IEEE life members newsletter

contents

www.ieee.org/lmc

1st & 2nd quarters

2004

The IEEE Life Members (LMs) are aware that from time to time questions are raised about the rights and privileges of the LM. For example, in 2003 there was a considerable amount of discussion in the IEEE Board of Directors (BoD) meetings that led to the BoD passing a motion to charge the LMs for the hard copy of the *IEEE Spectrum*. As reported in the 2003 3rd & 4th quarters IEEE LM Newsletter, the BoD rescinded that motion at its November 2003 meeting after a number of presentations were made including by the Life Members Committee (LMC).

The primary function of the LMC is to provide leadership in the identification and support of the interests of the LMs in the activities of the IEEE. The 2004 LMC has decided to take a proactive approach. At its March 2004 meeting, the LMC set up a Subcommittee to review all aspects of LM status, including the criterion for becoming a LM and the rights and privileges of a LM. It is expected to be an all inclusive study and the subcommittee has already started its deliberations. The subcommittee is expected to report by the end of 2004. I invite all LMs to send their thoughts and comments on this topic to Julian Bussgang (pg 2, top right).

Life members have the experience and the knowledge that they can share with younger members by taking an active part in the activities of the IEEE. This can be achieved through an active Life Members Chapter program. In addition to providing support from the LM Fund for worthy projects of interest to LMs, support for the LM Chapter activities is also provided from this Fund.

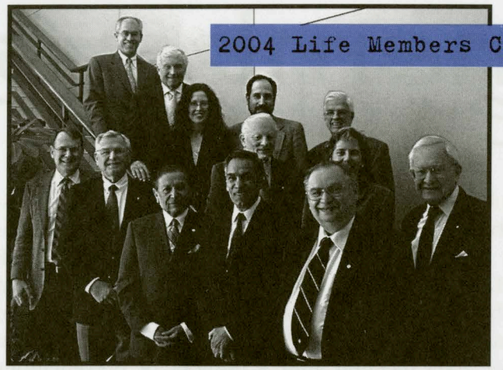
A LM Chapter Subcommittee has been set up to encourage the establishment of new LM Chapters in Sections with a viable number of LMs. I encourage you to be active in your Chapter if you have one in your area. Otherwise, take the lead to set up a LM Chapter in your area. I hope that we can double the number of LM Chapters by the end of 2005. Jacob Baal-Schem will be glad to hear your thoughts on the LM Chapter program (top of pg 3).

The contributions to the LM Fund are used to support a number of projects of interest to the LMs. Support for the operation of the LM Chapter activities is also provided from this Fund. The LMC is very thankful to all those who contribute to the LM Fund. In 2003, the average contribution by LMs to this Fund was $53.48 with about 27% of the LMs contributing. To extend its support of the many worthy project proposals received by the LMC, but not funded due to the lack of funds, I appeal to all LMs to increase the average contribution and the number of donors.

Active participation in LM Chapter activities and increased contributions to the LM Fund signify active participation of LMs in IEEE activities. They also will significantly enhance the advocacy role of the LMC on behalf of the LMs.

I welcome any comments that you may have. See the last page for the list of the 2004 LMC members and their email addresses.

Om P. Malik, Chair
IEEE Life Members Committee



2004 Life Members Committee

Front row (L-R): John W. Meredith, James E. O'Neil, Eduardo Bonzi Correa, Om P. Malik-LMC Chair, Jacob Baal-Schem

Middle row (L-R): Daniel J. Senese-IEEE Executive Director, Theodore W. Hissey, Jr., Mary Campbell-RAD staff, Warren A. Kesselman, Cecelia Jankowski-Secretary (staff), Julian J. Bussgang

Back row (L-R): Michael Geselowitz-History Center (staff), George F. McClure

The LMC and the LMF

The Life Members Committee (LMC), at its 29 March 2004 meeting, voted to change the guidelines for deciding how much to budget in a given year. The LMC approved using a three-year rolling average of the contributions received and of the ending net investment value (31 December) plus a base amount to spend in a given year. The money is used to fund programs and special projects that support: 1) young tech professionals and potential ones; 2) IEEE LMs and other similarly mature members who do not yet qualify for Life Membership tenure; and 3) the histories of IEEE-related technologies.

The official year-end total in contributions for 2003 was $235,933. This was a welcomed increase (even including a one time $10k gift) over 2002 ($180,532). However, interest and dividends from investments were down in 2003 ($27,216) from 2002 ($35,702) (but higher than the $20k budgeted). Thus, the increase in contributions was even more important and appreciated. More than 7,000 individuals generously gave to the IEEE Life Members Fund. However, we only had room (and that's with expanding this issue to 12 pages) to list those who gave $100 or more (pages 8-10). But the thousands of contributors who graciously gave various amounts under $100 (USD)—totaling over $175,000—truly made possible the funding of ongoing and new projects/programs.

