



We're Celebrating 50 Years!

Thank you for clicking into this special edition. In this issue, you won't find our usual technical articles. Instead, we are reminiscing with vintage photos of our equipment and snapshots about life in 1965, when we opened this testing laboratory. Our usual technical information and format will resume with the next issue.

As director of the lab, I began working here 30 years ago. But I first visited the facility in 1977, while working for a previous employer. I was fresh out of college, knowing little, and assigned to help build acoustical test walls. I learned more in a few months of hands-on test assembly construction here than during my five years of higher education. I remember I was impressed by the facility's size and exciting fire testing, but found viewing the acoustical tests after we completed each wall as being boring. At that time, the test conductor would take measurements one frequency at a time, inserting and removing each jack plug, and hand recording each reading. It took more than five hours to complete a single ASTM E90 (STC) test. Today, we simultaneously record data for all frequencies and multiple microphone locations using real-time analyzers and computers. This reduces the test time to about an hour and significantly improves accuracy. Technology has also enhanced our capabilities to record data in fire testing. Back then, we collected all of our data using only mechanical strip charts. Now, we can record more thermocouple locations with greater accuracy and better data overall. We've come a long way in five decades.

While we are celebrating our anniversary, I also want to take this opportunity to thank you for your business — those who have trusted their test programs with us from the beginning and those new clients who are helping us grow. Without you, we wouldn't be here. Now it is time to look forward: the next 50 years will see growth in our facility, in the tests we offer, and in our staff. Perhaps we will provide a learning experience for other green engineering students just out of school, like I was when I first visited this facility.

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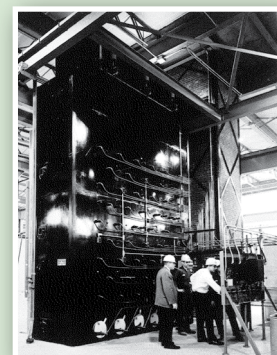
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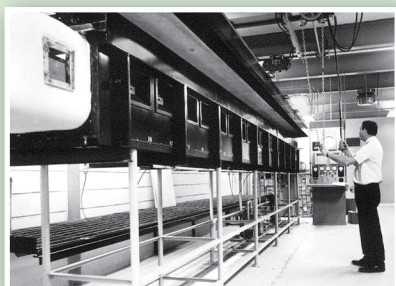
Life In 1965

Noteworthy events of
that year:
[read more >>](#)

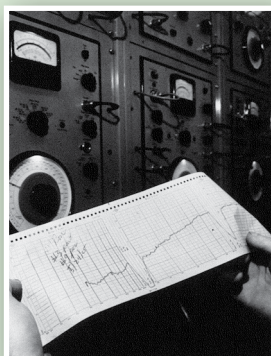


Our facility's new full-scale
wall furnace.

Early Days At The Testing Laboratory



The laboratory's new Steiner tunnel furnace.



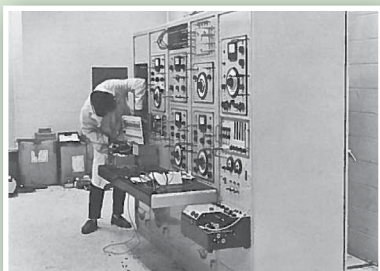
Acoustical test
measurements
are reviewed in
a mechanical
strip-chart format.



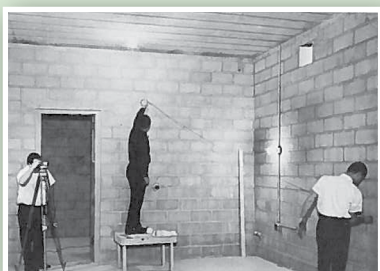
The control panel for
our new full-scale
floor-ceiling furnace.



