
THORBURN ASSOCIATES INC.
Acoustic and Technology Consultants
Newsletter

Fall 1993

Welcome to our Fall 1993 edition. Once again thank you for your great response to our summer newsletter. Yes, we are still accepting requests for either of our hour long presentations "Acoustics: What to Look for During a Site Visit" and "Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Video Tele-Conferencing," As always, we hope you find this information useful.

Technical Notes: Hydraulic Pile Drivers Work Out of a Tight Spot, Quietly

Driving piles is typically considered one of the noisiest, most disruptive activities at a construction job site. The increased noise and vibration levels can disrupt ongoing client activity as well as adjacent neighbors. However, new hydraulic pile-driving equipment may change this.

In a recent project to expand the paper making capacity of a Charleston, South Carolina paper plant a new foundation was required. This project became complicated when it was learned that the old, vibration-sensitive paper machine needed to remain in place and in operation for as long as possible before the equipment switch. Also, the initial work had to be completed in a space with only 12 feet of headroom.

Based on these requirements the contractor decided to use steel H-Piles and contacted Ken-Jet Industries Ltd., of Missagua, Ontario, (416) 670-2436. Ken-Jet Industries had just started distributing the Japanese-made Still Worker hydraulic piling machine in North America. The Still Worker uses hydraulics to drive piles with a smooth, fluid motion that minimizes noise and vibration. The unit operates at ground level. It grips a pile and pushes it down about 3 feet then releases. It then slides up 3 feet and grips the pile for another push.

Originally, the contractor for the project figured on driving one and a half 40-foot piles per shift. After practicing with the Still Worker they were able to install 3-4 piles per shift.

Different versions of the Still Worker can be used to install and extract steel H-Piles and sheet piles. The sheet piling equipment can "self travel" across the tops of installed piles.

The noise generated by the Still Worker is 20 decibels quieter than Vibro Hammers (1/4 as loud) and 30 decibels quieter than a Pile Hammer (1/3 as loud). Vibration levels are 30 decibels lower than a Vibro Hammer (1/3 the vibration) and 50 decibels lower than Pile Hammers (1/10 the vibration). This process should be considered for projects in acoustically critical environments.

TA Has New Digs!

As most of you may know from our recent "We Moved" postcards, TA has a new location. We would love to give you a tour of our office and a cup of coffee. If you want to stop by our send us a delivery please use the delivery address below. Since the Postal Carrier comes quite late in the afternoon, please be sure to send all mail to our P.O. Box for morning pick-up. Thanks!

Mail: P.O. Box 20399
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Deliveries: 2867 Grove Way

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Did You Know?

In the late 1980's the MIT commission on Industrial Productivity identified six weaknesses affecting most of the industries in the United States.

The commission spent a year and a half conducting 600 interviews on 3 continents. These interviews were divided into 9 industrial sectors including manufacturing automotives, chemicals, aircraft electronics, machine tools, steel, textiles, semi-conductors and computers, copiers, and education.

One of the major weaknesses found was the neglect of human resources. The United States pioneered mass education but today we rank 15th in high-schools literacy and 18th in numeracy. This is happening at the worst possible time when our work force must be able to read and understand more complex manuals, instructions, and systems.

On-the-Job Training in the United States was also inadequate. The commission found that between \$50 and \$150 billion a year was spent for "On-the-Job Training." At that time IBM alone spent over \$2 billion a year. This money went primarily to teach people the basic functions not taught in high-school. Whatever monies were left over went for specialty field training.

It was found that the United States, in general, believes in specialties and spcialists, whereas other nations and the best companies in the United States believe in training people more broadly.

Who Is That?

We would like a chance to introduce you to the newest member of ours staff, Tera Munro. Tera joined us on a part-time basis in April and has since been promoted to full-time.

Prior to joining TA, Tera worked as the Assistant Project Manager on the renovation of the San Francisco ANA Hotel (previously the Meridian). She also worked at the Ritz as an Assistant Project Engineer during its renovation. Tera assists us in office management and marketing.

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