

An Eclectic Photographic History of The IEEE Control Systems Society



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A look at Society events

By J. Douglas Birdwell

Early in 2004, as part of the planning process for our Society's 50th anniversary celebration, I decided to assemble a collection of photographs from Society events. The collection is not intended to have any profound meaning but is simply a way for our members to indulge in their individual and collective memories of past events and people, to impart a sense of where we have been, and perhaps of our future course.

I have titled the result "An Eclectic Photographic History." According to *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, the word "eclectic" means 1) "selecting what appears to be best in various doctrines, methods, or styles," and 2) "composed of elements drawn from various sources." This word certainly fits the collection. These images were gathered by asking our past presidents, past



conference chairs, and other members of the Society to rummage through their stored memorabilia and to submit any images of interest for inclusion in the collection. As

such, the garnered images are by no means a representative sampling of our history—they are strongly biased toward events where a photographer happened to be present, where the photographs happened to be preserved, and those that occurred in our more recent history. In fact, I did not receive one image that was more than 30 years old; thus, the first 25 years of our Society's history are not represented at all.

I also found that, even for those events where photographs were taken, there was a vast range in quality, subject matter, and quantity. Some conferences were very well documented in photographs, whereas others yielded only a few scattered snapshots. Images from many conferences can be found in past issues of *IEEE Control Systems Magazine (CSM)*; however, without the original photographs, the



ACC isn't all work! ACC'95 had a cruise, which Steve Kahne and friends attended.

Conferences

CDC: IEEE Conference on Decision and Control

SICE: Annual Conference of the Society of Instrument and Control Engineers of Japan

CCA: IEEE International Conference on Control Applications

ACC: American Control Conference



Cathy Tanner and Judy Alexander (shown with Derek Atherton at ACC'93) kept our conference registration desks running for many years.



Pradeep Misra, Kevin Passino, Umit Ozguner, Ray DeCarlo, and Daniel Repperger attend CCA'87 in Dearborn, Michigan.



(From left) Bill Levine, Steve Marcus, and Mike Safanov enjoy the festivities at CDC'76 in Clearwater, Florida.

preserved quality tends to be poor. Therefore, I did not use any photos from the publication record.

I do want to thank all of the people who contributed these images, although I decided to avoid acknowledgment by name. There are many more images than can be reproduced in this issue of *CSM*, and many will be shown at the 43rd IEEE Conference on Decision and Control (CDC) in the Bahamas, most likely during the banquet.

One might legitimately ask whether this project has been worthwhile. I think the answer is yes; it is beneficial to see (occasionally) what our past looked like and what we were like. Photographs trigger memories—at least, they have certainly triggered my memories. For example, there is a photograph of yours truly on a beach in Clearwater, Florida, taken during the 1976 CDC, my first. I was wearing a parka, which I brought down with me because I had to fly back to Boston after the conference. I had never intended to wear it on a Florida beach in December, but it was cold; in fact, everyone I have talked to who remembers that conference recalls how cold it was. Indoors, however, the conference was good, both technically and socially. I remember the steel drum band at the closing buffet reception (with dancing). Michael Athans was the general chair and hammed it up for the camera.



A parka in Florida? Doug Birdwell needed his for the 1976 CDC in Clearwater, Florida.



Petar Kokotovic, Michael Athans, Tamer Basar, Ioannis Kanellakopoulos, and Miroslav Krstic attend the CDC'93 Awards Banquet in San Antonio, Texas.

One thing that struck me immediately when I saw these photos was the much smaller crowd at the closing buffet. The CDC was smaller in those days, and this is reflected in the relative size of those proceedings to more recent conferences. These conference proceedings have grown from a single volume, to three, and then five to six, and have at times almost filled an entire CD-ROM. It is also interesting to see some of the people who were beginning their careers during this period and are now well known. I have included photos of Bill Levine, Steve Marcus, and Michael Safanov from the 1976 CDC to illustrate this point. As you view these images, you will probably notice that I have tried to include photographs of as many of our colleagues as possible. I believe these images of our past interactions



General Cochair Harris McClamroch welcomes everyone to Kohala Coast, Hawaii, and CCA/CACSD'99.



