

# Sam Hay Harper, Jr.

One of our most interesting ASHRAE members, Mr. Sam Harper, 79, passed away on November 30, 2010. For those of us who will remember Sam, we will miss a very great man, Engineer, and friend. For those of you who did not know Sam, I am truly sorry you missed someone special.

Sam was born in Houston, TX, October 7, 1931. He attended San Antonio Academy before finishing high school at Lamar in Houston. Sam was a graduate of Texas A&M College, Class of 1953 (Whoop!), where he received his B.S. degree in Mechanical Engineering. Then, like a lot of early graduates of Texas A&M, he entered one of the Armed Forces - the Army – and served in a Guided Missiles Branch. After he left the Army, Sam spent most of his professional engineering career in the HVAC industry in some form or another. He spent several years with the Trane Company, Westinghouse and Paschal-Harper, Inc. At one point he even established his own engineering company, S.H.H. Engineering.

Most of us remember him for the years he spent at Mechanical Reps (**at right**) and other Sales Representative Companies in and around Austin and San Antonio. He was a remarkable individual, easy to engage in conversation and always someone from which to “learn some nugget of truth”.



In his position as an Engineering Salesman, he provided guidance to multiple design engineers, young and old, and was a great source of information for many projects around town. Many designers and Contractors in Texas valued Sam’s input on numerous aspects of mechanical systems. His goal was to instill within the design and construction community the best and right way to go to market. Sam believed we all deserved to be paid an honest amount for honest work, and that no one of us are in the position of “giving our stuff away”. He truly believed in providing a value in order to receive fair compensation. One of the many things that made him loved was his humility as well. He often said that being a P.E. only meant you were “Partially Enlightened”.

We all knew him as someone with the highest integrity, who was very intelligent, sharp of wit and humor, and ready to ask the hard questions at all times. **At right: Sam is thinking of how to question the ASHRAE luncheon speaker.**



Sam's subject matter expertise was God, Texas A & M, and ASHRAE, but not always in that order. He loved his family, his country, as well as the outdoors. Sam was a member of the Society of Professional Engineers, Christ Episcopal Church, ASHRAE, Sons of the American Revolution, and many other organizations. I know that all Universities have traditions, but for those who are not Texas A & M graduates it is hard to fathom the depth of connection that Aggies have for one another. A very large number of Sam's Class of '53 friends showed up to pay their respects to Sam at his funeral. Sam always said, "The best view of Texas A & M was in the rear view mirror", but when tested Sam always responded that, "The Corps, The Corps, The Corps was responsible for the man he had become."



Sam wore his Aggie ring every day with pride, and it was fully worn out. When being admitted to the hospital ICU for the last time, a nurse wanted Sam to remove his ring. Sam politely but firmly said, "You can have everything else but let me continue to wear my Aggie ring." According to his friend Joe Brooks, the nurse sensed Sam's resolve and Sam wore his Aggie ring until he died.

Also, some may not know that one of Sam's favorite phrases was "John Wayne wouldn't do that." When he was asked at the hospital if he needed any pain medication, he simply said, "John Wayne would not need any."

**At right: Sam attends one of our ASHRAE tours.**

Sam is survived by his son and daughter with their extended families, but unfortunately was preceded in death by his wife of 52 years, Bettie.



Many ASHRAE members in Austin and San Antonio were friends with and were mentored by Sam. Sam will be greatly missed by many!

This author is truly blessed to have known him.

Respectfully Submitted,

Randy Schrecengost, Austin Chapter Historian  
With help from several of Sam's friends for input.