

History of the Oregon Section of the AIPG

The primary impetus for licensing as professionals in Oregon takes its seeds from a long history in the search for excellence and public credibility as much as it was the collision between the old school ways of engineering, their textbooks of the 1950s and the generation of scientists.

My late father was a licensed engineer and surveyor in Oregon from 1950 forward. He was a very intelligent man and a good problem solver his entire career. But by his own admission, the education he received at what was then called Oregon State College, taught aspiring young engineers only ONE class in soils and no geology. Regardless, they were still allowed to delve into areas where a smattering of knowledge could prove dangerous. I have seen his transcripts. Today, happily Oregon State University has entire departments in all aspects of engineering as well as independent schools in the geotechnical world including a world class School of Oceanography. This is a delight to all of our science specialists and a benefit to the American scientific community. The point of this discussion is to show a personal and real life example of how education has changed over time to better benefit the world's needs.

Inter-twinned in the reasoning for licensing is the public protection issue, government desires to regulate everything where consumers might be affected and for us as professionals to be able to stand alone. The Oregon chapter fought like its counterparts in other states for years, for a singular identity, and freedom from a somewhat foreign licensing board (engineers) who held different perspectives of the geological arena. Few were aware of or prepared for the rapid expansion of the overall geological marketplace. Personally I watched engineers who lost their licenses because they weren't prepared and lacked sufficient background to meet the challenges of our part of a rapidly changing world. Most of these individuals were likely good at engineering, but ventured into the geological/geotechnical areas and encountered numerous educational "landmines". Having been raised by an engineer, and having been educated and practiced in the environmental and engineering side of geology as well as soils engineering, I have seen the difference and the pit falls, which is why licensing exists today. It was never the production of volumes of work that mattered, but the challenges of the next problems that lay outside of the comfort box.

FOUNDING FATHERS IN OREGON

Somewhere in the mid-1970s The American Institute of Professional Geologists gave birth to the Oregon chapter. Looking back at the old files is challenging as few copies of their minutes and thoughts exist. Oregon's early section roster did include a broad spectrum of specializations including, but not limited to; academia from no less than six universities, private practitioners in geology, representatives from two or three state government offices and other parties with interest.

Amongst the first group we find the names of John Eliot Allen, educator and professor emeritus; Ewart M. Baldwin, educator and author; Lawrence L. Brown and Jerry Gray (not related) from government offices; Raymond E. "Andy" Corcoran, a former State Geologist; Ken Dodds, practitioner; Paul E. Hammond, an educator in mineralogy, etc.; Herbert G. Schlicker, Consultant; and many more. Some were my undergraduate professors, mentors and friends

forever. We miss those that are now gone, and all for their intense love of, and contribution to this profession.

Despite the condition of the chapter files and lack of continuity at times, I thought the readers might appreciate the timelines of activity which could be reconstructed and which will become a part of the more permanent records of this chapter for future reference. Should anyone find errors, please forgive as this is as good as it gets based on current evidence.

TIMELINE INFORMATION RECONSTRUCTED

1969-76 National membership and employment widely spread over the areas of geology, engineering geology, geophysics, hydrogeology, mining, geochemistry, paleontology, geomorphology, petrology and petroleum, et al.

1976 The Oregon chapter was based on 20 active members representing every sub-discipline in the sciences including academia from six universities across the western half of the Beaver State.

1977 Oregon Chapter of AIPG was in conversation with several groups regarding the status of whom the geologist in the state should be and their relationships with engineers—an ongoing issue. Paul E. Hammond was the section Secretary/Treasurer until December 1, 1977 when Richard C. Kent stepped up, partially due to Paul's retirement. The Oregon Chapter retained 20 members on the roster, and Arthur F. Brunton was the National Executive Director.

1977 February 10, 1977 meeting of the section at Randall's Chuck Wagon Restaurant, Salem, Oregon. The "hot" topic of the day was the always present and ongoing conversation about the proposed registration of geologists in Oregon, and the possible formation of a State Department of Resource Management, which would absorb DOGAMI, the Department of Geology and Mineral Industries. Paul Hammond, a professor at Portland State University was still pushing retirement.

