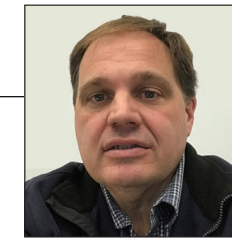
Editorial



DOUGLAS COFFIN
TAPPI Journal
Editorial Board

Celebrating an industry giant: Dr. Peter W. Hart

On February 19, 1915, at the annual meeting of the American Paper and Pulp Association held at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York, a group of 35 people formed a new division called the "Technical Section of the American Paper and Pulp Association" with the objectives to: (1) stimulate interest in the science of pulp and papermaking; (2) provide means for the interchange of ideas among its members; and (3) encourage original investigation. At that meeting, Professor Ralph H. McKee of the University of Maine (1909-1916) spoke. Professor McKee had initiated the first college course in Pulp and Paper in the United States. In his remarks he stated:

> "The meeting and organization of this division promises to do more towards putting this industry on a sound and paying basis than any previous step made by the American paper and pulp industry … Men engaged in the production and scientific phases of mill work have much to gain and at no injury to the mills they represent, by attendance and discussion as such meetings."



In addition to his writing, editing and review work with TAPPI Journal, Dr. Peter W. Hart has written numerous other journal papers, as well as books, chapters, conference papers, patents, and TAPPI TIPS.

» Click here to watch a video of Peter's thoughts on the industry and TAPPI

In 1915, the journal *Paper* was adopted as the official outlet for this new technical association. Today, our own *TAPPI Journal* provides this outlet for the dissemination of original investigation, allowing TAPPI to meet its original objectives to serve the paper industry on a scale that its founders could not have imagined.

An association is only as good as the dedication and commitment of its members to meeting its objectives. The current editor-in-chief of *TAPPI Journal*, Dr. Peter Hart, epitomizes what it means to be a TAPPI member. It is apropos that Peter's education in pulp and paper began at the University of Maine, where Professor McKee started pulp and paper education in the United States. Peter's senior thesis was on the carbon-to-hydrogen ratio in kraft pulps (1985). After earning a master's degree in 1988 from Maine, he journeyed south to earn his Ph.D. at Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta. His first *TAPPI Journal* paper was:

> "Adjusting pulping parameters and ways to debottleneck the process through modular analysis of pulp and paper systems (MAPPS) modeling of a kraft mill," *TAPPI Journal*, Vol. 73, 1990, pp. 111-116.

I'm not sure if Peter knew his trajectory at that time, but over the years, he has had numerous papers published in *TAPPI Journal*, including two best papers of the year (2017, 2022). He has also curated many special editions for the Journal. His written contributions reach beyond *TAPPI Journal* with contributions to other peer-review journals, books, chapters, conference papers, patents, and TAPPI TIPS. His written words have and will continue to guide new generations of engineers in the industry.

Peter's contributions to TAPPI far exceed his scholarly works. In his 42-year with TAPPI, he has served from the local to the international levels. He is a true leader. As a member of the *TAPPI Journal* Editorial Board since 2001 and editor-in-chief for three terms (2014-2016, 2020-2021, 2024-2025), he has worked tirelessly to ensure its success.

Those of you reading this because it is open access, thank Peter Hart who championed this significant change, while maintaining the practice that the authors in this and every month's issue pay no page fees. Peter is a strong proponent that the scientific knowledge should be available to help all in the paper and related industries.

Over the years, Peter's efforts have been recognized with the highest honors the association can bestow on one of its members: TAPPI Fellow and the 2022 TAPPI Gunnar Nicholson Gold Medal Award. The true recognition of his efforts is the impact he has made not only on *TAPPI Journal*, TAPPI, and the industry, but also on the individuals he has collaborated with and mentored. I have seen him push those he works with to give their best, and I have seen the joy in his eyes when he has witnessed their success. The success of those around Peter is the true measure that defines his lasting impact. His example provides a lofty goal for the rest of us to strive to meet.



Dr. Hart (middle)is shown receiving the Gunnar Nicholson Gold Medal Award – TAPPI's highest honor – in 2022 as presented by Larry N. Montague (right), president and CEO of TAPPI, and Jim Haffele, 2022 TAPPI Board of Directors chairman (left). This award is bestowed to those "who have made preeminent scientific and engineering achievements of proven applied benefit to the world's pulp, paper, board, and forest product industries."

