

Last week I went on a trip to Houston. While there, I took the opportunity to attend the Houston ASHRAE Chapter Meeting. It was very interesting to see how another large chapter conducts their monthly members meeting. For the most part, their meeting was the same as ours, but with a few differences. One, after everyone went through the buffet line and got seated, they kicked off their meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and an Invocation. Two, after the invocation, everyone in the room took a turn to stand up and introduce themselves including where they work and if they hold any ASHRAE board or committee position. Those couple of activities took a little time out of the meeting schedule but I thought they were very worthwhile. I think it would be great for the Central Oklahoma Chapter to start our meeting off the same way.

You probably aren't aware, but the Houston Chapter and the Central Oklahoma Chapter have some history together that goes way back, and it has to do with something very obscure: The origin of our very special name badges. See the excerpt below taken from Chapter 3 of my book, *"The Life and Times of Louis C Nettleship."*

History of the Central Oklahoma Chapter Meeting Name Badges

On September 12, 1967, Louis Loeffler Jr. wrote to Morris Backer of the Houston Chapter and asked if he would ship one of their Chapter name badges to him so that he could show it off at the next COK board of governors meeting. Louis Loeffler wrote in his letter that he had just recently made a trip to Houston, and while there, he attended a Houston Chapter ASHRAE meeting. While at the meeting, he noticed a large carrying case which they used to hold identification "buttons" for the members.



Photo 1 - Old paper nametag, circa 1965. Front and back

The old name tags the COK was using were 3" wide by 7" tall card stock cut to fit in a shirt or jacket breast pocket with the upper portion extending out of the pocket. One side was blue and said "ASHRAE Member" and had a line for you to write your name. It also had the month of each Chapter meeting so that you could track your attendance right on your nametag. The flip side was red, said "ASHRAE Guest"

and also had a line for your name and with whom you attended. The paper name tags functioned well enough, however, when Louis Loeffler saw the ones Houston was using, he was very impressed.

Once Louis Nettleship examined the sample that Louis Loeffler brought to the December 4, 1967, COK board of governors meeting, Louis Nettleship, then Chapter vice-president and president-elect, made a motion that a “committee be authorized to proceed with the purchase of badges and cases in an approximate amount of \$225.” The “badge committee” that was formed in 1967, and responsible for doing all the legwork to determine how to get the badges fabricated and stay within the imposed budget, was composed of Louis Loeffler Jr., Ham Nelson, and Bill Hulsey.

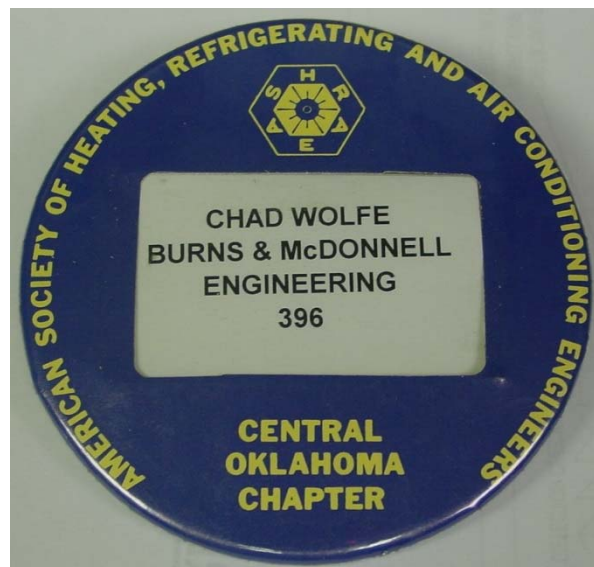


Photo 2 - Metal name badge. In use since 1968

The badges the two Louis’ proposed were round, blue in color, and had a clear window in the middle. Typed name cards were prepared by the membership committee that slid into the back of the badge and shown through the clear window. Having a removable card with the name allowed the name tag to be replaced and the metal badge reused indefinitely.

The final cost for 250 badges, one wooden carrying case that could hold 200 badges, and another one that could hold 100 badges, was \$206 including delivery. That equates to approximately \$1,460 in 2016 dollars! What Chapter would spend over a thousand dollars on name tags today?

The badges were used for the first time at the February 12, 1968, Chapter meeting. That happened to be the annual joint meeting between the Central Oklahoma and Northeastern Oklahoma Chapters. The COK members certainly showed up those Tulsa guys that day! However, after the first meeting, the COK BOG decided that approximately 20% of the metal name badges needed to be returned to the manufacturer to correct a manufacturing defect. They found that about 50 of the nameplates in the badge windows were on a steep slant, due to the card holder fastened to the back of the badge being out of line with the window on the front of the badge. Luckily, they ordered enough extra that those 50 didn’t need to be used yet. Having crooked names wouldn’t have looked so good in front of the Tulsa

guys. Also, the BOG decided all the typed paper name cards needed to be redone to include company affiliation, rather just name and badge number.



Photo 3 - Bill Collins and Lewis Wickline wearing the new name badges. Photo taken in April, 1968

February, 2018, will be the 50th anniversary for those metal name badges, as they are still in use at COK Chapter meetings today. Over the years, as senior members pass away, and others leave the Chapter, their badges are recycled for new members coming in. The attendance committee, especially Jim Wolfe, has issued a badge with a freshly printed name card in it to every new member, and kept the badge list up to date. They've also had to perform a repair or two on those old wooden carrying cases.

Incidentally, during the 1970-71 year when Louis Nettleship was president the second time, and with I.D. Nease serving as membership chairman, there was such an increase in the number of members, that a second order for blue metal name badges had to be placed.

Dusty Stoabs, PE, CPMP, LEED AP, ASHRAE Member

ASHRAE Central Oklahoma Chapter Historian