

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PACWEST CONFERENCE & THE IBMP IN WESTERN CANADA FROM 1942

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Pacific Coast Branch

The Pacific Coast Branch was originally formed in 1946¹ and held its first meeting in Vancouver that October with representatives from most of the mills in British Columbia. There were also several other mill delegates from Washington State that attended the well organized meeting.

In September 1948 the Pacific Coast Branch acted as host to the technical section in Vancouver for the summer meeting of the technical section.¹

In 1964 the first Tri-way meeting with the Pacific Coast, Western & TAPPI sections was held in Vancouver. By 1968, the Pacific Coast Branch had grown to a membership of 325 regular (mill) and 125 affiliates (suppliers). Five meetings were held during the year in addition to the joint conference. In February a new format was tried with an all-day meeting on a Saturday at a resort hotel in Parkesville, BC.²

In May 1972, for the first time, the Pacific branch extended invitations to affiliates for a one day golf tournament during the annual May meeting at Harmac³. After golfing a panel discussion on corrosion was held. In spite of the quality of the discussion there was poor participation. As a result, a decision was made that future golf tournaments would only include a guest speaker and no other affiliates.

The first joint conference between the Pacific Coast and Western branches was held May 25-27, 1972 at Jasper, Alberta.

Western Branch

The Western branch was formed as a result of the reorganizing of the Pacific Coast branch in the fall of 1966⁴. This Western branch had the distinction of encompassing the largest area, extending from Prince Rupert, BC to Pine Falls, Manitoba. The first Western Branch conference was held at Prince Albert, Saskatchewan (September 28-30, 1972).

The initial member mills in Western Branch were:

Columbia Cellulose	Castlegar, BC
Columbia Cellulose	Prince Rupert, BC
Crestbrook Forest Products	Skookumchuk, BC
Intercontinental Pulp	Prince George, BC
Kamloops Pulp & Paper Co. Ltd.	Kamloops, BC
North Western Pulp & Paper	Hinton, Alberta
Northwood Pulp	Prince George, BC
Prince Albert Pulp	Prince Albert, Sask.
Prince George Pulp	Prince George, BC

The initial membership in this branch was 138 with 100 of these coming from only four of the above mills.

1. CPPA Technical Section proceedings 1947, page 13
2. CPPA Technical Section proceedings 1968, page 33
3. CPPA Technical Section proceedings 1972, page 42
4. CPPA Technical Section proceedings 1968, page 35

International Brotherhood of Migratory Peddlers (IBMP) Organization

There was a time when the executives in the Pacific Northwest (US) were by no means unanimous in their support of technical meetings, conventions and other gatherings where their employees were solicited to attend. They believed that the social side of such meetings was over-stressed and that the technical benefits derived were of questionable value. The result was a restricted and unbalanced attendance where the purveyors of materials and equipment would discuss mutual problems informally and augment friendships.

Sincere business establishments and their ethical representatives were horrified to find that their motives were questioned and criticized and their contributions of time and funds rebounded to their discredit . Instances were noted where so-called "peddlers" far outnumbered the representatives from the mills for whom the meetings were planned.

These conditions approached the intolerable in the late 30's when, at a joint conference of TAPPI and the Superintendents Associations, a group of sales representatives were solicited to underwrite some of the entertainment expenses.

An unwritten agreement was made at the time to the effect that no further support, particularly financial, would be given to activities where sellers and users mingled, unless the final use of such support could be scrutinized by those making the contributions.

Up until this time there had been a sort of unofficial brotherhood that performed the functions of assisting at the conferences. In order to cope with these criticisms a group of peddlers met at the Aero Club in Portland on June 3, 1942 and the first IBMP Waiting room came into existence.

They selected the following officers for the first year:

President: Mr. Zinc Wise

Vice President: Mr. R.T. Petrie

Treasurer: Mr. H.H. Richmond

Secretary: Mr. Ray Smythe

They were asked to provide the entertainment at a men's breakfast at the joint TAPPI & Superintendents conference that year. The entertainment for the session was furnished by initiating George McGregor of Weyerhaeuser Timber Co. as a member of the Peddlers Union. Thus the first honorary peddler was inducted.

