

Bringing the History of Our Fellows into the Modern Age

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The Acoustical Society of America (ASA) has elected its Fellows from outstanding full or associate members who, according to the Bylaws of the ASA (see bit.ly/ASA-Bylaws), have “rendered conspicuous service or made notable contributions to the advancement, generation, promotion, or dissemination of the knowledge of acoustics or the fostering of its practical applications.” All Fellows are members of the ASA College of Fellows (CoF; see bit.ly/ASA-CoF).

The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America (JASA) publishes the names and citations of Fellows in recognition of their contributions, and these also appear along with other ASA award winners in the spring and fall issues of *Acoustics Today*. Since 2003, the names and citations of new Fellows have been fully documented in electronic form (see bit.ly/ASA-Fellows). However, prior to 2003, the record of Fellows was unclear.

Recently, the CoF Steering Committee realized that many or perhaps even all of the Fellows had been published in

JASA prior to 2003, and so it launched a campaign to collect the existing undigitized information. The goal was to collate all ASA Fellows and, if possible, their citations in a searchable database that is now available on the same page as the listings for post-2003 Fellows.

The work to develop this database involved two groups: the National Center for Physical Acoustics at the University of Mississippi, Oxford, and the Graduate Program in Acoustics at The Pennsylvania State University, University Park. Two teams were formed to search for the names and citations of Fellows from the first issue of *JASA* in 1930 through 2002. The authors then combined the two datasets to reduce unintended omissions and to best check and collate the information.

The result is a list of 1,281 ASA Fellows elected prior to 2003. Many are acousticians who are renowned for their distinguished service and scientific contributions as part

Figure 1. Part of the group of organizers of the Acoustical Society of America (ASA) who met at Bell Telephone Laboratories, December 1928. **Bottom row, left to right:** F. A. Saunders, R. V. Parsons, D. C. Miller, W. Waterfall, V. O. Knudsen, H. Fletcher, C. F. Stoddard, J. P. Maxfield, F. R. Watson, F. K. Richtmyer, and G. R. Anderson. **Second row from bottom, left to right:** H. A. Erf, H. C. Harrison, J. R. Kelly, R. L. Wegel, H. A. Frederick, N. R. French, C. W. Hewlett, A. T. Jones, I. Wolff, and J. B. Taylor. **Third row from bottom, left to right:** L. J. Sivian, E. L. Norton, W. A. MacNair, R. F. Mallina, L. Green, Jr., R. H. Schroeter, H. W. Lamson, C. N. Hickman, and D. G. Blattner. **Top row, left to right:** W. P. Mason, J. C. Steinberg, V. L. Chrisler, K. J. Schroeter, E. C. Wente, and W. C. Jones. Photo used with permission of the ASA.



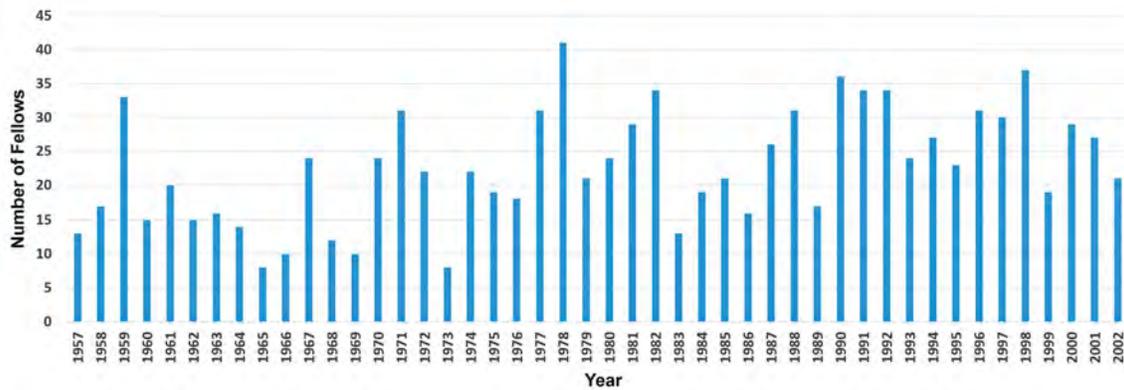


Figure 2. Distribution of elected Fellows of the ASA between 1957 and 2002.

of the history of the Society. Here are some insights from reviewing this list.

