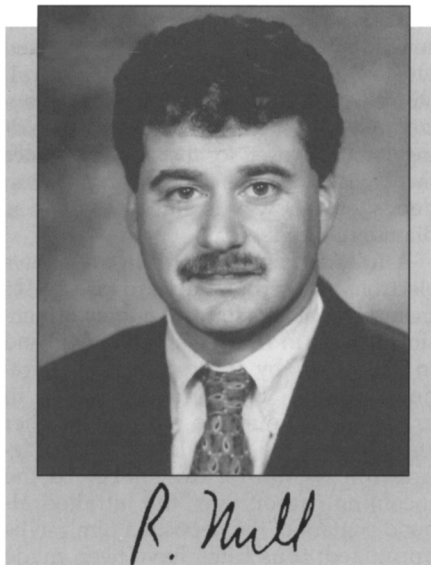


R.S.V.P.

I started my year as President of the Materials Research Society by writing a letter similar to this one, in which I invited comment on what you value most (or least) about our Society, and on what you think are the most important initiatives for the future. Expecting overwhelming response, special e-mail aliases and web-sites were set up, and the result was... nothing—not a single electronic chirp from the entire membership! If there is one thing that I have learned and re-learned during my term, it is the critical importance of continuous input from our members. So, please do let us know what you think. Use the telephone, e-mail or fax (my contact coordinates are phone: 804-982-5658, fax: 804-982-5660, e-mail: rh5c@virginia.edu), come and talk to any MRS officer at the Fall and Spring Meetings, leave messages on the MRS website, participate in the surveys we construct—whichever is the most convenient mechanism to let us know what you think is most valuable (or feel is most lacking) among the services we provide.

So what (apart from lonely nights scanning empty websites and e-mail boxes) have we been up to in the last year? Perhaps the biggest news is that we have a brand new headquarters building. The driving forces behind constructing this new headquarters were necessity and financial prudence (our old headquarters was rented, and had become inadequate), but we also believe that this new building offers enormous potential. How do we best use it to interface with our membership, the materials research community in general, and the rest of the world? How do we put the best face of materials research forward? Perhaps a materials museum, or a hands-on display for school children? Please give us your ideas. Volunteers especially welcome!

The Society has also made enormous



strides into the electronic age in the past year. Fully 60% of those of you who submitted abstracts to this year's Fall Meeting did so through the Web. We have also recently hired a technical editor, Gopal Rao, for our website. Gopal will lead the effort to establish "mrs.org" as the third thrust (along with our meetings and our printed publications) of our vision to make MRS the leading technical provider of up-to-the-minute materials research content.

We have also made the decision to restructure our Fall Meetings in Boston. We all love these meetings, but the walks from sessions at the Sheraton to the Westin to the Marriott and back...they were getting old, weren't they? So beginning with the 1999 Fall Meeting, we will be starting a phased transition of most, and perhaps eventually all, of our technical sessions to the Hynes Convention Center, which is right next to the

Sheraton. The goal is to enhance the quality and "user-friendliness" of our meetings, but you will be the judge of the success of this experiment—so, again, please let us know!

In the fields of government and public affairs, there have been several initiatives this year. MRS has been a central participant in two major multisociety press events supporting increased federal funding of scientific research (see *Washington News* in this issue of *MRS Bulletin* and *MRS Bulletin*, May 1997, p. 10). The Society also canvassed every member of the House and Senate, arguing against the proposed removal of the taxation waiver for graduate student tuition benefits in the last budget—a proposal that was ultimately averted, to the great relief of us all (see *MRS Bulletin*, October 1997, p. 16). And in pursuit of the goal of educating the general public about the excitement and importance of materials research, Julia M. Phillips, the chair of our Public Affairs Committee, has led an effort to develop a video news insert (to be aired on television news broadcasts) and a documentary (to be aired on PBS) on the materials advances that fueled the development of the transistor and microelectronics (see *Public Affairs Forum* in this issue of *MRS Bulletin*).

Finally I want to thank all of you with whom I've interacted over the past year for helping to make my experience as President of our Society so enjoyable. At the start of this year, I had two major goals for my term: to do as effective a job as possible, and to make sure that I had fun doing it. I am happy to report that the second goal, at least, has been reached!

With best wishes to you all,

ROBERT HULL
1997 MRS President

Please contact MRS at its new location:



Old Address:
9800 McKnight Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15237



Materials
Research
Society

506 Keystone Drive,
Warrendale, PA 15086-7573 USA

Phone (operator): 412-779-3003
Phone (automated attendant): 412-779-3004
Advertising & Exhibits: 412-779-8312
Fax: 412-779-8313

E-mail addresses and our MRS Website remain unchanged.

Information about the Materials Research Society and its full range of products and services can be found on the internet: <http://www.mrs.org/>