

The Newfoundland & Labrador (NL) Section began as a subsection of Canada Atlantic in 1974. Full section status was achieved by 1978. Since then, membership has steadily grown and the Section continues to play an active role in the growth of IEEE and in particular, IEEE Canada (Region 7).

An annual success for the Section has been the Newfoundland and Labrador Electrical and Computer Engineering Conference (NECEC), which completed its 18th year in 2008. Held in cooperation with Memorial University (MUN), NECEC provides a forum where professionals from electrical, electronic and computer engineering along with information specialists from business and academia present their work to the local community.

The NL Section enjoys an active relationship with the Student Branch at MUN; each hosts complementary technical and social events that bring the community together on a periodic basis. In 1998, the Branch received an IEEE Foundation award to help create a McNaughton Resource Centre focused on audio engineering and signal processing.

The Section is active at the Regional level, planning and hosting many national and international conferences. Among these is the Canadian Conference on Computer and Electrical Engineering (CCECE). Hosted in 1997, this Canadian flagship conference comes to St. John's again in 2009.

Newfoundland's electrotechnical community shares a rich and active history in the development of Canada's international presence. Since inception of the IEEE International Milestones of Electrical Engineering program in 1984, the NL Section has had the privilege of dedicating three Milestones; of which two were among the first.

The first honors the landing of the first transatlantic telegraph cable in 1866 at the Heart's Content Cable Station. This station and many subsequent cables served communications between the old and new worlds for almost 100 years.

The second recognizes the reception of the first transatlantic wireless communication by Guglielmo Marconi on the 12th of December 1901 at Signal Hill, St. John's, Newfoundland. A century later, the IEEE, ITRE (Tasmania) and Memorial University of Newfoundland along with Poldhu Amateur Radio Club and the Marconi Radio Club of Newfoundland hosted dignitaries and student competitors in a special centenary meeting and crystal radio contest to mark the occasion of the wireless experiment.

Newfoundland's third IEEE Milestone honors the completion of the first transatlantic undersea telephone system, TAT-1, in September 1956 operating between Oban, Scotland and Clarenville, Newfoundland. The system operated until 1978.

As a closing note the NL Section would like to recognize one of its own; a special member and friend to IEEE, Dr. Wallace Read. He became the President of IEEE in 1996, the first person to be elected from outside the United States of America in a vote by the total membership of IEEE.

Respectfully submitted December 2008
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