

editorial

A second home and a new era for AIP

We report this month on a new second site in the New York Suburbs (see page 44) now in the process of being occupied by the American Institute of Physics at Woodbury, Long Island. The decision to invest in this new site marks a significant milestone in AIP's 47-year-old history—it signifies that AIP has reached maturity in terms of size and functions.

The first 12 years of AIP's existence were spent in rented space until money could be raised to purchase a townhouse in midtown Manhattan. Within another 12 years this building was bursting at the seams with a staff of 50 and the Institute acquired its present headquarters site on East 45th Street just across First Avenue from the United Nations. Renovation of the original building and erection of an adjoining building at this location were completed in 1962, providing a four-story facility with 30 000 ft² of office space.

During this period, with the mushrooming growth of physics journals, the AIP staff was increasing at the rate of about 10% per year. By 1966 the staff had become too large for the headquarters building and some operations were forced to occupy rented space in nearby office buildings. This has been the situation for the last 12 years; more than half of the Institute's current staff has been housed outside the headquarters building in rented space at three different locations.

Now AIP will be able to consolidate up to 200 of its staff at the new suburban site and the remainder in midtown Manhattan. This is a siting pattern that has already been adopted by other large publishers—commercial organizations such as McGraw-Hill and scientific societies such as the American Chemical Society. The economic advantage is clear: those parts of AIP's publishing operation that do not interact directly with the physics community and hence do not need to be in the city can be moved to the suburbs to take advantage of lower real estate and labor costs. Given the \$17 million-per-year volume of AIP's operations, the anticipated savings will not be insignificant. The offices of the member societies together with the parts of AIP that function well in the city will remain at AIP's midtown headquarters.

The deeper implication of the new siting arrangement is that AIP has achieved full stature in

terms of staff size and the scope of services it performs for its nine member societies. The rapid growth of past years has led to a current staff of about 370. The functions of AIP's 13 divisions are now well defined and the value of their services has been tested with years of experience. Future growth in the extent and efficiency of services will be accomplished with the help of increased computerization.

All physicists can take pride that AIP in less than 50 years has grown to be and continues to be a strong and vital organization that has earned the respect and admiration of the scientific community in which its leadership is widely recognized.

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