



Valley Engineer Newsletter

MARCH - APRIL 2018

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

- April 13, 2018 at 4:30 pm - Yozo Fujii at the Fazlur Khan Distinguished Lecture Series - Lehigh Whitaker Lab, Room 303
- April 25, 2018 at 6:00 pm - United Labs Tour
- May 9, 2018 - Installation of Officers and Scholarship Awards Dinner - DeSales University



**PENNSYLVANIA SOCIETY
 OF
 PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS**

**LEHIGH VALLEY CHAPTER
 (ORGANIZED 1935)**

CARBON, LEHIGH, MONROE, & NORTHAMPTON COUNTIES

Scholarship and MATHCOUNTS® Donations

Alfred Gruenke, PE

The 2017-2018 MATHCOUNTS and Scholarship donation period is coming to an end. To date, we managed to receive \$13,235.00 from companies, engineering companies, and individuals. It's a bit less than the \$14,215.00 we collected last year, but still, not too shabby.

There were some major shifts in contributions this year. A number of contributors reduced their amounts, in one case dropping from Graduate to Senior level. Also, a couple of firms who had been steady contributors in the past decided to opt out this year.

However, we had a significant number of new contributors. Chapter President Brian Kutz's new firm, Liberty Trust, became a contributor this year. Brian was also instrumental in obtaining contributions from Maser Consulting and Langan Engineering. Kevin Campbell increased our contributor base by "signing up" Kreisler Miller located in Horsham, PA. My personal addition to this group is Allison Berger, who works for PEAK Technical Services in Horsham. I met Allison at a company sponsored affair and I explained our Chapter programs to her. She became a proud contributor, and I thank her.

We still have a few potential contributors out there. If too late for this year, we'll just add them to next year!

Members of the Chapter thank all who have contributed to our Scholarship and MATHCOUNTS Fund. More important, over 200 Middle School students and from four to six high school students thank you.

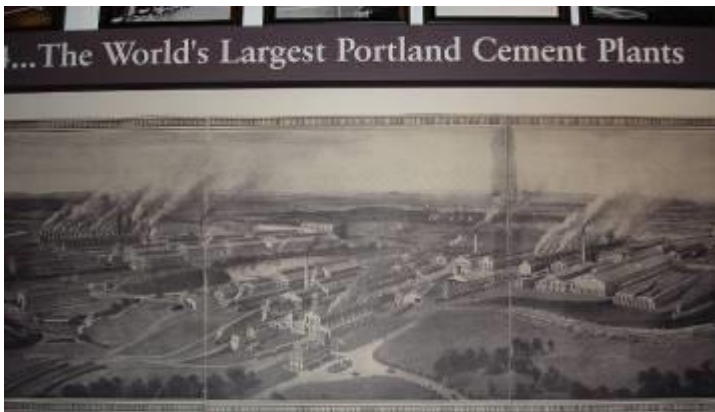
An Evening in a Museum

Alfred Gruenke, PE

Around twenty or so members and guests of the Lehigh Valley Chapter, Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers gathered on a chilly early-spring evening to tour a museum dedicated to an industry which once made the Lehigh Valley world-famous; the cement industry, with emphasis on the facilities of the Atlas Cement Company.

The Museum is the brainchild of Ed Pany and is located in a portion of the Borough of Northampton municipal building. The last Atlas facility shut down in 1982. Ed spent the next fifteen years collecting artifacts, lunchboxes, photos, and names of former employees. In 1997 he proposed the museum to Northampton Generating, situated on the site of the last Atlas plant. They agreed to the project and supplied the seed money. It is also supported by the remaining Lehigh Valley cement plants. Our tour guide was Larry Oberly.

Larry was a school teacher who never worked in a cement plant, but his enthusiasm for the subject was immediately apparent.



In the late 1800s the Navarro family of Madrid, Spain, spread its industrial wings to include Havana, Cuba, and the Borough of Siegfried, Pennsylvania. Jose Navarro was dispatched to build a cement complex which became the largest cement producer in the world. Plant 1, located west of the Lehigh River, opened in 1889. Plants 2, 3, 4, and 5 were east of the Lehigh River. Atlas also operated eight farms to feed the 200 horses used in the quarries and plants.

It should be noted that this era was a time of considerable innovations in the cement industry. The first Portland cement in North America was produced with vertical kilns by David Saylor in nearby Coplay. Atlas Cement used rotary kilns, which increased production tremendously. Thomas Alva Edison was an active participant in many of the technological advancements during this period. Edison owned a cement plant in Alpha New Jersey, which produced the cement for the original Yankee Stadium.

At its peak Atlas Cement had 78 kilns spread over 200 acres, producing 50,000 barrels of cement daily. That's 9,800 tons per day, a respectable number even today! Atlas Cement was the major supplier to the Panama Canal, 1,500,000 tons. Each batch was tested, and the fact that no out-of-spec cement was shipped still remains a point of pride. Atlas Cement also became part of the Empire State Building, Holland Tunnel, and Rockefeller Center.



Photo of the laboratory that ensured quality, with some of the equipment

Continued on page 3



relatives worked there. He answered no. He did not get the job.



