

Scripps Industrial Associates Administrative History

Deborah Day

Scripps Institution of Oceanography Archives, 1999

Scripps Institution of Oceanography Director William A. Nierenberg suggested

"forming a traveling committee to raise money for the operation of the [Geological] Data Center. ... I suggest the minimum objective hitting about eight oil companies for \$50,000 a year"

in a memorandum to H. William Menard written August 11, 1969¹. George Shor has suggested that this program be modeled on a similar program at Lamont-Doherty Geophysical Institute. Leaders of Texaco, Inc. learned of the program from SIO Geological Research Division Chair George Shor, and sent a check for \$20,000 payable to the Scripps Industrial Associates Program in 1971. A number of petroleum companies and other companies, such as the Science Applications International Corporation, with an interest in oceanography were invited to join the organization between 1971 and 1973.

Membership in SIA had several benefits during this period, including reference and quick copy service for geological data at Scripps and invitations to special seminars first offered in 1971. By 1974, seventeen companies were members of Scripps Industrial Associates and \$600,000 in contributions had been received². SIA funds were used to maintain the Geological Data Center, as research grants for SIO scientists and for student fellowships. Seminars became more structured with agendas and formal addresses by specific scientists as well as informal briefings on scientific developments and field results.

The organization of the structure became more formal in February 1974 when John E. Bennett was hired as Program Manager for SIA. A formal written charter of the organization was approved by SIO Director Nierenberg on March 20, 1974. The charter noted that SIA funds were:

...applied principally to support GRD activities at Scripps. In recognition of this fiscal assistance, Scripps has made readily available to the SIA members various survey data and other pertinent information; has facilitated access to more detailed records as requested; has provided liaison services with scientific personnel; and had conducted a series of seminars for membership on topics of timely interest.³

An SIA Advisory Council, as mandated by the charter, was formed on March 13, 1974. George Shor was chair.⁴

Membership in SIA continued to expand throughout the 1970's and eventually included both U.S. and foreign companies in diverse industries. In 1975 a sliding fee scale for SIA membership was adopted in lieu of a flat fee of \$20,000, but the SIA Advisory Committee found that this created inequities within the organization. A fixed fee was reestablished in 1976, and membership fees were increased periodically. Jack Bennett left Scripps in August 1975,

and George Shor and Tom Chase assumed his responsibilities for SIA. The advisory committee required that formal proposals be submitted for requests for SIA funds from SIO.

Fluctuations in the petroleum financial markets led some petroleum companies to reduce their contributions or cancel their SIA membership. In 1976, there were only ten SIA members. The SIA Steering Committee decided in 1978 to limit student fellowships funded out of the reduced SIA income to students of geological sciences and geophysics and to Applied Ocean Sciences and marine chemistry students whose work was relevant to geology and geophysics.

Beginning in 1976 Stuart Smith, Lori Hydock and Virginia Wells of the Geological Data Center were charged with acting as the primary Scripps SIA contact, running the semi-annual seminars as well as maintaining and organizing the SIA files and membership records. The privileges of SIA membership included permission to inspect and obtain copies of original and processed geophysical records in the Geological Data Center, periodic mailings of abstracts of in-press or recently published scientific papers written by SIO academic staff, and advanced notification of plans and routings of future research cruises. In September 1983, the SIA Advisory Committee recommended videotaping seminar talks.

Scripps Industrial Associates became inactive after the seminar held March 5, 1991 partly because reduced petroleum prices affected the members, but also because SIO/UCSD development efforts provided other opportunities for donors, including industrial donors, to make contributions to the Scripps Institution of Oceanography.

REFERENCES

1= William A. Nierenberg to Henry W. Menard, August 11, 1969. SIO Office of the Director (Nierenberg) Collection, Box 59, folder 12. SIO Archives.

2= Charter, Scripps Industrial Associates," March 20, 1974. Ibid.

3= Ibid.

4= W.A. Nierenberg memorandum March 13, 1974. Ibid. Members of the advisory committee were Victor Anderson, James Brune, Joseph Curray, Charles Cox, Francis Haxo, John Isaacs and John E. Bennett. Robert L. Fisher joined the committee in 1975.