For example, funding went to the IEEE Virtual Museum, which thanks to being named site of the week by the Kim Kommando Show (a radio broadcast with over 8 million weekly listeners) received 20 thousand visits in one day. Also, the support of global accreditation activities, and creating and placing lesson plans on the Internet for teachers and engineers using the Engineers Promoting Technological Literacy Through In-Service Program's materials help promote the tech education of the next generation.

In 2004, besides ongoing programs, the LMC approved funds to help restore Random Access Method of Accounting & Control (RAMAC), the first magnetic disk drive. Other proposals are awaiting more information before voting on them.

What do you think? Other than not having to pay membership dues and getting discounts at IEEE Conferences, what do you feel are the benefits of IEEE Life Membership? The Life Members Committee would like to know. The LMC would also like to know what contributions you think LMs make to the IEEE. The LMC would appreciate anecdotal feedback as well as more general thoughts/opinions. Please send your thoughts/opinions on this matter to Julian Bussgang at:

Life-members@ieee.org

Also, would you like a Distinguished Lecturer list on historical technology topics for interested LM Chapters? Are you willing to speak to other LM chapters within easy driving distance? If so, what tech history topics would you be willing to discuss? If interested, please email George McClure with your topic, phone number, and postal and email addresses to:

lm-chapters@ieee.org

IEEE Life Members Forum...Have you visited this virtual community yet? (See web address below.) And if so, did you contribute some interesting tidbit, answer a query or ask your own thought-provoking or not-so-thought-provoking question? This forum needs your continual input to succeed.

Applying to join? Please provide your IEEE member number in the "Optional Message to Community Administrators" box. Thanks!

https://www.ieeecommunities.org/lifemembers

Life members web site lists LM relevant IEEE Bylaws and the IEEE Life Members Committee (LMC) activities. It also gives summaries concerning funded projects and programs as well as reports on recent LMC meetings and more (like this newsletter).

www.ieee.org/lmc

Life Members Chapters

Okay, it's been five years and now we are really serious. We want the Life Members (LM) Chapters to spring up and prosper pretty much like dandelions everywhere. All it takes is six LMs to form a chapter. And the Section LM numbers are there.

Right now, there are 24 LM Chapters. However, there are roughly 70 Sections with over 100 LMs each. Almost 50 more Sections have 50 or more LMs residing on their turfs.

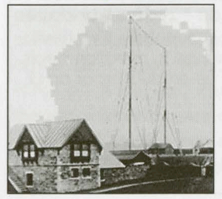
What's more, Region 7 (Canada) with only 826 LMs is leading the Regional pack with six LM Chapters. (Region 3 (3,585 LMs) is close behind with five.) However, Region 4 (1,906 LMs) has zero LM Chapters even though Sections, such as Twin Cities (182 LMs) and Chicago (151 LMs), would seem to have the numbers and close proximity to easily create Chapters. And Region 6, the residence of 6,155 LMs, has only one LM Chapter in Los Alamos, NM even though, three Sections in California rank in the top 10 for LMs: Santa Clara (862 LMs), Orange County (500 LMs) and Coastal Los Angeles (454 LMs). Interested? Contact your Region's coordinator and/or checkout the LMC website for more details. Lastly, we would love to share the existing 24 Chapters' stories. Email your LM Chapter news to: <m.campbell@ieee.org>.

LM Chapters. A Life Members Chapter can help Life members and other IEEE members remain active and involved. The LMC makes funding available as seed money. Jacob Baal-Schem oversees this program for the LMC as the Regional LM Chapter Liaison. For more information about creating a LM Chapter contact him or your Regional LM Chapter coordinator.

Region	Coordinator	Email alias
1	Edward Altshuler	edward.altshuler@hanscom.af.mil
2	TBA	lm-chapters@ieee.org
3	Dave McLaren	d.mclaren@ieee.org
4	TBA	lm-chapters@ieee.org
5	Ross Anderson	r.c.anderson@ieee.org
6	Len Carlson	l.carlson@ieee.org
7	Ron Potts	r.potts@ieee.org
8	Jacob Baal-Schem	j.baal.schem@ieee.org
9	Eduardo Bonzi Correa	e.bonzi@ieee.org
10	Matt Darveniza	matt@carr.ug.edu.au

Jacob Baal-Schem, Regional LM Chapter Liaison, Email: <j.baal.schem@ieee.org> or <lm-chapters@ieee.org>

Look familiar? Yes, this classic photo represents one of the IEEE Milestones, i.e. Signal Hill, Newfoundland dedicated October 1985—IEEE Newfoundland-Labrador Section. "At Signal Hill on December 12, 1901, Guglielmo Marconi and his assistant, George Kemp, confirmed the reception of the first transatlantic radio signals." In reading the write up you will also find out, "On Monday the 16th, Marconi released the news to the press and then began packing for a new location because the Anglo-American Telegraph Company threatened legal action for violating its communication monopoly in Newfoundland."



