

III. International Symposium APCOM Berlin, West Germany, September 17-21, 1990

APCOM XXII was organised jointly by the Technical and Free Universities of Berlin and was held in the International Congress Centre. This is the 6th largest conference centre in the world. It has facilities for up to 24,000 delegates and so it easily accommodated APCOM's 400 attendees.

Over 400 delegates represented over 30 different countries and as one may have expected the majority of the delegates were from Germany. It was interesting to note, although perhaps surprising considering the recent political changes, that the East German delegation was the highest in APCOM's history.

Approximately 200 papers were presented, around half of these were from universities, around a third from industry and the remainder came from state organisations such as research institutes and laboratories. Almost 70% of the presentations were mining or ore body valuation related. The processing industry was very poorly represented with only 7% of the papers. This is the lowest of any APCOM meeting and was disappointing to the organisers as well as to the mineral processors in the delegation.

The keynote address was given by P.H. Williams of Anglo American Corporation, Johannesburg, South Africa. It was entitled *Thirty Years of Application of Computers in Mining within AAC*. The presentation was fascinating and certainly set the scene for the next few days.

Expert systems featured highly throughout the conference but on the whole were quite disappointing. By far the most interesting was an excellent paper given by Mrs Jamsela from Kemira Oy, Finland who described a real time expert system for phosphate plant operation control. Another worthy of note was *A Knowledge Based system for the Simulation of Batch and Continuous Carbon-in-Leach systems* presented by Prof. J. van Deventer from University of Stellenbosch, South Africa. Very few papers illustrated practical examples of expert systems and most described systems which are either in the planning and design stage or which are pure research projects that are unlikely to ever be applied commercially. However, one area which does show promise for expert systems is that of risk assessment. Several papers focused on this problem covering subjects such as mine ventilation planning, detection and reduction of methane explosion risk and engineering risk assessment. In fact risk assessment in general had a very high profile throughout the conference.

As with previous APCOM's there were several sessions devoted to CAD applications and statistics. An interesting presentation was given by Nottingham University on their MINDER system (MINE Design using Expert Reasoning). MINDER is a decision support system for surface mine design using both commercial and in-house software. It was surprising that only two papers throughout the conference looked at environmental issues concerning the minerals industry.

The official languages of the conference were German, English and Russian with simultaneous translation of each paper as it was presented. The proceedings of the conference cover three volumes. Each paper is published in its original format and only the abstract is translated into the other two languages. Proceedings are available to non-delegates and these can be ordered from:

F.L. Wilke
Universitätsbibliothek der Technischen Universität Berlin
Erlaubung Publikationen
Postfach 17. Juni 135
10000 Berlin 12

APCOM XXIII will be held at the University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona on April 7-11th 1992. The first call for papers has just been released and the emphasis for this meeting will be on the practical rather than theoretical, particularly new and potential computer applications within the minerals industries. The conference will be in English only

K.A. Lewis

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Reviewers

Dr. R.A. Williams is a lecturer at the Department of Chemical Engineering, University of Manchester Institute of Science & Technology, England

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Prof. R.W. Smith is at the Mackay School of Mines, University of Nevada-Reno, Reno, Nevada, U.S.A.

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Prof. M.Z. Dogan is at the Mining Faculty, Mineral Processing Section, Istanbul Technical University, Turkey

Prof. J.S.J. Van Deventer is at the Department of Metallurgical Engineering, University of Stellenbosch, South Africa

Feb

K.A. Lewis is at Warren Spring Laboratory, Gunnels Wood Rd, Stevenage, Herts., England.

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