

125 Years... And Counting!

A timeline of ESWP and "everyone else"

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Any organization or company would be pleased to state that they are (at least) 125 years old. It's quite an accomplishment that not many can state. I would venture to say that there have been many more entities that have "came-and-went", versus those who have persevered to achieve their 125th year milestone; the Engineers' Society of Western Pennsylvania (ESWP) is one such entity.

Founded on January 6, 1880 in the Office of the City Engineer, Pittsburg (sic), ESWP has adapted to the many changes since, and is alive and well 125 years later. Much has happened during this time; society has changed dramatically over this period. And from early industrialization to today's high-tech standards, the ESWP has kept pace all along the way.

In preparation for the Society's 125th anniversary year, I have gained a new respect for the contributions and participation that ESWP has made to Western Pennsylvania, and beyond. Reading from the volumes of the ESWP's early proceedings, you can literally see the city of Pittsburgh "grow up". Early ESWP members — names like Andrew Carnegie, John Brashear, George Ferris, John Roebling — were making their mark on the world, which helped Pittsburgh grow into an industrial and corporate powerhouse. Public health and safety, transportation systems, roads, bridges, tunnels

and highways, heavy industry, mining, natural resources, design and construction are but a few topics recorded in the minutes of the ESWP earliest meetings. And Society members weren't on the sidelines; they were doers who were intimately involved with some of the weightiest responsibilities of the day. Still to this day, ESWP members are involved in projects around the world, representing companies large and small — or working independently — to continue the spirit displayed by those giants of yesteryear.

And it wasn't ESWP that made these dreams become realities, it was the effort and brilliance of those engineers and architects and other members that allowed ESWP to claim involvement in the growth of the past 125 years. It is the members who made (and continue to make) the Society what it is; not the other way around.

To help place the ESWP into perspective with other events from around the world, and around the block, please note a special feature in this issue of *Pittsburgh Engineer* magazine. Running along the footer of each page, you can follow a continuous timeline that traces the events of the world, nation, local society and *your* Society from its inception in 1880 through today. I hope that you enjoy some of the correlation between the layers of the timeline, and appreciate the continuity that

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ESWP has maintained while the world has changed so radically. And, yes, I am sure that many readers will know of events that don't appear in the timeline — it was truly both a pleasure and a challenge to arrive at this version — fear not, a full version in greater detail will be forthcoming in the new book commissioned by the Board of Directors that recounts the Society's first 125 years, due out in early 2006. (By the way, did you know that ESWP published the book "Pittsburgh" in 1930 to commemorate the 50th anniversary?)

The work contributed to date was thanks to the work of many

hard-working volunteers, who did much of the digging into ESWP's archives and elsewhere to help identify the items considered for the timeline and upcoming yet-to-be-titled book. A special thanks to George Tannehill, Chuck Tabone, David Donahue, Jim Dwyer, Kevin Schuman, Glenn Baggeley, Al Ackenheil, Rich Rice and Harold Hall for your thoughts and efforts. If you would like to join the effort, or have suggestions for additional items, please forward them to ESWP.

I hope that you enjoy reading along as much as we did researching, writing and learning about the early days of ESWP.

