

A.S.S.E. and the Illinois Chapter

The American Society of Sanitary Engineering for Plumbing and Sanitary Research owes its beginning to Mr. Henry B. Davis, Chief Plumbing Inspector for the District of Columbia. The prestigious Henry B. Davis Award still given annually is awarded in the name of the founder. Mr. Davis believed it was vital that plumbing practices in the United States be standardized to protect the nation's health and welfare.

On January 29, 1906, Mr. Davis and twenty-five plumbing inspectors from across the United States met in Washington, D.C. Their purpose was to organize an association of plumbing inspectors and sanitary engineers for the express purpose of protecting the nation's population and potable water supplies.

One of the first goals of the Society was to "formulate regulations for a consistent and uniform modern sanitary advancement of plumbing." In 1909, a three-man committee was appointed to work with the National Association of Masters Plumbers and the National Association of Journeymen. This committee, still in existence today, was assigned the task of promoting investigation and phenomena, operations or results of experiments as related to the plumbing and sanitary industries. Through the work of this committee, such epidemics as polio were proven to be associated with potable water systems. ASSE contended that this disease, along with several others, could be spread from one location to another through contaminated potable water, often caused by faulty plumbing practices, such as crossconnections that led to back-siphonage.

Since the inception of the American Society of Sanitary Engineering in 1906 the members have always attempted to practice the symbolic principle which was the basis of its organization "Prevention Rather Than Cure."

Originally local in scope, the Society has now grown to international prominence and today includes members from many foreign countries.

From the few members at its inception the Society now numbers well over 2,000 and is constantly growing.

Since the founding of ASSE in 1906, Chicago and the state of Illinois have made significant contributions to the society. Among its earliest members, in attendance at the National

Conventions were Edward H. Donahue from Peoria, Illinois, who attended the 1907 annual meeting in Cleveland, Ohio. Mr. Donahue invited ASSE delegates to come to Chicago, in 1908, and he must have been very persuasive as the first of many ASSE conventions was held in Chicago. Beginning in 1908, followed by an annual meeting in 1918 with Decatur, Illinois hosting the annual meeting in 1925 and Chicago again in 1933. Chicago's Edward Donahue was also a charter member of the Society at the annual meetings in 1915, 1916 and 1917, under the leadership of Thomas J. Claffey, another Chicagoan, as its national president. Much was discussed to protect the health of the nation, as the motto would become the clarion call for Plumbers Local 130 in Chicago. C.B. Ball, P.L. Hedrick, J.K. Allen of Chicago were part of the proceedings in 1915, 1916 and 1917, as well as Charles M. Udder from Joliet, Illinois. Thomas Claffey according to historical records of ASSE also served as president in 1926 and 1927. At the 1929 annual meeting, Joel Connolly, Chief of the Bureau of Sanitary Engineering,

of Chicago Department of Health gave a seminar on Corrosion in piping and plumbing fixtures and many changes were made in plumbing systems to correct this situation. Illinois and Chicago, were again an influential voice in the society along with Tom Claffey, Illinois could be proud of members George Dehn, Charles Gawne, and Charley Ball who all made significant contributions to the society during this time period. J.K. Dorsey was part of a large group of members proposing an Illinois Chapter. Not until 1941 at the annual convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin was Chapter application made on behalf of Illinois and Texas. Chapter rules and regulations were presented to the society at its Pittsburgh meeting in 1942 and were approved. The first Chapter being Illinois followed by Florida, Ohio, Texas and Massachusetts. The first president of the Chapter was John Dorsey who later became national president. Bill Ready was elected Secretary Treasurer. The yearly dues were \$12.00 and the national officers approved a \$2.00 rebate per member which helped to solve minor financial problems.

The Society has chapters throughout the United States and Canada. All of these Chapters hold interesting and informative meetings on regular schedules. New chapters are constantly being installed in desirable areas. And Society members find in their local chapters a means of expressing their aims and recommendations to the entire Society and the world and the Illinois Chapter is no exception.

The activities of the Chapters are varied and numerous. Several of them including Illinois, publish a Chapter Newsletter, which they send to their members monthly. This is in addition to the Newsletter, which the National also publishes monthly. The Chapter publications contain news of members, reminders and reports of meetings, announcements of special activities, etc.

At their regular meetings the Chapter have varied programs, each arrange to cover some phase of health, plumbing and sanitation, research, or to reveal new developments in the field. Movies are shown, and guest speakers, many of whom are leading authorities in the field of plumbing, health, research and sanitation, address the chapters. Tours of various manufacturing companies, water and sewage disposal plants, municipal buildings and other locations of interest are taken by the Chapters- in many cases the arrangements include more than one Chapter for such an event.