The significant other half (and also an IEEE Milestone) is Poldhu, Cornwall, England (left) where the letter "s" was sent in Morse Code to Canada.

IEEE Milestones

A natural, historical, good deed for a Life Members Chapter or a very energetic LM to undertake is establishing an IEEE Milestone for an IEEE organizational unit (OU). Each Milestone honors significant achievements in electrical, electronic and computer engineering. To qualify, "it must be at least 25 years old, must have involved a unique solution to an engineering problem and must have had at least regional impact."

Right now, there are over 50 Milestones worldwide. They run the gamut from a series of improvements: One-way Police Radio Communication-1928 (Southeastern Michigan Section) to Two-way Police Radio Communication-1933 (North Jersey Section) to FM Police Radio Communication-1940 (Connecticut Section) to early milestones such as Volta's Electrical Battery Invention-1799 (North Italy Section) and to more recent ones e.g. the First Wearable Cardiac Pacemaker-1957/58 (Twin Cities Section).

The IEEE History Committee through the History Center conducts the program. The two-stage process typically takes roughly a year to complete. The first stage is the person(s) representing the IEEE OU (e.g. Section or Chapter) proposes a Milestone by filling out a form found on the website (see last paragraph). It has seven questions that should be briefly answered along with providing the key corresponding people. The submitter(s)/OU also must accept responsibility for organizing the Milestone's publicity, the dedication ceremony and for paying for the cost of the bronze metal plaque (roughly $600 USD).

If the proposed Milestone is accepted, then the real work begins. A detailed Milestone Nomination form, which also requires the 75 words or less citation, must be prepared and submitted within six months for approval. Upon approval, a plaque with the citation is cast. Also, the OU plans and holds, with as much publicity as possible, a dedication ceremony.

For much more information, log onto <www.ieee.org/history_center> and click on "Milestones" on the left side contents bar.

tales from the vault

A name change

Well, it has been brought to our attention that some people may have been somewhat misled by the title "war stories" used in past issues. Also, there tended to be a preponderance of actual war and military defense related stories. So we changed it.

We are looking for fun, unusual, interesting and short stories that are somewhat tech/work related. Based on past and current submissions, we think that part of the title's meaning came through. But the stories can be non defense in origin as well. Of course, defense plays a huge part in technology's recent past. And a good story is a good story, no matter where it occurs. Details for submissions are on page 12.

Acronym discrepancy

In the last newsletter (*A balancing act*), I noticed a repeat of the old fable that SCR stands for Signal Corps Radio. It is a convenient coincidence that the letters jibe, but the real meaning is "Set, Complete, Radio." The component parts of any set then had other acronyms such as BC-for Basic Component, RE- for Relay, T- for transmitter, and so forth.

William A. Smith, LM
Fountaintown, IN

If it ain't broke...

My career with Motorola C&E began in July 1971. After one year, I was promoted to Project Leader with the National Projects Group. The job included being in charge of field engineering and main communications maintenance for the Pennsylvania Game Commission. Field work included supervising 20 Motorola communications shops around Pennsylvania.

Once a year, I supervised the annual radio performance testing, maintenance and level setting of the combination high-band and low-band radio two-way mountaintop equipment. High-band radio was for remote control operation. The main supervisory control station was on Sharp Mountain, 20 miles from the State Capitol of Harrisburg. The combination of tube and transistor equipment made settings difficult. Of interest was the main control station with a directional antenna that went from the Sharp Mountain site to the Game Headquarters in Harrisburg.

The newer transistorized high-band radio was capable of 40 watts of power output. A label on the equipment, however, stated never to adjust the output power higher than eight watts. Nothing in the radio station log said anything different even though the customer did not know of any problem. Thus, I advised the Motorola contractor to adjust the power to the rated output of 40 watts. Checking with a radio service monitor, no problems showed up with frequency, deviation, tone level, etc. A radio check was made with all the other State two-way users on that location and no interference was noted with anyone. I left the mountaintop site and went to the Harrisburg, PA office.

