



Augustus B. King

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By Walker L. Cisler And Harvey A. Wagner

AUGUSTUS BRAUN KINZEL, the first president of the National Academy of Engineering (NAE), died on October 23, 1987, at the age of eighty-seven. His distinguished career in research and metallurgy included important contributions in both fields and reflected his dedication to the engineering profession.

He was born on July 26, 1900, in New York City. His father, Otto, was a professional pianist and his mother, Josephine Braun, a mathematics teacher. He received an A.B., cum laude, in mathematics in 1919 from Columbia University; a B.S. in general engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1921; and a D. Met. Ing. in 1922, and an Sc.D. in 1933 from the University of Nancy, France. Among other honorary degrees he was awarded were the doctor of engineering from New York University in 1955, doctor of sciences from Clarkson College of Technology in 1957, and doctor honoris causa from the University of Nancy in 1963.

He began his professional career at the General Electric Laboratories in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, in 1919. Dr. Kinzel joined Union Carbide Research Laboratories in 1926 as a research metallurgist. He successively became chief metallurgist in 1931, vice-president in 1945, and president in 1948. In 1954 he was appointed director of research for the Union Carbide Corporation, and in 1955, vice-president of research.

He served as consultant to the Los Alamos, Oak Ridge,

Argonne, Knolls, and Brookhaven Laboratories. As a member of the initial Manhattan District Committee for the World Control of Atomic Energy, he helped draft the classified report that was the working basis for the Lilienthal and Baruch plans. During World War II he also held key advisory posts in the ordnance field and was in charge of the metals branch of the Technical Industrial Intelligence Committee in Europe. He was a member of the Defense Science Board and the Naval Research Advisory Committee, of which he was a past chairman (1953-1954). He was president of the American Institute of Mining, Metallurgical, and Petroleum Engineers (AIME) (1958) and of the Engineers Joint Council (1960); chairman of the Division of Engineering and Industrial Research of the National Research Council (1960); and a member of the National Academy of Sciences, the American Philosophical Society, and the MIT Corporation. He was a trustee of the California Institute of Technology, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, and the Salk Research Institute, and a member of the board of System Development Corporation of General American Investment Company, American Optical Company, and Beckman Instrument Company.

Dr. Kinzel was a founding member of the NAE and was instrumental in the formulation of its objectives on policies and philosophies. Over the years, he has given unstintingly of his time in serving the needs of the growing Academy. He was certainly an important factor in the Academy's success.

However, his interests were broadened beyond engineering as he became interested in the work of the Salk Institute for Biological Studies and eventually became its president and chief executive officer.

Dr. Kinzel was coauthor of the Engineering Foundation's volumes of *Alloys of Iron and Chromium* and was the author or coauthor of more than one hundred technical papers. He has given many of the honorary memorial lectures in metallurgy, including the Howe Memorial Lecture (AIME), the Comfort A. Adams Lecture (the American Welding Society [AWS]), the Burgess Memorial Lecture (American Society for Metals [ASM]), the Albert Sauveur Achievement Award (ASM), and the Edward DeMille Campbell Memorial Lecture (ASM). He was a recipient

of the Samuel Wylie Miller Memorial Medal Award (AWS), a James Turner Morehead medalist (International Acetylene Association [IAA]), and a Powder Metallurgy Medalist (Stevens Institute of Technology). He received the Industrial Research Institute Medal in May 1960 and the James Douglas Gold Medal (AIME) in February 1960. He was also the recipient of many distinguished service awards, is in the Metals Progress Hall of Fame (ASM), and was an honorary member of the Chemists Club and Eurospace.

Dr. Kinzel was a member of the University Club of New York City; the Racquet and Tennis Club of New York City; the Cosmos Club of Washington, D.C.; the Beach and Tennis Club of LaJolla, California; and several art museums and musical associations. He was a director of the Berkshire Farm for Boys and the International Benjamin Franklin Society. He lived in New York City and also had a home in LaJolla, California.

"Gus" Kinzel was a man of wide-ranging interests, but he always approached problems with the engineering system's approach. To quote him, "The scientist is a man of the laboratory, the library, and the land of logic. The engineer is, and should be, a man of affairs in a world of both changing fashions and economic realities. The more he knows about the present, the better engineer he'll be." The engineering profession has benefited much from the life and contributions of Dr. Kinzel. He was truly "A Twentieth Century Man of Affairs."