

History

See below for an interview with Past Chapter President, Ronald Kilcarr:

Ron Kilcarr was born in Good Samaritan Hospital right here on Long Island. In his early years, he attended Deer Park High School and continued his higher education across NY. He attended the State University of New York at Farmingdale, Rochester Institute of Technology, New York Institute of Technology and the University of the State of New York. He is a PE and is currently a Strategic Business Development Leader at the Trane Company. This month I had the opportunity to interview him in reference to his past experiences in the industry and in ASHRAE. He is a past president of the LI chapter and remains a committed member of the LI chapter.



Name: Ronald Kilcarr

Degrees: A.A.S. in Air Conditioning Engineering Technology, B.S. in Energy Engineering Technology, M.S. in Energy Management and my Professional Engineering License

1. What attracted you to engineering and the HVAC industry?

As far as engineering goes, in High School I seemed to be somewhat successful in math and science which are natural derivatives of Engineering. What attracted me to the HVAC industry was what appeared to be the inherent long term society requirements for HVAC and the ability to sustain a career.

2. What was your first job in the HVAC industry and where did it lead?

My first job in this industry was in 1982 for a design build HVAC Contractor named E.W. Hoffmann, Inc. where I started out assisting the project engineers with drawing revisions (with a T-square and pencils – remember those). I thought this was great, I got to re-size ducts and pipes, drawing things that were real and doing load calculations, all skills I just learned in college. Oh and don't let me forget to mention the hours in the dark room with the undeveloped yellow paper and tracings making blueprints (ok, just lost more than half the readers). Then I started working with the project engineers doing project estimating.

Now this is where I get hooked, the project engineers started to bring me to the project sites. Now I saw the job I did the HVAC load calculations for, I saw the equipment we selected for the project, I saw the pipes and ducts that I revised on the drawings. I sat in on the project meetings, saw that the world was not just black and white and that while engineering principals could and should not be compromised, with logical reasoning, solutions are usually obtainable.

As time went by, I eventually started handling my own projects from cradle to grave and provided a strong foundation upon which I have built my career on.

3. Describe the industry at that time.

Due to the energy crisis, while HVAC was a necessity in all buildings at that time, there were demands to be more precise in the designs, give thoughtful consideration to safety factors, bigger was no longer better or acceptable. Building envelopes were changing, Energy Conservation was prevalent. Time of day scheduling, duty cycling and demand limiting of the HVAC equipment were all being incorporated into the new HVAC designs.

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4. How and when did you get started in ASHRAE?

I became a student member of ASHRAE while I was at college and attended meetings whenever I could. Once I was done with College and working at E.W. Hoffmann, all the project engineers were members of ASHRAE and most were involved in the board, committees etc. and one day I was asked by one of the project engineers if I had any interest in joining the board and one of the committees. My answer was simple and direct, yes, but only if I could be on the reception committee, I wanted to sit at the door, welcome the members as they arrived, extend my hand and tell them that I was Ron Kilcarr and that I was glad to meet them. I had felt that if they knew who I was, If I ever needed help, I stood a better chance of them taking my call and trying to help or offer advise. I think today they call it networking.

5. What was your ASHRAE chapter, regional and Society experience?

While I have been a student member of both the Long Island and the Rochester chapters, I have always called the Long Island chapter my home. I ascended through the officer chairs of the chapter and at 31 became the youngest Long Island chapter president in 1993. While president, our chapter worked extremely hard and were awarded with many Chapter awards at the 1994's Chapters Regional Conference (CRC), including the chapter Presidential Award of Excellence.

6. What were the major issues facing ASHRAE during your presidency?

The biggest challenge was obtaining new members, retaining existing members and enticing members to join the different committees. While money was an underlying issue it was a year in and year out issue.

7. What was your presidential theme?

Good Programs and Team work. If we had good programs of interest, members would want to come to the meetings. If the work needed to be done was accomplished by many in lieu of only a few, we would get much more involvement and more satisfaction out of what we were trying to accomplish and bring a sense of pride to the chapter.

8. What do you consider to be the major accomplishments during your term?

Leading the long Island chapter to obtaining the Presidential Award of Excellence, which involved meeting and/or exceeding all the Society (as well as own) goals such as increased membership, Research funding donations, program quality, student involvement, member participation, chapter publicity, history retention, etc.

9. Did any humorous events take place during your term?

Oh yes there were! And what happens at the CRC stays at the CRC.

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10. Are there any things that you wish you could have done differently?

Yes, I wish I didn't put the idea of having a golf outing to a vote to a board that generally had no interest in golf.

11. What events have changed the industry since your presidency?

That's easy, innovation and DDC controls.

12. What has ASHRAE meant to you personally?

Throughout my career it has been a major source of invaluable information, whether it is the information available or the knowledgeable people whom I have been lucky enough to meet and associate with.

13. What advice would you give to a young person entering the HVAC field?

Join ASHRAE, attend the local meetings, join a committee, get involved and by all means stick your hand out and introduce yourself.

14. What other interests and/or hobbies do you have?

I really enjoy sports and sporting events. My two sons are heavily involved in competitive baseball and a lot of our time now is spent traveling to different Baseball events, tournaments and showcases throughout the eastern states.

I want to thank Ron for taking the time to answer my questions and give us all some insight into ASHRAE and the industry as a whole.

Elizabeth Jedrlinic
History Chair

Michael Razzano
History Co-Chair