The R. A. Evans — P. K. McElroy Award for 2007 Best Paper

P. K. McElroy

To family, friends and associates alike, he was “P. K.”

P. K. received the AB and AM degrees from Harvard University in 1920 and 1921, respectively. In early July of 1921, he entered the employ of Professor George Washington Pierce who was then consulting for the General Radio Company on underwater sound receiving equipment being built for the US Navy. In the fall of 1921, he transferred to General radio where he worked until retiring in 1964.

During his career, he engaged in a number of specialized engineering activities (including reliability) and held increasingly more important executive positions. He was the principal General Radio representative to several trade associations and technical societies including EIA, IRE, AIEE, IEEE and ANSI. In the IRE, he was Secretary-Treasurer of the Boston Section and later served as Treasurer and the General Chair of NEREM. He was a chair of the IEEE reliability group and the IEEE Parts, Hybrids and Packaging Group. In AIEE, he was Vice-Chair of the Technical Activities Board and Chair of the Fellow Committee.

P. K. handled the publication of all the Proceedings of these Annual Reliability and Maintainability Symposia (and its predecessors) for the first 20 years. He did not retire from that responsibility until declining health forced him to do so. Not only did he perform his publication job above and beyond the call of duty, but he was also always ready with encouragement, humor, advice and the initiative to help others on the Symposium Management Committee.

He was a Fellow of the IEEE and received the 1965 Annual Reliability Award from the IEEE Reliability Group. He was a member of Phi Beta Kappa, the American Society for Quality Control, the Precision Measurement Association and a charter member and Fellow of the Standards Engineers Society.

After retiring, P. K. did some consulting work and was active on many committees with IEEE and IEC. Throughout his life, the wise perspective he brought to problems turned significant difficulties into manageable challenges for himself and others.

P. K. gave over two decades of superlative service to the reliability profession. He was a productive worker, an able counselor and a congenial companion – you could depend upon him. It is not for any one of these qualities that this Award is named in P. K.’s honor. It is because he had all of them.