

The American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and  
Air Conditioning Engineers

Black Hills Area Chapter of Region IX

Leadership Recall Interview with Ronald O'Connell

Ron O'Connell was the first chapter president when the Black Hills Area Chapter was formed. The charter meeting was held in the Black Hills at the Black Forest Inn near Lake Pactola on the evening of September 22nd, 1976. There were twenty members, seven guests and twelve wives. Ron presided over the meeting that night and was elected as the first Chapter president. A slate of officers was elected that night as follows:

— President	Ronald O'Connell
CRC Action	James M. Christensen
Vice President	Delmar Aldrich
Secretary/Treasurer	Larry E. Beckwith
Board Member	Alvin I. Harding
Board Member	Lee F. Olsen

G. Bryan Drennan, who was the Region IX Chairman installed the new slate of officers. The Chapter's charter was presented by Society President William Chapman. Society Executive Secretary Andy Boggs and Society Membership Secretary Steve Singleton presented the President's gavel and Chapter banner to the new Chapter. In addition, there were a number of guests. Region IX Membership Vice-Chairman Lee Mutum and Region IX Research Promotion Vice-Chairman Fred Grasso from the Nebraska Chapter were present. There were three members of the South Dakota Chapter present also. Mr. Richard Jameson, Mr. Homer Palmer and Mr. Thomas Gannon were in attendance.

Ron remembered that it was really Mr. Bill Moser who had been instrumental in the effort to found the Chapter. Mr. Moser was a member of the South Dakota Chapter.

Ron's major challenge as the first president has never changed much. He found getting people to accept offices was the hardest part of being president. The next hardest part was getting used to all the things one has to learn to fit into the Society. In the early days of the Chapter, Ron says it was not as hard as it has become to get people out. Then, there were no where near the number of competing service clubs and professional societies as there is today. When asked to single out the most outstanding member, Ron noted that everyone has always been outstanding. When asked to single out the most outstanding Chapter activity, Ron proudly pointed to the two CRC's that this small chapter has hosted and how well people felt we did.

Ron O'Connell was born in New Underwood, South Dakota. He went to high school in Shosonhi, Wyoming. He attended a year of college at Colorado State College in Fort Collins and finished at

the University of Wyoming in Laramie. After college, he worked for

Kirkham Michael (KMA) in Omaha. He was transferred back to Rapid City after one and one half years. Ron went to work for Dunham Associates in 1964, left to work for Environmental Products only to return to Dunham Associates in 1987.