

2001 History Paper **Mississippi Chapter ASHRAE**

Charles N. Catledge

CHARLES CATLEDGE, BETTER KNOWN TO SOME PEOPLE AS CHARLIE, WAS BORN AND REAISED IN TUTWILER, TALLAHATCHIE COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI. AFTER GRADUATING FROM WEST TALLAHATCHIE HIGH SCHOOL, WHERE HE PLAYED FOOTBALL, CHARLES WENT TO MILLSAPS COLEGE. THERE, HE FINALLY MANAGED TO RECEIVE A BS DEGREE IN GEOLOGY IN 1956. THE SAME YEAR HE BECAME ENGAGED TO HIS COLLEGE SWEETHEART AND PRESENT WIFE, JUNE STELLWAGON.

HE THEN SPENT A YEAR IN GRADUATE SCHOOL WORKING ON HIS MASTERS DEGREE IN GEOLOGY AT MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY. AFTER SPENDING ALL OF HIS WEEKENDS AT MILLSAPS, A LONG RIDE FROM MISSISSIPPI STATE, HE AND JUNE WERE MARRIED IN THE SUMMER OF 1957. THANKS TO HIS FORMER COLLEGE ROOMMATE AND LONG LIFE FRIEND, JOHN HUBBARD, HE HAD A PLACE TO STAY ON THE WEEKENDS.

LATER HE WENT TO WORK FOA A MECHANICAL ENGINEER, "BUCKY" WALTERS. AFTER WORKING AS A DRAFTSMAN UNTIL 1961, HE WENT TO WORK FOR R.E. MEYERS CO. AS A MANUFACTURER'S REPRESENTATIVE. AT THIS TIME HE WAS WORKING IN A SMALL OFFICE SPACE ON NORTH STATE STREET, WHICH HE SHARED WITH SAM WRAY, WHO WAS WORKING FOR ANOTHER COMPANY. THEY ARE STILL GOOD FRIENDS TO THIS DAY.

IN DECEMBER, 1966, CHARLES STARTED HIS OWN MANUFACTURER'S REPRESENTATIVE COMPANY. ALONG WITH HIS EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT AND BOOKKEEPER, JUNE, THE TWO OF THEM LAUNCHED THE CHARLES N. CATLEDGE CO. THEY STARTED IN AN ATTIC ROOM IN THEIR HOUSE WITHOUT ANY OUTSIDE FINANCING. WITHIN A YEAR THE BUSINESS DOUBLED IT'S GROSS INCOME. I BET THE IRS LIKED THAT!

BY 1970, THEY HAD INCREASED THEIR FAMILY WITH FOUR (4) GIRLS: LISA, JULIE, CHARLOTTE, AND LANEY. ALL THIS GROWTH DEFINITELY CALLED FOR A BIGGER HOUSE, SO THEY MOVED TO THEIR PRESENT HOUSE ON LENOX DRIVE, WHERE THEY BUILT A SMALL OFFICE IN THE BACKYARD. SINCE HIS BUSINESS HAD REALLY GROWN AND JUNE HAD HER HANDS FULL WITH THE FOUR GIRLS, CHARLES HIRED A "GIRL FRIDAY" TO HELP RUN THE OFFICE. ALONG WITH THE BUSINESS CAME TOO MUCH TRAFFIC FOR A RESIDENTIAL AREA, SO HE MOVED HIS OFFICE TO A BUILDING ON THE CORNER OF I-55 AND ADKINS BLVD. BY THIS TIME IT WAS 1973, AND HE HIRED DON CERNIGLIA TO WORK FOR HIM.

ONE YEAR LATER, IN 1974, CHARLES PURCHASED THE PROPERTY AT 5880 NORTH COMMERCE PLAZA, WHERE HIS OFFICE REMAINED UNTIL CLOSING. HE INCORPORATED HIS BUSINESS IN THE SAME YEAR. WITH THIS MOVE, JUNE

SAID HER GOODBYES TO THE BUSINESS AND WILLIE VAUGHN WAS HIRED TO HANDLE THE BOOKKEEPING. AFTER THIS NEW ADDITION, ANOTHER NEW ADDITION CAME WHEN HE HIRED CORRINE FRIZZELL IN 1975. IN THE SAME YEAR, CHARLES HIRED EARL PROSPT TO DO SERVICE AND WARRANTY WORK ON THE EQUIPMENT.

LATER, IN 1979, JOHN SULLIVAN CAME TO WORK FOR CHARLES AND IN 1990, SHARON TAYLOR JOINED THE STAFF. THERE WERE SEVERAL OTHER EMPLOYEES HIRED AND REPLACED AT THE CATLEDGE CO. DURING THESE 25 YEARS, BUT THESE ARE THE ONES WITH THE LONGEST TIME OF SERVICE.

ALONG WITH THE DIFFERENT EMPLOYEES OVER THE YEARS, CAME A LOT OF HUMOR AND A LOT OF SORROW. ALL OF THIS MAD FOR A LOT OF VARIETY IN THE LIFETIME OF THE CHARLES N. CATLEDGE CO., INC. THESE LONG TERM EMPLOYEES CAN REMEMBER SOME OF THE CHANGES THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE OVER THE YEARS. HOWEVER, THE RECENT CHANGES HAVE EFFECTED MANY LIVES AND MOST OF ALL CHARLES CATLEDGE. NOW THAT HE IS RETIRING, HIS LIFE WILL NEVER BE THE SAME, NOR THE LIVES THAT HE HAS TOUCHED IN HIS DAY TO DAY BUSINESS.

CHARLES HAS ALWAYS BEEN VERY ACTIVE IN ASHRAE, HOLDING EVERY OFFICE IN THE LOCAL CHAPTER AND RECENTLY BEING AWARDED A LIFE MEMBERSHIP. HE HAS NEVER MISSED A CONVENTION SINCE HE STARTED HIS BUSINESS. HE HAS MADE A MARK IN THE MANUFACTURE'S REPRESENTATIVE BUSINESS THAT WILL BE LONG REMEMBERED. HE IS AN OUTSTANDING CITIZEN IN HIS COMMUNITY AND HAS HAD A LONG AND REWARDING POSITION IN THE BUSINESS WORLD. THANK YOU FOR THE 32 YEARS OF SERVICE, FROM 1966 TO 1998, THAT YOU HAVE GIVEN TO YOUR COLLEAGUES, AS THE CHARLES N. CATLEDGE CO., INC.

THE PRECEEDING WAS READ AT A RETIREMENT PARY GIVEN TO CHARLIE AT THE MISSISSIPPI CHAPTER ASHRAE ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY WHERE EVERYONE HAD A CHANCE TO ADDRESS CHARLIE ON HIS RETIREMENT. CHARLIE HAS BEEN UNEQUALLED IN HIS SUPPORT OF ASHRAE WITH RESEARCH PROMOTION, NOMINATIONS, COMMITTEE CHAIRS, ETC. WE NEED MORE PEOPLE LIKE CHARLIE IN ASHRAE TO REPLACE HIM AS HE LEAVES THE INDUSTRY.

Chapter Historian
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