HISTORY
of
THE CENTRAL OKLAHOMA CHAPTER
of the
AMERICAN SOCIETY OF HEATING, REFRIGERATING
and
AIR-CONDITIONING ENGINEERS, INC.

1995-2011
The purpose of the Chapter is to promote the objectives of the society to advance the arts and sciences of heating, refrigerating, air conditioning and ventilation, and the allied arts and sciences for the benefit of the general public.
FOREWORD

The Central Oklahoma ASHRAE Chapter was established in 1935. This history survey begins where, History Recalled, covering the first 60 years of Central Oklahoma Chapter of ASHRAE leaves off. That writing covers history from 1935 through 1995 and is still available in printed as well as digital form on the Central Oklahoma ASHRAE Chapter website. This history update covers some of the highlights from the chapter’s 60th anniversary through its 75th year, 2010-2011. Another significant publication, written in 2010 entitled, The Life and Times of William J. Collins, Jr. in ASHRAE, also contains much Chapter as well as Society history from 1935 through 2010 and is available on the Chapter website and in print.

The Region VIII Chapters Regional Conference (CRC) for the 1994-1995 year in Oklahoma City was intentionally selected by chapter leaders to coincide with the chapter’s 60th Anniversary as well as the Society’s 100th anniversary. The conference was to be a major event celebrating the anniversaries.

All was properly planned when the terrorist bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building occurred a few days before the conference. However, it was decided by regional and for local leaders to continue with the event, but a sober cloud hung over the week-end. The welcome party happened to be held from the top of the Liberty Bank Building (now Chase Building) in downtown Oklahoma City and the remains of the Murrah building could be clearly seen from the restaurant level during the evening. The CRC was very successful in spite of the bombing.

Three significant activities occurred every year covered by this writing. First, the Chapter Premier Award, based on the PAOE criteria, was earned by the Chapter each year. Further, the chapter has won the award every year since inception in 1970. Second, at least two scholarships were awarded each year. The Denham and Memorial Scholarships were always awarded at Oklahoma State University and awards were also made at Oklahoma University, Oklahoma Christian University and Oklahoma State – Tech in Oklahoma City. The Memorial Scholarship was converted to the Wm. J. Collins Research Fellowship in 2006. Third, at least one golf tournament was organized each year with Research Promotion and the Scholarship Fund receiving the proceeds from the event.
CHAPTER ACTIVITIES – Fall 1995 to Spring 2000

The 95-96 Chapter year began with somewhat of a cloud hanging over the city following the Murrah bombing but with momentum from the CRC the Chapter moved on with a strong slate of programs. One outstanding program featured a panel organized by Bob Reynolds featuring Ray Howell, Sam Kumar, Fred Erdman and Benney Sisson discussing the relative merits of two and three way valving with variable speed pumping. Bob Vermillion organized a great Spouse’s night program for February with a sit down dinner and a dance band at Applewoods. Also, the reigning golf championship team of Darr, Righthouse, Wolfe and Pendleton was upset by Binning, Boismeier, Degeare and Hames. The Spring 1996 CRC was held in Lubbock, TX Where B.H. Prasad was elected regional Research Promotion Chairman.

Chapter meetings were relocated to the Hilton Inn on Northwest Highway at the beginning of the 1996-97 year. An outstanding slate of programs was organized by Tom Determan. Featured were: James Hill Society President, Bill Coad a consulting engineer from St. Louis speaking about indoor air quality and Dave Bivert presented a talk about the transition to the metric system. An excellent turnout of sixteen Past Presidents attended the February meeting to welcome Jim Hill, Society President. The CRC was in Corpus Christi, TX where Tom Determan was presented with the Outstanding Chapter Programs award. The Chapter also received a Special Presidential Award of Excellence Citation. A unique feature of the CRC was a dinner on the USS Lexington Aircraft Carrier. Five scholarships were awarded by the Chapter: two at Oklahoma State University, two at Oklahoma Christian University and one at OSU Tech in Oklahoma City. Life Member awards were presented to: Bill Ferguson, Sr., Ed Thompson and Bob Vermillian. Sadly Life Member and 44 year Chapter member R.L. Williams, Jr. passed away during the year.
Special emphasis was placed on programs during Jim Taylor’s Chapter year and were all related to energy conservation. The programs were excellent but one was unique. Dr. David Cassel, OCU-OKC and his students conducted an evaluation of the energy performance of a building complex at Oklahoma Christian University during the year and presented the results as the April program. The student group did a great job. Four scholarships were awarded, one at OSU-OKC, one at OCUSA and two at OSU. In a change from tradition the December 1997 and January 1998 meetings were held at noon in an effort to avoid possible inclement weather. Three members were honored for 50 years of service to ASHRAE and the Chapter at the December meeting: Charley Hayes, Walter Langebartel and Dick Swan. William J. (Bill) Collins, Jr. received the Societies highest honor, the F. Paul Anderson Award, at the winter meeting in San Francisco, CA and was duly recognized at the following chapter meeting. The CRC was held in Tulsa, OK at the Double Tree hotel.