Various cement bags from the area - Allentown, Whitehall, Hercules, Keystone, and Lehigh.



Photos of quarries

Even though the museum is a display of artifacts from Atlas and other area cement companies, the presentation by Larry, and the displays in general, emphasize the people who worked at these plants. At its peak, 5,000 people depended on Atlas Cement for their livelihood. The area was populated mostly by people of Pennsylvania Dutch heritage but could not sustain such high levels of employment. To fill the gap Atlas, along with Bethlehem Steel, coal mining companies, and other industries went overseas to recruit workers. Central Europe was in turmoil, so agents went to Austria, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Croatia and Ukraine and easily recruited the needed workers and their families. The variety of churches in the area are indicators of the diversity of this period.

Larry related an interesting story as how Northampton was so named. The original Atlas Cement was in the villages of Siegfried, Newport and Stemton, incorporated as the borough of Alliance. The cloth bags had Alliance printed on the bags. There was a 5 ¢ deposit on each bag and it was expected that the empty bags would be returned for reuse. The deposit for each returned bag was subtracted from the next invoice. The problem was, there was another town in Pennsylvania named Alliance and the bags were sometimes shipped to the wrong town!

Prominent in the museum is a series of stainless steel plaques in the museum lobby. It lists 2,376 people who worked at various times for Atlas. Family relations were common. Looking at the names, it was unusual to have a last name with only one entry! This was a common trait in the industry. Larry mentioned that he once applied for a job at a cement plant and was asked if any

Continued on page 15

SCHOLARSHIP SPONSORS

A great way to be involved in the LVPSPE Chapter is to contribute to the **LVPSPE SCHOLARSHIP FUND**. Please Contact the Valley Engineer Editor to sponsor scholarships for the remainder of the calendar year.

If you would like to contribute in any amount – please send your TAX DEDUCTIBLE donation to PA ENGINEERING FUND. Donations should be mailed to:

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Please note “LVPSPE Scholarship Fund” on the comment line.

Or, you may also contribute via the LVPSPE website <http://www.lvpspe.org/Donations>.

Scholarship application is at <http://www.lvpspe.org/Scholarships>. Any questions regarding scholarships can be directed to

Alex Dezubay, PE
610-597-2007
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Board of Direction Meetings

The monthly Board of Direction meetings are 6:00 PM on the second (2nd) Monday of each month. Open to all members; they are held at the office of Liberty Property Trust, 74 W. Broad Street, Suite 240, Bethlehem, PA.

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 In 1909 it was decided to change the name to Northampton, presumably because it is located in Northampton County. That made life less complicated.

In 1909 the Atlas Portland Cement Company, seeing the need for a central mailing address, petitioned the Northampton County Court to combine the communities of Siegfried, Newport and Stemton to create the Borough of Northampton.

The cement industry has been an important part of the region for over 100 years and continues to be so. Cement from the Lehigh Valley has influenced the region, and the world. We thank Ed Pany and Larry Oberly, for the opportunity to view the industry that first put our area on the world map.

 For those who do not think, it is best at least to rearrange their prejudices once in a while.
 - Luther Burbank

Ferry Boat to Asia

Alfred Gruenke, PE

One of my "Claims to Fame" is, I first went to the continent of Asia in a ferry boat; twice.

East of Suez is a phrase coined by Kipling to describe all the countries of Asia during the time of the Raj. The phrase was popularized in his poem "Mandalay" published in 1890. Going "East of Suez" meant to escape the social confines of the Victorian era for a freer and more exciting life among more libertine cultures.

The first time to Asia was from Suez, Egypt (Africa) to Sinai, (Asia). I was on assignment approximately 60 miles south of Suez, in the Eastern Desert of Egypt. Site living conditions were spartan, so a weekend anywhere was a nice diversion.

This was in 1982/83, and there were many signs of the 1973 war with Israel. Bullet holes in buildings, wrecked Israeli tanks on display, that kind of thing. There were a couple of collapsed buildings, but it was hard to determine if this was a remnant of the war or merely the result of shoddy construction.

The name of the hotel in Suez was Hotel Suez and looked like something from the opening of the Suez Canal over a hundred years before. It might have been. The building had a large

Continued on page 16

veranda around it which, for some reason, brought to mind Humphry Bogart. I pictured Bogy in a floppy hat and baggy pants walking around, with a knowing smile on his face.



"The dawn comes up like thunder, Asia across the Gulf". With a nod to Kipling.

It was the best hotel in town, and, at \$7.00 a night, reasonably priced. I had the first-class room which had its own bathroom. For a wakeup call someone came around in the morning and knocked on the door. But it was clean, Stella beer in a bottle was cold and available, and the food was acceptable. I "Binged" hotels in Suez preparing for this article and the Hotel Suez is not listed. No surprise there.

I took the company bus from site on Thursday afternoon and again back to site on Saturday morning. A pleasant get-away from the other expats.

A few of the site electricians were pretty good and spoke passable English. I was invited to their homes and to various festivities, including a wedding! My Arabic got to be pretty good.

