

Congratulations!
It's an



The Birth of OIPEEC according to my recollection 52 years later

OIPEEC Celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the first official meeting of the organisation and General Assembly at the Oxford Conference in March 2013. On that occasion we were privileged to have one of OIPEEC's founding members, Professor Gabor Oplatka address the conference banquet and share his personal recollections of that time.

Professor Gabor Oplatka
Zürich, Switzerland

During the year 1961, Italy celebrated its Centennial. On the occasion of that 100-year anniversary, many different meetings were convened. One of these meetings, organized by Prof. Ugo Rossetti and Professor Gideon Meeuse at the Polytechnic Institute in Torino September 7-11, concerned steel wire ropes.

(The list of the participants and the program survives in our archives).



The Fathers of OIPEEC, Prof. Meeuse and Prof Rossetti

Two hundred and seventeen people participated in the conference which was a great success. Nineteen nations were represented, including: Austria, Belgium, Danmark, France, Germany (BRD and DDR), Hungary, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherland, Norway, Poland, Republic of South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and Yugoslavia.

The conference sparked much discussion - but understandably everyone favoured their own regulations - there was not even agreement about what a bending cycle was! There were four main

groups of people - depending on their background and interest...

COLLOQUIO INTERNAZIONALE SULLA FATICA DELLE FUNI METALLICHE
COLLOQUE INTERNATIONAL SUR L'ENDURANCE DES CABLES METALLIQUES
INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM ON FATIGUE OF WIRE ROPES
INTERNATIONALES KOLLOQUIUM UBER DIE ERMUDUNGFESTIGKEIT VON DRAHT SEILEN

Torino, 7-11 settembre 1961

LABORATORIO SPERIMENTALE DEI MATERIALI DA COSTRUZIONE - POLITECNICO DI TORINO

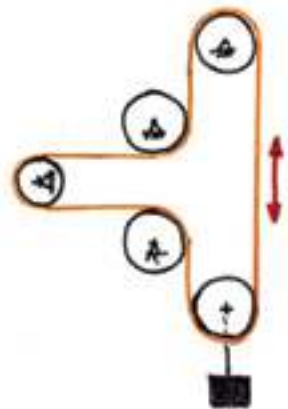


Prof. Gideon Meeuse ↑



Prof. Ugo Rossetti →

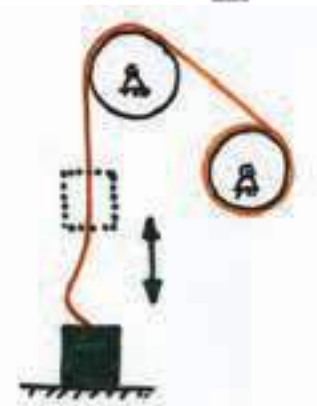
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The Researcher: looked for the influence of parameters

Parameters of the:

- rope
- installation
- operation



The User: wanted convenience

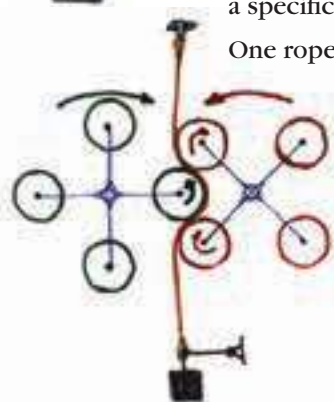
Test different ropes on the same installation



The Ropemakers:

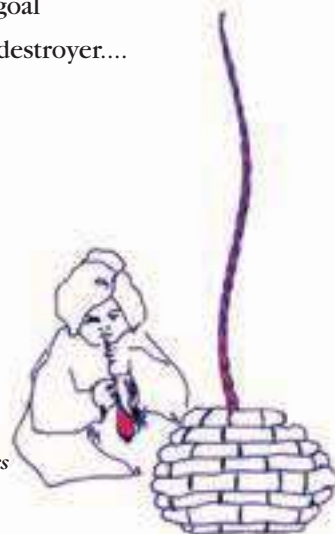
sought for the all-round rope

Test by different exposures in the same time.



The Tester: didn't have a specific goal

One rope destroyer...

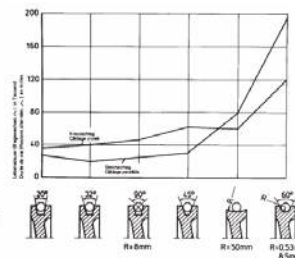
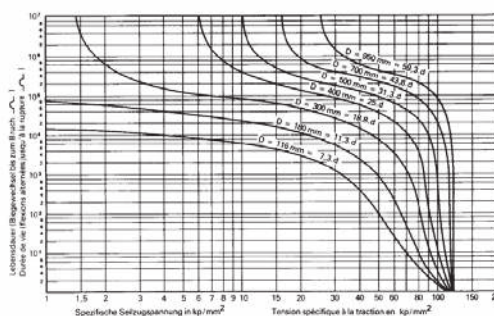


...In truth, to admit it: some papers were a bit fantastical - like an Indian snake charmer!

