

# WOOD AND FIBER

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## A LOOK BACK AND A LOOK AHEAD

I just returned a yes vote to the proposed merger of *Wood and Fiber* and *Wood Science*. It is the right thing to do. Both journals have served their purposes as stand-alone publications; combined they will provide a wider segment of the profession and our industry with quality research results.

As the merger approaches, it seems an appropriate time to look at the genesis of *Wood and Fiber*. It came into being during Ben Jayne's and my tenures as president of SWST. The need for a journal and the ability of the society to sustain its publication had been debated for a number of years. Finally we, as the officers, decided that over the next two years we would attempt to launch a journal. The exact sequence of events escapes me, but in general, we received much advice ranging from "now is not the time" and "the society will go broke trying to fund and operate a journal" to "why don't you get on with it, it is about time we did something for the membership except raise the dues."

Like all endeavors that succeed, we were blessed with much good fortune and the aid of a number of talented and enthusiastic people, not all members of SWST. First, Ben Jayne was able to enlist the aid of Joe McCarthy, who was Dean of the Graduate School at the University of Washington and the godfather of an obscure campus organization known as the "Office of Scholarly Journals." The purpose of the latter was to help faculty members establish and nurture journals in fields where circulation was limited. Dean McCarthy agreed to support us—both in principle and dollars—and this opened the door to the infrastructure necessary to launch a publication. It included a technical editor experienced in editing a quality journal for poverty-level societies, Carol Ovens, and a printer, Allen Press, who had the experience to patiently deal with novices, raise prices infrequently and turn out a quality publication.

With the mechanics out of the way, the question became "How do we pay the cost?" Finding the answer proved to be a valuable lesson in creative finance and accounting. First in importance was the increased acceptance by scientists of page charges by scholarly journals, at a time when grants were plentiful and included funds for publication. Suddenly, the proposed journal was close to self-sufficient. Another major step was provided by Charlie Morschauser, then society treasurer. He converted the concept of cash flow from theory to practice. In our case, the SWST didn't necessarily have to have a balanced budget as long as the dollar flow from dues and page charges was sufficient to meet publication costs at any point in time. Critics pointed out the dire consequences that would result if the cash flow were interrupted. It never was, and a two-account system kept us both honest and solvent, although at times it was close.

We had the funds and the mechanics to publish. *Wood and Fiber* was announced at the society meeting in Washington, D.C. in 1968. The first issue appeared in 1969.

The continued publication speaks well of the membership—particularly those

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where

$$\begin{aligned} \kappa_1 &= \frac{1}{2}(1 + \beta^2) \\ \kappa_2 &= \begin{cases} \frac{1}{2}\left(1 - \frac{2}{3}\beta\right) & : 0 \leq \beta \leq 1.5 \\ 0 & : \beta > 1.5 \end{cases} \\ \kappa_3 &= \begin{cases} 0.348\beta(\beta - 0.83) & : 0 \leq \beta \leq 0.83 \\ 0.035 - 0.312(\beta - 1.165)^2 & : 0.83 < \beta \leq 1.5 \\ 0 & : \beta > 1.5 \end{cases} \end{aligned}$$

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who served as part of the publication apparatus over the past thirteen years; editors, editorial boards, reviewers and authors. It also is a reflection of a devoted professional, Carol Ovens, the one person who has been a part of *Wood and Fiber* since its inception and the willingness of Joe McCarthy to provide the venture capital with no thought of personal gain.

I never believed I would join those who wrote nostalgia—my interest being the future, not the past; however, my association with the beginning of *Wood and Fiber* was the most rewarding of any extra-curricular activity. It's good to both look back at its beginning and forward to its growth in a new form.

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