After several hours had passed, the secretary came running to my desk saying the Secret Service was on the phone. They had asked for me by name. I thought someone in the office was playing a joke. No joke!

I talked to the "Special Agent in Charge, United States Secret Service at Thurmont, MD...with the Presidential Party." It seems our radio adjustment was giving strong interference off the back side of the Yagi with the main security channel for the US Secret Service at, of all places, Camp David, MD—and with President Carter there.

They had found my number through the Motorola National Office in Schaumburg, IL and after the agent had talked to Motorola's Vice President. The agent advised me that Motorola's Vice President was quite mad and had told the agent that strong steps would be taken to correct the situation one way or the other.

My reaction was to return to the mountaintop with my radio contractor and turn everything back the way it was. I was filling out paperwork, apologizing on the phone, and very lucky to still have a job with the company.

Robert Klinger, LS
Mechanicsburg, PA

Note: No one reads the FCC radio license. On it, it said that the frequencies were "experimental" and must be renewed every year. The PA Game Commission did that and we never got to see the original license. The license also said that a directional antenna must be used.

These circumstances, and a lack of interdepartmental communications, made for an interesting time. The FCC, later, made the Game Commission give up the license.

"BAD" tooth

Shortly after being inducted into the Army Air Corps and completing Basic Training at Fresno, CA in 1943, I was chosen to participate in a program called, "The Army Specialized Training Program." I was subsequently sent to Oregon State College in Corvallis, Oregon and assigned to the Advanced Civil Engineering Course. Life at OSC was every GI's dream; normal classes in the midst of a continuing civilian coed environment. There was also the promise of a direct commission at graduation.

Alas, that was not to be. One day, I reported to "sick call" with an infected tooth. I did not know that this would be the day that the commander of a topographic mapping outfit stationed in Portland would be visiting the school looking for volunteers to join his unit. And join they did. Practically the whole of our company volunteered. As it would turn out, the topo outfit was subsequently shipped to Hawaii where they spent the war making topographic maps.

Meanwhile, I continued with my studies until the Department of the Army decided that things in Europe were warming up enough that Infantrymen were needed more than more civil engineers. The program at Oregon State was cancelled and the Army student body was transferred, as a whole, to Oregon's own 70th Infantry Division stationed at nearby "Camp Adair."

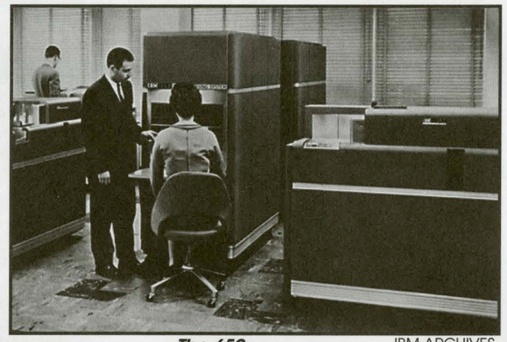
The 70th went on to participate in the European campaigns. Thus, instead of spending the war under a palm tree, I dug my way across Europe...all because of a bad tooth. Incidentally, I've never regretted the change in direction dealt by fate. I wound up graduating as an EE instead of a CE.

David Ferber, LM
Thousand Oaks, CA

just use the other side

In the fall of 1959, I was hired by Reaction Motors, Inc. (RMI), Denville, New Jersey. (RMI would become renowned for its throttleable liquid propellant engines for the X-15 Rocket Plane.) RMI had decided to upgrade its computational capabilities from a small-size LGP-30 to a medium-size IBM 650 and I was considered somewhat of a 650 expert in northern New Jersey programming circles. Thus, my job was to set up a computer group to support the chemical and the mechanical engineering of rocket fuels and engines.

Now the LGP-30 was a light brown box almost as large as an office desk; its only input/output was a Flexowriter, a battleship gray electric typewriter with a paper tape reader-punch. It was full of vacuum tubes, had a rotating magnetic drum memory and was leased for something like $1000 a month. It was situated in the rear corner, near the emergency exit, of the boron lab. Close by, the environmental safety monitoring unit, a cage of pet rabbits sat.



The 650 IBM ARCHIVES

The IBM 650, on the other hand, was a Stonehenge of dark grey boxes. The three largest ones were each six feet high and the size of a row of half a dozen or so file cabinets. At $4500 a month and requiring forty or so tons of air conditioning, it rated its own computer room. This change in computing power was a sizable expense for a smallish aerospace company. My staff comprised of a secretary and four programmers, of which two were experienced: they had a year of working with the LGP-30.