On the social side, chapter activities include

dinner dances, golf outings, picnics, boat cruises, Christmas parties, and many other enjoyable gettogethers. Many of these events are also designed to include the ladies.

One of the highlights of chapter activities is the election and installation of Officers each year, and it usually becomes the occasion for a festive dinner dance and the Illinois Chapter is always honored by the attendance of the National President and National Director.

The ladies are a very important part of this Society, both through their Auxiliaries and in their individual or group capacities.

The chapters that have Auxiliaries find that the women are not only sympathetic to their work, but actively join in its accomplishment.

They hold separate business sessions, but join the men to hear an interesting speaker or discussion. They participate actively in all phases of Society work.

The years of 1941 and 1942 were very significant for ASSE and especially our local Illinois Chapter, which is the oldest chapter in the society. Mike Mercury the Executive Secretary of the Chapter from 1941-1956 played a most significant roll not only as the recipient of the Henry B. Davis Award in 1975, but also for preparing a written history of the chapter and presented his report to the delegates at the 1959 Convention in Washington D.C. The Chairman, presiding over this meeting was Chicago's own President Edward J. Zimmer also a National President of ASSE, and renowned for his expertise in spearheading the city of Chicago testing lab known across the country. This article on our chapter would not be complete without Mike Mercury's history.

HISTORY OF OLDEST CHAPTER

In the month on May in 1941 thirteen members of the American Society of Sanitary Engineering held a meeting at Allegretti's Restaurant on North Wells Street in Chicago. The purpose of this meeting was to get the opinion of the members present as to the possibilities of obtaining more members in the Society, from a Chapter, elect temporary officers and inform the National Officers and the Members of the Board of Directors of our purpose and intent. Credit must be given to the late Arthur Gordon for calling this first meeting.

At the Annual Meeting held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in the fall of 1941, the Illinois group attended the annual meeting with one thought in mind and that was to convince the National Officers and the Members of the Board that the formation of Chapters on a National basis would be an asset to the Society, not only financially, but get men of great reputation in the field of Plumbing and Sanitation to join the Society.

The opposition to the formation of Chapters came from the older members of the Society, however, through the foresight of Herb Schaller and the late Tom Dugan, the National Officers and the Members of the Board of Directors brought about changes in the by-laws which made it possible for the members of the Society in the various states to form Chapters.

Eighteen years ago (in 1942) the Illinois Chapter received its Charter as the first Chapter in the Society. John Dorsey, who later became National President, was selected as our first President and Bill Ready was elected Secretary/Treasurer.

Financing for its incidental expenses was a problem and contribution from the members had to be made to carry on the activities as a group. The yearly dues in 1941 were \$12.00 and it was decided by the National Officers that the Chapters would receive a \$2.00 rebate per member, which helped to solve the minor financial problems.

As long as this time is taken up in the Refresher Program, I would like to make mention that the first Refresher Program was held in Boston in 1946 and a total of 15 members attended the morning and afternoon sessions. The gentlemen responsible for the starting of the Refresher Program was none other than our Past President, Herb Schaller who again had the foresightedness for the advancement of our industry by means of an educational program such as you are attending today. Carl Bash must also be given a great deal of credit as she was Chairman of the Refresher Course Program for a great many years, later became President of the Society and Mr. Edward Zimmer succeeded him. It has been gratifying as the years have gone by to see the Refresher Program get bigger and bigger in comparison to the fifteen members that attended the first meeting.

Only the gentlemen who are members of chapters and at some time have an annual meeting held in their respective city can fully realize the amount of work that is involved in raising funds to hold an annual meeting. We of the Illinois Chapter were faced with this problem in 1947. After the Boston Annual Meeting the Officers of the Illinois Chapter held a meeting, appointed committees and it was decided to give a dinner dance in conjunction with a patron program. The patron program was with the approval of the National Officers and the Board of Directors. The fund raising dinner dance and patron program given in February of 1947 brought in receipts of approximately \$20,000.00. The cooperation received from our local jobbers, plumbing contractors, manufacturers and the local union was of no equal. The 1947 annual meeting held in August was a huge success as 627 dinners were served, as the annual meeting attendance was the largest in the history of the Society. With a considerable amount of funds in the treasury, the Illinois Chapter was able to make a sizeable contributions to the Polio Fund, ASSE Testing Laboratory, Site Fund and send our Presidents to each subsequent annual meetings with all expenses paid. We were able to pay all expenses for George Petrie, who as an alternate of the Coordination Committee had to attend a meeting in this great city. In 1949 another dinner dance was given and again the affair was a success, not only socially, but also financially.

