

HISTORY OF THE CHESAPEAKE CHAPTER
AMERICAN SOCIETY OF SAFETY ENGINEERS
1961 - 1976

Great events in history are most times remembered subsequently through the use of special phrases to describe them. For instance, "Four score and seven years ago...." immediately brings to mind a great and tragic event in American history, and the great and tragic President who spoke those words at Gettysburg. In like fashion, "By the rude bridge that arched the floor....", "Listen my children and you shall hear..." and "The breaking waves dashed high on the stern and rockbound coast..." carry us back quickly over the years to events that shaped the destiny of our country and it's people.

All these events, and most others to follow, wherein great decisions had to be made to change from what has been to what shall be, were preceded by much planning, controversy, threatened friendships, occasional name-calling and always the philosophic urge that literally screamed for change to meet the progress that was going on all around. The history of the Chesapeake Chapter of the American Society of Safety Engineers began no differently.

We would like to trace for you, to the best of our collective memories abetted by copious notes and some photographs, the progression of events; to reconstruct the story of our Chapter, beginning at a time somewhat earlier than the date of our charter, and bringing you up to those events that can be remembered by all but the newest members. Then, it will be up to some future "historian"

to carry our story forward through what we hope will be even more fruitful association and even greater Chapter effort to serve our profession. And like all those other remembered events, our history really begins with a phrase, and that phrase was, "OK, so you said you were interested!" We'll return to that phrase in full detail in due course.

Our story may appear to be rather "long-winded" to some of you who have not been around through all this evolution. If so, we're truly sorry about that; but perhaps some of those who remember our early struggle to break from the restricting cocoon will feel some degree of happy nostalgia upon being refreshed with these details. If that happens, we will be happy, and we'll apologize personally to each member who will express his boredom of the drawn-out history.

The Safety Engineering Club of Baltimore has been called the oldest such organization in the country; we don't know about that, not having checked it out. It was, however, the only group of its kind in Maryland, and just about everybody in safety work belonged to it. Its membership therefore included all those pioneers of safety who laid much of groundwork for what was to develop into what safety is today; they were in the van, as they say. We will not dwell upon the Club or its people because this is not their history, but neither can we speak of early Maryland safety and not acknowledge, however briefly, the efforts in safety that preceded our own. At the same time, it cannot be denied that there was a steady infiltration of non-professionals because of the laxity of their qualifications requirements. Gradually, the true safety man,

ambitious to better serve his profession, found himself surrounded by people who, even by stretching a point or two, qualified merely as para-safety practitioners, and others who could not come quite that close. There was a need for something more, something that could carry us forward into a higher concept of what was sorely needed with the rapidly changing times. Many of us felt that this could best be achieved, could only be reached, through association with a nationally recognized organization that was already "light-years" ahead of our own philosophy and practices. This brought us always to consideration of associating with the American Society of Safety Engineers.

Prior to 1960, many efforts had been made to get our group out of the "big fish in a small pool" way of operating. Many of the old-timers were, as they say, "agin it". They were happy and content to go along as they were even though they acknowledged a change that was not improving the local capacity for meeting the new challenges. From time to time, however, the more progressive, more professional members of the old club, attempted to break away, and much correspondence, and more than a few conferences with A.S.S.E. preceded our final and successful efforts. We can begin our history with the effort that immediately preceded our goal-achieving venture. We do not want to leave anyone with the impression that entry into our new association was a simple conversion. There was much to be done, internal strife to be overcome, antagonism from a certain small group in an existing chapter to combat, and there remained always an absolute need to so qualify our people that acceptance into a truly professional organization could become reality. It wasn't easy, and it was only very recently that all the

old wounds were healed - and the last of that by attrition.

In the late 1950's, a small group of men, from the membership of the Safety Engineering Club, decided to make one final effort to bring the group into the American Society of Safety Engineers. A committee, consisting of Kenneth Robinson, Joseph Gaskill and Calvin Peltó, visited Philadelphia to meet with Mr. Arthur Christian who was Eastern Regional Vice President of A.S.S.E. that year. The committee carried with it the roster of the Engineering Club, with names, titles and business affiliation. After perusal of this list, Mr. Christian was sympathetic to the group for its efforts, but explained that they could not qualify as a chapter because of the small percentage of qualified safety people shown on the roster. And that seemed to be the end of all possibility to join the American Society of Safety Engineers.

