Engineering in 1965, Karl had already achieved recognition for his contribution to the engineering profession on an international basis. He was a dedicated professional who was recognized for the breadth of his views, which extended well beyond his steel industry experience to promotion of the mining, energy, and materials industries and especially to the education of young people by encouraging their association with these industries.

The professional career of Karl Feters extended over more than six decades, and his involvement and leadership through many dramatic changes are highly commendable. He was involved in steel production as a metallurgist, then was an academic instructor at Carnegie Institute of Technology, and later was involved in steel operations and subsequently became a leader in steel research and research management.

Karl Feters was born on November 28, 1909, in Alliance, Ohio, where he attended public schools. He received his bachelor's degree in metallurgical engineering from Carnegie Institute of Technology in 1931, and his doctorate in metallurgy from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1940. From 1933 to 1936 he was a metallurgical assistant for the

National Tube Company in Lorain, Ohio. From 1936 to 1938 he was a plant metallurgist for Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company. He then attended MIT to achieve a graduate degree. Karl returned to Carnegie Institute of Technology to assume a position with the Office of Scientific Research and Development project on seamless steel gun tubes, while he also served as an assistant professor of metallurgy and a staff member of the Metals Research Laboratory. In 1943 he returned to Youngstown on special assignment as a metallurgical engineer. He was appointed assistant to the vice-president of operations in 1950, became assistant vice-president in 1956, and vice-president of research and development in 1959. In 1970 he became vice-president of planning and technology.

Dr. Fetters was widely known throughout the international steel industry, and received recognition and numerous honors in other areas of the engineering community. He served as chairman of the Iron and Steel Division of the American Institute of Mining, Metallurgical, and Petroleum Engineers (AIME) in 1958-1959, and as president of The Metallurgical Society (TMS) of AIME in 1961-1962. In 1964 he was president of AIME. He was a fellow grade member of both TMS and the American Society for Metals (ASM). He served on several key committees of these societies, including a two-year term as a national trustee of ASM, representing that society at metallurgical conferences in Europe in 1955. He was also a chairman of the Mahoning Valley Chapter of ASM. He served as a member of the General Research Committee of the American Iron and Steel Institute and as a director of the American Standards Association, and was a member of iron and steel professional associations in Great Britain and Germany. He authored or coauthored many technical papers. He visited and interacted with iron and steel industry personnel throughout the Western Hemisphere, Europe, and Asia, particularly in Japan.

Dr. Fetters possessed great personal energy and wide interests. He was an active and skilled yachtsman, and was involved in teaching courses in seamanship, piloting, and boating safety. He was also a ham radio operator with contacts all over the world. Photography was another of his areas of expertise, and one of his most enjoyable hobbies.

A key aspect of the outstanding career of Karl Feters was his communication skills, and in particular, his ability to express his experience and outlook to those who benefited from his advice. He could share his own experience as well as his perspective on current and future situations when presenting an evaluation of a challenge or opportunity. The incorporation of this skill and ability in working with younger colleagues represented a special quality of Karl Feters. He was outspoken in his support of corporate research. Even more significant was his encouragement of individuals to extend their limits in contributing to our society. His perspective has had a significant impact in defining the goals of younger people following paths similar to his own.

The career of Karl Feters can be looked on in terms of his success, for example, his achievements and professional recognition. Indeed, however, one must not only acknowledge the exceptional accomplishments that followed from his own abilities, but also recognize his perception and sensitivity in communicating many of these skills to those associated with him.

His dedication and expertise remain with those who were associated with him, and the many who follow in similar career paths. Karl Feters was a leader and a pioneer in creating a model role by example, and in defining future goals in his area of the engineering profession.