The Early Years

The earliest published year for Fellows was 1939, seemingly on the Society's 10th anniversary, as documented in the Anniversary Issue [*JASA* 11, 177-178 (1939)]. Some especially notable Fellows are **Harvey Fletcher**, first president of the ASA; **Wallace Waterfall**, first editor in chief of *JASA* 1929–1933; **Dayton C. Miller**, ASA president 1931–1933; **Vern O. Knudsen**, ASA president 1933–1935; **Fredrick A. Saunders**, ASA president 1937–1939; **F. R. Watson**, editor of *JASA* 1933–1939 and ASA president 1939–1941; and **Floyd A. Firestone**, editor of *JASA* 1939–1956, editor in chief of *JASA* 1956–1957.

Other important individuals include **E. G. Boring**, **Carl Eyring**, **Fredrick V. Hunt**, **Erwin Meyer**, **Paul Sabine**, **Hugh S. Knowles**, **Carl E Seashore**, **Robert Young**, and **Georg von Békésy** (1939), who won a Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine in 1960 for his research on the function of the ear. See **Figure 1** for a part of the group of founding members of the Society.

1940s and 1950s

From 1939 to 1957, 235 Fellows were elected. No citations of their respective contributions were available in ASA publications for these Fellows. These included, among others, such luminaries as **Richard H. Bolt** (1941), **Grant Fairbanks** (1941), **Cyril M. Harris** (1946), **Leo L. Beranek** (1947), **Herman Feshbach** (1947), **Hale J. Sabine** (1947), **Ernst Glenn Wever** (1947), **Hallowell Davis** and **Karl D. Kryter** (1953), and **Jozef J. Zwislowski** (1954).

From 1957

Figure 2 shows the distribution of ASA Fellows from 1957 to 2002. During this period, *JASA* published the names of newly elected ASA Fellows along with a citation of their respective contributions. To identify the year of election of a Fellow as accurately as possible, the current pattern of the ASA Fellow election and announcement was followed: newly elected Fellows named in issues published in *JASA* during the first half of the year are identified as having been elected in the previous year, and those published in the second half of the year are identified as having been elected in that year.

For example, **James L. Flanagan** was elected a Fellow of the ASA for “his humorous research studies in speech communications, including both speech analysis and synthesis, and for his excellent contributions to the acoustical theory of speech.” His citation was published in *JASA* [31(6), 816 (1959)] and was identified as elected an ASA Fellow in the calendar year 1958.

Max V. Mathews was elected a Fellow of the ASA for “his significant contributions to the use of digital computers in simulating speech processing systems, for his original investigations in speech analysis, and for his theoretical and experimental researches in the auditory detection of signals” as published in *JASA* [33(9), 1249 (1961)]; Mathews was consequently identified as elected an ASA Fellow in 1961.

Before 1957, no citations were given for newly elected Fellows. Between 1957 and 1964, citations for newly elected ASA Fellows were long and detailed, such as

those for Flanagan and Mathews. Since 1965, citations for newly elected ASA Fellows have been concise.

Concluding Remarks

The CoF has successfully collected information about the ASA Fellows during the predigital era of the Society. This information enriches the Society's history and reputation and can be remarkably interesting. The elected ASA Fellows are now searchable electronically via the Society's website. Any corrections and/or additions to ASA Fellows' names/years/citations are welcome.

Acknowledgments

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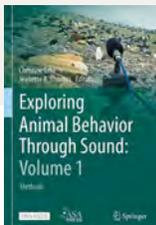
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