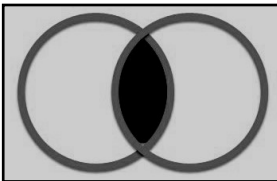


NewsLetter



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Polaroid Retirees Association

October - December
2020

THIS PUBLICATION IS SOLELY FOR THE USE OF THE PRA MEMBERSHIP
POLAROID RETIREES ASSOCIATION, INC. P.O. BOX 541395, WALTHAM, MA 02454-1395
WEB SITE ADDRESS WWW.POLAROIDRETIRES.ORG

Letter from the President

Dear PRA members and alumnae of the finest corporation one could ask to be employed by, We were led by a genius with vision, entrepreneurial excellence and a unique concern that all the employees of the corporation be afforded the opportunity to grow in depth and broadness of knowledge. He was special and the company reflected this uniqueness in an extraordinary way. Which one of us was not better off leaving Polaroid than when we joined the company? My name is Ed Wade and I am the new president of the PRA, Polaroid Retirees Association, replacing Elizabeth Foote who for past year led the Board of Directors of the PRA. Elizabeth led us in a manner where all issues and concerns were addressed and resolved while maintaining the pleasant atmosphere of care and concern, sustaining the Polaroid culture.

I spent 31 years at Polaroid, mainly involved with Film Manufacturing and Industrial Products, often travelling to Scotland, Holland and Mexico, an extraordinary experience working with and meeting many members that I now consider friends and associates. The PRA is a venue that enables us to sustain these relationships through our business and luncheon meetings held twice annually. Unfortunately, the coronavirus has interrupted most of our lives including the board's having to cancel both the May and October 2020 luncheon gatherings. We are hoping this will end soon so we may resume these valuable get-togethers.

With this *Newsletter* you will read of some of the activities we're considering and we welcome your feedback on these and any concerns you may have. Please be open with your recommendations and comments.

See page 11 for information about the board's decision to suspend the PRA's 2021 dues.

My mission for the next year is to increase the active membership of the PRA and have new members attend the business meetings, possibly sharing some of their Polaroid and post-Polaroid experiences. We're always interested in these and welcome your contributions.

We are facing a challenging future with the (hopefully) successful end of the pandemic and, a challenging election which could change the nation. Stay well and look forward with us for a resumption of our get-togethers.

Stay well and optimistic,
Ed Wade, *Polaroid Retirees Association President*

Dear PRA Members,

Many thanks to the Board of Directors for their support during my 14-month tenure as president. As I leave the role to focus on our PRA *Newsletter*, I send a special thanks to you for hanging in with a 35-year-old association of loyal, caring and committed former employees who continue to share our amazing Polaroid Experience.

My best wishes and support go to Ed Wade as he begins his presidency.

Hope to see you in May 2021,
Elizabeth Foote, *PRA Past President*

Board of Directors & Officers

President
Ed Wade

1st Vice President
John Flynn

2nd Vice President
Arthur Aznavorian

Treasurer
Nino Dilanni

Secretary
Mary McCann

Directors

Dave Bayer
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William Rosen
Bob Ruckstuhl
Eric Thorgerson

The Business of the PRA

The PRA's annual May gathering includes a short but important business meeting so that Members learn the financial and record-keeping status of the organization. Those attending also elect nominated directors to the board. Due to risks of the COVID-19 pandemic, we were unable to hold the event in 2020.

In lieu of the meeting, the Board of Directors, holding monthly sessions via Skype, voted to make a one-time change to our Operating Procedures to accommodate the need to move forward with our work. We began by unanimously electing incumbent board members David Bayer, Eva Karger, John Flynn, Erika Kliem and Maryann Hall.

We then elected Board Officers as follows: President, Ed Wade; 1st Vice President, John Flynn; 2nd Vice President, Arthur Aznavorian; Membership Chair, Bob Ruckstuhl; Finance Chair, David Bayer. Mary McCann will remain Secretary, and Nino DiIanni will remain Treasurer.

