

WILL YOU LEAVE A LEGACY LIKE THIS?

BY BRAD CURTIS, CHAIRMAN, MBMA

While my involvement in MBMA has occurred in just the last decade, I wanted to share with you some wisdom from those who've come before me. In looking through MBMA's archives, I learned some very important things from leaders who worked so hard to make MBMA great so many years ago. I hope you will enjoy reading a little bit about a few of these leaders and how they influenced—and were influenced by—the MBMA.

VOICES OF THE PAST

Lon Shealy served as MBMA chairman in 1979 and was on the executive committee from 1975 to 1979. He began his career in the metal building



industry in 1947. After retiring from the workforce in 1987, he wrote a book, "Destiny by Design," on strategic planning. He was also appointed Assistant Director of Commerce by the governor of Oklahoma. In 2006, at age 82, he had this to say about the influence of MBMA on the metal building industry:

"When I was on MBMA's executive committee, we had a mission to do better by the construction industry, offering attractive and functional structures at lower costs. The net value is that our efforts saved

the American economy billions and billions of dollars. Much of the retail and commercial construction could not have happened without systems construction.

As an association, those of us who led competing companies learned to work together. Just as when Butler shared their research on wind damage in Canada, we learned to trust and help one another. We became loyal to our industry. MBMA made this possible. They saw the potential of teaming together and lived up to it. In my opinion, no association has done it better."

Don Pratt served as chairman of MBMA in 1983 and was on the association's executive committee for several years prior to his chairmanship. An industry leader throughout his career, he exuded vision within the industry and respect for MBMA's contributions. About a decade ago, he expressed this opinion of MBMA's place in history:

"Our industry has a unique history and MBMA is a unique organization. It has created a place where competitors can work in cooperation to solve industry issues. Such cooperation has allowed the technology to evolve and adapt to offer high-performance solutions for commercial and industrial buildings.

MBMA encourages the exchange of ideas. This has led to a steady stream of new construction and system building technologies that have changed individual member companies and the industry as a whole."

George King was integral to MBMA's executive committee from 1987 to 1990, and again from around 1992 to 1995. He also served as chairman twice in 1990 and 1995. George felt his call to duty was rewarding because of the significant achievements of that era. He provided the following assessment of MBMA's contributions through investment in research:

"Throughout its history, MBMA's solid commitment to research has had a major influence on the industry. This research has enabled the industry to broaden its horizons in terms of end use of metal systems. Metal became more than 'tin sheds' and 'shades and shelters.' Metal systems became widely used and attractive—because of the research effort. And, the research enabled the technical committee to work with model and city code authorities to gain wider acceptance of metal building systems in the marketplace.

Research, development and engineering ... along with certification ... changed our industry and led to tremendous growth. And it was all accomplished by a group of highly competitive companies who chose to unite and come together for a common cause. I've seen this happen to some extent in other associations, but none have been as successful at this as the MBMA."

Harry R. (Bob) Lowe, P.E., was chairman of MBMA in 1999 and 2005. Throughout his career, he spent a total of 16 years on MBMA's board of directors and worked on many committees and special initiatives as well. "I have witnessed the evolution of the MBMA," he says, "from an exclusive 'Good ol' Boys' club to a flexible organization that responds proactively to inevitable change." Here's what he said in 2005 as he pondered the impact of MBMA:

"Sometimes I wonder just where our industry would be today if the MBMA did not exist. Our market share would have shriveled by just the lack of influence in codes alone. And the credibility of the industry would be in question without a stringent certification process. We will never know the extent of the impact this one association has had—and will have—on our industry, our country, our world. It may be a 'quiet' association, but its influence is powerful and lasting."

Wisdom is made of words that stand the test of time. These statements, from leaders through the years, affirm the importance of MBMA and its contributions of the past. Thanks to what MBMA has done, future generations will benefit; and the next generation of metal building systems professionals will take us to new heights that we can't currently envision.

Here's to an exciting—and amazing—future!