The War Years intervened and formal activity was not resumed until 1947. A request was received from W.E. Brawn, then National President of TAPPI, to take over the entertainment program at some of the meetings of the National TAPPI and possibly establish a branch chapter on the East Coast. This together with interested

inquiries from the Seattle and California groups, as well as other expressions of encouragement, brought a distinct realization that the work and ideals of the brotherhood were recognized and possibly needed elsewhere.

At a meeting on June 27, 1947⁵, the matter and manner of establishing subordinate waiting rooms was seriously planned and a committee of Messers Fulton, Alsop, and Smythe was set to form by-laws and a constitution around the ideas already advanced and approved by the members. After numerous meetings and discussions a set of by-laws was born, which the brotherhood adopted unanimously on Sept. 7, 1948⁶. There were four new waiting rooms established in 1948 along with another in 1955.

5. Ray Smythe

6. H.H. Richmond

Dates of Organization for Waiting Rooms:

#1 Portland, OR	June 3, 1942
#2 Seattle, WA	April 15, 1948
#3 New Orleans, LA	May 19, 1948
#4 New York, NY	Sept. 13, 1948
#5 Kalamazoo, MI	Sept. 13, 1948
#6 Vancouver, BC	May 21, 1955

Dates of Dissolvent for Waiting Rooms:

#3 New Orleans, LA	- April 9, 1951
#4 New York, NY	- April 9, 1951
#5 Kalamazoo MI	- June 18, 1956
#2 Seattle, WA, - rolled into Waiting Room#1 Portland, OR	- Date Unknown
#1 Portland, OR	- 2010 (date of final meeting unknown)

Waiting #2, Seattle is no longer active. It is believed to have been dissolved and consolidated into Waiting Room #1-Portland, OR.

Our Letterhead

In 1948, Mr. Wayne Bagley was commissioned to design our letterhead and membership card. Readers will be interested to know that Wayne was a commercial artist of some national reputation with his work appearing in Esquire and other magazines.

In the past the railroad was the usual mode of transportation and "peddlers" used the train for long distance travel. In the letterhead scene the peddler was a wee bit late and he is having trouble catching his one and only train home. This was not unusual in those days (nor today...all that's changed is the mode of travel!).

IBMP: Waiting Room # 6, Vancouver, BC

As can be noted from the above, Waiting Room # 6 was organized on May 21, 1955. Since 1962 we have organized annual, successful conferences, although sometimes attendance has varied with the economy and

location. Initially the conference used to alternate between Jasper and Harrison, with the exception of: Kamloops 1966, Prince George 1969, Victoria 1971 & 1977. In addition, there were four Tri-way meetings (Seattle, Portland & Vancouver branches) at Vancouver 1964, 1967 & 1973 and in Portland 1970.

Over the years we developed a precedent of giving scholarships to UBC, BCIT, and U of A for a student who was going into the Pulp & Paper industry. The scholarships were developed to honour the memory of deceased members of the IBMP-Waiting Room #6 or of the mill executive who had served on the Conference Organizing Committees. Over the years, this practice became difficult to maintain due to the economic variations of our Industry and in some cases the amount was inconsistent. Recently, along with support from the Industry a decision has been made to standardize this procedure and provide a budgeted contribution for each PACWEST Conference.

The PACWEST Conference has been very fortunate to have an outstanding group of volunteers who have managed our meetings over the years with great success. The following listing recognizes the mill executives from the Pacific and Western Branches, along those from Waiting Room #6 of the IBMP that have freely contributed their time towards this tradition.

The writer acknowledges the assistance of the following organizations and individuals:

CPPA Technical Section Proceedings

A brief IBMP History H.H. Richmond, Waiting Room # 1, 1957

A Brief IBMP History Reprinted, Ray Smythe, Waiting Room # 1, 1973

Bob Affleck, Colin Baker, Jim Bowersock, John Milligan