Glen Boyd was President for 1998-99. William J. Collins, Jr. was awarded the Distinguished Fifty Year Member Award at the Annual Meeting in Seattle, WA in January, 1999. B.H. Prasad passed away in May of 1999 and was honored by induction into the Chapter Hall of Fame and earlier at the CRC he received the Regional Award of Merit.
Prasad was an outstanding ASHRAE and Chapter member. Another notable chapter member, A.R. (Bob) Morin passed away in June. Bob was the Chapter President in 1941 and a Life Member.

Kevin Williams’ theme for the year was, “Service to others”. Member growth was excellent with 23 new members and a total dues paying membership of 350. Nearly 100 members attended the December meeting. With encouragement from Bill Collins, the issue of noon versus evening chapter meetings was thrashed out during the year with the result that noon meetings became the norm. Academia was well represented at the February meeting with Doctors Jeff Spitler, Jim Bose, Marvin Smith, Dan Fisher, and Simon Rose present. The program was highlighted by a Triple Threat event presented by Jim Bose and his associates from Oklahoma State University related to Geothermal Heat Pumps applied both to housing and bridges. After a good year, Kevin reported that he was pleasantly surprised to have received the Presidential Award of Excellence with Special Citation, presented the following year. Bob Vermillion received the Gold Ribbon Award for History at the CRC in Austin, TX. Dr. Faye McQuiston became a Life Member.
CHAPTER ACTIVITIES – Fall 2000 to Spring 2006

The first part of Brad Binning’s year saw the creation of a chapter web site. Newsletters were filed and meeting information could be accessed from the web. There was a big push and focus on attendance. The board increased the number of lunch meetings from dinner meetings to the chagrin of some of the old guard. With an active calling committee, excellent program committee, and the first joint meeting with the contractors association (or first in many years), the meeting attendance increased close to 30 percent. Society President Jim Wolfe attended a Chapter meeting after initially refusing an invitation from Bill Collins who then chastised him firmly. All the PAOE awards that OKC was accustomed to receive were accepted at the CRC.

The 2001-2002 year kicked off with a golf tournament at Surrey Hills Golf Club followed by a family cook-out at the Sportsman Country Club. Society President William J. Coad and future Society President and DRC, Bill Harrison attended the October meeting. The year was a very successful year because of all of the hard work and dedication provided by committee chairs, Shaun Sexton, Bob Vermillion, David McGough, Jenny Albertson, Bruce Albertson, Glen Boyd, Rick Vermillion, Bob Carson, Morris Lovett and Grant Flurry. Meeting attendance averaged 86 members for the year. The year culminated with the CRC at the Peabody Hotel in Little Rock, AR. The chapter won the Meeting Programs Award, Membership Award, Energy and Technical Award, and the Research Promotion Award (most money ever raised to that date). Rick Vermillion received the ALCO Award. At our final chapter meeting Mike was humbled to receive the Golden Sledge Hammer Award.

Tim Jones began his year with Chapter meetings moved to the Centre. A highlight of the first meeting of the year was the announcement of the Research Promotion campaign of 2001-02 which reached an all-time record of $40,280. Rick Vermillion and Mike Hughes, Research Promotion Chairs attained a goal of $36,000 for the current year. Following meetings featured Regional Chair Hugh McMillan in November and an outstanding program in February by Dan Int-Hout on acoustics. A very good program was presented in January entitled, “Maps for Kids”. An
outreach program was developed for high-school students and Choctaw and Moore High-schools were visited. The Eastern Oklahoma County Technology Center was also visited with a presentation related to the HVAC&R industry.

