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OUR RIVERS' HERITAGE—REVIEW OF THE 2009 SIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE, PITTSBURGH

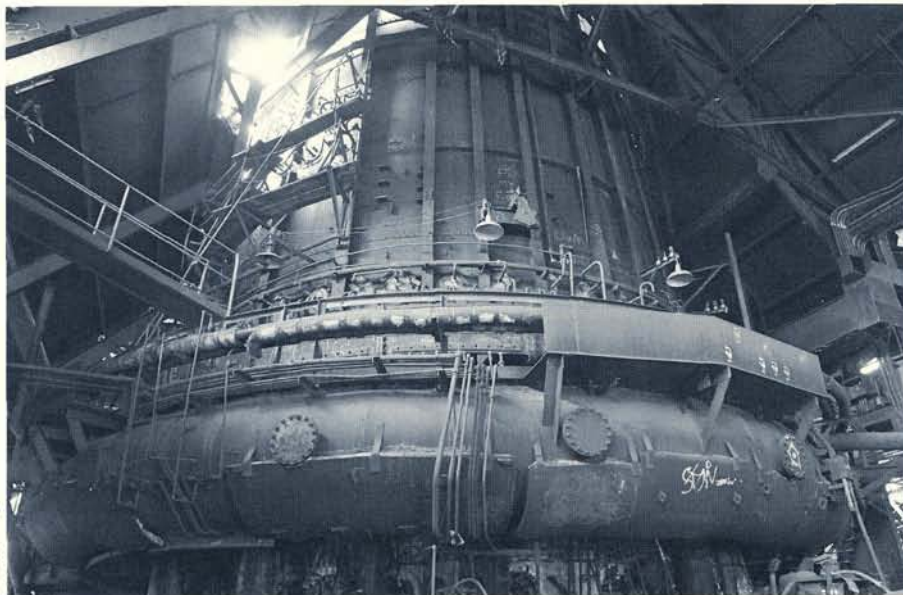
Nearly 200 SIA members gathered in Pittsburgh for the 38th Annual Conference, May 28-31. This was the SIA's third visit to Pittsburgh, making it the only city to host more than two conferences. The 4th Annual Conference (1974) and the 22nd Annual Conference (1993) were also held in the Steel City. This provided some of our long-time members the opportunity to reflect on the de-industrialization of a region that once held the greatest concentration of blast furnaces, steel mills, and coal mines in the nation. Manufacturing still takes place here, but at nowhere near the scale or scope that was evident during earlier SIA conferences. Numerous were the brownfields redeveloped for residences, commercial buildings, or parkland. The 2009 conference planning committee organized some traditional process tours, but the conference theme was "Our Rivers' Heritage," reflecting Pittsburgh's embrace of efforts to com-

memorate the historic industrial corridors stretching along the Allegheny, Monongahela, and Ohio rivers. Participants visited museums, historic sites, and infrastructure associated with Pittsburgh's industrial heritage. The sampling of sites focused primarily on the fields of iron and steel, rail and river transportation, coal and coke, and oil.

The format of the Annual Conference followed SIA traditions with Thursday early bird tours and opening reception; Friday process and historic sites tours, and evening show-and-tell; Saturday paper sessions, annual business meeting (see article in this issue), and banquet; and Sunday tours. Tours and activities were accompanied by an excellent guidebook edited by Barb Grundy and with an introduction to Pittsburgh's industrial history by Ronald Carlisle.

Thursday offered a choice of three early-bird tours. The first, "A Three For," was organized by Janis Dofner of the Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area, an organization

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Michael Hoyt

A view from the casting floor at Carrie Furnaces.

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