

CLASSIC PAPER REVIEWS

Preface

This issue sees the first in a series of spotlight articles in the Journal that was envisaged several years ago by the members of the SFPE Publications Committee. Our vision was to invite current researchers who work in the same field, or perhaps the original authors, to write short reviews of selected papers of enduring significance for the profession. The purpose is to celebrate the people and the historic roots of the concepts we may now take for granted.

A “classic paper” is a paper that made the original contribution to a new field that is still of relevance today and therefore of interest to the readers. It is a paper that is cited regularly, even today. Such papers usually stem from fundamental, rather than applied research.

In supporting this concept, the Publications Committee tried to consider questions such as to how to select a “classic” paper from among many important papers; and, could potential reviewers be encouraged to write such “directed” reviews? It was recognized that it would be counter-productive to impose too formal criteria on the selection of papers to be reviewed. The project depends on the commitment of the Publications Committee, SFPE Staff, the Editor of the JFPE, and reviewers, such as Dr. Ron Alpert, to bring to fruition.

Dr. Alpert authored the first review of a Classic Paper for this issue of the Journal. He has provided a “review of a review” that H.C. Hottel at M.I.T. did in 1959, of a paper by Russian authors Blinov and Khudiakov, entitled “Certain Laws Governing Diffusive Burning of Liquids”.

With sustained commitment, it is hoped that “Classic Paper Reviews” will become a regular feature of the Journal of Fire Protection Engineering.

J. R. Mawhinney, P. Eng.
Chair, Publications Committee