Consistent with our annual reporting to the Membership in May, we offer our **2019** report here. If you have comments please send them to Newsletterpra@gmail.com. The board will discuss your remarks at our December meeting.

In addition to the Board business as reported below, the PRA was active in several important projects. They include a Polaroid installation for the former Waltham Main Street site, involvement in the Charles River Museum of Industry and Innovation plans for a new and expanded Polaroid display and participation in the MIT Museum's Polaroid exhibit.

Print copies of the *Newsletter* were sent to over 1000 Members each quarter. The website, polaroidretirees.org, was maintained and visited often.

Reports below are respectfully submitted by Committee Chairs and Officers.

The Secretary's Report: Mary McCann, Secretary

In June of 2019, incumbent board members George Murray and Elizabeth Foote were elected to their 3rd terms, Arthur Aznavorian and Mary McCann to their 2nd, and Jim Mitcheson to his first. Also in June, George Murray completed the maximum three one-year terms as President of the PRA and Elizabeth Foote was elected President.

The PRA held two Members' Luncheons in 2019 at the Lantana in Randolph. The May Luncheon and Annual Meeting was graciously underwritten by the Direct Federal Credit Union for the third year in a row.

The speaker at the May Luncheon was Dr. Elizabeth Collins, Director of Palliative Care at Lahey Health and Medical Center, discussing end-of-life decisions. The speaker at the October meeting was Monte Reel, author of the book, *A Brotherhood of Spies*, a gripping description of Dr. Land's involvement in revolutionizing government intelligence-gathering capabilities and keeping the Cold War from escalating.

Membership Committee: Robert W. Ruckstuhl, Membership Chair

The PRA membership continued its 9-year decline in 2019. We lost a net of 96 members* bringing our year-end membership to 1091 members of which 822 are annual dues paying members, 202 are lifetime members, and 67 are spousal survivors of previous members and pay no dues. On a brighter note, our year-end number of 1091 members was helped by the addition of 15 new members during the year. With the long-term decline in membership staring us in the face we are actively looking for ways to add new members as well as understanding and reducing the loss of members due to their failure to keep their dues current.

*Of these 96 members approximately 25% were due to death while the remaining 75% were due to either resignations of widowed spouses or a member's failure to keep his/her dues current.

Audit Committee: David Bayer, Audit Committee Chair

In April, 2019, the PRA Audit Committee reviewed the Association's books for the period ended December 31, 2018. The Committee selected 6 of the largest income and disbursement transactions to verify that proper documentation and recording were present. Since no discrepancies were found, the Committee agreed that the audit results were in compliance with the Association's policies.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the Committee was not able to meet in person to perform an audit for the period ended December 31, 2019. When circumstances allow, the audit will be performed and its findings reported.

The Treasurer's Report: Nino DiIanni, Treasurer

The PRA financial results for 2019 were as follows:

Total Income \$16,604 (\$11,924 dues & interest, and October luncheon \$4,680)

Total Expenses \$17,052 (*Newsletter* \$6,930, October luncheon \$5,960, other expenses \$4,162)

Net Loss (\$448). The October luncheon subsidy was \$1,280.

The cash on hand at the end of 2019 was \$29,018.

The May luncheon was sponsored by the Direct Federal Credit Union for \$10,731. The Board expresses thanks to the DFCU for their continued support.

The Polaroid Project:

AT THE INTERSECTION
OF ART & TECHNOLOGY



Many of you visited the MIT Museum's "The Polaroid Project, Part I" exhibit during the fall and winter.

Because the pandemic caused Part II to close early, many of us missed out.

Now we can see it!

MIT Communications Officer Martha Davis tells us how.

In the spirit of innovation and ingenuity so central to Polaroid, The MIT Museum is pleased to present *The Polaroid Project, Part II* online.

"As we heard from many of you, we were also saddened when the second installation of our popular exhibition, freshly hung with new artwork, closed after just seven days due to COVID-19," shared Deborah Douglas, Director of Collections & Curator, Science & Technology at the museum, and co-curator of the exhibition. "We were determined to somehow make it accessible."

