

The Gallery of Fame: A Tribute to Gear Pioneers

Gear Technology's bimonthly aberration — gear trivia, humor, weirdness and oddments for the edification and amusement of our readers. Contributions are welcome.

The Gear Research Laboratory of the University of Illinois at Chicago is home to a unique tribute to gear pioneers from around the world, the Gallery of Fame. The gallery is the brainchild of the laboratory director, Professor Faydor L. Litvin. The Gallery was begun in 1994 and is a photographic tribute to those gear company founders, inventors and researchers who devoted their careers to the study and development of gears.

According to Prof. Litvin, "this collection is unique because retrieving items and information for the gallery was a difficult task. Time had destroyed documents and memories of the many contributors who were deceased, requiring much detective work." He created the gallery to give these innovative people the credit they deserve for their valuable contributions. "I consider creativity a driving force in human life," said Litvin. "I also consider Fame a very capricious goddess who doesn't reward in a proper time, or doesn't reward at all, people who deserve it."

One example of the difficult detective work involved was the case of Samuel I. Cone, founder of the Cone Drive Company and the inventor of the double enveloping worm gear drive. When Litvin approached Cone Drive Operations, Inc. (now a division of

Textron) for a picture and biography, he was given the latter but told that the former was missing and that the company would be obliged if he could find one. Litvin discovered a reference in Cone's biographical materials to work at the Norfolk Navy Yards, the place where he invented his double enveloping worm gear drive in 1909. Litvin then contacted the Secretary of the Navy, and with his help Litvin was able to find Cone's living relatives. He was given the photograph of Samuel I. Cone by Cone's granddaughter, Mrs. Mary Bell Kluge.

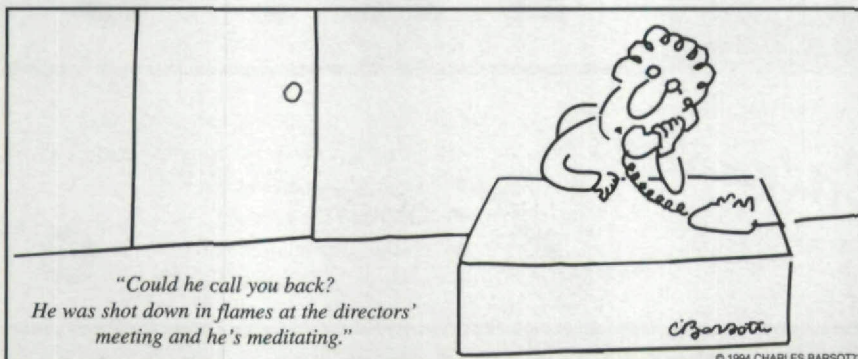
The Gallery of Fame is dedicated to all gear scientists, not just those from the West. Litvin also pays tribute to those who worked in the Soviet Union. To sum up his feelings about the old Soviet communist system, Litvin quoted Bertolt Brecht's couplet about life in East Germany: "To the Descendants. I live in dark times indeed!" Litvin's admiration for Russian and Soviet gear scientists is every bit as deep as his disgust over the communism they were forced to live and work under. They are well represented in the Gallery by Dr. Chaim I. Gochman (1851–1916), the founder of the analytical theory of gearing, Dr. Chrisanf F. Ketov (1887–1948), Nikolai I. Kolchin (1894–1975), Dr. Mikhail L. Novikov (1915–1957), Dr. Vladimir N. Kudriavtsev (1910–1996)



Above: Samuel I. Cone
Left: Dr. Chaim I. Gochman

and Dr. Lev V. Korostelev (1923–1978), who Litvin credits as the developer of the theory of gearing in Russia. "Dr. Korostelev belonged to the second generation of scientists who developed the theory of gearing in Russia," said Litvin.

The Gear Research Laboratory performs its research in cooperation with aerospace and industrial giants like Ford, Bell Helicopter, Sikorsky, The Gleason Works and U.S. Government agencies such as NASA and the U.S. Army. The Gallery of Fame, the faces of the great men—and a couple of great women—from the world of gearing, looks down upon Litvin and his researchers as they meet to discuss their work and theories. As for adding new names and photos to the Gallery in the future, Litvin says: "The space is not closed. We can always start the second row." Only time will tell who'll be next. ⚙



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