

THE PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER

Established: 1948

The Eastern Pennsylvania chapter formed some time between August 1, 1947 and August 1, 1948.

Educational meetings were held quarterly with subjects relating to promoting better health, better living and higher standards. The chapter helped some of the suburban sections and the town of Pottsville establish and formulate plumbing codes. We also began a program of filming items of interest in health building programs. We took motion pictures of the building and construction of the new sewage disposal plant in Philadelphia. We also filmed actual stream pollution in the Schuylkill River which convinced Governor Duff to clean up the entire Schuylkill valley, eliminating pollution and industrial disposal of wastes into the river. We also filmed unsanitary plumbing installations, health menaces and germ laden bootlegger jobs.

We contributed each year to the Society's Polio Fund to help with the research program.

The chapter tried to have four meetings a year in various parts of the state featuring topics of interest for that area. Prior to each meeting, we held a Board of Directors meeting to review the programs and the routine business of the chapter. By 1950, membership had grown to 122. One of the projects the chapter worked on in 1950 was culminated with the recommendation that doctors and professional offices be equipped with elbow or knee action lavatory fixtures to improve sanitary conditions.

As of 1955, Pennsylvania did not have a state wide sanitation law, but our sanitation and legislative committees began assisting Dr. H. Jackson Davis, head of the Bucks County Dept. of Health, with a regulation to control sewerage and industrial wastes. The chapter was also active in forming a new health law for the State of Pennsylvania to include a minimum plumbing code and the licensing of master plumbers throughout the state.

Some accomplishments of the chapter for 1958 were: a report to the Pennsylvania state authorities on lead poisoning from contaminated well water supplies with recommendations for change in the current procedures for water testing; support of the proposed Pennsylvania Public Health Plumbing Law; cooperation with Montgomery County in establishing a county committee to improve sewage disposal; and the Research Committee was studying modern water demands in public buildings. One of our plumbing inspector members was instrumental in the formulation and adoption of an ordinance requiring all fixtures in public buildings in his township to be wall hung.

At our second chapter meeting in 1960, we combined with our neighboring New York and New Jersey chapters to hold a joint meeting at the Owens-Corning Fiberglass Plant in Barrington NJ. It gave our membership a chance to mingle with fellow ASSE members and exchange ideas as how to further promote our Society's aims and ideals. In 1961 the joint meeting was again held at the Gerber Plant in Woodbridge, N.J.

In 1962, membership was at 88. The Tri-State meeting with New York and New Jersey was held at the Patterson-Kelley Co. Plant in PA on May 23, 1962 which included a tour throughout the plant.

The Tri-State meeting of 1963 was held at Wilcastle Center, Wilmington, DE with a luncheon provided through the courtesy of the Speakman Company and the Joseph A. Vogel Co. both of Wilmington. This record-breaking meeting was attended by about 275 members and guests including the newly formed Delaware Chapter, the New York Chapter, the New Jersey Chapter and the William Wilson Chapter.

Early in 1964, we applied for membership in the Engineer's Club of Philadelphia and we were happy and proud to say that we had been accepted and were now affiliated with this progressive organization.

Our chapter hosted the ASSE Annual Meeting which was held in Philadelphia in 1964.

Dan Henon was given credit for bringing 21 new members into the chapter. They were men of accomplishment in the fields of inspection, contracting, engineering and sanitation.

Several years ago our Board of Directors discussed the lack of interest and the stagnation of our chapter. It was decided by our Board that the lack of interest was just that. We were offering our members nothing but a periodic get-together. We embarked on a series of programs with subject matters that really interested our membership. The educational program for 1967 was "Water Pollution and Control".

The Board decided to continue our membership drive in 1968 because the previous year's programs were very successful and we added more than 50 new members.

We also started our own publication called Newsy Letter. We kept our membership informed as to what was going on within the chapter and anything newsworthy about our members.

Another project for our chapter was to sponsor a School of Plumbing Designers. Co-Chairman Frank Dufalla and Dick Hirsh announced at our September meeting that the school would open in January 1969. We received assistance from the New York Chapter and specifically Past National President Jim Church.

In February of 1969, our chapter was invited to participate in National Engineers Week. Our chapter President, Morris Weinberg, and Board member, Morron Lerner, attended a luncheon at the Benjamin Franklin Institute where all the engineering societies of the Philadelphia area were represented.

In June our chapter was host to the Mid-Atlantic States Meeting that was held at Universal Rundle Corp. The New York, Delaware, New Jersey, Virginia and Massachusetts chapters were represented for a total of 170 members and guests.

Our chapter's Plumbing Designers School Committee and its sub-committees met often and our school became a reality. The Code Committee that met once a month had established a goal of a rejuvenated Pennsylvania State Plumbing Code. The Program Committee continued to provide us with interesting programs so that our attendance ran close to and often higher than 50% of our membership. The Membership Committee carried on the work of last year's committee. Although we did not do as well as expected, we did gain 30 new members. Our total membership was reported to be 185 men and 1 lady.