However, in early 1961, and entirely on their own, Joe Gaskill and Len Wozny returned to the City of Brotherly Love, lunched with Mr. Christian and put their cards squarely on the table. What had to be done in Baltimore to meet A.S.S.E. requirements? Art advised us to start a new organization, consisting only of people who could qualify as safety pros to meet their requirements. He explained patiently that it would then be necessary for this group to be in existence for a year, with duly elected officers, keeping accurate minutes of regular meetings and an account of finances. At the end of one year, we were to submit a proper application for membership in A.S.S.E. as a recognized Chapter, and if all went well, we would probably be accepted. We saw a long fight ahead, but also a challenge. Upon returning from Philadelphia, Joe and

Len contacted the leading people of the area; those who it was felt could qualify and who might be interested. From the leading safety people in the Baltimore area, Kenneth Robinson, Joseph Shofstal, and Milton Durham agreed to serve with Len as an organizing committee. Although receipt of our charter was still to be nearly two years off, charter members of the Chesapeake Chapter might date their activities from what point in time, because on September 1, 1961, the letter, which began, "OK, so you said you were interested." was sent to all those we thought could qualify. Because it might have nostalgic value for those in the original group, and for the sake of the record, we present, in its entirety and as part of our history, the original call to action. Here it is, just as you once received it.

September 1, 1961

Dear Fellow Safety Engineer:

OK, SO YOU SAID YOU WERE INTERESTED!

Well so are we, and since we last contacted you we have received the blessing of the American Society of Safety Engineers through their Regional Vice-President, Mr. Arthur H. Christian, and from Mr. Shell Martin who presently heads up the Washington Chapter.

We don't like to spring arbitrary dates at you - please believe that it was necessary when you are trying to meet a September deadline and all the people you want to contact are busy or on vacations. We hope that the evening of September 14 works out well for you. There are several reasons; we have a place that's

available on that date and we have the best opportunity of getting A.S.S.E. representatives on September 14.

Since we are not even an organization at this writing, we don't have any money either. However, there are always people who are trying to help people who are trying to help themselves. Fortunately, the Supervisory employees of the Bethlehem Steel Company have kindly offered their facilities at the Sparrows Point Country Club for the occasion. There will be a private bar on the pay-as-you-go basis. Refreshments are reasonable and a dinner meeting can be held for approximately \$3.50 per plate. We're enclosing a map herewith to make it easier for you.

So, it's September 14th at the Sparrows Point Country Club for a 6:30 p.m. dinner and a meeting to follow. Plan to be there. There is so much that you want to know and so much that the A.S.S.E. representatives want to explain to us.

See you at the Country Club.

COMMITTEE: J. Milton Durham, The Martin Co.
K. C. Robinson, Eastern Stainless
Steel
H. J. Shofstal, Westinghouse
Electric
L. Wozny, Jr. Bethlehem Steel Co.

We were off and running, but there were still obstacles to be hurdled, and as stated in the beginning we seemed to have the same

growing pains and problems as other great groups. Mention of the President of the Washington Chapter in the above letter, reminds us that at that time, there were those in the Washington Chapter {now National Capitol Chapter} who were not about to hand over territorial rights to a bunch of Johnnie-come-latelies in Baltimore. There were those in that fine, old Washington group who would accept us only as a splinter group of their Chapter, into what is now known as a Section. There was a touch of humor along with the seriousness of our relationship with these old veterans. At that same general time, the Baltimore Orioles were trying to get back into the American League after long years in the old International League. The Washington Senators, having territorial rights assessed a rather heavy tribute which the Orioles had to pay to get in. The Colts had a similar problem with the Redskin's rights and they, too had to pay to play. The idea seemed to catch on in Washington, and at one point we were told that we could exist as part of their group with a \$5.00 per head annual tribute. Fortunately for us, wiser heads in the Washington Chapter prevailed and the presence of Shell Martin at our first meeting was a sign that there was hope of ultimately receiving the blessing of the Washington Chapter. With the Washington group's cooperation, we worked out our own territorial jurisdiction, which was later approved by A.S.S.E. It might be of interest in this history to explain our territory. It includes all of the State of Maryland except for the contiguous counties, Montgomery and Prince Georges, wherein many of the members of the National Capitol Chapter reside. Some of this territory, in reality, means little or nothing to us. It is not conceivable that

people on the lower Eastern Shore would associate themselves with our Baltimore-based group. The same would be true of individuals or groups in southern Maryland or the extreme western counties. It just isn't feasible due to distances, for these people to get full benefit from joining us. However, we battled for it, we won it, and we can afford to be real magnanimous when, at some future date, we are asked to cede territory. But these are side-lights, of interest perhaps only to those who remember those times.