Peter accomplished all of his TAPPI work while also working as an engineer and manager at MeadWestvaco and WestRock for more than 30 years. These positions include director of Fiber Science and Innovation at WestRock, as well as Research Fellow.

When you read *TAPPI Journal* this month, consider that it is not only because of the foresight and efforts of those founding 35 in 1915, but more importantly, it is because of the present-day efforts of those like Peter Hart who continue to dedicate themselves to serve and improve the paper industry.

The following are comments about Peter's industry contributions from members of the *TAPPI Journal* Editorial Board and others, as well as an announcement from WestRock regarding the recently established Dr. Peter W. Hart Graduate Student Award.

"Peter has been there for me since day one. When I first took the position with TAPPI, he helped me along the way as the 'new guy.' He listened to me, mentored me and even welcomed me into his home. He took time out of his busy schedule to not only mentor me, but also other TAPPI Staff members, to help us stay on the right path. Peter is one-of-a-kind."

Larry N. Montague, President and CEO, TAPPI

"I have known Peter since 1990 when he was a Ph.D. candidate at Georgia Tech. Peter encouraged me to take the undergraduate pulp and paper classes and labs at Tech, and later to go on to IPST for my graduate degrees. He is also a strong advocate for TAPPI involvement, and he helped to pull me into the organization. I am forever grateful to Peter for introducing me to this industry and for his friendship."

Brian Brogdon, Ph.D., Independent Paper & Forest Products Consultant

"Peter's work in paper science over the decades helped new scientists and engineers to get a fundamental understanding of papermaking. I have been referring to his articles since long before I had a chance to connect with him through the* TAPPI Journal *Editorial Board meetings. Paper science professionals often come across Peter's work in multiple fields and appreciate all his contributions to the paper scientific community. It is a pleasure to know him and his research."

Ravi Challa, Ph.D., Lead Scientist – Water and Protection, Dupont

"I am simply in awe of everything Peter has accomplished. Without his help, I would have failed as editor-in-chief of* TAPPI Journal. *We are all lucky he chose to devote his energy and skills to our industry."

Douglas Coffin, Ph.D., Professor, Miami University

"Peter has a warmth, energy, enthusiasm, and dedication to the industry. He is truly a giant and will forever be enshrined in our hearts and the history of our industry where his impact will be felt for generations to come, especially by way of his technical series of books."

Lucian Lucia, Ph.D., Professor, North Carolina State University

"To the man of his word, Dr. Peter W. Hart, thanks for making me a better thinker. You helped me to see and solve problems from different angles. Without you, I would not have earned my Ph.D. Thanks for your availability days, nights, and even on Christmas day when you submitted my paper to* TAPPI Journal*."

Yao Ntifafa, Ph.D., Senior R&D Scientist, WestRock

"Peter is an exacting scientist who sets high standards for us all. Generous with his time and insightful with his guidance, he truly is a giant in our industry. As I evaluate various pieces of technical work, I often think to myself, 'What would Peter think of this work?' That normally provides me with a 'North Star' in my assessment."

Steve Ottone, M.S., Technical Service Representative, Mallard Creek Polymers

"I It is absolutely remarkable what Peter has done in his career – from all the work that he has done internally with MeadWestvaco and WestRock to all of his publications and presentations, his dedication and contributions as an editor and a committee member, and his teaching and guidance as an instructor and supervisor. He has helped many of us grow with opportunities, encouragement, and inspiration. A heartfelt thank you and deepest gratitude for everything."

Joel Panek, Ph.D., Senior R&D Manager, WestRock

"Peter is an extraordinary individual, embodying both deep expertise in his field and remarkable kindness as a colleague. It's rare to find someone who excels both technically and personally, and I have always been honored to work with him."

Arthur J. Ragauskas, Ph.D., Governor's Chair in Biorefining/Professor at University of Tennessee

"It's amazing to consider all of the publications and books that Peter has written, edited, and published over his career. In doing so, and also by his willingness to talk about his passions, he has touched many lives. This legacy will continue for the next generations of researchers and engineers who Peter has influenced."

