Octave LaBath

1941–2019

Octave LaBath, 77, of Blue Ash, Ohio, and former vice president of engineering at Cincinnati Gearing Systems Inc., died Thursday, August 8, 2019. LaBath was an active AGMA member, a member of ASME and president of Gear Consulting Services. He held a patent of a gearbox in wind turbines and worked on the LCAC for the U.S. Navy.

LaBath was active on nine AGMA technical committees at various points since the 1970s. He was the Chairman of the ISO TC 60, a member of the Technical Division Executive Committee (TDEC) and received the TDEC Award in 1982, Chairman of AGMA's Epicyclic Enclosed Drives Committee — where he led the completion of ANSI/AGMA 6123, Design Manual for Epicyclic Gear Drives — and published three papers through AGMA (AGMA 209.12, AGMA 209.15, and 02FTM10).

"We are saddened to hear about Octave as he was a great engineer that did so much for AGMA and the gear industry," said Amir Aboutaleb, vice president, technical division, AGMA. "He was a true steward for the development of standards and welcoming all who wanted to be a part of the process. His technical expertise, kind demeanor and willingness to include all committee members will be remembered."

Many members of AGMA attribute their participation in technical committees to LaBath, whom encouraged them to get involved.

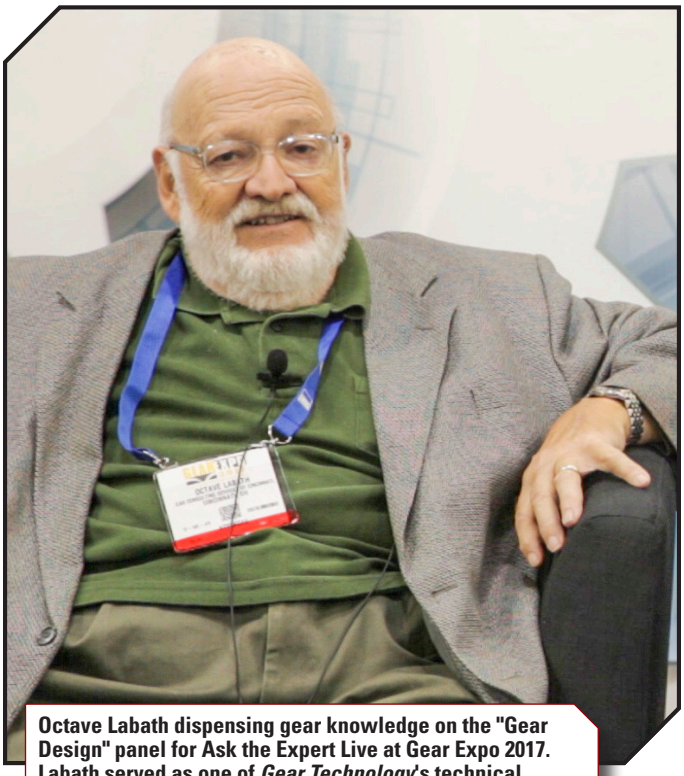
"Octave was one of the rare individuals in the gear industry who always took the time to recognize new committee members and their contributions to standards development," said Frank Uherek, principal engineer, Rexnord Gear Group. "He explained the background of the myriad of "rules of thumb" that gear engineers use to produce their designs.

LaBath was not only an important member of the AGMA technical committees but he really stood out as a leader amongst his peers, including those he worked with.

"Octave was a true gear engineer with an exceptional personality," said Tom Miller, chief engineer, Cincinnati Gearing Systems Inc. "He loved gears and gearboxes and even in retirement was always eager to teach or learn more about gears. There will never be another Octave; he will be greatly missed."

LaBath attended the University of Cincinnati in the College of Engineering. After his freshman year in 1960, he started a co-op job with the Cincinnati Gear Company. His first work section was in the shop as a machinist assistant setting up and producing pump gear blanks on an Acme Gridley four-bar feed machine. He learned to use micrometers to measure the outside diameters and face widths, depth mics to measure the hub lengths, and bore gages to measure the size in the bore.

His next job was assisting in setting up and manufacturing bevel gear blanks on a Cleveland automatic screw machine. Here, they made the blanks from a single bar stock fed automatically into the screw machine. He learned how to measure the face and back angles on the blanks.



Octave Labath dispensing gear knowledge on the "Gear Design" panel for Ask the Expert Live at Gear Expo 2017. Labath served as one of *Gear Technology*'s technical editors for more than a decade. He will be sorely missed.