This 3-D interactive "tour" with commentary by curators Douglas and Barbara Hitchcock, Polaroid's former Director of Cultural Affairs (and PRA member!), allows you to explore the gallery at your own pace, stopping to take a closer look when you want.

In its heyday, Polaroid and its products were loved by millions of amateurs and embraced by countless professionals. *The Polaroid Project* tells the fascinating and instructive story of the Polaroid Corporation, and presents various dimensions of the art-technology



Michael Cardinali, photographer. Courtesy MIT Museum, Cambridge, MA

The fixed focus of the Polaroid Big Shot camera required the photographer to move back and forth until the subject came into focus. In the 1970s, artist Andy Warhol popularized this inexpensive camera, taking dozens of images in preparation for his painted portraits.

relationship through original works of art and artifacts—including cameras, prototypes, experimental films and other technical materials—largely from the MIT Museum's own historic Polaroid collection.

After traveling around the world, this critically acclaimed exhibition stopped at the MIT Museum in October 2019, approximately a block from where instant film was first invented.

We were delighted to welcome so many members of the Polaroid Retirees Association during our Polaroid Day event in November and again for other events in the first three months during Part I of the exhibition. The museum is planning an upcoming program with the curators on October 29 and invites you to join us for what expect will be another lively discussion inspired by the Polaroid legacy. More information will be posted on our website.

For more information and to view the exhibition, please visit the museum's website, mitmuseum.org. We hope you enjoy the experience and come back again and again.

Martha Davis



"Where are all the Polaroid Retirees?"

Barbara Hitchcock makes a special visit to see Part II of the Polaroid show before deinstallation.

Singapore Series Features Polavision

Recently Sorahouse Executive Producer Kelly Lin contacted the PRA with questions about Polavision. The documentary production company based in Singapore makes films for international broadcast channels like the Discovery Channel and the History Channel. Kelly is currently working on a business documentary series for a regional news network which broadcasts across Asia Pacific and in 29 territories and has a global reach through its online platform www.channelnewsasia.com.

Kelly wrote:

“The series profiles companies and their products/services that have revolutionised the way we live, eat, connect. The stories are about the companies of the past and present day who have been gamechangers and innovators of their time, shaping our consumer behaviour and lifestyle, and making a huge impact on their industries.

“One of the companies we’re looking at is Polaroid, focusing especially on the product Polavision. Our documentary looks at the story of founder Dr. Land, how revolutionary his idea behind the Polavision was for its time. This was a time even before camcorders, when the idea of showing a video almost instantly after it was taken was the stuff of science fiction. We’d like to look at the development of the Polavision, and ultimately the factors that influenced its creation, as well as its release which unfortunately did not become a success as hoped.

“I’m reaching out to the PRA group to find out if there might be any former employees from Polaroid who worked on the Polavision (whether it be on the product itself or marketing team, or anything related) and whether they’d be willing to speak to me on the phone to share their anecdotes, and at a later stage, to possibly be interviewed and filmed for the documentary.”

We asked PRA members Ken McCarthy and Ed Byrnes to speak with Kelly about their memories of the product, and Mary McCann sent background information about the film development.

Ken started at Polaroid in N2 in 1971, and spent the first 20 years of his career working on Polavision film development and production. He was put in touch with Kelly and the two have been speaking about the product’s early days.

Ken tells us, “We spent some time talking about how necessary it was to maintain secrecy about our work and the developments that were accomplished. Then I talked about how shocking it was to have Dr. Land spell out the whole process in the *Photographic Science and Engineering Journal* article for the Society of Photographic Scientists and Engineers!

“Kelly asked about some of the interesting technical challenges that we faced, so I started talking about learning about additive color systems and how they work. Kelly seemed quite interested, so I explained how you can make just about any color by using three projectors, one each of red, green, and blue.

