

History of the Texas Section APS

Before we describe the *History of the Texas Section of the APS*, we show an excerpt of the “*History of the Texas Section, AAPT*”, by Roy Biser, Herbert Schwettman, and Fred Connell.

Concerning the Texas Academy of Science:

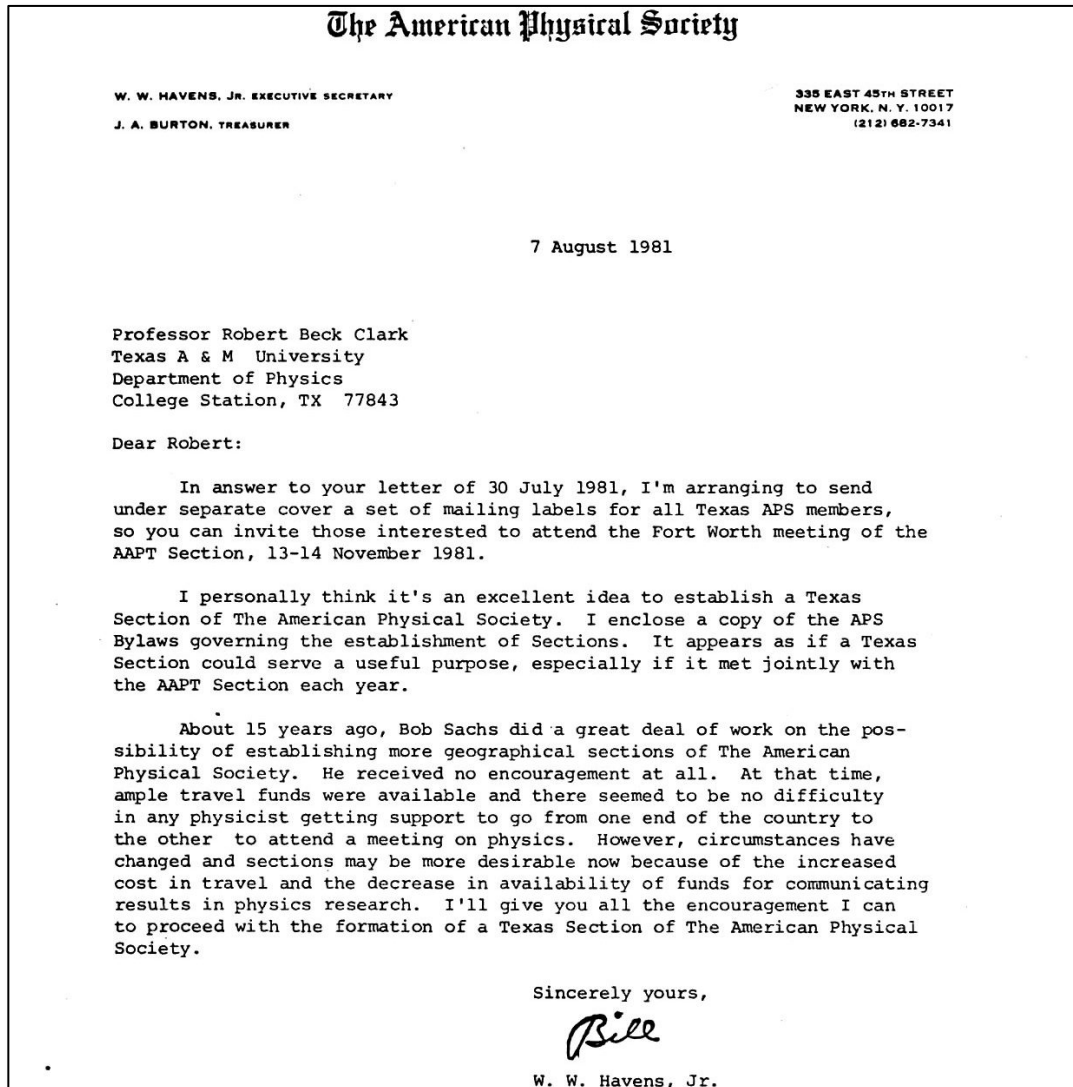
Prior to the formation of the Texas AAPT, the membership and the meetings of the Texas Academy of Science were strongly oriented toward the biological and earth sciences. Participation in Academy affairs, including meetings, by chemists, mathematicians, and physicists was meager, with the result that all three areas shared one Section of the Academy and held joint sessions at the meetings, a fact which obviously had an adverse effect on any attempts to increase interest in the meetings. The success of the Texas AAPT in stimulating interest and activity in physics in the years following 1954 appears to have motivated some members of the Texas Section of the Mathematical Association of America to follow a similar approach to increased activity in mathematics in the Academy meetings, and by 1961 the activity in both fields was sufficient to cause the Academy to create separate sections, with Section I designated for mathematics and Section II for physical sciences. Partic-