Many formal presentations were given, but none by Prof. Müller of the Technische Hochschule, Stuttgart. Instead, Prof. Müller made a spontaneous presentation during the discussions, showing all the results from Woernle and the latest news from Stuttgart. (This had been published already in DRAHT magazine). He told the assembly that this conference wasn't necessary because he already had found solutions for all the rope problems.



Prof Hugo Müller

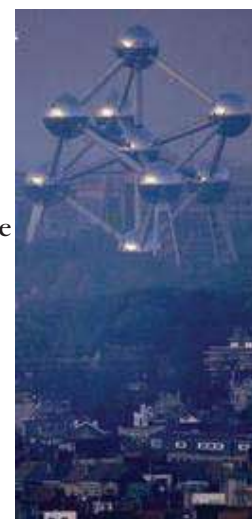


At the end of the conference Professors Rossetti and Meeuse presented a proposal to pass one resolution. *The immediate establishment of a single international organization for coordination of all the research work in the field of the steel wire ropes.*

An overwhelming majority of the attendees approved it. Only Prof. Müller opposed it, as being something that was not necessary.

In 1962, a preliminary meeting was called at the AIB in Bruxelles organised by Mr Jean Verwilt. There were about eight people present. Rossetti (I), Verwilt (B), Lyngstad (N), Gadliger (CH), Giovannozzi, Kaniss (D) and Clayton (GB). I was there representing Prof Zweifel.

We decided our main goal would be the coordination the research underway at the different university and material testing institutes. At the time, the list included Austrian (Wien, Graz, Innsbruck), Belgian (Bruxelles, and the AIB); Swiss (Zürich, and the EMPA); German (Stuttgart, Karlsruhe, Klausthal, Braunschweig, and Bochum); French (Paris, Grenoble, and the Ponts et Chaussées, Nantes); British (Glasgow); Hungarian (Budapest, Miskolc); Italian (Torino, Roma, Firenze, Trieste, Milano); Dutch (Delft and Mr. van



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de Mortel with his Rope demolishing device); Polish (Krakow, Katowice, Wroslaw) – the locations in western Europe. Institutions with commercial interests were not wanted but they were tolerated.

We built some wonderful castles in the air, as long the subject of money did not come up...



Mr. Hans Gadliger

Back in Zurich, the comment of my boss Prof Zweifel, was a short one:

‘Good job!

Let us organize the first conference, in ‘63 here in Zurich.’

Prof. O. Zweifel

...Then there was a pondering silence. Finally, Mr. Gadliger (CEO of CIS, the rope manufacturer at Schaffhausen) slapped 50 Swiss Francs down on the table with the remark “let us move on”.



Next, in September 1963 the first General Assembly took place in Zürich at the ETH, chaired by Prof. Zweifel of the Hochschule.

The main participants were Bahke (D), Bertolini (I), Bindschädler (CH), Bittner (A), Boss (NL), Clayton (GB), Gadliger (CH), Giovanozzi (I), Kaniss (D), Leanheur (F), Lingstad (N), Müller (D), Pfister (D), Rossetti (I), Schneider (A), Vervilst (B) and Zweifel (CH)

After short discussions:

- We approved the constitution and the budget.
- We elected the President and the members of the management board.
- We created 4 working groups
 - Endurance of ropes
 - Stiffness of ropes
 - Testing of wires
 - Dokumentation

In January 1963 one more preliminary meeting took place in preparation for the first General Assembly at Zürich.

It was held in the headquarters of the SFCN (France Railways) in Paris.



We created the first draft for the constitution. The leader was Mr. Jean Hennebert from Paris. I do not know that he had anything to do with ropes, but he had served as president for lots of organizations.

Among the participants I remember only Rossetti, Clayton and Kaniss. By the way, this is the reason OIPEEC had its original legal home in Paris. (Otherwise, I remember only that the weather was very, very cold, and therefore I found my way back to Zürich in the shortest possible time).



But the proposed logo provoked a longer discussion (according Parkinson's Law).

Prof. Ugo Rossetti proposed the name OIPEEC for the organization (Note: that OPEC did not exist this time) and presented the logo in the form we continue to use until today.

Prof. Müller criticized the image. He emphasized such a rope does

not exist, the pressure between the wires would be horrible, such a rope is not able to run over a sheave, the size of the sheave is much too small for the rope, the lay length of the rope is unrealistic, and so on.

Prof. Rossetti explained that this design was created by an artist (a friend of his) and not by a rope-specialist.

At last we agreed between us and approved the logo, against all these objections.

---And hence the baby was born---