“I told Kelly that we were about to go to market with Polavision in the mid-70s, but our hardware supplier backed out about 6 months before our scheduled launch. That caused about a three-year delay which was very costly, as video systems were just coming to the market by then. We spoke, too, of some interesting technical challenges. Many thanks to Mary McCann for some wonderful background materials.”

Ed spoke with Kelly about the marketing and sales experience with Polavision:

“Polavision’s 3-minute 8mm film run was considered by many to be a major limitation but in reality, it was not. Why? Most people favor quick, rapid response which Polavision provided. It was similar to contemporary systems such as TikTok, Snapchat, Instagram, etc., which provide data at 20 to 30 second cycles.

“Polaroid set up a special Polavision sales/marketing team to handle any and all potential sales. Initially, there were minor conflicts between Polaroid’s conventional technical sales/marketing staff with the new Polavision sales organization. In time things worked out, particularly when Polavision sales realized their best opportunity was the consumer market and time was running out....video was coming on strong.

“Time was against them so the urgency was to hit any and all markets that supported cine films. A simple example: One clever lad convinced a popular cruise line to set up a Polavision kiosk aboard one of their ships. In the 7-10 day cruise, a substantial number of units were sold.

“Time was not favorable to Polavision for, within a few years, video technology became the standard and replaced both Polavision and conventional photographic cine film. I and many others believe if Polavision had been introduced some 8-10 years prior to video, it would have been a magical success.”

Kelly tells us the schedule for finishing the series is February 2021, and it then will be available for online streaming. She will notify us and we will notify you.

Receiving Kelly’s request reminds Ken, Ed, Mary and all of us of Polaroid’s extraordinary products. The ability of Land and many employees to imagine the future and then design to meet it was indeed “magical.”

Demonstrating Polavision at the SPSE



Dr. Land introduces Polavision

The SPSE, the Society of Photographic Scientists and Engineers, invited Dr. Land to be their Keynote Speaker at their Annual Meeting at a hotel in Los Angeles in May of 1977. Polaroid had just introduced Polavision, and this was the first opportunity to unveil the technical details of the Polavision system to the photographic community.

In writing the talk and preparing the slides (this was before PowerPoint or Keynote were introduced), Vivian Walworth worked closely with Dr. Land. They had nearly one hundred slides, the maximum that a carousel slide carrier would hold.

They conversed and experimented over the order of the slides to determine the most logical presentation of information - so much so, that each slide was known by its title to Dr. Land, to Vivian and to her helpers who prepared the slides. Vivian was meticulous about making a slide list, using the familiar titles.

Dr. Land and Vivian worked on the order of the presentation until about 30 minutes before the presentation was to begin. While Dr. Land went off to freshen up for his talk, Vivian made sure that a complete slide list was in place and the carousel was mounted on the projector.

The session was very well attended; Land was introduced and began his talk. After just two or three slides, the projector jammed. Now, the perennial audio-visual chair at the SPSE meetings was a rather officious individual who immediately rushed to the projector, saying "I know how to fix that." He lifted the carousel off the projector and turned it over - and the 100 slides came tumbling out.

Vivian and her helper (who may have been responsible for leaving the slide retaining ring untightened), armed with flashlights, dropped to the floor to retrieve, identify and reload the slides in proper order while Land launched into the background of color photography. What followed was a wonderful extemporaneous narrative from Dr. Land



Land Demonstrates Polavision at the Annual Meeting 1977

leading the audience through a detailed history of color vision and additive color photography.

When the slides were reassembled and the projector turned on, Land received an impromptu round of applause from the audience. He then continued with his exposition of Polavision.

The Second Half

Dr. Land wanted the audience to have the whole Polavision experience. Two stage sets similar to those used at the April Shareholders Meeting had been shipped by truck to Los Angeles, and some performers like the group at Shareholders were there to provide some action for filming. The sets were erected in the ballroom where Land's talk took place, and the audience had a chance after the talk to see instant movies made and displayed.

