

# The Albert S. Osborn Award of Excellence

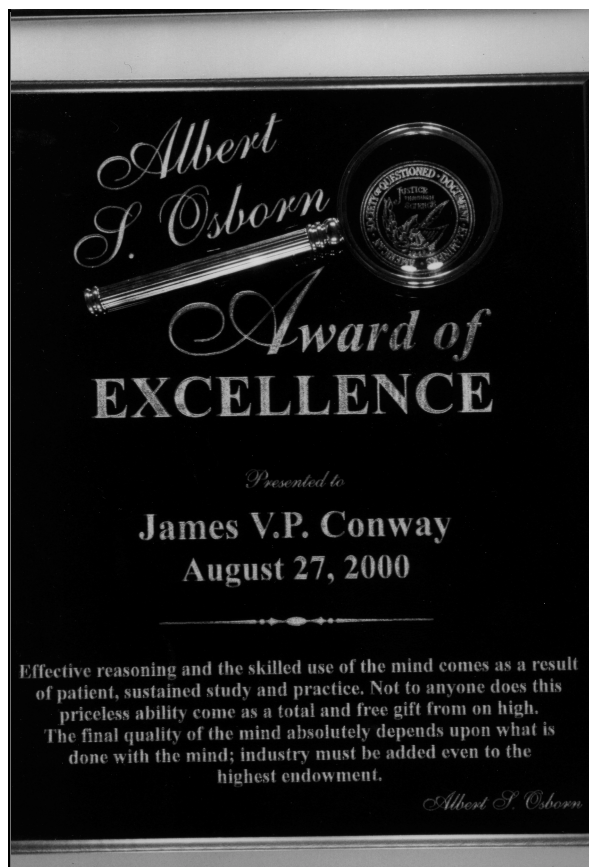
## Robert J. Muehlberger

One of the most difficult decisions which faced the Executive Committee this past year was the selection of an awardee of the Albert S. Osborn Award of Excellence. The award itself was approved at the Executive Committee meeting held at Scottsdale, AZ in August of 1997. However, the daunting task was to choose one candidate who met the following criteria:

- A. The recipient must be a living member in good standing of the American Society of Questioned Document Examiners and may be either a regular or life member at the time of the nomination.
- B. The recipient must have been active in the field of questioned document examination for a period of at least twenty-five years and must have been a member of the ASQDE for a period of at least twenty years.
- C. The award shall only be bestowed on persons who have attained exceptional distinction in terms of:
  1. Cumulative activities, such as professional research or literary accomplishments which advance the field of questioned document examination, and
  2. Outstanding service to the ASQDE over a long period of time, such service resulting in generally recognized and beneficial improvements in the Society.

The number of truly qualified individuals within the Society who meet these criteria had stymied the Executive Committee from granting the inaugural award. It was believed to be appropriate that in the year 2000, we should begin the process of recognizing those members who have dedicated their careers to the advancement of questioned document examination and, in particular to those who have provided the leadership of the Society, making it the most recognized professional organization of questioned document examiners.

Mr. James V. P. Conway had once expressed the desire to become the world's best expert on questioned documents. During a career with the U. S. Postal Inspection Service that began in 1939, Mr. Conway pursued that goal with an intensity and drive that was at once recognized by Inspection Service management as a valued asset to the organization. His initial goal was subordinated several times when he was called upon to serve in a number of management positions, culminating as Deputy Postmaster General of the U.S. Postal Service.

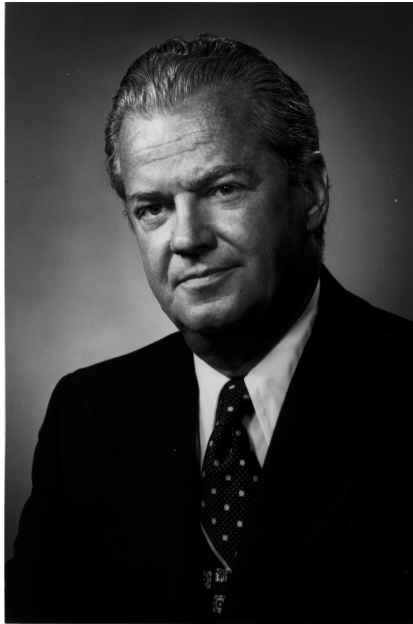


*The Albert S. Osborn Award of Excellence awarded to James V. P. Conway*

## Inaugural Honoree: James V. P. Conway

Even while serving in these management positions, he continued to be professionally involved in questioned document examination and contributed as a member of ASQDE by preparing papers for presentation at the Annual General Meetings. Many of these papers dealt with the role of the questioned document examiner in some of the management problems which he faced, from how evidence is collected and used, to the use of questioned document examination in arbitration hearings. In all, Mr. Conway prepared and presented over ninety articles and papers and authored a reference text in 1959, *Evidential Documents*, that is still widely used today by questioned document examiners.

Upon his retirement from the U. S. Postal Service in 1980, Mr. Conway returned to the San Francisco area where he began and then resumed full-time his career in questioned document examination.



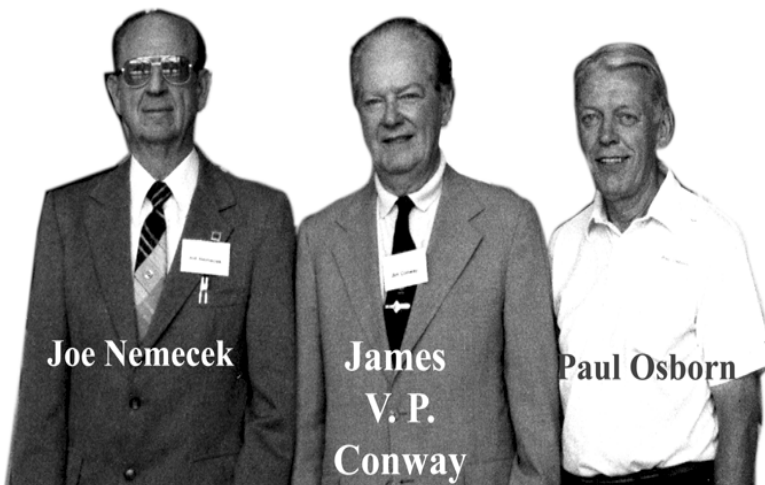
*James V. P. Conway*

Since 1940, Mr. Conway has qualified as an expert witness in federal, state, military and territorial courts and before grand juries and other judicial bodies in over 600 cases involving virtually every aspect of questioned document examination.

Mr. Conway has willingly given of his time to assist in the training of questioned document examiners and has often been the primary instructor for some of the American Board of Forensic Document Examiners (ABFDE) sponsored seminars. He has served as a Director with ABFDE and many have witnessed his incisive questioning of certification examinees. Although a session with Mr. Conway was often a very daunting one for the young examiner, he has always expressed that you should not be afraid of failure, and to confront the difficult problems: "it will make you humble."

Mr. Conway was a long time member of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences and received the "Distinguished Fellow Award" in February of 2000. Mr. Conway has served in the various positions on the Society's Executive Committee and succeeded two of his former colleagues with the U. S. Postal Inspection Service San Francisco Crime Laboratory, John Shimoda and David Crown, as President of the American Society of Questioned Document Examiners from 1988–1990.

Congratulations to Mr. James V. P. Conway, the winner of the 2000 Albert S. Osborn Award of Excellence! ✦



*Joe Nemecek, James V. P. Conway, and Paul Osborn at the 1990 ASQDE AGM*