LaBath worked in various shop departments — cut off saws; turning; hobbing; shaping; shaving; burring; shaft grinding; bore grinding; milling machine; and inspection.

Two years into his job at Cincinnati Gearing Systems, LaBath went into the office as an assistant to the vice president of engineering. He calculated the set-up for the gear inspection machines using a Friden mechanical calculator. He used mathematic tables in an Illinois Tool small booklet for the trigonometric and involute functions.

During his final year of co-op work, LaBath designed a gearbox that reduced the speed of a hydraulic motor that used pump gears in the motor. This included designing the housing, selecting the bearings and seals, and testing the assembly. The unit was a vertical design with splash lubrication.

While at UC, LaBath joined the student section of ASME. He ended up being a 40-year lifetime member of ASME. He graduated with a BSME degree in 1964 and joined Cincinnati Gear full-time as a project engineer. At the urging of a colleague, he decided to continue his education at night school. In fact, when he took an advanced machine design class, the teacher actually had LaBath and other students teach the section on gear design.

It was in the master's program that LaBath was introduced to computers. His work included the design, assembly, and testing of the various designs. He retired from the Cincinnati Gear Company in 2001 as — ironically enough — vice president of engineering. Learn more about Octave LaBath here: *www.geartechnology.com/blog/from-co-op-to-vice-president-octave-a-labath/*

Mahr

OPENS CUSTOMER CENTER IN WIXOM, MICHIGAN

MATTHEW JASTER, SENIOR EDITOR

Mahr Inc., a global manufacturer of precision measurement equipment and solutions, recently celebrated the grand opening of its new Midwest Regional Customer Center. Located in the Detroit area in Wixom, MI, the facility features an extensive demonstration area, fully equipped with the very latest machines, systems and precision gages from the Mahr portfolio. Furthermore, the site has been specified to provide training and conference spaces, together with office spaces for the Mahr team.

"It's been a fantastic team effort to get this off the ground," said Brett Green, CEO and president, Mahr Inc. during the ribbon-cutting ceremony. "A lot of people here and in the wider Mahr world have come together on this project and we're delighted to have everything ready and on display so our customers can bring their measurement challenges here and let Mahr help solve their problems."

"The grand opening was a great opportunity for me to come by and celebrate with our Mahr family. The state of Michigan has a very long and proud history of manufacturing. In a recent article in Global Trade Magazine, Michigan was ranked as one of the top ten states for tech-driven manufacturing. It's my great pleasure to declare Mahr's Detroit-area Customer Center in Wixom officially open," said Carl Mahr, member of the Mahr family and supervisory board.

According to Pat Nugent, vice president of product management at Mahr, Wixom was chosen as the location for Mahr's second Midwest customer center because it's in the heart of the automotive manufacturing industry and is a key area of focus for Mahr's business.

"Mahr's strategy for the Americas is to bring its expertise closer to customers, so a local presence in this automotive and manufacturing industry hotspot is important to grow the Mahr brand in Michigan and beyond. Furthermore, the location in Alpha Tech Park specifically is ideal because of its easy access off the interstate," Nugent said.

Given the prevalence of gears in automotive manufacturing, Mahr expects gear metrology to be an important area of focus at the Wixom facility.

"As surface finish on gears is becoming increasingly important, the Wixom facility currently includes a dedicated and automated gear surface finish machine. A gear can be placed on this machine and the user simply inputs its basic parameters, and the tool will automatically measure the gear's surface finish. Furthermore, there are numerous hand tools currently at our Wixom facility that are used in gear measurement."

Nugent said that the MarShaft SCOPE 600 plus 3-D, an optical and tactile shaft measuring machine for gears and camshafts, should be in Wixom soon and they expect the GMX universal gear measuring machine to be available in the future as well.

"The MarShaft SCOPE, GMX universal gear measuring machine and surface measurement machine are all made to measure a gear simply by inputting the parameters into the software, and then it automatically calculates how it has to move around to get around the gear and in between the teeth and make all the measurements — they are all very easy to operate.

We ultimately expect all products to be represented in the Wixom facility," Nugent added.

Gear inspection training and education at this facility will be a key area of focus.

"We've built a dedicated training facility adjacent to the product demo room to provide training for all products. It was designed this way so that any product can be moved into the training room very easily, at any time," Nugent said. "Additionally, we expect to offer our full suite of Mahr Academy classes at Wixom. We began conducting MarSurf and MarForm classes this year, and MarGear is coming next year. (*www.mahr.com*)

Adam Gimpert

DISCUSSES HELIOS NAME CHANGE

Helios Gear Products Business Manager **Adam Gimpert** recently discussed the name-change from Koepfer America to Helios in an industry Q&A:

Q: Helios is a new name in the gear manufacturing industry. What do you do?

