



The tour started in Copenhagen . . .

A Contractor Tour of Europe

AWCI's European Study Mission Was an Unqualified Success in Business and Sightseeing

It was truly a study trip, although some would call it a junket or a nifty vacation.

Admittedly, it was much of these—but more—as 19 members of the special AWCI construction tour group spent two weeks visiting Northern Europe in May-June.

The contractors, along with their wives, traveled under the auspices of the Association's International Liaison Committee which set up the construction study group. As such, the group visited Denmark, Sweden, Germany and England.

One contractor in Great Britain-speaking at a joint dinner that the Americans attended—described the fast-moving 19 as “this group of Americans who are touring Europe in 5 minutes flat.”

Perhaps the schedule was jammed. And there can be little doubt that the study group did its best to make every minute count.

But in the May 27-June 10 period, they visited both residential and industrial job sites in Denmark, Sweden and Germany with plenty of opportunity to exchange talk with wall and ceiling contractors there. Then the trip was wrapped up with a joint meeting in Bath, Great Britain, on the occasion of the summer meeting of the Plastering Federation, the Dry Lining (drywall) Association, and the Suspended Ceiling Association.

In the interim, the group had an abundance of time and opportunity to sight-see, shop, and test the cultural impact of the countries they visited. Special arrangements were also made for the women to shop, visit job sites with their husbands and to participate in virtually all of the business-related activities.

Those participating in the tour included Mr. and Mrs. Lynn P. Lassiter, of Murray, Kentucky; Mr.

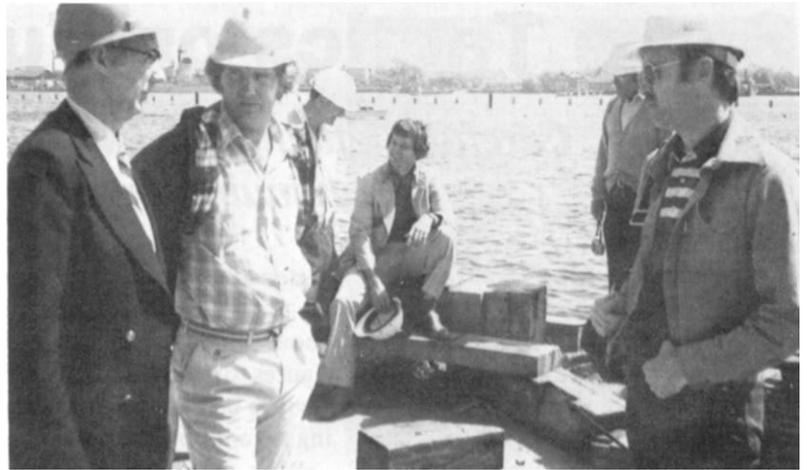
and Mrs. W. James Morrissey, of Raymond, New Hampshire; Mr. and Mrs. Clinton Fladland, St. Paul, Minnesota; Mr. and Mrs. Robert Moosbrugger, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Mr. and Mrs. Bryon L. Parrish, West Linn, Oregon; Mr. and Mrs. Andrew W. Spillman, El Paso, Texas; Mr. and Mrs. David J. St. Hilaire, Yalesville, Connecticut; Mr. and Mrs. Valdez Taylor, and daughter, Cheri, of Santa Barbara, California; and Mr. and Mrs. Gerald L. Wykoff, of Washington, D.C.

When all was said and done, the construction group visited residential job sites, a massive remodeling of a grain warehouse into quarter-million dollar condominium apartments, schools and laboratories, commercial office buildings, as well as the Rigips gypsum wallboard plant in Germany.

“There was more in this trip than



... with a visit to a warehouse job



... a talk on techniques ...



... then on to Malmo, Sweden ...

I really expected,” admitted Jim Morrissey, a superintendent for New Hampshire’s T. J. McCartney, Inc. “And it’s good to be able to compare the approach and techniques of others.”

Said Val Taylor, Val’s Painting & Drywall, “The procedures and methods appear similar—and they are. But I think it’s worthwhile for any wall and ceiling contractor to see how these different approaches reflect a country’s individual conditions and markets for building . . . the reason for the subtle shifts in emphasis.”

