History Of Batterie Essay, Research Paper

Brief History of Batteries

Batteries are one of the most important objects in our everyday lives. Clocks have them (better than a

sundial!), smoke detectors have them (but some people don’t know that the battery needs to be replaced,

so check your detector’s battery before you go to another page!), your remote control for your T.V.

has one (beats walking to the T.V.!), even your computer has one (of you didn’t know that already!). In

short, batteries make life so much easier. Take, for example, your car. Most people don’t even think twice

about starting their car, unless it doesn’t start, they just turn the key, and away the car goes. Now just think

about this… how easy it to turn a key? Not too bad. Now try doing the work that your car battery does,

crank the engine yourself! “Yuk!” I can hear people saying, “wouldn’t that mean that I have to stand outside

in the pouring rain after going shopping all day at the mall?” So there you have it.

The first evidence of batteries comes from archaelogical digs in Baghdad, Iraq. This first “battery” was

dated to around 250 B.C. and was used in simple operations to electroplate objects with a thin layer of

metal, much like the process used now to plate inexpensive gold and silver jewlery. One of the first uses

for batteries. Batteries were re-discovered much later by a man named Alessandro Volta after which the

unit of electical potential was named, the volt.

Alessandro Volta was born in 1745 and died in

1827, but not before developing what would

come to be the most important part of life as we

know it. He developed a device made of

alternated pieces of electrolyte (sodium chloride,

a.k.a. table salt) soaked discs, zinc and copper

discs stacked in a column with a wire connected to a copper plate on the top and a

wire connected to a zinc plate on the bottom, left. Volta demonstrated his new

re-discovery, the Voltaic Cell to Napoleon Bonaparte in 1801, right. (Volta is

standing in the centre of the picture, Napoleon is sitting to the picture’s left.)

Since 1801 many aspects of batteries have changed. Their shapes have gone

through a few changes, there are now many different types of materials used to

construct batteries, all resulting in differently performing batteries for many different

applications. As you, the reader, delve through my project, I will attempt to display

and explain some of the more popular and effective technologies developed over

the last 20 years with Nickel-based cells, Lithium-based cells, along with a few less known

fast-developing battery technologies. Enjoy!

Head back to the Table of Contents or go to the next page, the Basic Concepts of the Operation of

Batteries, to continue your journey!