As Supervisor of Scientific Computing, it fell to me to prepare a detailed budget for the anticipated big-time computing that coming year. Now the 650 was a punch card computer and it had a ravenous appetite: All programs and data were read into and punched out of the 650 on these dollar-sized pasteboards. There was a separate machine, called a tabulator, somewhat bigger than an office desk, that would read and print the cards on wide, and endless, folded paper, at the ear-shattering rate of 50 lines a minute.

Punch cards ran about $6 per case of 10,000. Cheap enough, except we had to have two 25-gallon trash cans to accommodate the discarded cards and printouts. Also, these cans had to be emptied nightly. That figured out to about 7500 gallons of punch card trash a year. So my first year's budget had several thousand dollars just for punch cards and printer paper.

Unexpectedly, I was called late one afternoon into the annual board of directors meeting to defend my budget projections. The directors were mostly financial-Wall Street-business types; a couple were engineering-scientific notables. None had a clue about computers but they had been pretty well convinced that their rocket engine and fuel business would suffer without electronic computational support.

After forty-five minutes of each side not really understanding what the other side was saying, one director (a financial type) proclaimed with finality a resolution that would surely allow approval of the budget and the closing of this pesky matter. He announced, "You can turn the punch cards over and use the other side. That way we can cut that part of the budget in half."

Before I could continue my attempt to familiarize my superiors with the arcana and esoterica of modern computing, they all quickly approved the suggestion. With great relief, my boss and his—the VP of Science and Engineering—fled the board room sans ceremony with me in tow.

After a nine-month delivery lead time delay, we got the IBM 650 number fourteen hundred and something. Unforeseen business opportunities later in the year forced two and then three-shift computer operation. My original modest first-year estimate for punch cards, and other expendables, was exceeded several fold. But the deficit was happily funded for the bountiful and valuable computations being performed.

Duncan Morrill, LS
Merrimack, NH

A sequel

"Repairing Radars in the South Seas" (1st & 2nd quarters 2003)

About mid 1944, our radar operators noticed fuzziness on the radar screen of the PPI (plan position indicator). After some time, someone in the operations room looked out over the harbor and saw clouds with rain underneath. This observation continued for several days. We thought we had something. This belief was reported to the Navy Captain of the Yard office.

Back then, we didn't have NEXRAD doppler weather radar like we have now. This was simply an amplified return echo, just like any other target.

There was a Navy Weather Central in a Quonset hut just next door to our operations hut. They seemed quite interested in this phenomenon. Soon I sketched up a polar grid similar to that of the PPI screen. I instructed the operators to pencil an outline of the fuzzy area and an number inside it—1,2,3 or 4—based on their judgment of the intensity of the return.

The Navy liked this and soon a Lt. came over once an hour to get a report.

One day soon after, the Lt. came to inquire about the latest weather report...the Commander of the Naval Base wanted to go fishing. The radar operator on duty had been tracking a cloud coming in and reported that it surely would rain. Sure enough, in one half hour the rain really poured down. We were on the map then, so to speak.

William Barrick, LM
New Hartford NY

an ironic twist

Many WWII war stories are about the contributions of EEs to the war. This story is about the contribution of the war to an EE.

I had to quit high school at the age of 15 to support myself. In 1943, I was 18 years old and was working as a warehouseman in a Chicago brewery. When I looked into the future, all I saw was a dismal career of stacking cases of beer. Then I got a postcard that began, "The President Sends You Greetings." After the draft board determined that I was a warm body and therefore fit to serve, I was drafted into the Navy over my strenuous protests. Real men wore soldiers' uniforms, not Buster Brown outfits.

That random assignment to the Navy was to have a favorable impact on the rest of my life. After boot camp, I was sent to an Electrician's Mate school (a class A school) at Iowa State College, at Ames Iowa. There I was introduced to some basic electric work, beginning with Ohm's Law and how to solder. After completing the four months course, I was sent to the Electrical Interior Communications school in Washington, DC. That was a Navy class C school, which required eight months of very intense work, learning the theory of operation of all the electrical communication equipment used in the interior of Navy ships and more about the characteristics of three phase power than one would really want to know. A few months after that, the training was put into practice aboard the USS Crenshaw, APA 76. I finished out the war on her, sailing the Pacific.

Needing money after the war, I went back to work at the brewery for the summer. However, with my Navy schooling, I had enough high school credits for a degree, which I obtained after passing the General Educational Development test. Since Congress had passed the GI bill and I had some money saved and could work at part-time jobs, I was in the first class to enter the Navy Pier Undergraduate Division of the University of Illinois at Chicago. The rest, as they say, is history. Capitalizing on my Navy schooling, I elected to pursue an Electrical Engineering degree. I graduated with honors in February 1951 and went on to a fulfilling career. It seems ironic that it took a war to make it possible. As I look about now, I wonder how many young people are denied the opportunity to pursue their potential because of circumstances beyond their control.