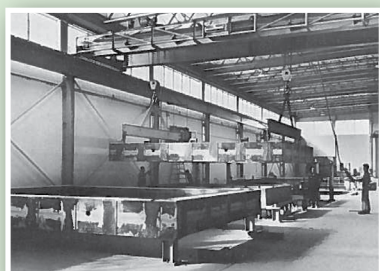
Operating a 30-ton overhead crane to position loading tanks onto the test assembly.



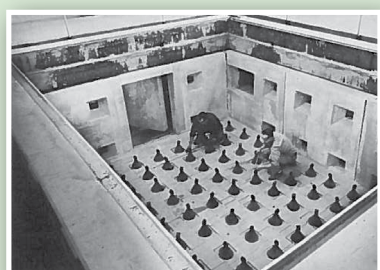
Here, a technician installs the instrument console in our acoustical control room.



Making adjustments to the newly completed acoustical test chambers.



The 30-ton crane and floor-ceiling fire test frames.



Our new full-scale floor-ceiling furnace.

What Was Life Like In 1965?

In 1965, our state-of-the-art testing facility opened in Buffalo, New York. If you were living in America, the average annual income was \$6,900 and it cost about \$20,000 to buy a new house. A loaf of bread was 21 cents, a gallon of gas was 31 cents, and a postage stamp was 5 cents.

Noteworthy events that year:

Of National Interest

- The first American combat troops landed in Vietnam.
- The hippie peace-love movement was gaining ground (and would be with us through the '60s into the '70s).
- Martin Luther King, Jr. led a successful civil rights march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama.
- U.S. astronaut Edward H. White, II became the first American to walk in space.
- The Gateway Arch in St. Louis, Missouri, was completed.
- The first mandated health warnings appeared on cigarette packages.
- President Lyndon Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act.
- A popular innovative business tool: the IBM electric typewriter.
- Movies: *The Sound of Music*, *Goldfinger* and *Dr. Zhivago* were released.
- Music: Frank Sinatra, Roger Miller, the Beatles and the Rolling Stones were headlining.
- Sports: Los Angeles Dodgers won the world series (baseball), Boston Celtics won the NBA championship (basketball), Green Bay Packers won the NFL championship and the Buffalo Bills won the AFL championship (both football), Jack Nicklaus took the Masters title (golf), and Lucky Debonair finished first in the Kentucky Derby.

In The Buffalo Region

- Nov. 9, 1965, the Great Northeast Blackout left 30 million people in seven states and parts of Canada without lights and power for 12 hours – including most cities in the Northeast. At that time, it was the largest power failure in history.
- 520-foot Skylon Tower was built 775 feet from the bottom of Niagara Falls.
- The Anchor Bar in Buffalo debuted Buffalo chicken wings just one year earlier, and already this tasty new fare was becoming popular. We like to think Buffalo wings were invented in anticipation of our soon-to-be hungry clients (click [here](#) to read our archived story, "The Secret is in the Sauce").
- Hound Dog Radio on WBLK 93.7 FM broadcast blues and soul music, and the powerful 50,000-watt WKBW 1520 AM (known as KB) supplied top-40 music in Buffalo and throughout the Eastern U.S.
- The International Polka Convention was held in Buffalo (August 1965).
- The Rolling Stones, who recently played Buffalo in concert July 11, 2015, had their first number-one U.S. hit as young musicians in 1965: "*I Can't Get No Satisfaction*." In 1965, a ticket to their concert was \$3.50. 2015 concert tickets are \$85 to \$420 (fetching up to four times this price from scalpers). The Stones now range in age from 68 to 74.
- Quarterback Jack Kemp and a dominating defense led the Buffalo Bills to their second consecutive AFL championship. (The team would lose the next year in the AFL championship, forfeiting a chance to play in the first Super Bowl against the Green Bay Packers.)
- Other sports teams continued to be in the fabric of Buffalo: the Buffalo Bisons' Triple-A baseball team played in their 85th year (including eight years in the MLB's National League), and the Buffalo Bisons' AHL team (predecessor to the NHL Buffalo Sabres) played in their 37th year. Today, the Bisons are in their 135th year, and the Sabres are already in their 45th year.

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