

The Final Curtain

George Fox Lang, Associate Editor

This, the 612th issue of *Sound & Vibration*, will be the last. The final curtain is falling on a class act – the finest engineering publication that ever served the full spectrum of dynamic analysis, measurement, education and philosophy is closing.

After 51 years of continuous publication, Jack and Lois are finally closing the doors at *S&V* to enjoy some well-earned vacation/retirement time. All of us who have worked in support of the magazine applaud this decision. It's time for a little rest and relaxation for our hard-working friends.

Of course, knowing “the boss,” relaxation will probably involve some “minor” projects like writing or publishing a book, supervising a church project or doing some major home renovation – old habits die hard! For a guy who stands tall and proud, Jack has spent an awful lot of his life bent over with his nose pressed to the grindstone.

For more than a half-century, *S&V* has performed two important communication tasks. First, it has provided well-written and illustrated technical articles

providing our readers with factually correct, current engineering information; methods and techniques that can be directly employed in the planning and discharge of their work. Secondly, we also have provided a conduit allowing advertisers to make our unique readers aware of the latest and best products available to perform their specialized work. This has been valuable to reader and advertiser alike, and we have made our living by fostering and shepherding both communication paths.

“Why this change?” you ask. “Why can't the magazine just continue under new management?” These are good questions, but they are selfish ones. The simple fact is that publishing a high-quality business-to-business magazine focused on our narrow topic is no longer profitable or even

financially feasible.

The printed magazine business overall is collapsing. Two of the popular hobbyist magazines I subscribed to, *Popular Photography* and *Hemmings Sports & Exotic Cars*, closed their doors this year. People are no longer buying their reading on paper – they're staring at their mobile phones instead.

The circulation of *S&V* has eroded over the years. At one time we enjoyed over 19,000 qualified subscribers; now we have about 4,700. *S&V* is provided free of charge

Since 2011, *Robbe & Berking Classics* has also published a bilingual (German and English) book-like quarterly magazine, *Goose*. “*Goose* tells you stories of life in, on and by the water,” see http://www.classic-yachts.de/goose/index_en.html. Mr. Berking was recently quoted in *Wooden Boat* magazine, “Everything I do is from times far away. You don't need it anymore. You don't need a wooden boat. You don't need a silver spoon. You don't need a magazine printed on paper.” Jack has an alter ego!


It has been a pleasure for me to write

articles and editorials for this journal for more than 40 years. My work with *Sound & Vibration* has always been my “hobby” job, undertaken in parallel with “real” engineering jobs in various industries, including aircraft, automotive and electronic instrumentation.

S&V gave me a chance to develop as a writer and to improve as a photographer. I have enjoyed learning how to edit the work of others and especially in learning how to help new authors develop their writing skills. For me, working for *Sound & Vibration*

has been time well spent and thoroughly enjoyed.

There is something very special, something cleansing and refreshing, about laboring at a place that is run by smart and kind people possessed of real integrity. That's the kind of shop *S&V* has always been and I'm very proud to have been a small part of it.

To the wonderful folks I have shared this work harness with, to the many fine authors who have made *S&V* possible by making their work our content, to all of the advertisers and readers who have supported us through the decades, and to all the kind people who have written or e-mailed me regarding my writings, thank you very much. I will sorely miss all of you. 

The author can be reached at: gflang@verizon.net.



to U.S. readers and for a small postal charge overseas. We survive solely on advertising fees. But, the rate you can charge for advertising is directly proportional to circulation. It has become a desperate monthly effort to gain enough paid advertising to cover the cost of the magazine's production and distribution.

Oliver Berking is the fifth generation Berking to run *Robbe & Berking Silver* of Flensburg, Germany. They are hand-makers of egg cups, cocktail shakers, candelabras and fine table silver. He also runs a younger business, *Robbe & Berking Classics*, which is a boatyard restoring, reproducing and marketing classic wooden sailing yachts designed in the 1920s and '30s (mostly of the 12-meter racing class) and other classic sailing and power vessels.