Rail Transportation Division Newsletter

Rail Transportation

Summer2008

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Over many years, the ASME Rail Transportation Division has been a leading technical organization that serves the railroad industry, engineers, and our membership by holding conferences and publishing papers. This strong tradition will continue during the coming year with the upcoming Chicago RTD Fall Conference in September, 2008 (after the RSI Conference), and the Pueblo Joint Rail Conference (JRC) in March, 2009 (after the AAR Research Review). In addition to papers and presentations from ASME and IEEE authors, the JRC has been strengthened by the addition of ASCE participation, which will bring technical content on a variety of railroad infrastructure research topics.

The key in providing outstanding service to the railroad industry is having excellent, and relevant, technical content at the conferences. Depth and breadth of subject matter detailing new developments and technologies, makes for exciting and interesting gatherings of engineering professionals. If you or someone you know want to author a technical paper, or make a presentation at a RTD conference, please do not hold back – share your knowledge and findings with the industry to help move us all ahead.

As you may have noticed, RTD has been holding technical conferences at times and locations where other organizations are already holding a meeting – such as this September in Chicago with RSI. In today's era of more tasks, fewer available personnel and increased travel costs, this strategy is designed to give railroad industry engineers the opportunity to attend multiple events during the same week.

As with any volunteer organization, much work goes on behind the scenes to make events happen. The Executive, General and Advisory Committees of RTD deal with many issues including conference scheduling, budgeting, college scholarship payments for students, attracting new members, maintaining the history and heritage of our industry, and much more. RTD is extremely fortunate to have a group of talented and dedicated professionals working as volunteers.

As the incoming RTD Chairman for 2008-2009, I am looking forward to working with these fine people during the upcoming year. Please do not hesitate to offer your suggestions on ways we can make RTD better.

Cameron P. Lonsdale
ASME RTD Chair 2008-2009

FUTURE MEETINGS

2008 RTD Fall Conference, September, 24-25 Chicago, IL
2009 JRC; Pueblo CO, March 4-5, 2009
2009 RTD Fall Conference September 2009; Ft Worth, TX
2010 JRC – Being Planned
2010 Fall Conference-Minneapolis

2008 Fall Technical Conference
Chicago Illinois
September 24-25

Advances in Railroad Technology – Advantages in the Global Marketplace

The ASME 2008 Rail Transportation Division Fall Technical Conference will be held in Chicago, IL, Wednesday and Thursday, September 24-25, at the Chicago Hilton Hotel.

Dinner Speaker: Lisa Stabler, AVP-Quality and Reliability Engineering, BNSF will provide an *Overview of ATSI (AAR's Advanced Technology Safety Initiative) and EHMS (Equipment Health Management System) at the* Wednesday Evening conference dinner.

Online registration will open August 8, and early registration will close September 8. Watch our website for further details.
http://www.asmeconferences.org/RTDF08/

The Conference will follow the 2008 RSI Coordinated Mechanical Associations Technical Conference, which will take place September 21-24, with both indoor and outdoor exhibits. This provides opportunity to attend two premier rail industry events.

Through a special arrangement with RSI, your ASME registration nametag will give you admission to both the indoor and outdoor RSI exhibits.

ASME technical sessions will be Wednesday afternoon and Thursday, September 24-25.

A conference reception and dinner are scheduled for Wednesday evening, replacing the usual luncheon of past conferences.

You are encouraged to make your hotel room reservations early while rooms are still available at the "RSI special conference rate." For reservation information and more conference information, check our website:
http://www.asmeconferences.org/RTDF08/

2008 Joint Rail conference
Wilmington Delaware

The Rail Transportation Division (RTD) holds two conferences annually, one in the fall and one in the spring. Conferences provide opportunity for latest updates of technology beneficial to the railroad industry, and the conferences typically include a tour at a nearby industry site of interest.

The Spring 2008 Joint Rail Conference (JRC) was held April 22-24 in Wilmington, DE with ASME, IEEE and ASCE partnering for papers, RTD handling registration and financials, and IEEE taking the planning lead. Covered topics related to improving railroad efficiency and reliability for a safer environment and included:
Vehicle design and operation

- Air brake systems
- Bearing performance
- Traction power systems
- Tank car progress
- Train monitoring and control
- Modeling railroad dynamics
- Crashworthiness
- Track and maintenance of way issues
- Passenger cars & locomotives

Conference attendance was 141. RTD extends an appreciative "Thank You" to Amtrak for graciously hosting tours of their Wilmington and Bear Maintenance Facilities. The luncheon featured speaker was Mr. Rudy Vazquez, Amtrak Senior Director, High Speed Rail Maintenance/Overhaul Engineering, AMTRAK Mechanical Department. Mr. Vazquez highlighted challenges and accomplishments in maintaining the high speed Acela trains.

