

From CPMT (Components, Packaging, and Manufacturing Technology) to EPS

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Old friends Ron Gedney (CPMT President 1990-1991) and Jim Morris met up again for the first time since the mid-90's in Florida where Ron lives in retirement in Daytona and Jim was attending TAB meetings in Lake Buena Vista. Ron jump-started Jim's 25-year career in multiple CPMT roles when he appointed Jim as CPMT Treasurer in 1990. Ron worked at IBM-Endicott while Jim was just down the road at SUNY-Binghamton and had just been recruited to assist with Bob Howard's new initiatives as the VP of Education. At the time, the CPMT Society had around \$150K in the bank and was losing \$70K/year, so the outcome was not hard to predict if we did not do something. We proposed and the Board eventually approved a simple change in conference planning. Instead of planning for break-even conferences, we planned for a 15% surplus. Conferences immediately stopped losing money. The Society was also suffering the results of a surfeit of success as the Transactions grew far beyond the budgeted page count. Much to everyone's surprise, when we described our situation, IEEE approved a subscription increase for the Transactions that exceeded all the rules. Although there were some hard feelings when the BoG withdrew its previous support for the Holm Conference's new student scholarship, everyone supported the ten-year goal of establishing a reserve of one year's expenses, and were astonished when it was achieved within less than two years. In the following 25 years, Jim served as Treasurer (1990-1997), Conferences VP (1998-2003), Transactions AE (1998-2015), three terms on the BoG, roughly 20 years on three different ECTC program committees, as General Chair of four CPMT conferences, and in various other roles especially with conferences.

Ron got involved in CHMT (Components, Hybrids & Manufacturing Technology) around about 1980. John Powers, a friend of Ron's from IBM Fishkill, and President of CHMT (c.1985) called and asked him to try to rescue the CHMT Packaging Committee, the former chair having quit in disgust because "nobody was interested in electronic packaging!" Ron agreed, somewhat tentatively, "not having the faintest idea what to do." George Harman from NIST took him "under his wing" and recommended they organize a packaging workshop, with George's help in soliciting good papers. So a very successful workshop was held in 1981 and then George pushed Ron to also become chair of the ECTC Packaging Committee with the goal of getting enough papers for two sessions. The following year George and Ron talked the Program Chair into three sessions, then four sessions. The next thing Ron knew, he was Assistant Program Chair for ECTC, and committed for four years! From there, Ron was elected to the CPMT Board of Governors, then to Administrative VP, and from there to become President following Leo Feinstein. It was clearly this sequence of events that established electronics packaging as the dominant field within CPMT, and eventually to the Society's identification as the Electronics Packaging Society, EPS. It sounds like the "Packaging Committee" took over!

Ron notes that his CPMT experience working with volunteers gave him a big leg up when he went to work for the National Electronics Manufacturing Initiative (NEMI) – a consortium - in 1996 as Director of Operations and Treasurer. His observation was you can't manage volunteers like you do employees! You can assign jobs to employees, but with volunteers you have to get them interested and willing to commit to do the job! (He also credits Jim with teaching him some "stuff about finance" which was useful in his job as NEMI Treasurer, but Jim has no idea what that could be!) (Ron's comment: I must have learned something from Jim – during the 7 years I was Treasurer of NEMI we were only in the red once) In general, Ron notes that it is surprising what can be accomplished when people are willing to work together, e.g. as CPMT volunteers. His one regret was that he was unable at NEMI to get card and board manufacturers to pull together to save the U.S. card and board industry. On the other hand, he regards NEMI's biggest success when he was there was enabling the U.S. industry to switch to a known, tested, lead-free solder by 2005. For this work he received the Soldertec Global Lead-Free Solder Award in 2004. He co-edited an IEEE Press book (Lead-Free Electronics) published in 2007, based on NEMI's work.

Nowadays, Ron is still active as Secretary of the IEEE Daytona Beach Section and chairs the Life Member Affinity group. He has been interfacing with a SciTech Charter school to re-assemble and install the Daytona Section's Small Radio Telescope (SRT) at their facility (picture below). Jim is now more active in the IEEE Nanotechnology Council as Awards Chair (2010-2012), Conferences VP (2013-2014), Finance VP (2015-2018), President-Elect (2019) and currently President (2020-2021), following a brief spell as the CPMT representative (2008-2009).

