

ECHOES FROM JUST PASSED ICWSE 2015

The conference which became tradition for the Faculty of Wood Engineering and for its international friends - ICWSE (International Conference of Wood Science and Engineering in the third Millennium) has reached this year its 10th anniversary. The event unfolded under the aegis of four prestigious groups: The International Union of Forest Research Organizations, The Forest Products Society, The Society of Wood Science and Technology and The Romanian Academy of Technical Sciences and of a partner institution, The Faculty of Applied Sciences in Salzburg.

This conference perpetuated a continuity and has been organized every second year due to the generosity and continuous support received from its sponsors, which are multinational companies well-represented in the Romanian wood-processing sector in Romania: Kastamonu, Egger, Holzindustrie Schweighofer, Sortilemn, Vectra International, J.F. Furnir, Kronospan, Losan, Birotic and Pro Ligno foundation.

The beginning of November was gifting the conference days with a pleasant sunny weather and a colorful nature, just the perfect environment for an animated scientific agenda combined with moments of relaxation in open air.

Some of the guests arrived earlier, on Monday 2nd of November, taking advantage of the Erasmus bilateral agreements and enjoying some nice "get together" time while visiting the laboratories of the Faculty of Wood Engineering or when giving interesting presentations about their institutional research and program studies or later in the afternoon, following up the invitation of our colleague Emilia Salca to an Opera recital.

However, the official conference opening day was the 5th of November, when the university Aula hosted the opening ceremony to its 130 participants, from 4 continents and 24 countries: Austria, Bulgaria, Chile, Croatia, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Korea, Nigeria, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, USA and Romania.

The first scientific session of the conference was open by four speeches professionally given by experimented top invited researchers: Dr. Klaus Richter, from Technical University Munchen (Germany), Fellow of the International Academy of Wood Science and Editor-in-chief of two prestigious journals, European Journal of Wood and Wood Products and Wood Science and Technology, Dr. Gervais Sawyer (United Kingdom), editor of the International Wood Products Journal and member of the International Research Group on Wood Protection, Dr. Timothy Young, University of Tennessee (SUA), co-founder of Forest Products Society - Europe, Past President of the Forest Products Society and member of the American Society of Quality and the American Statistical Association and Dr. Marius Cătălin Barbu from Transilvania University (Romania), group leader for IUFRO Division 5 and Forest Products Society - Section Europe.



In the very interesting presentation of Dr. Klaus Richter, the status and trends for future development of wood adhesives were successively and synthetically evidenced. In order to improve the technologies, some emerging challenges especially for the wood adhesion industries were sketched, and current research questions and their relevance for the future advancement were delineated.

Excelently presenting a paper in place of Dr. Irle, Research Director at Ecole Superieure du Bois (France), Dr. Gervais Sawyer challenged the audience with a discussion paper that presented a project about intelligently recycling wood, called CaReWood aiming to develop and assess the viability of a method of reprocessing post-consumer wood that has a minimal impact on the cross-sectional area of the pieces.

Although a simple concept, its implementation was proved be complex and so this paper provided a context and discussion of the factors that can influence putting the CaReWood process into practice.

Dr. Tim Young captured the audience by advancing some algorithms and solutions for data analysis of the production processes in the context of Taguchi Robust Product Design (TRPD), which may lead to

higher product value while lowering costs of manufacturing. Dr. Young showed that by successfully implementing a process metric such as the signal-to-noise ratio in the context of TRPD may greatly reduce the time a company spends on the experience curve and improve competitive advantage.

The last keynote presentation was offered by Dr. Barbu, who made an interesting and exhaustive synthesis regarding the evolution of lightweight wood composites in their wide variety, pointing to a number of benefits that these structures deliver, but also to the challenges incurred.

By following the keynote papers, the other 100 oral presentations, carefully selected by the exigency of 47 referees, were grouped for two days in 10 sections meant to cover a diverse range of subjects of interest for wood domain, such as: wood structure and properties, wood drying and heat treatments, wood-based materials, mechanical wood processing, surface quality and computer-aided engineering, wood preservation, chemical modification, gluing and coating, conservation-restoration of wooden objects, furniture design, wood constructions, renewable energy from wooden biomass and economics in wood industry. A poster session with 9 papers, offering a diverse scientific periplus, was ending the conference works.



The social program complemented the conference works with spots of entertainment and friendly talks for the first evening cocktail at ARO Palace in an ambiance overlooking the city fortress. This was only anticipating an even more entertaining evening for the following day, the banquet, which included a Romanian folk program, followed by music and dance, combined with views of the picturesque landscape of Brasov seen from the heights on the way to Poiana Brasov, our host of the last evening event.

The subscribers to the post-conference excursion were beneficiary of a perfect, sunny autumn day on the 7th of a generous November, slightly chilly, but highly decorated with a large palette of colours and a deep blue sky covering the scenery as soon as we arrived at Bran Castle. After visiting this legendary place and endowed with fresh memories about the myth of Dracula, another point of attraction was an imminent target as the hunger built up in the fresh Transylvanian air: the restaurant of Fundata resort with picturesque views over the montaneous surrounding area. A group picture taken at the end of this periplus is intended to remain a proof for this moment in time for refreshing the memory at times.



Although, the conference became in the meantime history, the echoes as impressions and words of appreciation from its participants have continued to come: "it was the best conference I ever have been to" (Dr. Wimmer Rupert, Austria), "I really enjoyed this year's conference in Brasov. I cannot wait to return!" (Dr. Tim Young, USA), "the conference was very well organised" (Dr. Peter Niemz, Switzerland), "a superb

conference and some excellent papers” (Dr. Pitman, UK); “fantastic conference” (Dr. Dick Sandberg, Sweden), “nice conference and perfect hospitality” (Dr. Peter Rademacher, Czech Republic), “the discussions during sessions and contacts with a multitude of experts were very fruitful” (Dr. Verkasalo, Finland), “hospitality was, as always, outstanding in Brasov” (Dr. Robert Nemeth, Hungary), “excellent conference, everything was so well organised. The friendliness and hospitality of everyone made this a very special conference” (Dr. Brand Wessels, South Africa), “brilliant organisation, I had a great time!” (Dr. Gervais Sawyer, UK), “I have so many great impressions about ICWSE event, people, venues, excursion! I am truly looking forward to coming back to Brasov” (Djordje Popovic, Sweden), “excellent organisation” (Dr. Katia Ruel, France), “the papers, the welcome cocktail, banquet and excursion to Bran castle were simply wonderful and memorable” (Dr. Abel Olorunnisola, Nigeria), “perfect organisation and great conference....it would be a pity if I would not have come” (Dr. Marko Petric, Slovenia), “very nice and useful conference” (Dr. Vjekoslav Zivkovic, Croatia), “everything was wonderful” (Dr. Mehmet Akyildiz, Turkey), “perfect organisation, famous banquet and excursion. It was the cherry on the cake!” (Dr. Ljubomir Javorek, Slovakia).

Like the sound of a concert, the conference ended its works, but has left the echoes as welcoming notes in anticipation for the next ICWSE event in 2017.



A report of,
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