As a result of the lessons learned during the pilot school program conducted in 1968-69, the chapter further expanded the program in 1970 into a regular fully established Plumbing Design School under the direction of committee chairman Morris Weinberg. The School Committee developed the plan into an elementary and advanced curriculum.

The chapter developed a series of seminars for the allied skills such as the architect, the structural electrician and the process engineering designers and draftsmen. The program chairman, Cass Holloway, and his committee have provided the membership with continuing education in new materials,

the language and methods to be used in the coming battle against pollution and some innovations such as a three way panel discussion between an architect, an engineer and a contractor. The Membership Committee, under the leadership of Sid Volov, brought in nearly forty members.

Chapter President Dan Henon gave a brief history of the chapter with his 1971 Pennsylvania Chapter Report. He said that ten years ago our chapter was comprised of a group of nearly one hundred members scattered over the eastern part of the state of whom fewer than twenty-five attended the quarterly chapter meetings.

It was a nice congenial group at these meetings. Everyone knew each other and it was seldom that a new face appeared. Most were master plumbers or equipment representatives, with a few plumbing inspectors and designers. They usually met in country inns or country clubs about the area.

Some of our officers felt that this operation did not implement the Society's slogan "Prevention Rather Than Cure" since, except for normal business, our membership as such played no viable role in any of the communities in which we lived.

As a result of these feelings a definite program of membership expansion and retention was begun in order to attract a sizable portion of each of the segments of our professional plumbing inspectors and sanitary officials, plumbing engineers and designers, master plumbers, mechanical contractors and additional product representatives. Many accepted the invitation to join.

A change in meeting place to a central city location assisted this program by making it easier for a larger segment of our field to attend.

Growth and change were not without pain and loss. Some of our members did not agree with the newer ideas and withdrew. Others members found it difficult to attend all of our meetings. However, an increase to bi-monthly meetings helped this situation somewhat. A live wire program of the best speakers and the newest techniques drew some of them back and, in turn, interested new members.

At the same time the number of committees, and members on these committees, was increased to gain a broader base of participation. One benefit of this was the exposure of some latent talent for future officers. Our custom, that the chairmen deliver their own report to the body, gave recognition to their efforts.

A fortunate circumstance through these times was the stewardship of Gus A Heinzelmen Jr., our late secretary, who carefully handled the meager funds and also kept our records and correspondence current.

Each year an annual theme was chosen for the meetings: one year codes; another new drainage products; another year concentrated on soil joints of all kinds.

The idea of education took root. What no one fully realized, of course, was that the membership was implementing our famous slogan. By participating in all of our activities we began to give service to our communities since the first step in prevention is knowledge.

Each branch of our membership concentrated on acquaintances in its own field for a while and we soon had a strong balance among the main parts of our field. The speakers carried the change in our chapter's activities back to their own localities.

A newsletter was started to reach those who could not attend and also to provide communication between the officers and committees and the membership. We ran panel discussions that threatened, at times, to deteriorate into a Kilkenny cat fight. After each of these meetings our attendance always picked up and new men joined.

A continuing process of selection insured that progression to the presidency is not foreordained but only the most active and interested persons succeeded to the chair. Committee selection always introduced new faces. Many of our past presidents continued their interest in a specialized field after passing on the gavel.

As the membership's attendance grew, our quarters became crowded and another relocation was in order. The move to the suburbs had its influ-

ence, and some of the upstate localities now had representation. As a result, a good restaurant near the intersection of two main arteries was selected. Free parking, an excellent view of the city from the roof top, good food and a lively program all combined to make a great night out.

Some years ago a group, under the chairmanship of Morris Weinberg, felt that our diverse membership was well equipped for one service to the area, that of education. A highly experienced professional group such as ours was made for the job. Moe's committee received whole hearted support. The many reports detailing our organization and progress attest to the success of the Pennsylvania Chapter's Plumbing Design School now in its fourth season. Suffice to say, we were producing over twenty graduates a year from this two year course for our members and the profession.

We stood at a new phase of growth. In our own state, a new program designed to reach members too distant to drive to the Philadelphia area was formulated. Our national activity in the past was limited to one or two members, but in the future more of us hope to serve the Society as National committee members. Our chapter membership approached ten percent of the Society with a net annual rate of growth exceeding fifteen percent. Over three dozen men participate on the chapter's committees. Attendance at meetings was often near the fifty percent mark and exceeded this at the annual Christmas party. Over fifty members travel to the Eastern States conference. Our membership was now running 230 to 240.

