



# ASHRAE

Hawaii Chapter

## HE EA MAKAMAE

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### HISTORICAL COMMITTEE (SY 2010-11)

Chaired by Joseph K. Ting, P.E., P.Eng., CxA

## ALOHA TO THE HAWAII CHAPTER OF ASHRAE

**Frederick H. Kohloss, P.E., JD - 21<sup>st</sup> Chapter President (SY 1989-90)**

When you're 88, you have a lot of memories. Some of my most treasured memories are of the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) and most of those memories are of Hawaii.

In 1955, I came to Hawaii. I attended the University of Maryland and was in the ROTC when the U.S. entered World War II. I received a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering in January 1943 and, after Officer Candidate School, I was commissioned a lieutenant in the Army Corps of Engineers. I served in the 125<sup>th</sup> Armored Engineer Battalion of the 14<sup>th</sup> Armored Division.

In 1944, I made the best decision of my life: I married Peggy just before I went overseas. Our division fought in France and Germany. After the German surrender, I joined a construction battalion in England. We sailed to the Philippines and built barracks for the air corps. (The ship didn't come near Hawaii, stopping only in Panama and New Guinea.) After Japan's

surrender, we sailed to Yokohama, and performed base maintenance at Tachikawa and Yokota Air Bases. In 1946, I was shipped to Seattle (again going nowhere near Hawaii). I was then relieved from Army active duty at Ft. Meade, Maryland, and met my year-old daughter & Margee for the first time.

With the help of the G.I. Bill, I attended the Law School of George Washington University (GWU) at night to study patent law. I had to have a job to support my growing family, so starting in 1946, I taught engineering at GWU in the daytime, while going to school at night. I graduated in 1949, with a J.D. degree, but had found I didn't like patent law.



As an instructor, and later an assistant professor at GWU, I taught courses in thermodynamics & HVAC&R (heating, ventilating, air conditioning and refrigeration). I joined ASHRAE's predecessor society, ASRE in 1949. In 1949-50, while I was still on the G.I. Bill, I took graduate mechanical

engineering courses at the University of Maryland during the evenings and weekends. The University of Delaware had a resident summer program in 1950, which with my U of Maryland credits, would leave me only to complete a thesis for a master's degree. University of Delaware let me prepare my thesis, while teaching at GWU in 1950-1951. Titled "Design and Performance of Evaporative Refrigerant Condensers", it was accepted and I received the Master of Mechanical Engineering degree in June 1951.

My family had grown by the addition of Charlotte and Eleanor, so in 1951, I took a job as chief engineer of an air conditioning design & contracting firm in Washington D.C., which represented Worthington. From 1951 to 1954, I designed and we installed projects including the Washington Hotel, the American Chemical Society Building, and the TV station WTTG.

The Cleveland Worthington distributor, Avery Engineering, was headed by engineer, Lester Avery who had been installing industrial refrigeration and air conditioning since the 1930s and had been president of ASHVE, the other ASHRAE predecessor. Lester made me join ASHVE on my arrival in Cleveland and enticed me to Cleveland by a big salary increase (to \$8,000 a year) serving his company as chief engineer. So, we moved to Cleveland in 1954. I liked the company and the city, but, our daughter Eleanor became severe asthmatic. Our doctor said if you want this kid to survive, move to a warm climate. Well, I put a classified ad in engineering magazines. Harold Heide came to Cleveland and hired me in the fall of 1955.

Heide and Cook had the Hawaii York franchise. Joe Tanaka and Gil Salfen had joined the firm when Heide got the franchise from Hawaii Tuna Packers. Harold Heide and Jack Cook were two honorable and competent plumbers, and I learned a lot about plumbing and sheet metal work, while working there.

Hawaii architects and engineers were losing large local and Pacific Ocean area design job to

mainland firms. At that point in time, Bob Belt of Belt Collins and other civil engineers, organized a partnership known as Belt Lemmon and Lo, whose partners included Lemmon. A few years later, Lemmon Freeth and Haines (now Architects Hawaii) was established to include Don Lo (structural engineer), and Wynn Nakamura (electrical engineer). Bob Belt then approached Frank Montgomery to set up a partner mechanical firm. Frank didn't want to leave Hawaiian Electric Company (HECO), so he and I started Montgomery and Kohloss. I was full-time and Frank was part-time with the firm. HECO kept promoting Frank so he never left. After four years, I gave him one year's notice of my intent to start my own firm, and he brought in Nels Soderholm to replace me. Nels later added Lars Sorensen as a partner.

