

History Activities Coordinator**Anthony Davies****Goals**

- 1) Encouraging and assisting the preparation of proposals for IEEE History Milestones
- 2) Encouraging Sections and Chapters and other OUs in R8 to conserve their historical records and achievements and to maintain their history on the IEEE section of the ETHW website appropriate for this
- 3) Encouraging the creation of Oral Histories by interviewing distinguished IEEE members and high-achieving engineers

Status

As reported before, there are many topics for IEEE History Milestone Plaques in the Sections of Region 8; the obstacle to progress is mainly the inability to find "champions" who will see a proposal through from initial idea to final approval and installation, a process which takes a minimum of two years and often much more than that.

Section websites are very "variable" in the extent and style to which they record the Section's history, and some still provide almost nothing. This history can also often be included in the ETHW website, but this is not done in most cases. The quality and content of Section websites can be a major influence on the vitality of the Section as it is seen by members and non-members. A similar comment can be made about Chapter websites.

Some say that Students and Young Professionals do not need to be interested in Technology History, yet if it is believed that they are responsible for "inventing the future", they must be aware of past methods and achievements.

Outlook

Several proposals are underway for History Milestones, and one is approved for unveiling in Dundee, Scotland on 5th April 2018, to commemorate amorphous silicon thin-film transistors, which were an essential step in the feasibility of large flat screen displays. A number of History related conferences organised by various societies are planned for the next two years; IET weekend history conference on Programmable Logic Controllers will be in Birmingham, England, and of course it is hoped that HISTELCON 2019 will be feasible in Glasgow, Scotland. I expect to be giving a talk on some aspect of Technology History (not yet decided) in April at Glasgow Caledonian University. There is potential for better collaboration with other History of Technology related organisations (for example, in UK, the LEO Computers Society, the BCS Computer Conservation Society, and the Defence Electronics History Society)

Points of Concern

As mentioned often, it is not easy to find volunteers who maintain interest and who are also willing to devote adequate time to the various aspects of preservation and publicising technology history, and some policies of the IEEE History Committee appear to alter significantly from year to year.

Other Issues to report

To make a success of HISTELCON 2019, not only will more people be needed to provide actual volunteer help with the organisation (including reviewing papers), but financial support will be needed since History of Technology events need to have a very low cost of attendance and cannot be expected to create financial surpluses.



Fig. 1. Smart Car