Our programs included an increase in service to the Society by participation at the National level in the Refresher Course. On the committee level, cooperation with plumbers guilds and associations to study the state code changes, protection of the public's health by commenting on proposed new state laws relating to industrial housing (manufacturing housing), sending delegates to appear before city boards regarding local code revisions, prepare for the Eastern States Conference in 1972 and the National Meeting of 1976, continue our Plumbing Design School of nearly eighty students and last, but not least, enjoy an increase of attendance at our wonderful National Meeting and Refresher Course.

Chapter President Joseph Miele said in his Chapter Report that the chapter continued to progress in 1973 as evidence by the increased membership, both local and remote, two more graduating classes from our Plumbing Design School, a bigger and better newsletter The Pipeline, and our meetings which were well attended by one third of the total membership. The monthly dinner meetings, followed by interesting and timely programs and speakers, were the hub of our success mainly because our Program Committee continued to outdo itself each month with excellent topics. The Pennsylvania Chapter was the largest ASSE chapter with 240 members.

In 1975, Chapter President James Kenney praised Alex Hodlofski for his outstanding job of putting together the chapter's monthly newsletter. Our committees used this publication as a means to keep in touch. The eight page bulletin was crammed with articles by our members and the advertising quota was complete thanks to the efforts of the advertising committee chaired by John Barbieri. The advertisers made the publication self supporting.

President James Kenney also mentioned that the Plumbing Design School, which was in its eighth year was operating to full capacity and its success can only be attributed to the dedication of the chairman Bill Flynn and his team of instructors.

Chapter President John Harkins stated that he intended to instill new life into the chapter. Some of his ideas were to introduce new members on the various committees, establish an Advisory Committee consisting of past presidents, update the membership list, undertake a more diverse and interesting program agenda for their monthly meetings, and offer more technical and informative articles in the monthly bulletin "The Pipeline".

Our chapter again hosted the ASSE Annual Meeting which was held in Philadelphia 1976.

The chapter added two new committees in 1978, the Information and Literature Committee with Bill Waldman as Chairman and the Sunshine Committee with Milt Bergey as Chairman. The Sunshine Committee was

responsible for sending flowers and cards to members who were sick, had a death in the family or for a happy occasion such as a birth or wedding.

The Pennsylvania Chapter hosted the Mid-Atlantic States Meeting which was held at the Tyler Pipe Plant located in Macungie, PA.

Our chapter became incorporated in August 1980 in the state of Pennsylvania.

The Pennsylvania Chapter Plumbing Design School began its thirteenth year in September 1980. After updating curriculum to meet today's needs, the school accepted 50 students.

In 1982, the chapter published an industry directory which provided a comprehensive reference source for anyone who wanted to find a vendor, contractor, or specifier to do a particular task.

In 1984, our chapter published the second industry directory in which all segments of the plumbing industry participated.

At our 1985 Annual Christmas Party, we had each member who attended donate toys to the Marines Toys for Tots campaign to help needy youngsters. The response was overwhelming. The chapter planned to continue the program at the next Christmas Party. Thanks to our Programs Committee, our regular meetings offer speakers with a wide range of topics. Our Ways and Means Committee handles our Annual Golf Outing and Dinner and our field trips. Our Plumbing Design Program is currently in its eighteenth year.

The chapter has been holding semi-annual joint meetings with ASPE.

In 1990, our chapter had 222 members.

In 1992, we accepted the resignation of our Treasurer Harry Hild who had been the backbone of our chapter.

Chapter Nicholas J. Cozzan said that he always looked forward to the chapter's general meetings because of the interesting topics that range from energy and water conservation, laws governing backflow prevention, and new innovations and technology in our industry and, we can't forget the Annual Golf Outing and Holiday Party.

In 1995, we established a Backflow Prevention School Committee with Joseph Fugelo as chairman. The purpose of the committee was to help promote our backflow school to our local municipalities, targeting the City of Philadelphia Water Department.

Bob Stranix assumed the responsibility of our Pipeline newsletter in 1995.

In 1999, the chapter concentrated on their Backflow Valve Testing Classes which were being offered at the Plumbers Local #690 Union Hall. The chapter also was planning re-certification classes.

Chapter President Jack Morrissey gave a recap of his chapter's yearly schedule. The December holiday party was a joint effort with A.S.P.E. and was also our installation of officers. Regular meetings were held until our Golf Outing which was the last event before taking a summer break. September began the educational start for the year with a Plumbing Design Class that educated students in plumbing codes and piping methods. We also had a Backflow Testing Certification Class which was conducted at Local #690 Training Center and was ASSE approved.

This is an excerpt from the The ASSE Centennial Book "Celebrating 100 Years of "Prevention Rather Than Cure" 1906-2006". To purchase a copy, visit www.asse-plumbing.org/Std%20Prog%20Info/Pubs%20Order.htm. \$10 of every purchase goes to the ASSE Scholarship Fund.