Our meetings held monthly have always been well attended and I will venture to say that over the past 18 years more than 17,000 members, their wives and friends have attended the meetings. The meetings of the Illinois Chapter have not been confined to the City of Chicago. The Chapter has held meetings in the Western and Southern parts of the State of Illinois and also held joint meetings with the Wisconsin Chapter. Our Officers and members have attended the quarterly meetings of the Indiana Chapter.

We have cooperated with the Wisconsin Chapter at the time that Milwaukee Plumbing Code was in jeopardy. The City Council of the City of Milwaukee and the members of the Wisconsin Chapter at the invitation of the Illinois Chapter, gave a laboratory demonstration held at the Chicago Plumbing Testing Laboratory. The purpose of the demonstration was to prove to the Councilmen that the lowering the standards of their plumbing code would only endanger the health of the people of their city. A similar meeting was held with the Indian chapter in March of this year.

In 1953 the Illinois Chapter donated to the Cook County Chapter of the Polio Foundation, An Iron Lung in the memory of Edward Ertswald, who had died suddenly. We know that this Iron Lung has save the lives of many people.

Our program chairman from year to year has made it possible to have prominent speakers at our meetings, given discourses on subjects closely allied to our industry. On many occasions the meetings have been held jointly with the Women's Auxiliary.

Our members have contributed valuable information in the field of plumbing and sanitation by means of research conducted in the greater metropolitan Area of Chicago.

No need of repeating the success and the attendance of the Golden jubilee Meeting held in Chicago in 1956 as we of the Illinois Chapter feel it was the highlight in the history of the Society educationally, socially and financially and we are proud to say that our Chapter was the **first to contribute to the Annual Meeting Fund** - the sum of over \$480.

During the years from 1956 through 1982, the Illinois Chapter and the American Society continued to protect the health of the nation, through local chapter meetings and national conventions maintaining

and improving standards, codes and continued open dialogue between all facets of the Industry. The Illinois chapter again provided national leadership to the society. Edward J. Zimmer from Chicago was elected National President at the 1961 convention in St. Louis, Missouri and again in 1962 at the convention in Little Rock, Arkansas and William (Bill) Reichert, a giant in the Chicago Industry was elected National President in 1981 at the convention in Honolulu, Hawaii.

The leadership of the local chapter in 1956 after the writing of the local chapters history by Mike Mercury was Edward J. Zimmer, President; John Delehant, Vice President; Mike Mercury, Treasurer; and John Barrett, Secretary.

The World Building Congress was held at the LaSalle Hotel on September 19, 1957 in Chicago, Illinois. Among the many Chapter members in attendance were Stephen M. Bailey, Edward J. Burke, George Connolly, Al Duever, Mike Mercury, Dick Weldon and Edward J. Zimmer.

A special meeting was held in Springfield, Illinois on September 28, 1957. Mr. Clarence Klassen, Chief Engineer of Illinois State Health Department, told of the state's efforts to keep the lakes and streams free from pollution. Local Union 130 U.A. was represented by Ray Peterson, George Mitchell and Ed Domas. The Chicago Plumbing Contractors Association was represented by William Readey.

The year's accomplishments also included a very successful spaghetti picnic with 300 in attendance.

A monthly chapter news sheet was published in this year to stimulate interest and report on local affairs. The first publication was mailed on March 1, 1957.

New seats were purchased for Chapter headquarters.

The Illinois Chapter participated in the farewell party for Harry Greisbach sponsored by Business Manager Stephen M. Bailey of Local 130 U.A. Harry was the well known instructor of apprentices at Washburn Trade School and a very loyal member of the Illinois Chapter. We wish him well in his retirement.

The Illinois Chapter membership at the end of 1956 was 264. There were 20 new members initiated, 8 members reinstated, 1 member transferred.

In 1958, the local chapter again elected Ed Zimmer, President; William E. Baum, Vice President; John Barrett, Treasurer; and James Gallagher, Secretary. At the March meeting Mike Mercury was presented a gold watch, appropriately inscribed for his 15 years of devoted service to the chapter. During 1958, the Illinois Chapter had been instrumental in influencing the condemnation of open toilet facilities aboard pleasure crafts in the Chain of Lakes region of the Northern Illinois.

The chapter's membership in 1958 was 304 an increase of 40 members since 1957 and in 1959 membership increased to 318.

In 1961, William E Baum, a long time plumbing contractor was elected President; John Barrett, Vice President; Jim Gallagher, Treasurer; and Bob Wallace, Secretary.