The following piece, written by Bob Vermillion, entitled, “Fifty Years Ago,” was published in the January Sou’Wester:

William J. Collins, Jr. served as President of the Central Oklahoma Chapter - ASHRAE.
President Truman signs peace treaty granting Japan full sovereignty and officially ending World War II in the pacific region.
Marshall Fields Chicago store celebrated its 100th Anniversary.
Twenty-five year old Princess Elizabeth ascends to The British Throne. President Truman signed a bill Authorizing the Armed Forces to confer commissions on Women doctors, dentist and other medical specialist. Consumers shelled out 6 cents for a head of lettuce and 20 cents for a loaf of bread. A family of 4 could eat on $1,300.00 a year.
“Mr. Potato Head” was the first toy to be advertised on TV and “Mr. Birdseye” marketed the first frozen peas.
The National Education Association reported that the nation has only one qualified teacher for every five vacancies.
For men the prices of a hair cut was $1.00, the
average price of a necktie was $2.00, and a Stetson hat was $10.00. For women the price of a pair of shoes was $8.95-$14.95 and stockings were $1.65. Lipstick was $1.00. Salaries for an accountant was $60.00 weekly, a beauty operator $50.00, a machinist $81.00, a truck driver $70.00 and Marilyn Monroe's weekly salary was $750.00. New York catcher Yogi Berra earned an estimated $37,500.00 for the year.

According to advertisement Trane Company quoted, “Trane air conditioning, heating and ventilation equipment reduces worker fatigue and makes for greater alertness and efficiency.”

Bobbie J. and Bonnie Vermillion were married December 31, 1952

The CRC was in Ft. Worth, TX where Bob Vermillion received the Gold Ribbon for history and Rick Vermillion received several awards for Research Promotion. The Monterey Chapter won the Golden Gavel. The Denham and Memorial Scholarships were awarded at OSU. The Memorial recognized the deaths of Wayne Smith, recipient of the Regional Award of Merit and Lewis Wickling, a Life Member. Also deceased were Life Members: Harry Flewelling, John Montin, William (Bill) Flynn and Carol Carr.

An article in a trade publication lauding ASHRAE for leadership prompted Alan Loeffler to emphasize leadership as his theme for the 2003-2004 year. An outstanding slate of programs, developed by Josh Loerke, highlighted by the January program by Maralynne Flehner, a litigating attorney and ASHRAE Distinguished Lecturer, entitled, “Negotiating Skills.” There was also an excellent program by John Harrod and Glen Boyd on Std. 90.1. A guest speaker in the fall intrigued Alan so much he investigated hybrid cars and ended up buying a new 2004 Toyota Prius as a company car. The CRC was in Tyler, TX where Alan received the Jack Thompson Award for outstanding chapter president. Jack Matherly, a highly respected contractor, business man and chapter member, passed away on May 21, 2003.

When Jim Irwin was installed as President, Bobby Vermillion congratulated him and whispered, “make sure you maintain our Chapter’s Premier Status”, for the 2004-2005 year. Later Jim was honored when the Society requested he write an article and then having it published in ASHRAE Insights about our Chapter being a Premier Chapter. Society President Ron Vallort visited the chapter at the January meeting and Hugh McMillan was at the October
meeting. A program was developed to interest college students in HVAC with various chapter members as speakers. The Research Promotion goal of $34,800 was exceeded. Clint D. (Bud) Miller received the Distinguished Fifty Year Member Award and Jeff Spitler was elevated to the grade of Fellow. The CRC was held in San Antonio, TX. Chapter member Ed Thompson passed away in February.

The highlight of Shawn Sexton’s chapter year was the Region XIII CRC in Cancun, Mexico. It was the first Region VIII meeting outside the USA. Central Oklahoma Chapter was well represented by officers and active members. Regional Director, Art Geisler was a guest of the October meeting. The Fifty Year History of the Temtrol Company was recognized at a meeting and in an issue of the Sou’Wester. Sadly, William J. (Bill) Collins passed away in July 2005. Bill was a Chapter and Society icon and largely responsible for the outstanding achievements of the Chapter and Region VIII. Harry Rountree delivered a tribute to Bill at a chapter meeting. A Research Promotion Coin with his image was dedicated to Bill by Society and the first coin was presented to Mrs. Collins by Bob Vermillion.
CHAPTER ACTIVITIES – Fall 2006 to Spring 2011

Unexpectedly the President-Elect position was vacant from the past year; therefore, Harry Rountree, up to assume the Chapter Presidency for 2006-2007. Harry, a 60 year member and chapter president in 1970 and a Golden Gavel recipient that year, vowed to regain the number one spot again. However, the CRC was scheduled for Oklahoma City in the spring and no host chapter had ever won the Golden Gavel. The chapter had a very good year and a great CRC chaired by John Harrod but the Golden Gavel went elsewhere. The year featured an excellent history project with a series of Sou’wester articles about members and companies. Two of the outstanding ones were about the Loeffler family origin in Germany and the other featured Dick Swan a pioneer engineer in Oklahoma. Louis Loeffler, Jr. was recognized as the oldest active ASHRAE member in the spring at the age of 94. The Memorial Scholarship at OSU was converted to the William J. Collins Graduate Research Fellowship in the fall of 2006. Robert (Bob) Estep passed away on August 22, 2006.