December 1, 1977 minutes detailing the recent meeting of the Association of Professional Geological Scientists, Oregon Section, on November 17, 1977 in Salem, the state capital. Mr. Saleem Farooqui was elected section President for 1978. Richard C. Kent was elected to the position(s) of Secretary/Treasurer.

1977 The "Mineral Resources Crisis Statement" was produced in the vein of the industries and the profession aiding government to better see issues potentially affecting our economy and profession.

1977 A period of high activity for those in the profession posturing for AIPG, AEG and other group offices with the state licensing matters arising in the market. The section was working hard at recruitment of new members.

1982-83 Ken Dodds was elected President, with Bob Gainer as Vice President of this 27 member section.

1982 Senate Bill 480 was formed and hot-bed discussions were flying around due to the nature of potential liability risks for professionals due to the manner of language being used. The primary concerns boiled down to the fear that such regulation would chase off Professional Geologists, Engineering Geologists, and CEG practitioners licensing from other states.

1983 National Director of AIPG, Victor C. Tannehill was elected.

1982 Oregon chapter elections resulted with: President, Allen Agnew (a long-time friend and educator); Vice President, Durga Rimal; Treasurer, Jerry Gray; Secretary, Jeanne Kinney, and the outgoing President was Robert L. Gamer.

1984-85 Early activity was supported by newsletters from other chapters including, but not limited to: Colorado, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Wyoming. The National Director was Russell J. Jackson, with the Illinois State Geologic Survey.

1985 The AIPG magazine, "The Professional Geologist" bore the article, "USGS Postures and Lobbies Capital and EPA". The article addressed the hot environmental issue that not all asbestos minerals were equally dangerous.

The Professional Geologist carried the article, "Professional Self-Regulation Lauded by The White House".

1984-85 A period of discussions and impending legislation in the wings regarding national matters surrounding minerals, metals, and hard assets issues.

1985 Oregon Chapter status comprise of 14 members plus 6 retired, with a national membership of 4012.

1984-85 Oregon Chapter President was Allen F. Agnew from OSU, Corvallis, OR. Go Beavers! This was a period of AEG and AIPG enlistment issues. Records show that this may have been the first time that the Oregon Chapter adopted the "SMOG" title. This acronym stood for "Society of Miscellaneous Oregon Geologists. As usual, the by-laws were receiving an overhaul.

1989 We had 23 members, however no messages were found to indicate what mattered most.

1990s- 2011 Business, business, business. John H. Gray stood up to take the reigns as Chapter President in 1992.

2012 The Oregon chapter of AIPG continues to use the path of communication with other chapters by directly requesting their newsletters. This has permitted us to see other parts of the country through the eyes of other professionals, and to dream about having that extra time to visit and partake in their local geological field trips, meetings and conventions. This chapter has included the talents of past and present governmental agency personnel, college professors (several of them my own), specialists in mining and economic geology, prolific writers that have educated thousands of the up and coming, and much more. Their lives were and remain today, challenging, hard, productive and rewarding. They are a most impressive collection of talents and experiences that live on forever through each one of us still practicing today. We learned from them and grew to become the best, serving industries, government, and education, while providing a myriad of solutions through science for the greater American and global markets.

The market demands growth, new technical products, better transportation systems, and improved construction materials and methodologies, and we have produced them at a frightening pace. Very exciting!

SUMMARY

The past 25 years as a member of AIPG's Oregon chapter and as President, I have shared all of the duties of its operation and particularly enjoyed those random calls from the new national officers. Hearing from other larger chapters through their newsletters is always a treat and serves to remind us that others remain on the forefront of science as well. Students and older practitioners alike are often highlighted in the monthly "TPG" issue, which we applaud. It is heart warming to hear that students get to "shadow" politicians and view the government machine in action. To this, we say, "use it, don't lose it" folks as not everyone has those opportunities in their career.

The Oregon Chapter of The American Institute of Professional Geologists salutes the organizers and our predecessors for giving more than just their experience to the organization—you are gold! Feel free to look up the current Oregon Chapter members and to reach out and have discussions. I have always said there is too little time in life for a lot of things needing attention, but the choices here are not those of others, but remain yours for the future.

John H. Gray
President, Oregon Chapter, AIPG