“That—plus the opportunity to see northern Europe under the best of conditions is what makes an international study trip like this so valuable.”

For others in the group, there were surprises. Those with a background in plastering were astonished to learn that there is no history

or presence of plastering in Sweden where brick and timber have long held sway in partitioning. And where—now—dry wall is making enormous inroads into both the residential and industrial-commercial markets.

In Denmark, though, the first stop on the fast-moving international agenda, the American construction people were escorted to two large jobs that also included plaster—one an old grain warehouse that was being converted into condominiums and the other a similar warehouse that had been made into a hotel.

On these jobs they were accompanied by Jorgen Dreyer, manager of Denmark’s Gyprok, and by Knud From, an architect with the same company.

There they watched the Danish craftsmen, who negotiate a pay package for each project rather than

for a time period, gutting the massive timbered structure and introducing a mixture of plastering, drywall and suspended ceilings. They also noted the use of a unique metal wire lath to which were attached porous ceramic Maltese cross coatings which provided enormous suction for plaster application.

Also evident was the use of triangular shaped plastic shims which could be anchored with a nail and then adjusted with hammer taps until the right elevation was attained with no danger of slippage because of the gripping reverse teeth in each triangle.

In Sweden, the Americans first visited—in the company of Gyprok marketing director and AWCI associate member Olav Haavimb—a high rise office and apartment building. Constructed with one of the Swede’s modern concrete pour-

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ing systems, the interior partitions were primarily load bearing concrete wall and drywall partitions on steel stud.

Windows were all thermo paned—in many cases triple paned—with a variation in Sweden of having the casements on pivots which allowed for swinging the windows around for maintenance and easy cleaning.

Also in Sweden the group visited a large single house development tract. They were both fascinated and critical of various aspects of house building in Sweden. The workmanship was extremely high quality with an emphasis on texturing or wall papering the drywall partitions.

Generally, it was explained, the upstairs bedrooms in a new Swedish home are not finished. They are left there for the do-it-yourself pre-



... a commercial job in Berlin ...



... and a gypsum board factory ...



... a tour of Hameln, Germany ...



... a spray demonstration

ferences of the new home owner so the drywall business in Sweden contains a significant do-it-yourself quotient.

The modern rebuilding miracle that is Germany—discounting the unseasonable 105° temperatures—was dramatically displayed in a tour put together for the study group by Karl-Otto Griep, the marketing director for Rigips, Germany's drywall manufacturing company. Griep is an AWCI Associate member, too.

With his wife, Lonnie, Karl pulled together German manufacturers, engineers, architects, contractors and researchers to give the group a penetrating and accurate look at the way Germany handles its construction—and how drywall penetrates a traditional plastering market.

Not only were there a number of factory and job site visits, but the Americans were treated to a complete tour of the Western part of Berlin, taken on a half-day tour of Communist Berlin, and given a chance to spend time in Berlin's many shops and restaurants.

After an event-packed tour of Berlin, the group flew to Hameln, the German city home of the fa-

mous Pied Piper story and the surrounding Hannoverian countryside. Again, the Americans had an opportunity to visit job sites, the Rigips factory where a complete



... plasterwork graffiti ...



... in England, a meeting ... for exchange of ideas



... a look at ceilings ...



... more job site visits

tour was arranged similar to the Eternit factory tour in Berlin, and also enjoyed the excitement of visiting centuries-old castles and gardens.

Once in Great Britain, the contractor group went to Bath where the British associations were conducting their summer meetings. While there, the two countries held a joint buffet luncheon and meeting and topped off the day's activities with an outstanding dinner-dance.

The following day in London, the Americans were entertained royally in the world famous Plaisterers Hall with a 9-course dinner arranged by Harry Humble and his assistant Michael Coyle.

For the occasion, AWCI member and former vice president Reg Atkins brought a good contingency of British construction people to help brighten the festivities.

The final day of the two-week trip was spent as a free day roaming the sights of London, capped off with a visit to the famous Victoria Palace theatre where the group saw the London company in the play "Annie."

The next day was a travel day—and a first hand experience for the contractor group to see how Lon-

don's airport was reacting to the grounding of the DC-10s as a result of the Chicago air crash. Fortu-

nately, there were no serious transportation problems and everyone arrived home on schedule.