

## Celebrating 50 years of IEEE ENCS: 1965 – 2015

### Part 3: IEEE in Eastern North Carolina

Last month we learned about how the American Institute of Electrical Engineers (AIEE) and the Institute of Radio Engineers (IRE) were established in North Carolina, and how the North Carolina Section was formed. This month's article will focus on the activities of the Eastern North Carolina Subsection, which became the Eastern North Carolina Section in 1965.

#### *AIEE in Eastern North Carolina*

By 1956, the AIEE had 474 members in North Carolina. In April of that year, the spring meeting of the AIEE North Carolina Section was held in Charlotte. Among those in attendance from eastern North Carolina were Edwin Weems Winkler (1903-1989), Secretary/Treasurer of the North Carolina Section, and a long-time member of the electrical engineering faculty at NC State College; and Edward K. Kraybill (1917-2004), Chairman of the Eastern North Carolina Subsection, and a member of the Electrical Engineering faculty at Duke University from 1939 to 1971.



Figure 1. E.W. Winkler, Professor of Electrical Engineering, North Carolina State College.

Professor Winkler had joined the electrical engineering faculty at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill around 1929. At that time, there were duplicate Schools of Engineering at UNC-Chapel Hill and NC State College. In 1937, it was decided to consolidate both into a single engineering department at NC State. Winkler then moved over to NC State, taking with him all the “goodies” from the Chapel Hill engineering department, according to his memoirs.<sup>1</sup> Winkler remained on the NC State faculty until 1972.

At the Charlotte AIEE meeting, Professor Kraybill gave a status report on the growth of the Eastern North Carolina Subsection, stating that “interest and attendance are on the rise.” He gave three reasons for this: 1) good papers and programs; 2) distributing name tags before meetings; and 3) serving Cokes and donuts at the end of the meeting. According to the Spring 1956 *AIEE North Carolina Section Newsletter*, “He reports that a research project has been started to determine the correlation (if any) between attendance and the serving of refreshments.”

#### *IRE in Eastern North Carolina*

AIEE and IRE chapters had been meeting jointly throughout the state since 1955, including a joint AIEE/IRE student chapter at NC State. At the national level, AIEE and IRE were moving closer to forming a single organization, the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE). In November 1962, at the IRE North Carolina Section Seventh Annual Symposium, Chairman W.E. Lanford announced that “two local merger committees, one from each society, are making good progress toward an orderly and

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<sup>1</sup> “A Brief History of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering,” College of Engineering, North Carolina State University, p. 14. [https://www.ece.ncsu.edu/news\\_info/content/briefhistory.pdf](https://www.ece.ncsu.edu/news_info/content/briefhistory.pdf)

expeditious formation of the North Carolina Section of the IEEE.” Professor E. T. Kraybill of Duke represented the Eastern North Carolina Subsection on the AIEE merger committee, along with Paul S. Colby of Raleigh.

The merger of the two societies became effective on January 1, 1963. The first official meeting of the IEEE North Carolina Section was held in Greensboro on October 3-4, 1963.

*Do you have an IEEE Story to Share?*

We would like to hear from ENCS members who have stories to share about their experiences as IEEE members. We’d like to know when, where, and why you joined, how IEEE membership has benefitted you, and any other stories you would like to share. If you have a story to share, please contact Tom Jepsen at [tjepsen@ieee.org](mailto:tjepsen@ieee.org).

*Want to learn more?*

To learn more about the AIEE, IRE, and the North Carolina Section, go to <http://sites.ieee.org/charlotte/files/2013/02/cltSecHistory29to79c.pdf>

*Answers to Last Month’s History Question*

When did the first radio station begin broadcasting in North Carolina? Which of the AIEE North Carolina Section founders helped set up the station?

In April 1922, radio station WBT began broadcasting from Charlotte, the first commercial radio station in North Carolina. It had been set up by Fred Laxton of General Electric, Frank Bunker of Westinghouse, and Earle J. Gluck of Southern Bell, one of the founders of AIEE in North Carolina. Shortly thereafter, engineering students and faculty at NC State College began to operate radio station WLAC, which lasted less than a year. WBT continues to broadcast today on 1110 AM and on the Internet. Source: “Radio Broadcasting,” NCPedia, <http://ncpedia.org/radio-broadcasting> .

*This Month’s History Question*

When was Research Triangle Park created? Who were its founders?

(Answers will appear in next month’s ENCS Newsletter)

Tom Jepsen 4/27/2015