

CHAPTER HISTORY & MEMORIALS

Chapter History

The following history of the chapter was provided by [Ed Myskowski](#) and Dave Woodhouse.

This section of the site is intended to provide younger and/or newer members of the AEG/NE section with an idea of how it came to be. It also serves as a memorial for two of the inspirational leaders who got it to where it is, and who we have recently lost while still in their prime years.

The roots of AEG go back to 1957 when the California AEG was founded by 12 geologists and included three sections in that state. CAEG was incorporated in 1960 and changed their name to AEG in 1963 when CAEG started to add sections outside of California.

The New England section was founded in 1964 by Ron Hirschfeld of MIT, later a founder of the geotechnical firm of GEI. The original members of our section included Dick Sherman of Metcalf and Eddy (still active), Don Reed of Haley and Aldrich (deceased), and Bill Swiger of Stone and Webster (deceased) just to name a few.

We originally met in the MIT faculty club and later as the organization grew, for several years at ERT/ENSR, Ledgemont Labs, BC, the Sheraton Plaza, and the Crown Hotel. The section was chosen in 1984 as the site of the annual meeting held at the Park Plaza. Past presidents have included Bill Swiger, Bill Mallio, Dave Woodhouse, Frank Bellini, Don Goodell, Tracy Peter, John Humphrey, Ed Blackey, Jutta Hager, Judy Singer, Bruce Wilkinson, John Kaplin, Brad Miller, Art Lazarus, Phil Durgin....I ran out of names.

Ed Blackey

Ed Blackey (1927 - 2001) was a founding member of AEG's New England section. He also served as AEG's executive director from 1987 to 1997, and took pride in stabilizing AEG's finances during that ten-year period. When he accepted the executive director's position, AEG's national office consisted of a few cardboard boxes of incomplete records. He established AEG's first staffed office, at Sudbury, Massachusetts, located in two adjacent office condominiums that he purchased at auction on AEG's behalf.



He worked for the New England Division U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from 1951 to 1982. One of his early projects entailed performing geotech testing to support runway design and construction on the Greenland icecap, as part of the Defense Early Warning (DEW) system. He spent several consecutive summers in Greenland, during the course of that fieldwork in the early 1950's.

His later projects included flood-control dams in Japan and New England, and foundation studies for numerous Federal buildings (including a proposed NASA facility, to be built in Cambridge, Massachusetts, that was relocated to Texas after President Kennedy's death).

He greatly enjoyed working on a stormwater diversion tunnel that re-directed the Park River beneath the City of Hartford, Connecticut. That structure was built with a tunnel boring machine (TBM) and a segmented pre-cast concrete liner. Ed arranged for extensive seismic refraction profiling along the proposed route, and continuous photographic mapping of the rock surface through a window on the side of the boring machine, to help mitigate post-construction contractor claims.

A lifelong New Englander, Ed enjoyed skiing in New Hampshire's White Mountains and summers with

his wife Pat at their lakeside cottage.

John Humphrey

John Humphrey was educated in geology at the University of VT (1962). He was a state registered professional in ME and DE, a certified professional with the AIPG, and a registered professional blaster in MA. John was an active member and leader of many professional groups, especially the New England section of AEG, where he was regional director from 1981-1983.

My association with John dates from 1988 when he had just returned from a residency in Cairo, Egypt as chief geologist with Haley & Aldrich for a wastewater treatment system including 25 km of tunnels. Back in the USA, he served as Chief Geologist and Manager of Engineering Geology for H&A, and he also resumed a leadership role with the AEG. From 1989 to 1994, he served variously as treasurer, vice chairman, and chairman.

Our members with roots to the early 1990's will remember John as co-leader or organizer of many popular field trips. These included Pine Hill in the Middlesex Fells (with Jutta Hager), Cape Ann Granite (with Bill Dennen and Ed Myskowski), and a boat trip over the MWRA Boston Harbor discharge tunnels which must rank as the best attended event to date.

John's most significant contribution to AEG-New England was his level of enthusiasm and charisma, rare even among leaders. We all remember his ability to cajole us into attending dinners, and to make the driest of material entertaining.

After retiring from H&A in 1995, he moved to Arizona. He returned to New England in 2000, and we anticipated his renewed contributions to the section. Sadly, this was not meant to be, and we use this opportunity to memorialize his passing in 2001.