Sometime during the evening, the audio-visual chair (the same one) informed John McCann that the room would have to be cleared after the demonstration because the Director of Research at Eastman Kodak would be giving the first address of the next morning - in the same room.

The truck drivers were alerted, and the van that transported the sets was summoned from some twenty miles away. Since the talk had been late in starting, the demonstrations continued late into the night. It was near midnight when the trucks arrived and sets could be broken down and after two in the morning when they finished packing.

The next morning, we followed the crowd to the meeting room for Dr. Hansen's talk.

It was just a few minutes into the talk when we realized we were in a different room!

Reported by Mary McCann



Vivian Walworth

In Memoriam

Find more complete obituaries at www.polaroidretirees.org

Basile, Anthony S. "Tony", 89 of Hampton, NH, 8/2/20 was the husband of Hildy and Judy, father of Patricia, Paula, Priscilla and Stephanie, grandfather of eight, and great grandfather of two. He served in the U.S. Army. He worked for sometime in Milngavie, Scotland. Tony was a Manager.



Blake, Jr., John J. "Jack", 89, Lynn, 6/14/20 was the husband of Majorie, father of Paula, Joanne, Maryann and Jacqueline, grandfather of four, and great-grandfather of five. He served in the U.S. Army (Korean Conflict). He worked in Human Resources. Jack was an avid Candlepin Bowler.



Byron, George K. 85, Concord, 9/4/20 was the father of Paula, Pamela and Jeffrey, grandfather of six, and great-grandfather of two. He served in the U.S. Army (Korean War).



An outdoors enthusiast, George enjoyed biking, hiking, and kayaking.

Chiuve, Alfred, 91, Stoneham, 8/22/20 was the husband of the late Rosemarie, father of Donald, Frederick and the late Julianne, and grandfather of four. Fred loved bowling, playing cards, taking daily walks, golfing, baking and cooking for his children. He served in the U.S. Navy (Korean War) and was an avid Boston sports fan.



Corcoran, Gerald, 76, Falmouth, formerly of Waltham, 6/24/20 was the brother of Henry, Marilyn, William, Vincent and Susan and uncle of many. He was a Technician in Waltham.

Fortner, Jr., Howard W., 86, Tarpon Springs, FL, 7/3/20 was the husband of Edna, father of Elinor and brother of Albert. He was the Plant Manager in Camera Division (Norwood) for the start-up of SX-70 cameras and all the cameras

which followed. He was a member of the PRA.

Freund, Larry, 84, Springfield, 7/26/20 was the husband of Eleanor, father of Christopher and Joseph, and grandfather of five. People who spent time with him were able to share his sense of humor and passion for life. He was known for his generosity and love for helping others.

Gold, Naomi-Ann "Nicki", 88, Los Angeles, 8/26/20 was the wife of Dr. Jack, mother of Joanne, Ruth, David, Alison, Stephanie and Jennifer, and grandmother of eight. She was a Mathematician. She wore many hats: carpooler, Girl Scout leader, PTA fundraiser, Math tutor, bookkeeper, party planner and more.



Griffin, Jr., Roy A., 87, Billerica, 8/12/20 was the husband of Mary, father of John, Maureen, Patricia, Michael and Brian, and grandfather of eight. He served in the U.S. Navy (Korean War). Roy was a Draftsman and a former member of the Irish American Club in Billerica.

Harrigan, Teresa L., 89, Somerville, 7/28/20 was the wife of the late John, mother of Linda, and grandmother of Darius. She was an indefatigable optimist who loved people and always enjoyed the journey, making a difference to others along the way.



Kiely, Thomas J., 95, Dedham, 8/12/20 was the husband of the late Marilyn, father of Kimberly, Christopher and Jay, and grandfather of three. Tom served in the U.S. Army (World War II), including nine months of combat in the Battle of the Bulge and the liberation of the Gusen concentration camp. He worked closely with Dr. Edwin Land.



