



The August 2009 *Penetrant Professor* *from Met-L-Chek®*



Kermit Skeie

As almost everyone now knows, Kermit Skeie passed away, after a lifetime in the NDT industry. Kermit was not just another player in the field, he was a well known pioneer in many respects, and certain current equipment and practices reflect his input. There will be a tribute to Kermit in the next edition of MATERIALS EVALUATION, but we want to say a little about Kermit that will not be in that tribute.



First, Kermit began his working career at the dawn of the use of penetrants. He was employed as a junior metallurgist in 1942 at the Basic Magnesium plant in Henderson, Nevada, where they had a small quantity of ZL-1 penetrant in their lab. Using it introduced him to the test method. He joined Magnaflux® in 1945 as a field engineer. At that time, ZL-1 was apparently the only fluorescent penetrant on the market, and it was a Method A water washable penetrant. Some situations



were encountered in which the water washable method was not entirely satisfactory, and Kermit was there when post emulsifiable penetrant systems were designed.

During his career with Magnaflux® he successfully sold both equipment and penetrant materials to a number of major companies in the U. S. He left Magnaflux® and then went to work for Uresco, a firm that combined the sales organization of Bob Schulz with the penetrants developed by James Alburger at Shannon Luminous Materials Company.

After a period of time he became a consultant and developed several test pieces that are used today in the quality assurance of magnetic particle testing.

Anyone who was present at a society meeting at which Kermit was also present will have witnessed his weighty presence. Kermit was no shrinking violet. He had firm

opinions and the experience and data to back them up, combined with an unforgettable voice. He is a person who will surely be missed.

The NDT industry might be like a number of other industries, in that it is maturing. As this happens, individuals who have had a major impact on the industry age, retire, and eventually pass away, or, in some instances, they move out of the field.

Kermit was one of these, but in recent years others have also been lost to the penetrant field. To name a few, there was **Loy Sockman, James Alburger, Adolf Fijalkowski, Norman Hyam, Orlando Molina, Vilma Holmgren, and Amos Sherwin**, all of whom were involved with the development and application of penetrants. This field of experience is shrinking at the moment. We feel very good at **Met-L-Chek®**, since between Bill and Mike, we have more than 90 years of experience, as Kermit would say, “**with green fingernails.**” No matter what your question, we are here to share our experience with you to help you solve whatever question or problem that you might have.

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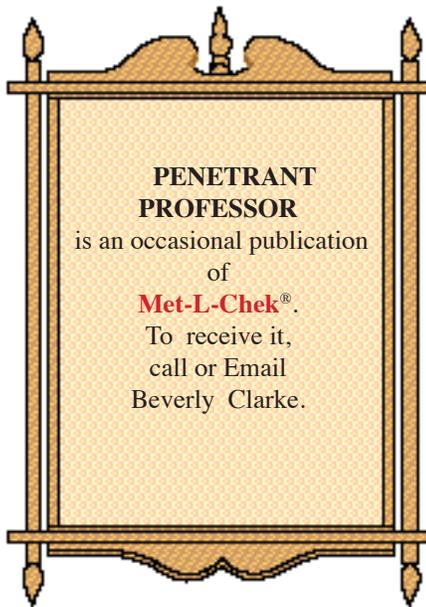
Dave Burdick

We have just learned that Dave Burdick, sales manager for Sherwin Inc. recently passed away. Our sincere sympathy to Dave's family.

Dave was always cheerful, and a well liked active participant in the local Los Angeles section of ASNT. We know Dave will be missed by the chapter and his employer.



Flags of the month
Urbana-Champaign
Illinois
(home of the Illini)



"RUMORS"

Rumors are a problem, especially when they begin from an unknown source and when they allege things that are of importance, like rocking one's boat. The power of rumors is pretty great. During World War 2, the government had an active campaign to stop rumors from spreading. Believing some of the stuff that was "planted" by our enemies could affect the spirit of our troops and their civilian backing.

And so it was with some dismay that we heard that auditors were demanding that the water content

of water washable penetrants and lipophilic emulsifiers had to be determined by using **ASTM D-95**, and that the **Karl Fischer** titration method was not allowed. The **ASTM D-95** method was first designated many years ago, and it is actually not a very good method for this analysis. It cannot determine the water content of azeotropic liquids, is time consuming to perform, a bit dangerous, more costly than the titration method, and not as accurate. Most current approved laboratories have given up using D-95, so it was a shock to hear that this was now the only approved method.



*Penprof celebrates 16 years of
continuous service to
NDT community*

Now, we cannot state that auditors are or are not insisting on the use of **ASTM D-95** only.

There are many auditors, and we are not privy to what they do or do not require, since they often seem to act using their own ideas. But we wanted to check to see if **NADCAP** had any place in this drama, so we inquired of Phil Keown.

Phil reported back to us that the **NADCAP** checklist mirrors the **ASTM E-1417** requirement, which allows either **ASTM D-95** or the **Karl Fischer** method. We were obviously pleased to hear this, and are equally pleased to pass this information on to our readers. So if you have heard that D-95 is the only acceptable game in town, it turns out that this is most likely just a rumor.

The Penetrant Professor



Penprof
takes grandchildren
white water rafting in Utah