Robert B. Laube, LS
Manhattan Beach, CA

d:-o

A prequel

"Radar landings" by Chester T. Rice brought back memories. Mr. Rice followed my footsteps a few months later at the radar school at MIT. I graduated from there in November 1943 and was assigned to the naval air-borne radar school in Corpus Christie, TX. I ended up doing lend-lease work with the USSR Navy in Elizabeth City, NC.

On a test flight in early 1945, my commanding officer was piloting the aircraft, PBY-6A, and I sat at the radar console near the navigation cubicle. The previous day I had calibrated the radio altimeter and was confident that the altitudes shown in the cockpit were accurate within 10 feet. Our destination was Nantucket Island—entirely over water from Elizabeth City. However, Nantucket was fogged in. As an alternate, we could land at the Naval Air Base on Rhode Island.

But, we tried Nantucket. I knew the geography of the field on Nantucket, could pick out the water tower on my radar and give my CO bearings and distances to where I felt was the runaway. He watched the radio-altimeter. We broke through the fog at the end of the runaway at an altitude of about 50 feet.

Yes, it took two of us to bring us down. But radar and FM signals made it possible. This was 10 cm. wavelength radar, and not quite as refined as the later X-band worked on by Mr. Rice. I am sure that he felt the same satisfaction of realizing the potential of radar then as I did. Now, some 60 years later, we have satellites able to read license plate numbers on the ground.

Gregory G. Gagarin, LM
Chevy Chase, MD

Mishap in the long distance telephone system

After completing the third year of a four-year engineering course at Sydney University, all students were sent to do a several months stint in industry. Thus, in 1951, I was allocated to the Post Master Generals Department, the Australian Federal Government's communications monopoly. With other students, I went to the City North Exchange. There all long distance calls to and from Sydney were channeled.

This was the era of vacuum tube technology when just eight (8) voice channels were conveyed on each pair of wires. Our task was to measure the noise on the three power supply busbars, 120 volts, silent earth (for vacuum tubes) and noisy earth (for relays). The busbars ran along the top of the bays just below the ceiling. We had to climb up a ladder to press the measuring probes onto the busbars.

The room was arranged with 15 rows of bays, with 16 bays in each row, eight (8) on either side of the room. The main busbars were located in the center of the room, The secondary busbars were connected at right angles, through fuses, to supply power to each bay. Fuses were also provided for each bay. If a fuse should blow, a contact closed to activate an alarm.

In making measurements, a quite uncomfortable process when balancing high on a ladder, we occasionally blew a fuse. In this process, we uncovered the fact that when a fuse blew on a bus supplying a row of bays, no alarm contact had been provided.

I should mention that nothing seemed to ruffle the technicians who manned the Exchange. They were not perturbed whenever we set off an alarm.

Then came the day when we had to test the main power supply to the exchange on the floor below the bays. In our usual style (and because access was difficult), our probes caused a short. Immediately, large ballast globes lit up to transfer power to the back-up multi-vibrator, which was needed to establish all carrier frequencies for the exchange. Unfortunately, the back-up multi-vibrator did not start up—all long distance communications to Sydney ceased.

To our astonishment, when the chief technician became aware of the situation, he ran up and down the stairs like a jackrabbit (so different from his normal equanimity).

At the time, I was expecting to be reprimanded for the havoc we had caused. Now I realize we did them a great favor by uncovering the serious deficiencies.

Walter Lachs, Fellow
Blue Bay, New South Wales
Australia

Aerospace's highs and lows

As an electronic engineer during the cold war/missile buildup of the 60s and 70s, I worked mostly in the field out of Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico. Working with such employers as Bell, Hughes, and McDonnell, I flew a lot as a radar operator/missile launcher in the then current jet fighter aircraft. We tested air-to-air missiles such as the Falcon and the Sidewinder against F-80 and B-17 drone targets.

There were times during a target shoot (against a B-17 drone) when an extra target popped up on the radar screen. Being wary, I'd take my aircraft out of automatic mode into manually override to withhold firing. I, thus, avoided blowing out of the sky the private pilot of the Cessna or Comanche who unwittingly or intentionally was crossing the White Sands Missile Range.

There were many trips to Eglin AFB in Florida to fly out over the Gulf of Mexico on tests of air-to-air missiles against drone and decoy targets. At times, we'd be grounded for days or weeks as storms moved into the gulf. So while remaining on close call, we beach combed, played chess, caught up on letter writing and studied subjects of interest.