Aruna Abhayagoonawardhana introduced an international flavor to the 2007-2008 chapter year having come to the United States from Sri Lanka as a college student at Oklahoma University where his interest in ASHRAE developed. In addition to his fine leadership of the Chapter, his spirit of patriotism was notable. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited prior to each meeting. Chapter members in the military were recognized during the year and a care package was sent to Chapter Member Chris Cassey and his unit in Iraq at Christmas. The main focus during the year was student activities, membership promotion and good technical programs to maintain the tradition of excellence alive in Region VIII. Bob Vermillion received the Pinnacle Award from Society for his outstanding...
Research Promotion work during the 2006-2007 year when the Chapter raised over $68,000. The Temtrol Company was honored for their *Golden Circle* contributions of $10,000 over the past 10 years. John Harrod was the first Professional Engineer in the region to be certified as a Certified Health Care Facility Design Professional. The first *Collins Fellowship* was awarded at OSU to James Cullin and the Societies *Homer Adams* Award went to Bereket Nigusse at OSU. The CRC was in Shreveport, LA where a number of chapter members were recognized. John Harrod and Tino Mendez were honored as *Distinguished Chapter* members and Tino received the Region VIII Member award for 2006-2007. The Chapter was also recognized for student activities and the best newsletter in the region. Aruna received the Jack Thompson Award as the outstanding Chapter President. Longtime member Victor Schuelein passed away on April 28, 2008.

A major accomplishment during the administration of Grant Flurry was installation of the Member Roster on the Chapter website, an ongoing project for two or more years. The November meeting was high-lighted by a program by Bill Coad, an outstanding practicing engineer from St. Louis. Likewise, the January meeting was notable as the Society President and well known Region VIII member, Bill Harrison, from Little Rock, AR was the program speaker. There were two excellent events related to the chapter but conducted elsewhere; Bruce Albertson arranged a tour of the Sandridge Facility with lunch in Bricktown and there was a three hour Satellite Broadcast at the Benham offices about IAQ, “Clean, Lean and Green”. The CRC was in Lubbock, TX where eight Chapter members were recognized with *Chapter Service Awards*. Bob Vermillion and Aruna Abhayagoonawardhana were recognized for their outstanding Research Promotion and Student Activities work respectively. Bill Collins was nominated for the *ASHRAE Hall of Fame*.

The 2009-2010 chapter year started in style with a program featuring both Society President Gordon Holness and Region VIII Director Ken Fulk present. This was followed by another great program on Condensing Boilers and Water Heaters by Jeff Deal from Livonia, MI. Then there was a short course in November related to Standard 62. A scholarship in memory of B.H. Prasad was awarded to his son, Neil. Wm. J. (Bill) Collins was inducted into the *ASHRAE Hall of Fame* and Bob Vermillion was awarded (posthumously) the *Society Research Promotion Award*. Bob had passed away on January 8, 2010. Harry Rountree stepped up to handle the Research Promotion campaign and
had collected $45,580 by April and was gunning for $50K. Both Louis Loeffler, Jr., age 97, and Frank X. Loeffler, Jr., age 90, died in November 2009. An excellent article appeared in the Sou’Wester about both Frank X. Junior and Senior who founded the Chapter.

The 75th anniversary of the Chapter was celebrated with a kick-off party where past and present chapter leaders got together to start the ASHRAE year with a bang. Also, the anniversary was commemorated with a certificate presented to the chapter by DRC, Ken Fulk. Faye McQuiston in conjunction with Alan Loeffler, Chapter Historian, compiled a biography entitled, “The Life and Times of William J. Collins, Jr. in ASHRAE”. The Central Oklahoma Chapter along with Region VIII leadership, agreed to sponsor five students from the University of Oklahoma to attend the annual ASHRAE winter meeting in Las Vegas. The Chapter achieved full circle for leadership contribution to Research Promotion. Maintaining chapter tradition, the chapter achieved par in all PAOE categories. Alejandro Garcia, Chapter President, participated at the CRC in Dallas Texas as a speaker in one of the technical sessions.

POSTWORD

This history could not have been compiled without the comments, experiences and images provided by the Chapter Presidents cited herein. Also, the voluminous historical files left by Bobbie Vermillion were most helpful as well as some material from the William J. (Bill) Collins, Jr. files. The authors thank everyone for their assistance.

Alan Loeffler, Chapter Historian
Faye C. McQuiston