

Living Through Change

BY TOM KLEMENS

There's a new way to leverage your connection to *MSC*.

MY GRANDMOTHER WAS BORN IN 1900, which made it pretty easy to figure out how old she was at any given time. More than once in my adolescent years, and numerous times since, I've reflected on how much change she saw in her lifetime.

Granny was born long before automobiles became the default mode of transportation in the U.S. Yet, nearly three-quarters of a century later, she would drive alone from Seattle to Pittsburgh to be at our wedding. She had a lot of spunk.

She also had a lot of wisdom. I remember Granny more for her multitude of anecdotes, though, than for any full-blown stories. One such snippet came out as I was preparing for my first semester at Carnegie-Mellon University. Granny attended Carnegie Tech, as it was then known, in the Prohibition era. Those were the days when young women went there, as she had, to study home economics. That's also where she met my grandfather, a young electrical engineering instructor who, a number of years later, would develop the silent motor for phonographs, i.e., record players. (How many of you remember the "old" phonographs that had motors that hummed?)

My favorite Granny anecdote is one for which the details are sketchy, but a little imagination makes up for that. It had to do with her slipping out the back door of a speakeasy on the corner of campus one night just as the Prohibition Unit agents were coming in the front door. That was Granny, all right.

She saw the arrival of automobiles, airplanes, radio, and movies, as well as the passage of two world wars, to say nothing of events in her own personal life. And she was generous in sharing her life lessons, especially with her grandchildren.

Perhaps the single most significant thing I learned from Granny was not to be afraid of trying something new. She was the first person to offer me a cup of coffee, when I was about nine. (It took awhile to develop a taste for the stuff...) She had a great attitude about change, and I'm sure that helped her deal with an ever-changing world.

Which brings us to the reason for this little discourse. For all the changes that Granny lived through, she never got to use the Internet. Talk about a change—who would have thought

a dozen years ago that so much of our lives today would revolve around a network of computers? Or that the world would be sharing so much information electronically? If Granny were here today, she would be using an iPad and tweeting about it.

How about you? Are you embracing the new media, or ignoring it?

Regular readers of *Modern Steel Construction* are well aware that electronic archives are readily available at www.modernsteel.com. But you may be surprised to learn that several new features are now being offered on the *MSC* website. And they go beyond simply presenting information by offering additional links and other resources to help navigate the swelling sea of information.

Steel in the News – Located on the *MSC* home page, this section now features one (or more) new items every weekday. Be sure to catch the new "Steel Shot" posted every Friday for an interesting look at our favorite material in various poses. By selecting the "View more news..." link, you also can go back into the SITN archives, conveniently grouped by month.

We've also enlisted several *MSC* subscribers as contributing editors to share interesting news and information. **Jennifer Jernigan** is our Steel Shots specialist and also an estimator for Hirschfeld Industries, Dallas. **Jim D'Aloisio**, of Klepper, Hahn & Hyatt, East Syracuse, N.Y., focuses on all things green. **Lauren DiPalma** of Thornton Tomasetti's Chicago office heads the Young Engineer Committee of the Structural Engineers Association of Illinois. **Daniel Popp** is the director of the Chicago office of Baldrige & Associates Structural Engineering. You can read more about them at www.modernsteel.com/contributing_bios.php.

Twitter – Follow @ModernSteel on Twitter for interesting items and observations, offered as they come to the editors' attention. Even if you don't yet "tweet" you can read the latest *MSC* tweets at <http://twitter.com/modernsteel>.

MSC Online Edition – Did you know that the new issue of *MSC* goes live online on the first of each month? The recently enhanced online edition is filled with interactive links and tools for navigation, translation, and sharing with your colleagues. It also features a growing issue archive that is searchable issue by issue or for the entire library. As online magazines go, we think you'll find this one pretty user-friendly.

Online Archive – The "Archives" section of the *MSC* website is nothing new, but it's worth a reminder from time to time. There you can download PDF versions of articles from the most recent issue back to 1996.

With the newly expanded variety of media available through *MSC*, you're encouraged to share. If you come across something interesting, or if you would like to become one of our regular contributors, drop us a line. Contact information is on page 6.

And remember, for an early look at what's new each month, go to www.modernsteel.com on the 1st.

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Senior editor Tom Klemens joined the staff of Modern Steel Construction in 2009. Among other adventures, he spent one summer of his college years as a laborer in the hot strip mill at J&L Steel's South Side Works in Pittsburgh, and has had rust in his veins ever since.

Have an opinion you'd like to share in "Topping Out"? Send your feedback to Tom Klemens, senior editor, at klemens@modernsteel.com.