To get back to New Mexico during those years, a tree-hopping connecting flight called the Vomit Comet took passengers from Eglin/Ft. Walton to Pensacola. From there, American Airlines flew to New Orleans, Dallas and El Paso. Because of the variable winter weather, we would find ourselves hopelessly grounded in New Orleans during Mardi Gras. Taking the Zen approach, we enjoyed the inevitable. Of course, the ones with true vision brought back copies of the local papers to prove they really were delayed due to weather.

So what was the downside of working in aerospace? Here are some: being away from family, loss of contracts, little job security due to political whims. Thus, the astute engineer always maintained a current resume.

Art Judd, LS
Santa Fe, NM

tales from the vault (continued)

In the line of fire

In the mid-70s, I was directed to work at a major network TV station in Washington, DC to solve some of their problems. (In those days, it was a struggle to make every thing come out the correct color.) This assignment eventually stretched out to three *long* months for me. But being a corporate engineer, my employer could request such things and could request that I work when others were off, i.e. Saturdays and Sundays. Thus, we did engineering design work during the week and staff work on the weekends. Therein lies this experience.

Sunday news programs were live. This particular Sunday, the 10 am program's guest was none other than the President of France, Valery Giscard d'Estaing. Thus, at about 9 am, a three-automobile entourage of President d'Estaing's rolled into the station's parking lot flanked with six Washington Police motor cycles in the front and six in the back.

(At 6 am, the Presidential security (FBI or Secret Service or both, I don't remember) already had invaded the building and shut down all the elevators. They even took the fuses out of the master fuse box for the elevators. They also had secured *all* the doors. Thus, movement around the studios was hazardous at best.)

For awhile, things went smoothly until about 9:50 am (10 minutes before air time), when Bill Monroe—the moderator for that day's show—complained that the tally lights on camera two would not go out. I went running past Secret Service agents to the equipment room.

Not being familiar with that particular camera, I pulled the tally lamp power supply out of the rack "to fix the problem." Instead, the whole camera went down. Off to the power supply room I went to get the camera working again.

I was winding my way back through the Secret Service when I heard Mr. Monroe still complaining about the tally lights. Mr. Monroe said that at this point he didn't care if the lamps came on when the camera was active, he just didn't want the red lights in his eyes.

Thus, I thought, okay, let's just remove the lamps supply for now. Down went the camera with five minutes to air time now. Back in went the lamps supply.

With the camera working once again, I figured simply covering the tally lamps with something would suffice for now. I looked around and saw in the far corner of the studio some black felt draped over a stand. I also found a pair of long paper scissors at the script desk. I raced over to the felt, cut off about two square feet and ran the 70 or so feet passing President d'Estaing (about three feet away) holding the scissors like a dagger.

When I reached the camera, I cut the felt into smaller pieces and taped them over the tally lamps. The immediate problem was solved two minutes before air time. I retreated to the control room with adrenaline pumping at full tilt. The show proceeded without a hitch.

Gradually, it dawned on me what I had done. Remember, there were Secret Service everywhere. I asked some of the locals why I had not been taken down by the Secret Service as I passed so close to d'Estaing with a lethal weapon. The answer came back that they were one of the top of the line Secret Service groups. They had figured out what was going on and found my solution satisfactory. Needless to say, it took a while for me to gather up the courage to go back to the studio while all that security was there.

Related happenings that day. 1) FYI, the tally lamps were fixed that afternoon. The technical console, which was unmanned, had a test button which was stuck in the down position.

2) Mr. Monroe was totally bald and the studio lights glistened from his head. The reflected light totally saturated the camera picture in places. Just before air time, the solution was to put him on a stool in the corner with a cape to cover his clothes. Then a powder puff about the size of a basket ball was plopped down on his head to provide a "mat" finish.

Robert Sanford, LS
Flower Mound, TX

The unfortunate need people who will be kind to them; the prosperous need people to be kind to. —Aristotle

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In addition, you join our legacy giving donor recognition group, the Goldsmith League. It is named for Alfred N. Goldsmith and his wife Gertrude (Maude) as a special tribute for their estate gift to the IEEE Foundation.

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Before you decide if a gift in your estate of your US savings bonds is right for you, please meet with your financial advisor. To request additional information or to hold a confidential discussion of giving opportunities to the IEEE Life Members Fund, please contact the IEEE Development Office by telephone at +1 732.562.3860 or by electronic mail at supportieee@ieee.org.