The Texas Section of AAPT had been operating very successfully for many years after 1954, but somewhere in the 1970s more and more of the contributed papers, especially those by students, were about physics research rather than physics teaching. Some of the members felt that such papers weren't really appropriate for AAPT. However, the expense of taking students to national APS meetings plus the harsher environment of their contributed paper sessions made the AAPT Section meetings very attractive for this purpose.

In the 70s there was also increasing interest in getting some industrial physicists from the rapidly-growing high-tech companies involved in the Texas Section. If one encouraged them to present the results of their research at Texas Section meetings, Texas teachers and students would be better informed about possible careers in an industrial setting.

The formation of a Texas APS Section was brought up for discussion by the Executive Council of Texas AAPT at their Spring 1981 Meeting in Austin, and an *ad hoc* committee was appointed to follow up. Robert Beck Clark was named Chair of the *Ad Hoc* Committee, and Len Diana and David Gavenda were the other members. They arranged for an organizational meeting at the Fall Meeting at TCU. This can be described as the time of the conception of the APS Section.

Those involved in the process were greatly encouraged by the national office of the APS to proceed. A new policy to encourage the formation of more Sections would apply to the Texas Section: Any APS member could get free membership in a Section, and the Section would receive \$2.00 per member from the national office to help with expenses.



Diana March 10, 1982 Memo to Gavenda, Hudson, Quarles

"I saw Dr . W. W. Havens, Jr., Executive Secretary of APS, shortly before 9:30a.m., Sunday, March 7, 1982, and he put the matter of the Texas Section, APS, on the agenda of the Executive Committee of the APS for discussion at 2:30 p.m. I presented our case at 2:30 p.m. and the motion to approve the Texas Section, APS, passed without dissenting vote. I assume the vote was unanimous; Dr. Maurice Goldhaber, in the chair, did not ask about abstentions. Next the Council of APS considers the matter at the Washington

meeting in April. If approved, Dr. Havens will advertise for members in the May issue of the Bulletin. Then our Bylaws will be reviewed, and full approval would come in November, 1982, upon acceptance of our Bylaws or their revised form, if necessary. Early in May I will ask Dr. Havens about our status and seek permission for a joint meeting with the Texas Section of AAPT in November."

The American Physical Society

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JOSEPH A. BURTON
BELL LABORATORIES (RETIRED)

TO: APS Section Officers

FROM: J. A. Burton 

SUBJECT: Proposed Free Membership in APS Sections

DATE: December 31, 1981

The suggestion made by some Section representatives that APS offer free membership in APS Sections, as is now done for Divisions, was discussed at the 22 November APS Council meeting, and the following resolution passed unanimously:

Resolution.....That the APS Council encourage further discussion with the APS Section Officers to work out details of a plan to offer free Section membership to APS members in FY 1983, and for the Society to reimburse the Section appropriately in lieu of Section Dues

The purpose of this note is to suggest that we discuss this further by phone, to decide what should be done before the Council meeting in San Francisco on January 24. This is the last Council meeting before FY 1983 Dues Bills are mailed in late March. Therefore, if this Dues Bill should make provision for free Section memberships, Council should be informed about the general plan proposed.

Perhaps we can discuss this further by individual phone calls during the next ten days, and if it seems desirable, we could then have a conference call on January 14 or 15.

Happy New Year !!

JAB:da

enc.

xc:	C. Randall	B. C. Clark	R. Winters	H. P. Kelly
	T.M. Kelly	M. M. Shahin	F. L. Wilson	R. B. Clark
	I. Sellin	L. W. Seagondollar	L. Slifkin	
	W. W. Smith	E. H. Stanley	G. E. Hohenberg	



Len Diana worked diligently to draft the by-laws for the section and get them provisionally approved by the APS Executive Committee in March of 1982.

At the Texas AAPT Spring Meeting that year in San Angelo David Gavenda was able to announce plans for a joint Fall Meeting in Austin, in anticipation of final approval by that time.

