

2009: Celebrating 75 Years!

1934-1958 - *The first 25 years*

"I can make a better one than that!"



said a young, confident Donald Brookfield, Sr. in 1933 to his father while accompanying him to a laboratory supply house to look at viscometers for their synthetic resin business venture. And with this unpredictable statement from the recent MIT graduate, our history began.

Don went home and began experimenting with motors and springs in the basement

of his family's home. It wasn't as easy as he thought it would be while at the laboratory supply house with his dad, but Don found the work challenging, he enjoyed it, and he was good at it. Don envisioned a different viscometer than what was conventional at the time and began experimenting with other materials that would ultimately produce his first viscometer. This original, single-speed instrument would later develop into what is now known as "the world standard" in viscosity measurement and control.

Business began slowly, but it built at a steady pace as word of the instrument's quality — and its inventor — began to spread. Don's practice of exchanging older units with new and improved ones at no charge was unheard of, and of course, well received. As Don later said, "This gave us great credibility...or maybe they just thought we were crazy!"

A few years after the business began to pick up, war broke out. Brookfield, like many manufacturers of the time, put their main business on hold in order to contribute to the WWII effort. Although it was necessary to shift the priority from viscometers to war components, Don felt privileged to help out any way he could, and in later years, was very proud of the contribution Brookfield had made.

After the war, Don was able to return full-time to development by improving on the original single-speed design by developing a two-speed model, then a four-speed, and later, an eight-speed. The instrument continued to evolve over the years into the multi-speed electronic drive model that is still in production today.

1959-1983 - *The next 25 years*

Don remained true to his original vision of "the highest quality at the lowest possible price" by developing other significant changes to the instruments themselves and, also, by creatively extending their range and uses. Over the next 25 years Brookfield continued to address issues of temperature control, the ability to measure small sample volumes, and the need to measure very low viscosities by inventing a wide range of accessories to compliment the various model viscometers that had been engineered over the years. Temperature control devices, adapters, mixers, and stands were designed to expand the versatility of Brookfield's original — and newly developed digital — line of viscometers. Brookfield also responded to requests by customers to measure continuously in production by developing a complete range of shear rate defined in-line Process Viscometers.

What was once a small, application-specific instrument company was now becoming a globally-important resource in such industrial areas as asphalt, adhesives, biological fluids, chemicals, drilling fluids, foods, paints, personal care products, polymers, etc. During this period, his son, David, joined the company and helped to develop the companies' product and reputation further. The Brookfield Viscometer began appearing in standards all over the world — and still continues to be a force in most major industrial applications.

1984-2009 - *The past 25 years*

Technology began progressing at an alarming rate, continually knocking on the doors of conventional instrumentation. Brookfield answered each call by producing a wide range of digital and programmable viscometers and rheometers that would operate in stand-alone mode or could be remotely controlled by a PC and software. Greater measurement capabilities would allow customers the ability to perform a variety of testing methods, from simple centipoise readings to high end shear rate/shear stress calculations. To meet the needs of the increasing number of customers using continuous viscosity measurement in the automation of their production control, Brookfield expanded its line of process instruments to include viscosity sensors with no moving parts and no need for field calibration.

Brookfield also branched into new areas by adding our first Texture Analyzer to the product mix. These instruments provided the perfect compliment to our line of R&D and QC testing instrumentation as it imitated many human testing conditions that a traditional viscometer cannot offer.

Don passed away in 2004 but Brookfield Engineering continues to honor his legacy by supplying products of the highest quality and value with the best service...and of course, by always thinking ahead—of advancing the technology, to find ways of making viscosity measurement and control instrumentation even "better."

