



Frank X. Loeffler, Sr

If you've ever looked at our Past Presidents list on our chapter's website, you've likely scrolled to the bottom out of curiosity to see who the first chapter president was. There, you'll find that Frank Loeffler, Sr. is listed. Moreover, a closer inspection of the list reveals that three other Loefflers served as chapter presidents over the years. The Loeffler family has played an integral role in our chapter's history, dating back to its humble beginnings with Frank Loeffler, Sr.

Frank Loeffler, Sr. was a brash and determined young engineer who, despite the country being in the midst of the Great Depression, believed that the American Society of Heating and Ventilating Engineers should establish a chapter in Oklahoma. In 1935, when the Society had 1,850 members and 17 chapters, Frank petitioned ASHVE to charter a chapter in our state. This new chapter would become the first in what is now Region VIII, preceding the chapters in Dallas and Houston by four years. The petition was granted, and on December 16, 1935, ASHVE President John Howatt presented the charter at a meeting held at the Biltmore Hotel. At that meeting, Frank Loeffler was elected president of the chapter, serving in that capacity for two years. He also served as the chapter's delegate to the Society meeting (there were no CRCs at that time).

Frank was born in Chicago, Illinois, in 1893 and attended the University of Illinois, graduating in 1914 with a degree in civil engineering. Because civil engineering positions were scarce at the time, he began working for a firm that sold steam heating specialties and became a member of ASHVE that same year.

In 1916, Frank found himself in Oklahoma City after a stop in St. Louis en route from Chicago, still selling steam heating specialties. Shortly thereafter, he persuaded his brother, Louis Loeffler, Sr., to join him at the Federal Steam Specialties Company. In 1922, he formed the Frank Loeffler Supply Company at 710 North Hudson. Thirteen years later, in 1935, he partnered with Joe Greene to form the Loeffler-Greene Supply Company at 1604 Northwest Fifth Street. Joe Greene managed the plumbing side of the business, while Frank promoted the heating division, with principal product lines including Pacific boilers, C.A. Dunham pumps and accessories, Modine unit heaters, Tuttle & Bailey grilles and registers, and Clarage fans, among others.

Also in 1935, the State of Oklahoma enacted a law governing the engineering profession, and Loeffler became one of the early registrants. Because consulting engineers in the mechanical field were scarce at the time, he assisted numerous architects in designing mechanical systems for buildings throughout the Southwest. His many contributions to Oklahoma City University even led to the naming of one of their buildings the Loeffler Building—a building that still exists today, albeit serving a different purpose.

Having joined ASHVE in 1914 at the age of 21, he met the 30-year membership requirement for Life Membership in 1944; however, he had to wait another 14 years until he reached the age of 65 to receive the Life Member grade. He was later awarded a 50-year Member certificate and inducted into the Chapter Hall of Fame.

A little-known fact about Frank is that he lost a lawsuit he should have won because his lawyer did not fully understand the engineering business. Upset and resolutely, he decided to attend law school at Oklahoma City University at night. He followed through earning his law degree and ultimately passed the bar!

Frank Loeffler, Sr. retired in 1965 and passed away in 1973 at the age of 80, leaving behind a significant legacy in our chapter. *(Article originally written by Alan Loeffler, past chapter historian.)*



FRANK X. LOEFFLER, SR (right) receiving his 50-year membership certificate from Bill Collins, Jr, 1968