

Past Presidential Facts

New Orleans Chapter of ASHRAE

George “Elmer” May was our first president. At that time, we were known as The American Society of Heating & Ventilation Engineering (ASH & VE). Although we don’t have exact dates, our Society recognizes that our Chapter was officially chartered in 1939. It was not until December of 1958 when the chapter officially became The American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air Conditioning Engineers after merging with ASRE (American Society of Refrigerating Engineers). The first president of the combined societies was Thomas Stokes.

Our chapter’s second president, Cary B. Gamble, began a legacy of leadership which really guided our chapter during the early years of the New Orleans Chapter. Gamble’s consulting engineering business was widely respected throughout the country. His firm was a pioneer and did many high profile jobs in the early days of air conditioning. He also encouraged participation in ASHRAE, and from his firm, they gave us the following presidents: Ralph Elizardi, William Martin, Jr., Thomas Stokes, Edward Sanford, Randy Lewis, Paul Coe, and Floyd Berlin. Tom Boudreaux, served as president while he was at Mechanical Construction Company, also worked at Cary Gamble.

Since becoming an ASHRAE member in 1983, I have had the pleasure of working with several of our past presidents. Bill “Red” Martin (president in 1951-52) left Cary Gamble and in 1962, formed William B. Martin Consulting Engineers. In 1970, he joined Guillot, Sullivan, Vogt, & Martin. In 1977, he joined Gene Sullivan to become Sullivan and Martin.. After, he formed Martin Engineers. He finished his career at the Mathes Group. He has since passed away.

R. K. Goode (1957-58) founded one the leading rep agencies in the area, representing Barber Coleman in the air distribution and controls business for many years.

Edward Sanford (1960-61) also left Cary Gamble and formed his own firm called Sanford and Associates which practiced up until the mid 1980’s until his death.

Randy Lewis (1962-63) had a very rich career which after leaving Cary Gamble, worked at Babst Mechanical, R.L. Mechanical and Johnson Controls until his death.

Harold Faller (1963-64) also had a very successful practice. His firm also spawned two future presidents – L. Rae Tinto ((1973-74) and Jimmy Reuter (1989-90).

Paul Coe, Jr. (1964-65) was very influential and was responsible for the mechanical design of several of our high-rises downtown. He left Cary Gamble for a very successful career at Mechanical Construction Company. MCC also provided us with Scuddy Fontenelle, who was president in 1982-83, along with Tom Boudreaux in 1988-89.

David Levine was very active in our Society and would have been president of the Society had it not been for his untimely death in 1980. As a testament to the service he provided to our Society, the Region we belong to (Region VII) awards a plaque that bears his name to the chapter president who exhibits the best performance during the year. To my knowledge, we have won it three during the presidencies of Deborah Brandt (1997-98), Cliff Gillio (2000-01), and my presidency in 1996-97.

Frank Fisher, president in 1966-67, formed a rep agency called Fisher Engineering, which also gave us presidents such as Mason Foil, Steve Sulli, and Mark Scheuermann.

Earl Morrison had the honor of being President during the 1972 Winter Meeting, which also included a huge product show. This was quite an honor for our chapter. This honor was repeated in 1994, with Mary Jenkins as our president during that meeting. This meeting, once called the Semi-Annual Meeting was also held in New Orleans in 1964 and once prior to being known as ASHRAE (1958). Earl formed a manufacturer's rep agency called Gulf Coast Engineering in the 1980's, which also provided us Sid Shepard, president in 1981-82.

Waring Green served our chapter faithfully for many years after our presidency in 1976-77 as our chapter historian. In 1999, the Society recognized his career and accomplishments by awarding Waring the honor of becoming a Fellow in 1999. In 2003, he also received the 50 Year Distinguished Service Award presented by the Society.

Ernie Belmont (1977-78) recently passed away, but anyone who ever attended a meeting with him remembers the great invocations he always provided us. He was always a pleasure to have at our meetings.

Harold Flettrich, who was president in 1979-80, and one of his employees later became our first female president, Katty LaVassuer in 1990-91. She was the first of several which includes Mary Jenkins (1993-94), Deborah Brandt (1997-98), Heidi Gremillion (2001-02), and our most recent president Gina Hiatt. One of Harold's other employees who served as president was Joe Riorda in 198-79. Joe also worked at NOPSI, which also provided us Arthur Mott in 1985-86. NOPSI and Louisiana Power and Light later merged and formed Entergy, which provided us Walter Barnes as president in 1991-92.

Louis Orth served as president in 1984-85, and was committee chair for student activities for many years. Louis was a professor at Tulane, and had the distinction of teaching several of our members and past presidents.

Alan Maddox was president in 1987-88. He formed a test and balance agency several years ago, and he has remained active in our chapter..

When I joined the Society, Floyd Berlin was president (1983-84) and we had our regular meetings at Masson's at the Lakefront (near West End Café, where we had our executive committee meetings for several years).

We became concerned for a while as a chapter that we would put any restaurant out of business by our holding a meeting there. After Masson's closed, we met at Drago's for a number of years (I remember Jimmy Reuter announcing during the meeting there that the World Series game had been postponed due to an earthquake- the same one which ravaged the San Francisco and the bay area). We met for a while at Smilie's. We met a few times at the Glass Garden in Metairie, which is now closed. We also met a couple of years at Stonebreaker's until its' demise. During my presidency, we met at Barreca's. Stonebreaker's was replaced by Mike Anderson's at the same location, where we met until it met the same fate. We have been at the Steak Knife for nearly three years now.

Frank Schambach was president in 1992, and after his presidency, was very active in Region VII, serving for several years as a Region VII Vice-Chair for Refrigeration. He was also the first committee chair to appear at an early morning Chapter Regional Conference Meeting with sunglasses! Besides being a recipient of the Chapter's Cary B. Gamble award in the early 1990's, he was also recognized by our Region with The Regional Award of Merit in 2000. The Society honored Frank with the Distinguished Service Award in 2003.

In the 1990's we had the honor of hosting two Chapter Regional Conferences (CRC). The first in 1992 was co- chaired by Barry Schully (President in 1994-95). The first CRC was so successful, when the New Orleans Chapter was selected to have the CRC in 1999, Barry was asked to chair again with Dave Strawn (President in 1995-96). Both events rallied the chapter and helped the chapter grow for several years subsequent to the meeting. As a result of the success of each CRC, Barry was awarded the Cary B. Gamble Award, which recognized outstanding service to the chapter in 1992 and 1999. Dave Strawn was awarded the Cary B. Gamble Award in 1999 for his contribution to the 1999 CRC. Barry and Dave were also recognized by Region VII; both were recipients of the Regional Award of Merit in 2001 and 2002 respectively.

Dave Pieper (2002-03) revitalized our Delta Digest back in the old days when we still used paper and was recognized by our Region for having the best newsletter in 1997.

Our chapter has been very fortunate to have the leadership we have enjoyed. In attempting to give a brief overview of some to the accomplishments of our past presidents, the problem we create is overlooking the accomplishments of those we have not named, who gave up years of service to our chapter. For all those we have mentioned and for all those who we have missed, we thank you for the leadership you have provided for our chapters existence and growth. It is our hope that you will pass along the contributions of those not named so they too can be recognized for what they did.

Submitted by Buddy Hodge, May 2004