

Mississippi Chapter ASHRAE

History Paper

March 9, 2005

Nelson Douglass, P.E.

Nelson Douglass is an “icon” in the engineering community of Mississippi. Nelson is known for his work in the government, commercial & institutional sectors. Nelson is a founding partner of Cooke, Douglass, Farr, Lemons/Ltd. (CDFL), the largest Architectural & Engineering Firm in Mississippi. Nelson recently retired after more than forty years as a managing partner of CDFL and more than 50 years in the consulting industry. The following history of Nelson Douglass is written in honor of this man who made a tremendous impact on our industry during his lengthy career.

Nelson was born in Grenada, Mississippi on April 8, 1934, the son of Nelson and Pearl Douglass. He has two younger brothers that are also Mechanical Engineers. He spent his elementary and high school years in Grenada, graduating in 1952. Nelson went on to attend engineering school at Mississippi State University, where he earned his Bachelor of Science Degree in Mechanical Engineering in 1956. Upon graduation, Nelson accepted a job with Union Carbide Nuclear Company in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. Nelson spent four and one-half years with

Union Carbide before he and his wife, Rosemary Castle Douglass, moved to Jackson, MS to begin working for Overstreet, Ware and Ware Architects and Engineers. Nelson was employed with Overstreet, Ware and Ware for the next three years where he developed a partnership with William H. Cooke, Civil Engineer and Robert E. Farr, Architect to form the firm of Cooke, Douglass, Farr/Ltd. The firm officially began its practice in 1961. In 1991, the firm changed its name to Cooke, Douglass, Farr, Lemons/Ltd., where Nelson remained as a managing partner until his retirement in January 2004.

Nelson and his wife are the proud parents of three children. Libby, a mechanical engineer with twenty three years experience with International Paper, in Germantown, TN; Luanne an accountant working with her mother at the Bridal Path; and Doug who is the owner of Tuxes Two. Nelson and Rosemary have also been blessed with six grandchildren.

Nelson is an avid golfer, and is a member of Annandale Country Club (home of the Southern Farm Bureau Classic, a PGA Tour championship). His association there has afforded him many friends outside of his engineering career. Nelson also enjoys Mississippi State sporting events. After his retirement, Nelson purchased a home in Starkville, MS to allow him to attend these events. Nelson and Rosemary are active members of Alta Woods Methodist Church and have been for forty years serving

in many capacities such as Board of Trustees and Chairman of Committees.

Nelson has always supported various professional organizations. He served as President of the Mississippi Engineering Society in 1974-75, President of Mississippi C.E.C and a National Director, President of the Mississippi Chapter ASHRAE in 1965-66, where he was very active and rarely missed a chapter meeting. Nelson also served on the Boiler and Pressure Vessel Committee for the State of Mississippi.

Just a few of Nelson's most noted projects are: WorldCom (MCI) Headquarters in Clinton, MS, the Jackson Post Office and One Jackson Place. There are so many other projects that should be mentioned, as one can imagine, that Nelson was responsible for during his fifty plus year career. Being a product of this industry, the author is personally aware of several projects in which family members were under direct supervision of Nelson and his engineering guidance but time will not allow for these stories. Suffice it to say, the Mississippi Engineering community is honored to have had Nelson working amongst us for so many years and we wish him all the best.