In 1963, President John Barrett; Vice President, Robert Wallace; Treasurer, James Gallagher; and Secretary, James B. Ivers and Sgt. At Arms, Andrew McCann, led the Illinois Chapter and in 1964, the officers were President, Robert Wallace; Vice President, Wesley Parker; Secretary, Neil Riordan; Treasurer, Norbert Tremko; Sgt. At Arms - among the distinguished directors was Business Manager, Stephen M. Bailey, Business Manger of LU 130, one of the most well known plumbers in the nation.

Officers of the Illinois Chapter gave of their time and talents to the local Chapter and the National Society and we proudly list their names in our history. We would be remiss if we did not apologize to those we are not able to include because of gaps in our files, to those unnamed and all the present and previous members of the Illinois Chapter, our pride in our accomplishments would not have been possible with our your input, no matter how small, a big thank you to all!

The annual report given in 1967, the Illinois Chapters membership was 280, in 1968- 293 members, in 1969- 262 members and in 1976 the members of the chapter was still 267 members and still one of the largest chapters in the American Society.

The years 1976-983 were very important to the local chapter and the Society, as membership increased from 267 to 501 members, the new enthusiasm and impetus was generated by the local officers listed in a report written by Gerald M. Sullivan, later to be elected Business Manager of UA Local 130. His report is proudly included in our history of the chapter.

Illinois Chapter ASSE Officers 1982 & 1983

Gerald M. Sullivan	President
Richard Morin	1st Vice President
Syd Culver	2nd Vice President
Julian Jackson	Secretary
James McCarthy	Treasurer
Tony Mercury	Sergeant-at Arms

The first order of business for the officers and members of the Board of Directors of the Illinois Chapter was to introduce a monthly chapter newsletter. Secretary Julian Jackson was enlisted to serve as editor-no small charge to say the least. Julian's first challenge was to solicit ads to finance the cost. Together with Treasurer Jim McCarthy he proved himself equal to the task.

A calendar of the chapter meetings for 1982 was published in the first issue of the chapter's newsletter. The same was repeated in the first issue of 1983. It included three mini-product shows, which to the credit of the Speaker's Committee, chaired by Second Vice President Culver, proved to be hugely successful. These shows also generated renewed interest in the chapter, which partially spurred the rapid increase in membership. Due to the enthusiastic acceptance of this meeting format, mini-product shows were also part of the 1983 calendar.

It may be open to debate, but some attribute the popularity of the shows to the chef's selections of roast beef and ham on the bone being carved as guests paused to dine. Members of the Publicity Committee, chaired by John Bojan, will argue that the presence of the Chicago Sting's Honey Bees hawking chances for the newly initiated Flush Fund was the real key to success. The Flush Fund went on to provide pots of at least \$250 at three of the meetings during the year as well as in 1983.

Pete Diamond served as chairman of the Membership Committee. He reported membership had grown by 96 to 422 members since the start of the year. In the same breath, he set an ambitious goal of 500 members for the Illinois Chapter. After much persistence and hard work, the Membership Committee jubilantly reported in December 1983 mission accomplished! Membership in the Illinois Chapter stood at 501.

Dick Morin, First Vice President, who later served as International President, got together with John Barrett to establish a second Chapter award. Introduced in recognition of Ed Zimmer, who contributed so much to the furtherance of the American Society of Sanitary Engineering, fittingly it was presented to Syd Culver who did so much to promote the Illinois Chapter.

While chapter activities continued to grow in popularity with the members during 1983, a primary focus of the officers and Board of Directors was preparation for the 1983 annual meeting of the American Society of Sanitary Engineering. Their hard work made that meeting one of the most memorable and talked about events in the history of the Society.

Each morning began with a complimentary continental breakfast and each evening concluded with hospitality in the Presidential Suite, which incidentally remained opened during all leisure hours. The kick off event for the Annual Meeting was an elaborate cocktail reception in the Imperial Suite featuring hors d'oeuvres and entertainment.

Afternoon activities were as varied as the days of the week with something for everyone. For the sports minded the ASSE Open challenged the golfers. Baseball enthusiasts were treated to an afternoon at the "Friendly Confines of Wrigley Field". Beautiful Lake Michigan was the site of the ASSE Sportsman where several landed sporting coho salmon.

Visits to the Jardine Water Treatment Plant and the Stickney Sewage Treatment were scheduled for the inquiring minds. Scheduled also were trips to the Clean Water Exhibit at the Museum of Science and Industry, the Plumbing Industry Center, Weil Pump Company and Chicago's Historical Water Tower.

