

SEM History

Experimental Techniques September/October 2002, Vol. 26, No. 5

Charles V. Mahlmann 1914-1986

Forward: For the first eighteen years of its existence, the SESA leaned heavily upon volunteers to accomplish its missions. Charles V. (Chuck) Mahlmann was an important one of those volunteers who edited many issues of the *Proceedings of the Society for Experimental Stress Analysis*.

Early Editorial History: The proceedings for the *Semi-Annual Eastern Photoelasticity Conferences*, when published, were traditionally edited by the local host. During the *Seventeenth Semi-Annual Eastern Photoelasticity Conference*, the members voted to change the organization's name to the *Society for Experimental Stress Analysis*. The meeting was sponsored by the Chrysler Corporation and Charles Lipson was the local organizer. Partially following tradition, Lipson was an editor of the proceedings which were then called the *Proceedings of the Society for Experimental Stress Analysis* Vol. I, No. I. Bill Murray was the President of the new organization and also helped edit the publication. (Bill had previously been the editor of proceedings for three earlier Eastern Photoelasticity Conferences). Thus, Vol.I No. I through Vol.V No.II were listed as being edited by C. Lipson (Chrysler Corp.) and W. M. Murray (MIT). No editor was listed for Vol VI, but in 1950 and 1951 Vol. VII and Vol VIII were edited by an Editorial Board consisting of W. M. Murray, editor, C. V. Mahlmann (MIT) and D. H. Pletta (Virginia Polytechnic Institute). Starting with Vol IX (1952) the editors for the SESA. Proceedings were C. V. Mahlmann and W. M. Murray. That arrangement continued until a paid profession staff, headed by Bonney Rossi, took over in 1961.

As a member of the SESA Executive Committee and as Chairman of the Papers Committee (in the late 1950s), I saw and interacted often with Chuck Mahlmann, the editor. He was a friendly and generous person but impressed me as being very shy. He seemed to be most comfortable working behind the scenes, yet was a major force in producing the high quality proceeding for which SESA was receiving international acclamation. I was not privy to the financial arrangements, but I believe that Chuck served the Society as a volunteer, as did Bill Murray, Charles Lipson, and Dan Pletta..

Bill Murray was, very deservedly, the most honored and recognized person in SESA/SEM history, and Charles Lipson was recognized as one of four founders of SESA, was its third president, a fellow and a Murray Lecturer. By contrast, with only one exception Chuck Mahlmann's public recognition was limited to having his name appear on a list in each volume of the proceedings. That exception was an article of appreciation that appeared in Vol. 1 No. 2 of *Experimental Mechanics* (Feb. 1961). No author was listed for the article but I strongly suspect that it was written by Bill Murray. Since many SEM members weren't yet born in 1961, we will reprint that article here. In my opinion, Chuck Mahlmann's talented contributions and longtime loyalty to the *Friendly Society* deserve to be recognized as an important part of SEM History.

CET

A Salute to Charles V. Mahlmann

It is well known that our Society has been operated since its inception largely by the volunteer efforts of many devoted members. Not so well known, perhaps, is the valuable contribution made by C.V. Mahlmann who, for the past decade, has been managing editor of the *Proceedings*. For this reason, and because he is now yielding this post to a full-time staff, a salute to his excellent work seems most appropriate.

Few, except those who have been close to the detailed operations of the Society, can fully appreciate the many hours of patient labor that Editor Mahlmann has contributed to the *Proceedings*. He has not only directed production but, in addition, has personally prepared many of the drawings, tables and diagrams, as well as the master sheets required for a clear and attractive presentation. His work has supplemented the contributions of the numerous authors and friends of SESA whose efforts have brought international recognition to this publication.

In our retiring editor, the Society has found not only an enthusiastic and devoted friend, but also an unusual and brilliant man. Charles received his early education in Japan, where he learned to speak the language. Entering the University of Dayton (Ohio) at the tender age of 14, he received his M.E. degree four years later. He pursued his graduate studies at several universities – Cincinnati, George Washington, Wisconsin – and earned his master's degree at M.I.T. While at college, "Chuck" gained experience in various aspects of the printing industry – an interest he holds to this day.

In his professional life as an engineer, he has been associated with a number of prominent firms, including Emerson Radio, General Motors Corporation and the Instrumentation Laboratory of M.I.T. More recently, he has established himself as a consultant. His unusual capabilities in machine design have earned him an outstanding reputation, especially in the field of electro-mechanical devices. Lately, he has been devoting some time to the design of plastics and to the development of mechanical equipment for the medical profession.

The Society has indeed been fortunate in having a generous and loyal friend with exceptional professional skill and a useful knowledge of the printing industry. To "Chuck" Mahlmann, the SESA extends its thanks for a job well done and takes this occasion to wish him continued success.

- Reprinted from the February 1961 issue of *Experimental Mechanics*, published by the Society for Experimental Mechanics, Inc.