ADVANCE NOTICE
2009 JOINT RAIL CONFERENCE
Pueblo, CO, March 4-5, 2009

The 2009 JRC, hosted by three societies (ASME, IEEE and ASCE) will once again be held in Pueblo, CO, following the Annual AAR Research Review (March 3-4).
Following the tour of TTCI on Wednesday morning, RTD technical sessions will be Wednesday afternoon and Thursday, March 4 and 5.

Watch for future announcements of the call for papers and conference details

Jop (Joseph) Peter Van Overveen,

Dec. 3, 1916 - March 3, 2008

The Rail Transportation Division sadly notes the passing of a long-time member. Joseph, commonly referred to as "Jop" or "Joppy" (pronounced Yop) by friends and relatives, was known by his colleagues in the rail industry as “Joe.”

Joe was born in Amsterdam, Holland and as a child developed a love for trains. He also lived in South Africa for a short time while his father was working in the diamond industry. His father appeared on an NBC’s Chet Huntley Newsreel in the 1950's regarding his cutting of the "Burton Diamond" worn by Elizabeth Taylor. The diamond was cut on a wheel designed by Joseph. In his early 20's Joe was drafted into the US Army, during World War II, and became a naturalized US Citizen in September 1940.

Joe and his wife Irene were married in 1943. He was discharged as a 1st Lieutenant in 1946, and they moved to Northern California in 1949. They laid down roots in Lafayette in 1950, where they lived for over 57 years.

Joe earned a Bachelor's Degree in Mechanical Engineering from studies in Haarlem, Holland, and a Master's Degree in Railway Mechanical Engineering from Purdue University. He had gained much engineering experience in the Army, at a food packaging company in New York, and at a gear/transmission factory in Massachusetts. Working for Shand & Jurs in Berkeley, Joe developed 5 engineering patents related to petroleum storage equipment. He was hired in the 1960's, by Parsons, Brinckerhoff-Tudor-Bechtel for the initial development of the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BARTD) System, which led to the position of Senior Mechanical Engineer with BARTD.

Many innovative mechanical features of the transit system were designed by Joe. He retired from BARTD at the age of 80, after working over 30 years for the district. Joe often marveled that after playing with model trains as a child, he was very lucky to play with "big" trains as an adult.

He was very active in many civic and professional groups and was instrumental in the City of Lafayette becoming incorporated. Joe regularly attended Lafayette City Council meetings where he was known for his "lectern moments". He was an environmentalist long before it was fashionable, fore fronting the removal of a commercial helicopter-landing pad that had impacted his quiet suburb in the 1960's. He was Director of the Lafayette Community Center 1958-1974, Chairman of the Board 1960-1964, Lafayette City Recreation Commissioner 1975-1982, and active member in the Lafayette Historical Society, Lafayette Forward, the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, and LaFrantics. For his efforts, Joseph was voted Lafayette Citizen of the Year in 1962. Joe obviously loved his city and he loved his adopted country.

He was a member of the National and California Society of Professional Engineers since 1959, a Life Fellow of The American Society of Mechanical Engineers and member emeritus of the ASME History and Heritage Committee. Joe attended many of the ASME Rail Transportation Division technical conferences, presenting papers and entering into discussions on other papers. He had a wealth of experience and knowledge, which he shared with the rail industry. Joe will be missed by the rail industry engineering community.

RTD Initiatives for Students

RTD has, in the past, sponsored one or two annual scholarships, depending on division financial resources, for students interested in pursuing a career in the railroad industry. In 2008 RTD decided to more broadly support student participation in conferences by donating, for that purpose, an amount, determined by the Executive Committee, to each of the three Association of American Railroads (AAR) affiliated research universities: University of Illinois – Champaign Urbana, Texas A&M, and Virginia Tech. The donation in 2008 was $1,500 to Virginia Tech, in memoriam of the shootings at Virginia Tech, and $1,000 to each of the other affiliates. We look forward to active student interest and participation at RTD conferences.

Membership Development Activity

ASME RTD conferences offer a benefit that non-members who pay the full non-member conference registration fee are eligible for a one-year free ASME Membership. After the 2008 JRC conference in Wilmington, nine people signed up for the memberships. This is the highest number of new sign-ups the division has seen over many years.

Membership Development is one of the most important activities. Historically, ASME RTD has had around 700 members. Over the past five years, we have seen the number of the RTD members decline slightly. This year, we have broken the trend. My special thanks go to all the people who

helped in recruiting members and contributed to making the conferences more interesting.

HISTORY OF RAIL TRANSPORTATION
EDWIN B. KATTE, FIRST CHAIR OF THE ASME RAIL TRANSPORTATION DIVISION, 1920-1923.

During the first three years of the RTD Edwin B. Katte, Chief Engineer, Electric Traction of the New York Central Lines, held the position of Chair. He is the only person to have held that position for more than two terms, and no person has held that position for more than two terms since 1928.