Note: *This article is educational in nature and should not be considered as legal or financial advice.*

Karen Galuchie
IEEE Development Office

Internet for the chronologically challenged

I could make a lot of personal excuses. But the real reason I haven't taken the plunge is that I just don't have sufficient motivation to go through the process. For the moment, I am remaining with the 57% of US Americans who still use dial up access at up to 56kbps. It's a service I get very reliably in New Jersey, in the Adirondacks, in Minnesota, in Los Angeles, or anywhere I am likely to roam.

True, it is taking longer and longer to download my e-mail. Part of the problem is due to the increased use of digital pictures from my various correspondents, both wanted and unwanted. It seems that the desire to exchange pictures rapidly and conveniently is what has pushed many of my friends into the broadband realm. For whatever reasons, that has not been one of my personal priorities. And I don't have a camera phone either.

Okay, so I haven't taken the plunge into broadband.

The other part of the problem of large e-mail files is the deluge of spam that has developed, but I am sure that is not news to you. The spammers are absolutely relentless, and for good reasons. Sending their entreaties to buy, subscribe, invest, etc. costs them next to nothing and an infinitesimal rate of response makes them money. When I analyzed my personally received spam over a period of three weeks, I was astounded by what I found. I had received an average of 2.5 offers of some means of improving my sexual performance each day and the high day was 9. Even more prevalent were suggestions on how I might save money on anything from ink cartridges to mortgages. Their numbers ran pretty consistently at 5.8 per day. The rest encompassed such things as low cost meds, gambling and health improvements rounding out to total about 9.6 per day. This is an annoying but manageable number, but only if I stay on top of it.

Then there are some other mailbox stuffers about which I am neither totally blameless nor totally disinterested. IEEE sends me an average of 1.6 messages a day, mostly Institute news and calls for papers on subjects that I know absolutely nothing about. My nose for national and international news and opinion has caused me to deliberately sign up for online tables of contents averaging 4.4 daily, most of which I now ignore.

Not so easy to ignore are the forwarded items from "friends." They really seem to be well intended, and every once and while there is a real pony buried in all that stuff. My very favorite is a photo of about 500 people without clothes walking away from a public square with the caption, "Enron Employees Leave Houston With All Their Worldly Possessions." I'm glad I didn't pass up that gem.

The really bad, unwanted stuff consists of virus and worm attacks. Thanks to the IEEE's screening on its E-mail alias service, what I received over the 22 days were just notices of aborted attacks, a total of 24. On the worst day, there were 7 aborted attacks. Unfortunately, the Internet has become a pretty scary place. Have you signed up for your IEEE E-mail alias yet?

As a final note, I have at last gotten rid of my circa 1995 desktop PC. (I am sure that you have all found that it is far easier to acquire new computers than it is to get rid of the old ones.) While this particular machine is passing into friendly hands, I still did my best to cleanse it of anything that could possibly lead to personal disgrace or identity theft.

At first I found myself working at cross purposes with Norton's System Works. Every time I deleted or uninstalled something, the software would squirrel it away for possible recovery. Along the way (and shame on me) I found 498 cookies and 1186 cache pages for a total of 58 megabytes including "slack." In the end, I cleared out 700 megabytes (the disk capacity was only 2 megabytes) which I over-wrote with Bruce Springsteen music. On top of that, my daughter is under strict instructions to destroy the hard drive before the final junking.

As to broadband conversion, maybe next time. Broadband services are getting cheaper and wireless local networking equipment is getting better. The latter thanks to IEEE's 802.11g standard. Stay tuned.

Fred Andrews, LF
f.andrews@ieee.org

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de code

our mailing list

The Life Members Newsletter is distributed to Life members and those who are NOT Life members but are 1) IEEE members 65 years and older, 2) retired IEEE members aged 62 through 64 and 3) members of special boards and committees.

submitting articles

We welcome articles for this newsletter. In particular, we seek articles about projects initiated at the Section and Region level by Life members as well as "war" stories. In general, published story lengths are:

1/4 page—200 words 1/3—300 words
1/2 page—450 words 1 page—900 words

Acronyms should be completely identified once. Reference dates (years) also should be included. Editing, including for length, may occur. If you wish to discuss a story idea beforehand, you may contact me by email Jim O'Neil <james.oneil@ieee.org>, Julian Bussgang <j.bussgang@ieee.org> or call Mary Campbell, Managing Editor, at +1 732 562 5526.

The deadline for possible inclusion in the next issue is 14 October 2004. Please include your town, state, country, phone number and/or an email address with your piece.

stopping IEEE services

Those Life members who wish to have all services stopped should contact IEEE Member Services. If you are doing it at the request of someone else, submit the member's name, number, grade, address, change date and your connection, e.g. Section Chair.

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