At that first meeting at the Sparrows Point Country Club, attended by seventy qualified people, we agreed to form a new organization for the sole purpose of preparing ourselves for acceptance into the American Society of Safety Engineers. We agreed on our name - The Chesapeake Society of Safety Engineers - we elected our officers, who were as follows:

President	-	Len Wozny
Vice President	-	Kenny Robinson
Secretary	-	Joe Shofstal
Treasurer	-	Paul Lucanski

This new organization held regular meetings, closely adhering to A.S.S.E. prerequisites, and grew from an original nucleus of forty-two qualified members to the ninety-seven charter members shown here:

Joseph R. O. Adams
Robert S. Adams, Jr.
Wilbur K. Agee
Charles D. Aglgren
Burgoyne G. Almoney
Henry J. Amann
Harry Robert Bahel, Jr.
Bruce N. Ballinger
Bert W. Behringer
Edmund D. Brower
A. Clifton Burton
Semeon R. Carpenter
William H. Catterton, Jr.
John F. Chittenden

William R. Eiler
William H. English
V. C. Fasano
Gary P. Fisher
Arthur V. Foard
Joseph G. Gaskill
Harry R. Gehring
Joseph T. Golden
Marion O. Graham
Edward V. Grund, Jr.
Paul E. Grundman
S. P. Gutelius
Joseph A. Haller
Frederick A. Hamel

William W. Merrick
Maurice D. Meyers
Ernest M. Newbold
Lawrence E. Park
Calvin K. Pelto
Fred C. Peregoy
H. Arnold Perkins
George H. Peyton
Lloyd J. Piccin
Richard I. Pike
Harry F. Rawlings
Clarence G. Reese
Walter L. Rice
Kenneth C. Robinson

Alfred H. Chris
Walter J. Chuprun
Harry Cianos
Jeffrey O. Clayton
Richard B. Cleary, Jr.
Robert H. Coleman
Alfred E. Como
Charles E. Creswell
William H. Davies
Allan N. Dean
Edward F. Derr
Edward F. Dice
S. Sheldon Diggins
Charles A. Dorsey
John F. Douglass
J. Milton Durham
Erwin O. Dykes
Ben P. Dykman

Joseph P. Hanna
Eugene D. Harrison
James Hunter
Charles B. Irwin, Jr.
Arthur G. Jacobson
John K. Jimmyer
Robert T. Kauffman
Sebastian W. Kessler
Louis M. Kreamer
Vernon F. Leonard
Otto W. Linton
Paul P. Lucansky
Harry E. Hackey
Thomas H. McBrien
Harry J. McClellan
Thomas B. McMath
James W. May, Sr.
Charles P. Meagher

John M. Roche
John E. Rous
Robert P. Rous
William E. Rynders
Allen E. Savage
Robert J. Schirmer
Joseph H. Shofstal
Arthur A. Smith
Earl W. Smith
L. Eugene Thorpe
Harry A. Veditz
Joseph F. Voeglein, Jr.
Joseph F. Wickless
Richard Williams
D. Hugh Wilkinson, Jr.
Eugene W. Wood
Wesley E. Wood, Jr.
Leonard Wozny, Jr.
Ralph B. Wray

During the course of that first year, this "Society" co-sponsored the Governor of Maryland's Safety and Health Conference and the Baltimore Safety Council's Seminar, with older Safety Engineering Club. Many of our members, incidently, continue their membership in both groups. We took part in other safety activities and were beginning to make ourselves known.

A formal petition for Chapter status was presented to A.S.S.E. in October of 1962. In that petition, we submitted the listing of our officers, minutes of our meetings, an account of our finances, our Constitution and By-Laws, a letter from the Washington Chapter that agreed with our territorial claim, a description of that territory and its boundaries, and a complete listing of all our members with most recent titles and business affiliation, addresses and type of membership.

The American Society of Safety Engineers responded in due time by granting our charter effective April 9, 1963. From that point on we have conducted ourselves as the Chesapeake Chapter of the American Society of Safety Engineers.