Born October 16, 1871 in St. Louis, Mo., where his father, Colonel Walter Katte, was in charge of the construction of the Eads Bridge, Mr. Katte received his early engineering training at Sibley College, Cornell University, from which he was graduated in 1893. His railroad career began January 1, 1896, and from then until December 1903, he served consecutively with the New York Central & Hudson River Railroad as assistant engineer in charge of the Park Avenue Viaduct, in the drafting department of the chief engineer's office, as assistant engineer in charge of water supply; then was appointed mechanical engineer in the Engineering Department in charge of the design and construction of light, heat and power plants, coaling stations and water supply.

In December 1903, he was appointed electrical engineer, a position that carried with it the secretaryship of the Electric Traction Commission. Three years later he was made Chief Engineer of Electric Traction for the New York Central Railroad, in charge of design, construction and operation of the electric traction systems of the road.

Early Engineering Work

Between the time that he completed his college work (he was granted the degree of Master Mechanical Engineer after a year's residence study), and the time that he joined the New York Centrals forces, Mr. Katte was doing important preparatory work. He was employed as a machinist and erector in the hydraulic works of the Henry R. Worthington Company, South Brooklyn, N.Y., from 1894 to 1896. It was from there that he went into the Railroad's services. During his early years there his work embraced the preliminary calculations, design and construction of the heat, light and power plant for the remodeled old Grand Central Station in New York; also the design and installation of the electric lighting and elevator plant for the Union Passenger Station at Albany; and the electric light and power plant for the Weehawken Passenger Station; a lighting system for the West Albany Shops and a central power plant for the car and locomotive shops there, having a capacity of 2,000 horsepower. He also handled a central station for the Weehawken Terminal of 2,300 kilowatts capacity in alternating current steam-driven generators, and directed many other engineering jobs for the Railroad.

As electrical engineer and secretary of the Electric Traction Commission of the New York Central & Hudson River Railroad, he had direct charge of the electrical and mechanical engineering corps engaged in electrifying the lines in and out of New York City. This was the first trunk line steam railroad to have its entire through and suburban service hauled by electricity, not only in this country but abroad. This undertaking included two 30,000-kilowatt capacity central stations, which were among the first to use large capacity turbine driven alternators. The system included nine substations with batteries, extensive aerial and underground 11,000-volt transmission systems, 600-volt direct current distributing systems and 285 miles of third rail. The equipment included seventy-three of the most powerful, high speed passenger electric locomotives up to that time constructed, also 212 all-steel motor cars, being the first all-steel cars constructed for a trunk line railroad.

After becoming chief engineer of electric traction, Mr. Katte had charge of the design, construction and operation of the electric traction system, and the design and construction of many new types of electric locomotives, multiple unit motor cars, the design and installation of modern power station and substation appliances and the extension of the electric traction system of the New York Central from Woodlawn to White Plains and from Yonkers to Croton.

In March 1922, he was appointed consulting electrical engineer for the Cleveland Union Terminal Company, having charge of the design and construction of the electric traction system entering this station, both for the railroads and for the electric interurban systems. Mr. Katte was instrumental in the development of the Diesel-electric locomotives for switching and main line service. Several of the pioneer locomotives of this system were developed directly under his supervision.

In November 1925, he was appointed chairman of the committee having charge of the electrification of the freight service of the New York Central on its West Side tracks in New York City.

Two months later he was named chairman of the New York Central Lines Mechanical and Electrical Committee, which coordinates the electrical and mechanical activities of all the Lines.

His vast activity in the electrical field brought him many associations. The technical societies of which he was a member, in addition to Kappa Alpha, are the American Institute of Electrical Engineers, American Society of Mechanical Engineers, American Railway Engineering Association, New York Electrical Society, American Committee on Electrolysis, and the American Committee on Inductive Coordination. He served as an officer or committee chairman of each organization and presented many technical papers before various groups. He was also a member of the

New York Railroad Club, the University Club, Century Association, and Transportation Club in New York City, and of the Ardsley Club at Ardsley-on-Hudson.

In addition, Mr. Katte took an active part in technical education work, as witness his service as consulting electrical engineer to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, as an alumni representative at the College of Engineering, Cornell University, and as a member of the Committee on University Relations of the American Railway Association. He lectured before engineering classes at Harvard, Cornell, Stevens ***Institute of Technology and the Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute.***

During the World War he held a commission as Major in the Engineer Officers' Reserve Corps of the United States Army, but did not see active duty because of his Government employment as Chief Engineer of Electric Traction in the United States Railroad Administration. He was First Sergeant and later Second Lieutenant in the Irvington, N.Y., Home Guard, and he served on Liberty Loan, Red Cross, War Workers, and Y.M.C.A. committees.

Mr. Katte died at his home in Irvington, N.Y. the morning of July 19, 1928 at the age of 56, and after an illness of more than a year. Surviving him were his widow, the former Miss Elvira King, daughter of Thomas M. King, one-time president of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad; his mother, Mrs. Walter Katte; a sister, Mrs. Edwin G. Merrill; a daughter, Elizabeth, and a son, Edwin B. Katte, Jr.

Funeral services were conducted Saturday, July 28, 1928, from St. Barnabas' Church at Irvington. Burial was in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, Tarrytown, N.Y.

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