A: The name is relatively new, but our company has supplied machines and tools to the industry for over 30 years as Koepfer America. As of January 1, 2019, our name changed to Helios Gear Products.

Q: What spurred the name change?

A: The confluence of three forces convinced us it was the right time for a name-change.

Firstly, our company has grown to offer manufacturers several solutions for machines and tools. We directly represent several OEMs (original equipment manufacturers), including ourselves, and many consumable tool OEMs. A neutral brand like "Helios" allows us to more equally

represent all our partner OEMs.

Secondly, in 2018, our key OEM partner announced a new hobbing solution well suited for the direct and Tier 1 automotive sectors. We have structured our company to serve job shops and similar small manufacturing operations, so the alignment between our group and this new hobbing machine required an evolution of our organization.

Lastly and thirdly, YG Tech, OEM of the Hera line of gear hobbing equipment, needed new representatives in North America. After visiting the YG Tech factory and vetting their machine tool solutions, we knew that working together would bring a great hobbing solution to market. With the Hera line, we can now offer gear manufacturers three empowering forces: affordability, quality, and from-stock delivery—all with our proven, reliable technical assistance.

Q: Does this mean that Koepfer is gone?

A: "Koepfer" is owned by the EMAG Group, and here in the United States, Helios Gear Products will continue to be the technical service provider for legacy Koepfer equipment, which includes models such as 300, 200, 160, 180, 173, 153, and others. We proudly continue to serve our existing Koepfer customers with our proven technical support and new affordable technologies.

Q: For technical assistance on Koepfer equipment, should customers contact Helios?

A: Absolutely! We are EMAG Koepfer GmbH's technical service partner for all "K-type" machinery. In simple terms, if the machine is a Koepfer Model 300, 200, 160, 180, 173, 153, or similar, Helios is the go-to company for technical assistance and domestically stocked parts.

Q: Why is Helios and YG Tech such a great combination?

A: The Hera machines from YG Tech offer world class technology, such as Fanuc CNC, direct-drive torque motors, hardened and ground linear rails, and unified automation systems that our existing customers will expect and find familiar. YG Tech is a multi-generational family-owned business echoed by today's leadership at Helios, and YG Tech has built gear machines since 1963 and other machine tools since the early 20th century. With Helios's expertise and reputation in the North American gear manufacturing industry, the Helios Hera line offers manufacturers a new, affordable, high-quality, high-technology, reliable option for gear hobbing in the 21st century.

Q: What does "Helios" mean?

A: For our team, Helios means equipping manufacturers with machines and tools to make profitable gears. For others, Helios is the god of the sun in Greek mythology. We liked the sun symbolism, and "Helios" is not tied to any one brand that we represent. We strive to "shed light" on the path to profitable production for gear manufacturers, so they can compete in the global arena.

Q: What are Helios's main product offerings?

A: Machines and tools for gear manufacturers: We supply hobbing equipment for gears up to about 30 inches in diameter, and on the other end, we have hobbing equipment that comfortably handles gears smaller than a baby's little finger. Our deburring and chamfering machines are a growing segment of our products, and we also supply abrasive tools for generating grinding, form grinding, bevel gear grinding, and more. Cutting tools, of course, are an important part of our offerings: carbide and HSS hobs, milling cutters, and shaper cutters. Lastly, manufacturers also rely on us for hob sharpening and contract inspection work.

Depending on the hobbing solution required, our hobbing machines are built by ourselves, Monnier+Zahner, or YG Tech, and our deburring and chamfering machines are built by Tecnomacchine.

Q: Will Helios continue to offer used equipment?

A: We certainly will continue to offer cost-conscious solutions. Manufacturers looking for budget-friendly machines should consider our used and re-controlled ("K-Repowered") options, which we offer with warranties and backed by our Helios technical support. Our stock is always changing, so manufacturers should give us a call or visit our website for the latest.

Q: Is there anything else you'd like to add about the future of Helios?

A: We continue to work on being a leading supplier of gear manufacturing solutions. Part of that effort is our sales partnership with Kapp Technologies of Boulder, CO. Combined, our engineers and sales teams offer manufacturers are trusted, high-quality resource for hobbing, grinding, deburring, and inspection solutions. Manufacturers know that working with either Helios or Kapp will open doors for productive and profitable gearing for the future. (*www.heliosgearproducts.com*)