



**Materials
Processing
Institute**

THE SOCIAL ROLE OF BUSINESS

A Speech given at the preview night for the Graft & Glory Exhibition,
Materials Processing Institute.

16th January 2020



Ladies & Gentlemen, on behalf of the Chairman and Council of the Materials Processing Institute I would like to welcome you to a preview evening for the touring Craft & Glory exhibition. We will hear more about the exhibition in due course from Liz Mayes, the Director of the Common Room, who have curated these exhibits and are touring them around the North East, but first I would like to say a few words about the Materials Processing Institute and why we are supporting this exhibition.

Many of you have been associated with the Institute for some time and you know that as an organisation we operate at the cutting edge of science and technology, developing new innovations for the manufacture of steel, metals and materials. Our research teams are focussed on topics such as the development of new advanced materials, achieving a low carbon and hydrogen future, deploying new digital technologies and reducing waste through a circular economy.

However, the Institute is more than this. I founded this organisation in 2014, divesting it from its then parent company, as a not-for-profit business. We have a high degree of employee participation, with one staff member directly elected to the board, a profit-sharing scheme that sees the lower paid more highly rewarded and 10% employee ownership. For some this would be considered radical, but for me it is just good business.

We recognise also that we have an important role to play in our local community. In setting up the Institute in 2014 I wrote a societal and ethical mission, which sits alongside our day to day commercial operations. This mission commits us to supporting our community through education, economic development and art & culture. This is why we have supported local artists and cultural activities, including the award-winning Steel Stories exhibition at Kirkleatham Museum and why we recently set up our Millman Scholarship programme to enable bright scholars from this region to study materials science at a UK university.

This event tonight is the launch of a two-week programme of activities that manages to support all three of these aims. The centrepiece is this exhibition which is open to the public from the 20th to 31st January. I think it is important also to acknowledge that one of the exhibits here features the New Hartley Pit Disaster which took place on this day, 16th January 1862 and where 204 men and boys lost their lives. For someone like me, who comes from a mining community and whose family has been touched by such tragedies, some of the stories surrounding this event are simply too upsetting to tell, but I do think it would be appropriate at this time for us to observe a minute's silence in memory of those who lost their lives, their families and all those who whose toil in the collieries kept the blast furnaces smelting, the home fires burning and the wheels of our economy turning.

Thank you. As tragic as the New Hartley Pit Disaster was, it did result in safety improvements for all miners, including the stipulation that all collieries should have two shafts. It is moments like this that we have duty to pass on to future generations and I am pleased to say that as part of the events surrounding this exhibition there will be two schools programmes and a family activity day, supported the Common Room, the National Literacy Trust and Redcar & Cleveland Council.

Using the exhibition as a springboard for the future we are also hosting business panel discussion on the future of engineering in the UK, organised in collaboration with the Cleveland Institution of Engineers. More than this, we will have an artist in residence, creating a new artwork inspired by this exhibition and which will feature as a permanent and lasting legacy here at the Institute.

None of this would have been possible without the vision of the Common Room and I am delighted that their director Liz Mayes, joins us this evening. I have known Liz for a number of years, first in her role as regional director for EEF. I immediately identified Liz as someone with whom I shared a common set of values and so it was with great pleasure that I welcomed her move to the Common Room and the revitalisation of the Mining Institute in Newcastle. We are delighted to be supporting that project by acting as hosts of this exhibition and so I would like to invite Liz to say a few words about the project.

Thank you Liz. We are delighted to be one of your partners for this exhibition, giving the people of Redcar, South Bank and beyond the opportunity to find out more about our shared industrial heritage. You are all now welcome to spend some time viewing the exhibition and I hope also telling your friends to come along and look too. Thank you.

Chris McDonald is the Chief Executive Officer of the Materials Processing Institute. The Institute carries out industrial research and innovation in advanced materials, low carbon energy, digital technologies and the circular economy supporting the materials, processing and energy sectors for over 75 years. Chris led the divestment and return to independent, not-for-profit ownership of the Institute in 2014.

Chris's background is in industrial research and manufacturing, where he has worked internationally. A graduate of Cambridge University, Chris is a Fellow the Institute of Chemical Engineers and of the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining. He sits on industrial advisory boards at a number of universities, including Oxford and Sheffield.

Chris has an interest in innovation management and industry dynamics and in addition to leading the Institute, he provides expert opinion and consultancy support to companies, institutes, Governments and public bodies in innovation and technology strategy and management. He also advises on the technical due diligence aspects of mergers and acquisitions.

Chris is prominent in the development of public policy, around innovation, steel, SMEs, where he works to support growth and inward investment. Chris is the policy chair for Innovation and Enterprise for the Federation of Small Businesses, a member of the CBI Regional Council and Shadow Monetary Policy Committee for the North East, the Chair of the UK Metals Council and a member of the Steel Advisory Board for UK Steel (EEF).

Chris is often called to commentate in the media on innovation leadership and the steel industry.

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Chris McDonald
Chief Executive Officer
Materials Processing Institute

Materials Processing Institute

The Materials Processing Institute is an independent, open access and not-for-profit technology and innovation centre working with industry, government and academia worldwide. Support ranges from small scale, site based investigations, through to long term collaborative research programmes.

The Materials Processing Institute is expert in advanced materials, low carbon energy and the circular economy, specialising in challenging processes, particularly those involving high specification materials, high temperatures and difficult operating conditions.

The Institute has over 70 years' experience as a leading UK technology provider. Extensive materials processing knowledge is supported by state-of-the-art facilities with a broad range of equipment, from laboratories through to demonstration, scale-up and production plant.

Scientists and engineers work with industry and apply their expertise to develop and implement robust solutions to research and development and improvements for products and processes.

Expertise is spread across a wide range of disciplines, including:

- > Materials Characterisation, Research and Development
- > Simulation and Design
- > Monitoring, Measurement and Control in Hostile Environments
- > Process Development and Upscaling
- > Specialist Melting and Steel / Alloy Production
- > Engineering / Asset Management
- > Materials Handling
- > Minerals and Ores

Research and project management teams deliver support across a wide range of industrial and manufacturing sectors including:

- > Metals and Metals Manufacture
- > Chemicals and Process
- > Nuclear
- > Oil & Gas
- > Energy
- > Aerospace and Defence
- > Mining and Quarrying





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