



[Kenneth L. Power \(1924-1978\)](#)

2012 Inductee from Mining's Past

Kenneth L. Power received his degree in Metallurgical Engineering from The University of Arizona in 1947, with a professional degree of Metallurgical Engineer from the same institution in 1959.

Power began his career with the Anaconda Company, and then moved to Inspiration Consolidated Copper Co, where he served as concentrator superintendent. He left Inspiration for American Smelting and Refining (ASARCO) at Silver Bell near Tucson, Arizona. There, he became a proponent of a proposed copper recovery program- Liquid-Liquid extraction of copper, better known today as solvent extraction/electrowinning (SX/EW). His report to management was received with the comment that the company was a smelting company and didn't want to spend money on competing technology.

Shortly after this, in 1968, Ken met with Maxie Anderson, President of Ranchers Exploration & Development Co, who in 1967 had already decided to utilize SX/EW at their Bluebird Mine in Miami, Arizona, where design and construction was underway. He was hired as General Manager of the Bluebird Mine and successfully oversaw the world's first commercial operation of SX/EW in the copper industry. First solutions were run through the new plant in March, 1968. In a few months, regular production of 30,000 pounds of copper per day was achieved.

During the ten years he was with Ranchers, he became recognized as an authority on the leaching of copper oxide ores and the application of solvent extraction-electrowinning technology to the production of cathode copper. Aside from being General Manager of the Bluebird, he also served as Project Manager of Ranchers Durita (uranium) operation.

Although Kenneth L. Power's career was cut short when he died from an aortic aneurysm at age 53 while working at the Durita project, the influence he had on developing and popularizing the

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SX/EW processing method as a cost-effective and efficient recovery technology is still recognized today.