A steel drum band entertains attendees at the closing reception of CDC'76.



After a long afternoon of policy discussions and decisions, the 2003 Executive Committee enjoys a dinner cruise in San Antonio, Texas.



In addition to being a lovely hotel, the Islandia Hyatt—home of CDC'78 in San Diego, California—had wonderful sunsets and vistas that included whales.



Mark Spong, Robert Skelton, and Steve Yurkovich at CDC'97 in San Diego, California.



Awards are given at conferences. Here, the ACC'00 awardees.



Keith Glover receives the Control Systems Technology Award at CDC'01.



SICE'03 in Fukui, Japan.



At ACC'97 in Albuquerque, New Mexico, the entertainment was a barbeque and show.

demonstrate the community that has evolved in our field and the genuine bonds of friendship that have been formed. I hope you will enjoy these, as I have enjoyed their assembly.

This photographic journey through our shared past is, by its very nature, visual rather than textual. Each image's caption provides information on the event and date and the individuals in the photograph. As you peruse these images, I hope they trigger associations with your own memories and, for our younger Society members, provide a heightened appreciation of our Society's past. You will see many of our Society's active volunteers and stellar contributors. You will also see our future, especially in the photographs from the 2003



Three 50th birthdays in 2004—the IEEE Control Systems Society, CSS President Doug Birdwell, and CSM Editor-in-Chief Dennis Bernstein.

CDC, whose photographers captured images of many of our younger conference participants. Among these individuals are, I am certain, the future leaders of our Society and luminaries of our field.

This photographic history, eclectic or otherwise, provides an archival snapshot of portions of our Society's past, and illustrates the importance of photography's role in preservation. Our past use of photography has been somewhat spotty and relatively poorly preserved. Perhaps this photographic essay can also serve as a reminder to future volunteers and event organizers to ensure that our future is recorded for the benefit of subsequent generations.



The History panel and attendees at CDC'03 in Maui, Hawaii. Were they pondering the 50th anniversary of our Society?



Derek Atherton, Michael Masten, Harris McClamroch, and Abraham Haddad look over the conference program at CDC'92 in Tucson, Arizona.



Linda Bushnell with her son, Cheryl Schrader, Molly Shor, and Bozenna Pasik-Duncan attend the Harbor Cruise at CDC'00 in Sydney, Australia.



Doug Birdwell, Charlie Herget, and Alan Laub at CDC'90 in Honolulu, Hawaii.



The future of control? Daniel Spall (son of CSS Member Jim Spall) demonstrates control of an unstable manned vehicle.



The future of our Society—young members of our community at CDC'03 in Maui, Hawaii.



The fashion statement for CDC'86 in Athens, Greece—a CSS T-shirt as worn by CSS officers, committee chairs, and members.



The class of CSS award winners at CDC'00 in Sydney, Australia.



The CDC moved back to Florida in 1988, this time to Tampa. T.J. Tam and Lotfi Zadeh were among the attendees.



Pradeep Misra and Panos Antsaklis at ACC'97 in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

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al chair of the 1998 CDC in Tampa, Florida. He is currently the president of the IEEE Control Systems Society. He can be contacted at the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN 37996-2100 USA.



Charlie Herget savors a moment of relaxation at the end of his presidency at CDC'93 in San Antonio, Texas. The conference was held at the San Antonio Marriott Rivercenter.



Vladimir Yakubovich, recipient of the 1996 CS Field Award, Program Cochair Doug Birdwell, and Alexander Fradkov sightsee in Tokyo before the opening of CDC'96 in Kobe, Japan.



It's budget time again at the May 2004 Executive Committee Meeting in Knoxville, Tennessee.



Executive Committee meetings are held four times a year. This meeting was in 1998.



Smile for the camera! Michael Athans, his former students, and friends at the Athans Symposium at CDC'98.



Snapshots from the November 2003 Executive Committee Meeting in Boise, Idaho.