Relaxing afternoons were spent by many touring the city on the Culture Bus. Capping the afternoon activities on the final day of the Annual Meeting was a cruise along Chicago's shoreline aboard the Chicago Starr. Fine dining and entertainment was the order of the afternoon.

The evenings were also eventful. Thanks to Al Weinberg our shuttle service attracted many to Chicago's hot spots in Greek town and on Chicago's near northside. Illinois Night featured dinner in the Blackstone Hotel followed by a night at the theater and capped off with a nightcap in the Presidential Suite. The following night the Chapter hosted a reception in the Presidential Suite featuring Steve Kaye on the piano.

The dedication of the Officers, Board of Directors, and members was rewarded during the Annual Meeting of the Society in 1982, when International President Reichert presented Illinois with the Dewey R. Dedrick award, the award for most new members as well as the award for the largest net increase in membership. In 1983, the Illinois Chapter again received the Dewey R. Dedrick award for most new members that year.

The meetings of 1983 concluded with a rousing talk interspersed with humor by All American and professional football play Ziggy Czarobski.

Our synopsis of the Illinois Chapter would not be complete without a listing of the National Past Presidents of the American Society from the Illinois Chapter and the past Presidents of our local Chapter and also a list of the local chapters recipients of the prestigious Crystal Drop Award and Edward J. Zimmer Award:

National Past Presidents of the A.S.S.E.

1909-1910	C.B. Ball
1913-1916	T.J. Claffy
1946-1948	John K. Dorsey
1961-1962	E.J. Zimmer
1981	William Reichert
1988	Alex Weinberg
1994	Richard H. Morin
2003	Gunnar O. Collins

A.S.S.E. Illinois Chapter Past Presidents

John K. Dorsey	John S. Bojan
----------------	---------------

William M. Readey
Howard Elliott
William Reichert
George Petrie
Harold Duffy
Edward Zimmer
William Bahn
John Barrett
Robert Wallace
Wesley Parker
William Dempsey
Casey Bielanski
William Wallin
John Gillespie
Neil Riordan

Alex Weinberg
Gerald Sullivan
Julian Jackson
Richard Morin
George Curran
Dan Quintell
Ray Ehrlich
Joe Sazma
Gunnar Collins
Joe Proskurniak
John F. Flader
Leonard McCue
Kevin Sherlock
Robert O'Leary
Al Gehrke

A.S.S.E. Illinois Chapter Crystal Drop Award Recipients

1982	Tom Dowling
1983	Michael Mercury
1984	Edward Brabec
1983	Wes Parker
1984	Sydney K. Culver
1985	William J. Reichert
1986	Alex Weinberg
1987	Richard H. Morin
1988	Ted Arenberg
1989	Casey J. Bielanski
1990	John S. Bojan
1991	Leonard McCue
1992	Gerald M. Sullivan
1993	Joe Sazma
1994	Axel Nelson
1995	Gunnar Collins
1996	Joe Proskurniak
1997	Ray Ehrlich
1998	Gary Hull
1999	Jim Majerowicz
2000	Susan Lisowski
2001	Bob Ryan
2002	Tony DiVito

ASSE Illinois Chapter Edward J. Zimmer Recipients

1982	Syd Culver
1983	James McCarth
1984	Bud Riordan Sr.
1985	Gerald M. Sullivan
1987	John Bojan
1988	Gunnar Collins
1989	Peter R. Diamond
1990	Julian Jackson
1991	Ray Keenan
1992	James Rack
1993	Ray Ehrlich
1994	Joe Proskurniak
1995	Axel Nelson
1996	Gary Hull
1997	Cy Gaimari
1998	Kevin Sherlock
1999	Tony DiVito
2000	Richard Morin
2001	Robert O'Leary

2002	Bill Woods, III
2003	Mike Scherer
2004	Pat Flader
2005	John Flader

Since 1976, another prestigious award has been given to local chapters in honor of Dewey Detrick, for increasing membership. The Illinois Chapter has received this award ten times the most of any local chapter since its inception. Another sign of the success of the local chapter and its hard working members.

The dedication and efforts of the present and past members of the Illinois Chapter is reflected in the names listed above as representative of the efforts of all who have contributed to our industry. The American Society of Sanitary Engineers is in good hands with Executive Director Shannon Corcoran and her hard working staff. Shannon is certainly following in the footsteps of her mother and long time director Dian Corcoran. 100 years is certainly a special milestone for the society and one attained because of those who came before us. Congratulations and best wishes to all in the A.S.S.E. as we look forward to another one hundred years from the proud and hard working members of the Illinois Chapter.