

IPE VANCOUVER BRANCH



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MARCH MINI-CONFERENCE A SUCCESS

The Vancouver Branch of the Institute of Power Engineers hosted a one day conference on March 19, 2011 at St. Paul's Hospital. The three topics presented focused on Energy, Energy Efficiency and Conservation. The first presentation was given by Fred Konkle on the topic of "The Role of Nuclear Energy." This topic included a brief look at the recent events which happened at the nuclear plant in Japan with some explanations to the problems resulting from the quake and following tsunami.

The presentation also explained the Molten Salt Reactor and the use of Thorium for nuclear energy production. Fred explained how the Thorium (Th232) reactor and Uranium (U233) reactors were developed at the same time, but the reason there are 433 reactors up and running today in the world and they are all U233 is the resultant plutonium.



More than 75,000 nuclear warheads have been produced from the plutonium since the Second World War.

The Thorium process is inherently safe and the Chinese may be developing it at this time. Next month there will be an announcement at the 3rd Annual Thorium Convention in Washington, DC.

The second presentation was given by Marcus Bellot from Steam Specialty Sales Ltd along with Al Dierks from

Dierks Equipment Sales Ltd. and Ryan Jefferson, also from Steam Specialty Sales. This presentation topic "Steam traps, Steam energy, and equipment efficiency" described how to save money with the proper sizing, maintenance, design, and new technology in controls of current market equipment. The presenter issued a handout of the presentation in the form of notes pages.

The third presentation was give by Fred Konkle on the topic of "Refrigeration Energy Conservation." This presentation offered a great amount of information on the history, use, efficiency, changes in technology and advancements in the use of ammonia refrigeration as the cheapest medium for refrigeration. It also touched on the HVAC system and air conditioning utilized by chiller operations.

More than 40 Power Engineers and friends found the full day session interesting and informative.

Thanks to Dave Paulin, PE for putting the conference together.

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Area Director for B.C.

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Check the website, www.ipevancouver.ca for an update on the Vancouver Branch's activities. Your comments and pictures are welcome for the next newsletter.

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How long have you worked as a Power Engineer?

I started studying for my power engineering certificate at VVI in 1981 under the guidance of Art Lees. I worked in a variety of industries and progressed to my 2nd Class examination in 1991. This career sort of runs in the family as my father was also a power engineer.

What is one of the big projects you are currently working on?

The biggest project I worked on was the new power plant at Vancouver General Hospital. I was part of the commissioning team and was the official trainer for the new plant. This was a very rewarding project and it was very interesting to teach others.

Which of our company's short-term priorities (safety; reliability; energy conservation and efficiency; financial targets; customer satisfaction; and people) means the most to you and why?

I see safety as the priority as everyone wants to go home safely, but also in this work environment, we need the people we work with and around to feel very safe with our pressure vessels.

Describe one of the most memorable, frightening, exciting or embarrassing experiences you've had with the company.

On the electrical system, we have an essential power supply and a non-essential power supply. The non-essential system went down and we had no obvious reason. After troubleshooting by switching power on and off, we found a pump with inadequate overloads. This was corrected and everything is now good. Although not frightening the anxiety levels were high and it led to a stressful day.

What are some of the most interesting changes or occurrences that have happened over your tenure here?

The changes to the new power plant have been the most interesting changes at VGH. We also have had many chief engineers in the plant during the last few years.

What was your full job title, what group did you work for and what kind of work did you do?

I am a second class shift engineer at VGH and work a 12 hr. shift rotation

What do you enjoy most about your job / working for the company?

The 12 hour shift rotation is very good as it gives me quality time off with my family. The expansion at the plant has kept us very busy and receptive to new ideas.

What is your background before coming to the company?

Before joining VGH in 1993, I worked in Woodfibre and Port Alberni pulp and paper mills, Petro-can oil refinery, TMP plant in Chetwynd, and Eburne sawmill.

What are some of your interests outside of work?

Outside of work it is time with family. I have three children and they are very involved in sports. I take them to the lacrosse box and teach them things I learned when I played the game. Two are involved in hockey, so we do lots of driving to and from the rinks.

What are your plans?

In five years, my kids will be hopefully more involved with sports so that will be my priority. In the power engineering field I plan to do some upgrading to keep ahead of the changing technologies.



Dave Ewanchook at the lake.