Belt Lemmon and Lo did the state capitol design and I did the preliminary mechanical design of the capitol before leaving. While with Montgomery, I taught thermodynamics at the University of Hawaii, School of Engineering. Later, Jimmy Chou did an outstanding job teaching there and continued to support ASHRAE.

Frederick H. Kohloss and Associates opened its door in 1961. I had made friends in the design and construction field in my six years in Hawaii, and I had been attending ASME and later ASHRAE Society meeting on the mainland.

Through mutual friends, I became acquainted with Australia's architect John Buchan while visiting Melbourne. I did some design work there for Mr. Buchan in 1962. In 1963, I opened a branch (actually a separate Australian company) in Melbourne. My senior associate, Dick Hughes, moved to Melbourne to run it. I made frequent visits, and owned an apartment there for over twenty years. Australian engineers Trevor Tiller and later David Bibby ran the branch. Both became active ASHRAE members. Dick Hughes returned from Australia and worked many years in the Honolulu office, later in our San Francisco office until he retired.

Our firm had a long-time Tucson branch and shorter-lived branches in San Francisco, Cleveland, Denver, and Guam.

Honolulu staff at times included (all ASHRAE members) Tsukasa Mukai (now in Hilo), Randy Murayama, Tom Pressler, Rich Rauls, Kenneth Thom, Mike Langer, and for the longest tenure, Primo Pablo. Mike Hattori was a key associate for many years before opening his own office.

I'm proud that we had a stock ownership plan. All employees (after one year's service) shared all the company profits. After five years employment an employee's share was fully vested.

In Hawaii, we got a lot of help from manufacturer's representatives. Initially, there weren't very many but I recall Von Hamm-Young, Lewers & Cooke, and Honolulu Iron Works. Contractors: Air Engineering (Carrier), Heide & Cook (York), and Oahu Plumbing (Worthington, later Trane) gave us application data on products.

Van Darrow, Norm Baxter, and Lester Sen, respectively, were engineers at the above contracting firms. Later, we did a lot of jobs with Continental Mechanical, whose Dick Dearing, Bob Seelman and Sam Fujikawa, were all ASHRAE stalwarts, and I have had the pleasure to deal with them. Carrier Hawaii became the domain of John Arizumi, who was a leader in ASHRAE as well as the engineering and contracting community. Trane also opened their own office, and for over 30 years, Bob Hann was their outstanding representative who gave great support to ASHRAE.

In controls, John Gesser of Johnson Controls Inc. became an ASHRAE fixture. With the help of the above, Hawaii ASHRAE members plus engineer Bob Hamilton, the Hawaii ASHRAE chapter was chartered in 1969.

Boyd Chee, a competent manufacturer's representative, and his wife Dora, joined Peggy and me at ASHRAE chapter meetings. Boyd served a term as Society Director-At-Large. Lester Nakata was also active in the region and society affairs, chairing the Society Refrigeration Committee.

A fine young engineer, Giovanni Chung, died tragically in a Manila hotel fire. Giovanni had spearheaded getting my name into the ASHRAE Society Officer's nomination process. I served as Director, Treasurer, Vice-President, President-elect, finally President in 1986-87.

In the late 1980s, we started closing branches as I gave thought to my retirement. By 1990, we had only the Honolulu office.

In 1991, my Melbourne friend Alan Scott, an ASHRAE member, who headed the very large successful Australian firm of Lincolne Scott, came through Honolulu and invited me to join him for a drink. He was looking to buy a U.S. engineering firm. He and I worked out a deal. We would form a new Hawaii firm, Lincolne Scott Kohloss that would be a Lincolne Scott subsidiary. He would purchase the Kohloss firm's assets from me; I would remain head of the new firm, with a minority ownership. Our employees would receive money for their stock accounts. Alan would bring in engineers from his firm, and would gradually phase me out. Three Australian engineers, Mike Suttie, John Whitmore, and John Fyfe then headed the firm with my assistance until 2001, when they didn't need me anymore and politely eased me out.

By 2001, my Peggy was in the early stages of Alzheimer's. In late 2002, we moved to a retirement facility in Tucson where she received excellent care. She passed away on October 6, 2009. We chose Tucson because we have daughter Eleanor, and granddaughter Margaret Anne and her husband here, the weather is pleasant, the facility is excellent, and the city is familiar. I don't do design, but I have been a consultant on a few Hawaii contract disputes; I do miss Hawaii after 47 years.

I'm pleased that by efforts of people like Joseph Ting, Eric Nakagawa, Sam Gillie and many others I didn't mention, the ASHRAE spirit continues to flourish.