July/August 1982 BAPS, p. 689

**FORMATION OF A TEXAS
SECTION OF THE AMERICAN
PHYSICAL SOCIETY**

Formation of the fifth section of the American Physical Society, the Texas Section, was approved (pending approval of the Bylaws by Council) at the 25 April 1982 Council Meeting. Any Fellow or Member of the Society residing in or near Texas is invited to join the newly formed Section, without any additional dues needed to be paid.

An Organizing Committee was formed to help create the Bylaws of the Section, and they are listed below. Organizing Committee: L. M. Diana, Chairman; J. David Gavenda, Tom Hudson, and C. A. Quarles.

The initial meeting of the provisional Texas Section will be held at the University of Texas at Austin on 12–13 November 1982. Additional information about this meeting will be sent to all APS members who have returned this application form for membership in the Texas Section to the office of the Executive Secretary before 31 August, 1982. Local arrangements are being made by Professor J. David Gavenda, The University of Texas at Austin, Department of Physics, Austin, TX 78712.■

APS Vice-President Mildred Dresselhaus went to the Austin meeting of the Section to announce its formal approval, presenting a check for \$1,000.00 to Len Diana for its organizational expenses. *So the TSAPS was born!*

The existence of the Texas APS Section meant that one could have abstracts for all of the papers presented at the joint Section meetings published in the *Bulletin of the APS*. The richer treasury of the APS section made it possible to

bring in outstanding physicists from around the nation to talk about the latest advances in their fields. These presentations have given many students their first opportunity to learn what it is like to make a significant presentation before a scientific body. The richer treasury has also made possible student awards for travel expenses, as well as the *Robert S. Hyer Awards* for outstanding research by graduate and undergraduate students of physics.

Minutes of the First Meeting of the Texas Section

Austin, Texas; 11–13 November 1982

PREAMBLE

The inaugural meeting of the Texas Section of the American Physical Society was held on the campus of the University of Texas at Austin on 11–13 November 1982. J. David Gavenda served as the local chairperson and the APS Council was represented by Mildred S. Dresselhaus, APS Vice-President, who announced that the Texas Section and its bylaws had been formally approved by the Council. Two hundred and eighty-nine individuals registered for the meeting which was held jointly with the Texas Section of the American Association of Physics Teachers and Zone 10 of the Society of Physics Students. John L. Hubisz of College of the Mainland served as the program chairperson.

The program featured invited presentations by Joe P. Meyer, AAPT Vice-President; Edward S. Fry, Texas A&M University; and K. W. Gentle, J. D. Meiss, and Steven Weinberg of the University of Texas at Austin. Ninety-four contributed papers were presented in nine sessions during the meeting. The luncheon speakers were Mildred Dresselhaus and Dion Shea of SPS. The banquet speaker was Harlan J. Smith, Director of McDonald Observatory and a special award was presented to Herbert D. Schwetman, Baylor University (retired) for outstanding contributions to physics in higher education in Texas. The program also included laboratory tours and exhibits.

A business meeting, following the luncheon, was presided over by Leonard M. Diana of the University of Texas at Arlington who served as the chairperson of the section organizing committee. Mildred Dresselhaus announced that the APS Council had

approved a \$1000 contribution to the section to assist with organizational expenses and presented a check to Len Diana. She also discussed the important role of sections and explained the recently approved Council policy which allows APS members to join a section at no cost and provides a \$2.00 contribution per member to the section from APS.

The following were elected as interim section officers to serve until the election in the Spring of 1983. Leonard M. Diana, Chairperson; J. David Gavenda, Vice-chairperson and Robert Beck Clark, Texas A&M University, as Secretary-Treasurer. Elected to serve on the interim section executive board were Charles K. Manka, Sam Houston State University; Bowen Loftin, University of Houston-Downtown Campus; Rogers W. Redding, North Texas State University; Ben M. Doughty, East Texas State University; and Thomas L. Estle, Rice University.

Motions were also passed unanimously that the section would hold its fall and spring meetings jointly with the Texas Section of AAPT. The spring section meeting for 1983 will therefore be held 3–5 March at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches and the fall 1983 meeting will be held 17–19 November at North Texas State University in Denton. David Gavenda also reported on the setting of fees for abstracts to appear in the *Bulletin* at \$7.00 per abstract.

Robert Beck Clark
Secretary-Treasurer

Following those pioneering times, the Texas Section of the American Physical Society has grown into one of the most successful in the nation, thanks in large part to its symbiotic relationship with its mother, the Texas Section of AAPT.

Text and documents provided by David Gavenda (The University of Texas at Austin)

Edited by Carlos Bertulani (Texas A&M University-Commerce)

June 15, 2018