

History of the Pulp and Paper Industry Committee

By John A. Kay, IEEE Pulp and Paper Industry Committee Chairman

The IEEE IAS Pulp and Paper Industry Committee had its simple beginnings in 1955 as the subcommittee of the General Industry Applications of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers (AIEE). The Pulp and Paper Industry Committee was formed in 1955 with a total originally membership of 22 members. The first Executive committee for the Subcommittee on Pulp and Paper Industry of the Committee on General Industry Applications in 1955-1956 consisted of S. A. Bobe, *Chairman*, Westinghouse Electric Corp., G. I. Burner, *Vice Chairman*, Rust Engineering Company and S. J. Campbell, *Secretary*, Westinghouse Electric Corp.

This subcommittee held their first Annual Pulp and Paper Conference at Gainesville, FL, on March 8-9, 1956, in conjunction with local AIEE and the University of Florida. The major thrust of the committee's activities has always been to present technical papers on topics related directly to electrical engineering activities as practiced in the pulp and paper industry.

This first conference was very successful in all respects. The total registration was 92, which included some 30 - 35 mill people. The group was small but a very close, friendly and enthusiastic. This tradition still lives on in the conferences of today. Perhaps it was the conference fee that attracted the stout crowd; full fee for conference registration was only \$2.50!

The format of the presentations was similar in style to that used at most conferences today; technical oration of the written work then an active question and answer sessions. So active, in fact, that it was said that the question and answer session had to be stopped on practically every paper because of a lack of time in the schedule.

At the conclusion of the first conference, a committee meeting was held to determine the location for the next conference; the next conference would be held in March 1957 in cooperation with Georgia Tech Atlanta, GA. Until 1961 the annual conferences were held in college and university locations. The longest standing committee member, Claude H. Hudson, began his involvement with the committee as the 2nd Vice Chairman beginning in 1957. Claude attend almost every annual conference until his, passing August 2010

In 1959, the first spouses program was incorporated into the conference and it still remains a very popular addition. Starting in 1962, the committee instituted the New Product Presentations (NPP) which were opportunities for vendors to highlight their new products and technologies through a brief technical presentation. Still today, NPP presentations continue to serve annual conference attendees.

In 1968, the committee instituted the Meritorious Achievement Award to annually honor an individual, who through outstanding performance related to his career has made substantial contributions which serve to further the objectives of the Pulp and Paper Industry. In 1986 an additional Award was added providing a Meritorious Service and Engineering Award. In recognition of a life-long contributions to the Pulp & Paper Industry, the committee established the James A. Rooks Memorial Student Intern Program. Every year since 2007 the committee celebrates Jim's relentless compassion to bring young engineers into the industry by sponsoring engineering student interns working for industry manufacturing companies, to attend the annual technical conference at no cost.

From 1955 through 1970 the committee operated without major technical subcommittees. In 1971, the committee organized into four major technical subcommittees; Engineering Management, Maintenance and Construction, Power (Power Distribution), Drives and Control Systems, and Training, Safety, Standards and Codes. These subcommittees, as well as ad hoc special focus subcommittees, have continued the trend and policies of presenting topics of major, technical importance to attendees of the conferences.

The continued excellence of its technical programs, special event, and participants is evidenced by continued support of the conference. As forest product based industries have survived through many economic and technical changes and the IEEE Pulp and Paper Industry Committee has adapted and reconfigured its programs and structure striving to support the legacy of providing a world class forum for progress in the electrical and controls side of this industry segment.