Gregg Reed, Ph.D., Technical Manager, Imerys

WestRock announces the Dr. Peter W. Hart Graduate Student Award

We invite you to join in celebrating our esteemed colleague, Peter Hart. In recognition of Peter's profound accomplishments in the paper and packaging industry, North Carolina State University College of Natural Resources has established the Dr. Peter W. Hart Graduate Student Award. A WestRock career spanning more than 30 years, a distinguished TAPPI Fellow with numerous awards and accolades, a published research author – all are impressive, but when we think of Peter's legacy, top of mind is the tremendous impact he's had on developing a skilled, technical, innovation-focused workforce for our industry during his 18 years as an Adjunct Associate Professor with the North Carolina State Department of Forest Biomaterials.

The Dr. Peter W. Hart Graduate Award will ensure more students pursuing a graduate degree in Forest Biomaterials have the resources they need for research and access to professional development through educational conferences. To ensure the award's long-term availability, WestRock is committed to ensuring the fund has a $100,000 endowment. We hope you'll join us in honoring Peter's legacy by clicking the link below and making a donation today: ***https://go.ncsu.edu/peterhartaward***.



Dr. Hart (white shirt) with colleagues at a WestRock mill.

"Peter is a legend who possesses and demonstrates generational impact and talent. His engaging contribution style and thriving technical passion create in myself and many colleagues in our industry a deep and reverent respect for his many innovations, insights, and contributions."

Scott Rosencrance, Ph.D., Vice President of Strategy and Business Development, Kemira

"I feel very fortunate to have many mentors, but most of them I picked along the way. But Peter — the paper guy with a 'Hart' of gold — picked me as a mentee instead. You picked me out of the crowd almost without knowing me, and you provided me with amazing career growth opportunities and great professional advice. I am so grateful for your mentorship, friendship, and all the shared knowledge. I feel extremely fortunate to have such a compassionate, generous, and professional role model to look up to. I will be forever grateful for everything you have done for me and for our industry."

M. Soledad Peresin, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Auburn University

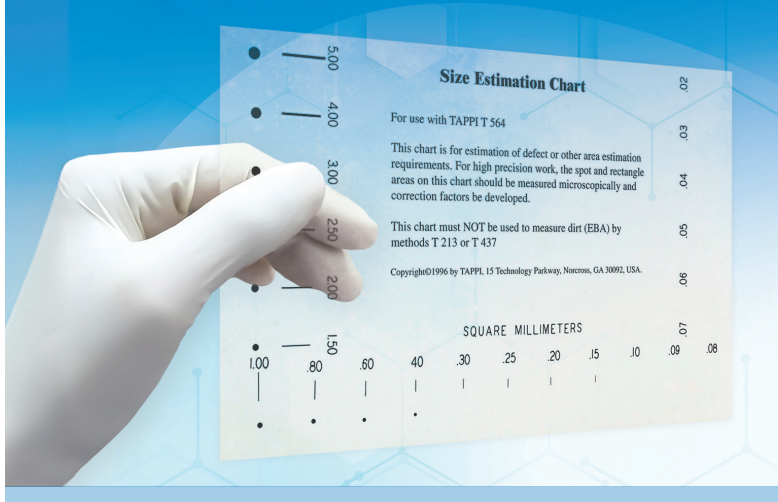
"I stand in heartfelt awe of Peter's prolific ability to write, edit, peer review, organize, and analyze scientific content, along with his enthusiasm for doing so. He has been a constant source of guidance and support for both me and* TAPPI Journal*, always willing to step up and go beyond. Peter has written and reviewed countless research papers, as well as curated many special issues. Along with his leadership, this has had an immeasurable impact on* TAPPI Journal *and for our industry. Above all, though, working with Peter is simply a joy."

Monica Shaw, Editorial Director, TAPPI Journal

"Throughout his career, Peter has contributed so much to the pulp and paper industry, from addressing key technical issues through research, publications, and editing books to supporting research and education in academic institutions. I personally gain so much from his expertise and support for my research. His dedication to the industry, enthusiasm to help others, and support of TAPPI are invaluable."

J.Y. Zhu, Ph.D., Research General Engineer, USDA Forest Service

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