I took a taxi to the canal and boarded a ferry boat to Asia, accompanied by a couple of my friends. The boat was rather rickety but seemed seaworthy enough for a short trip. The gulf is only 200 yards wide, so the trip took only a few minutes. On the Sinai side we took a taxi and headed south for a couple of miles.



Ocean going vessel waiting to enter the Suez Canal



The Canal

The classic picture of the Suez Canal is a camel, with an oceangoing ship in the background. That's what it looked like, except I didn't see any camels. The Asian side of the Suez Canal is pretty much the same as the African side. Dry, featureless desert. Very routine, but it was my first trip to Asia.

The second ferry boat trip to Asia was in Turkey, across the Dardanelles. Our assignment was in Canakkale, which is in Asia. We flew to Istanbul, which is in Europe, and stayed the night in a hotel. The next day the customer's driver picked us up and we headed west and south. The 200-mile trip took over five hours. Along the way I saw a road sign for Sofia, Bulgaria. It took me a moment to put this in perspective. I was a long way from Pennsylvania!

Continued on page 17

We drove to near the end of the Gallipoli Peninsula, and onto a very nice and roomy ferry boat for the one-mile ride across the Dardanelles to Asia. It held around twenty trucks, buses, cars, bicycles, plus a few pedestrians. We continued on the Asian side to our destination, a little village called Mahmudiye about 25 miles south of Canakkale. On the way I noticed a road sign for Troy, Troy.

The next Saturday the customer took us for a tour of the Gallipoli battlefield, the disastrous (for the British) attempt to attack the Ottoman Empire during WWI. We took a ferry boat to Gallipoli similar to our first crossing.

Returning at the end of the day, we missed the last regular ferry boat. Fortunately, there was a somewhat more minuscule ferry boat available. There was room for only four cars; the wheels of the cars were only inches from the edge of the deck!

We made it, so it sufficed, though the crossing was a bit harrowing.

I've traveled to various countries in Asia numerous times by plane, but the first two times were by a more ancient mode of transportation, a ferry boat



Ferry boat to Asia, from Europe



Asia ahead

Never, never be afraid to do what's right, especially if the wellbeing of a person or animal is at stake. Society's punishments are small compared to the wounds we inflict on our soul when we look the other way
-Dr. Martin Luther King

Idealism is fine, but as it approaches reality, the costs become prohibitive.
-William F. Buckley, Jr.

I doubt, therefore I think, therefore I am.
-Rene Descartes

I think I am, therefore, I am... I think.
-George Carlin

I can, therefore I am.
-Simone Weil

Rest is not idleness, and to lie sometimes on the grass under trees on a summer's day, listening to the murmur of the water, or watching the clouds float across the sky, is by no means a waste of time.
- John Lubbock, *The Use of Life*



Lehigh Valley Chapter
Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers
Lehigh, Northampton, Monroe and Carbon Counties



Minutes for the March 12, 2018 Board of Directors Meeting

6:00 pm at the office of Liberty Property Trust, 74 West Broad Street, Suite 240, Bethlehem, PA 18018

Attendees: Ray Szczucki, Brian Kutz, Al Dezubay, Chris Williams, Mary Rooney, Kevin Campbell, Angelika Forndran, Harry Garman, Bob Peruzzi, Al Gruenke (phone) and Alexa Rooney (phone)

- A. Call to Order – Brian Kutz called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.
- B. New Business
 - Alexa Rooney is looking to get involved in the Chapter and joined the meeting over the phone. She moved here recently and was previously active in a Michigan chapter. Alexa is interested in becoming a Director.
 - Harry Garman reviewed Chapter accounting records. Discussed a few questions with Ray and the Board.
 - Ray to coordinate with Peter Staffeld for Wild Apricot (web server) payment authorization and PayPal privileges.
 - Al Gruenke to provide list of officer nominations.
 - Bob Peruzzi thanked the Board for being named Engineer of the Year. The Engineer's Week speaker and location were both great. Bob will write an article for the next newsletter, on behalf of the National Academy of Forensic Engineers.
- C. Programs – Al Dezubay
 - March 20 – Tour of Atlas Cement. Dinner to follow at Assante.
 - April – UL (United Lab), no date
 - May – Banquet scheduled for 5/9. We'll invite reps from graduate level donors.
- D. MATHCOUNTS – Kevin Campbell
 - Kevin reviewed accounting. This year's event had lowest expenses in at least 10 years.
 - Kevin will also be serving as the state MATHCOUNTS coordinator in two weeks.
- E. Fundraising – Al Gruenke
 - \$12,385 so far. Expecting total of around \$13,300.
- F. Scholarships – Al Dezubay
 - Applications were due yesterday. Received 35 applications, up from 26 last year.
 - Al will send spreadsheet and copies of applications and transcripts for review by Chris, Brian and Angelika.
- G. Treasurer – Ray Szczucki
 - Typical deposits and payments since February. Some PEF contributions received.
 - Made contribution to Dream Big and Cetronia Ambulance.
 - Brian, Al Dezubay and Ray will get together to update the Chapter's bank signature card.
- H. Adjournment at 6:53 pm on a motion by Kevin, seconded by Angelika.