On May 14, 1963, the Chapter held its charter acceptance meeting, again at the Sparrows Point Country Club. Many distinguished people associated with safety and the industrial community were in attendance, but because we are now writing from fragmented notes and photographs that are not always too revealing - not to mention a forgetfulness that comes with senior citizen status, we might overlook someone. But representing the American Society of Safety Engineers were their leading officers shown below:

At our head table that night {for auld lang syne} were:

Mr. Hudson Quarles	-	President, Baltimore Safety Council
Mr. L. D. Zweier	-	Management's Representative, Bethlehem Steel Corporation
Mr. Paul Lucanski	-	Our First Treasurer
Mr. Henry Lamb	-	Eastern Regional Vice President, A.S.S.E.
Mr. Kenneth Robinson	-	Our first Vice-President
Mr. Al Blackman	-	Manging Director, A.S.S.E.
Mr. Leonard Wozny	-	Our first President
Mr. Arthur Christian	-	Treasurer, A.S.S.E.
Mr. Joseph Shofstal	-	Our First Secretary
Mr. James Van Namee	-	Vice-President, Eastern Central Region, A.S.S.E.
Mr. Wilbur Agee	-	Our first Chaplain

To indicate our grateful thanks to the men who helped us in so many ways to achieve membership as a Chapter into A.S.S.E., we would like an accounting of our history to show that Al Blackman was in our corner always, helping us through territorial differences, acquiring cooperation from individuals and groups from whom we needed approvals, and guiding us always in the right direction, especially when things looked dark and we felt the urge to abandon the whole project with a "what's the use" attitude. We owe Al much. Henry Lamb, from another angle was always willing to assist and prompted us always into keeping our standards high. And then, to

show our feelings of gratitude for the man who worked longest closest to our group, we recall to you Len's introductory comments that proceded Art's presentation of the charter to us, "...and now, fellows, we come to that gentleman who doesn't really have to be introduced to many of us. He has steered us along, officially and otherwise I would say, since the very first meeting in this very room two years ago. On that occasion, an unorganized but no less dedicated group met here to discuss our very earliest plans to shape our professional destiny. There were roadblocks that at times seemed insurmountable; we had troubles, oh, did we have troubles, but in all that ensuing time, we had that happy feeling that as long as I could get a call through to Philadelphia, as long as I could get Locust 4-1600, I could get Art Christian, and after I'd talk to Art our big troubles became little ones or disappeared. He has stuck with us to this very moment, and I know that he'll continue his valued assistance. I need say nothing more except to present the Treasurer of the American Society of Safety Engineers, Mr. Art Christian."

Prior to the presentation of the charter, we had heard from Mr. Quarles, who was an official of the Black and Decker Company, and President of the Baltimore Safety Council {now Safety Council of Maryland} welcomed us into the industrial community as professional advisors to our respective employers. Mr. Lamb, of the old American Standards Association {now ANSI}, advised us on ethics, admonished us to keep our standards high, and gave us valuable ideas for working as a successful chapter. Al Blackman, as already noted, had long been our good friend and counselor. He spoke to us now of a need for increased professionalism, a theme we were to hear

more and more, with increasing intensity which ultimately led to the fulfillment of a dream of long standing; the formation of the Board of Certified Safety Professionals, and the opportunity for us to participate therein.

An indication of the interest and dedication of that first group of members, the so called old timers who call themselves charter members, can be realized in part through a reminder from the remarks that were made to fill in that part of the time between the last few spoonfuls of mint frappe and the introduction of the first speaker. The president congratulated the group assembled with these words, "To me, this is rather an amazing turnout. Granted that this is a very special kind of meeting, one that occurs only once in the life of a chapter, I should explain to our out of town visitors that we can take great satisfaction in the fact that more than eighty members out of a total Chesapeake enrollment of 93 have responded in this fashion. One might say that the attendance should be good after two years of working toward this particular evening, but consider for a moment that just a few days ago there was a meeting of the Safety Engineering Club of Baltimore, to which many of us belong, and that between then and now there was a Past Presidents' Night of that same organization, and that on Thursday and Friday of this week many of you will be participating in the Governor of Maryland's Safety and Health Show, you are to be congratulated on your endurance and dedication {as are your long suffering wives}. I hope the Governor's Conference does not suffer from all this prior activity, and, knowing you, I'm sure that it will not."

From that point forward, our history should be reflected in existing minutes and newsletters. We grew, we prospered to the point where it became possible to provide scholarships. We have contributed to the growth of the American Society of Safety Engineers too by sending our proven officers to represent us and our region in Society programs to even further improve our status as professionals.

At this writing, February of 1976, in the year of our country's two-hundredth birthday, we are alive and healthy. We are in the hands of well qualified leadership, both in the Chapter and at Society level. We are growing. We need to grow to keep up with the rapidly accelerated pace of our professional requirements. We'll make it!