LaGreca, Sr., Alfred J., 88, E. Sandwich, 5/15/20 was the husband of Marie, father of Fred and John, and grandfather of three. He worked in Human Resources (Waltham and Cam-

bridge). Al was a Service-Connected Disabled Veteran and an advocate for the homeless and veterans. He loved sports.



Lytle, Jr., William O. 83, Hingham, 8/18/20 was the brother to his late twin sisters Charlotte and Ann, friend to Nancy and family to Jack and Marcia. He served in the U.S. Navy. As an Independent Management Consultant he authored several books. Bill traveled to various countries and continued his lifelong love of photography, taking photos to document his experiences.



Malatesta, William J., 92, Newburyport, 6/24/20 was the husband of Joan and the late Anna, and father of Elaine, Billy, Maria, Patricia and Steven. He served in the U.S. Navy. He was a Facilities Manager who led a Design Team and worked on many buildings and laboratories.

McLaughlin, Joseph J., Nantucket, 8/16/20 was the husband of Rhoda, father of Ceci, Maura and Angela, and grandfather of three. He served in the U.S. Army. Joseph was Group Vice President of Worldwide Marketing. He took great pride in helping and mentoring young people by assisting them to formulate their plans and goals for their future careers. He was a member of the PRA.



Melendy, Donald A., 83, Billerica, 6/10/20 was the husband of the late Marie, father of Diane, Tom, and Mike, and grandfather of five. He was a Carpenter and a member of the Billerica Lions Club.

Moreschi, Anthony T., 75, North Andover, 8/25/20 was the husband of Susan, father of Jeanne and Anthony, and grandfather of two. Tony was Plant Manager of the R2 film plant in Waltham and later Director of Purchasing. He was a member of the PRA.

In Memoriam



Muren, Albert C. "Al", 86, Marion, 8/18/20 was the husband of Frances and the late Irene, father of Andrea, Clifford, and Gail, and grandfather of three. He was a Principal

Engineer developing color-processing chemicals for instant cameras (New Bedford). He enjoyed crossword puzzles, reading, business news, sports, dining and ballroom dancing. He was a member of the PRA.



Muzzioli, Barbara M. 71, Billerica, 8/27/20 was the wife of the late Paul, mother of Michelle, Joe, stepsons Keith and Robert and grandmother of 4.

She worked as a Financial Accountant. She loved spending time in her garden and her yard was a neighborhood oasis filled with so many varieties of flowers. She also enjoyed her koi pond and a gazebo she built and enjoyed with Paul.



Pinede, Marie G., 77, Randolph, 7/17/20 was the wife of the late Jacques, mother of Marie and Steven, and grandmother of Dominic and Christophe. She worked

in Norwood, third shift. Marie was deeply imbedded in prayer and reflection, in her family, in writing, in art and in her favorite hymns.



Popielski, Jr., Alexander J. "Sonny", 79, Middleton, 6/7/20 was the husband of Beverly, father of Kenneth, Lisa, Mark and David, and grandfather of eight. Spending time with

his family, caring for his grandchildren, and traveling brought him many years of great joy.

Reid, Daniel B., 72, Litchfield, NH, 8/11/20 was the husband of Arlene. He worked in Waltham. In remembrance of Daniel, "take time to be kind to others."



Reimann Jr., George P., 84, Hopkinton, 8/22/20 was the husband of Nancy, father of Deborah, Paul, Susan, Amy and Robert, grandfather of 14, and great-grandfather of

ten. He was a Mechanical Engineer in E.F.E.D. He was an avid camper, a fisherman and enjoyed playing cribbage. He was a member of the PRA.

Roby, Mary, 84, Fram-

ingham, 7/27/20 was the wife of the late Roger and Charles, mother of the late Roger, Samuel and Carmen, and mother of John, Fred, Michael and Nancy and grandmother and great-grandmother of many. She was an Engineer and a Purchasing Agent. She loved music and singing, and was a member of the band "The Decision". She was a member of the PRA.



Sisk, Marie, 89, Hanover, 8/20/20 was the wife of the late John, mother of Donna, mother-in-law of Wayne, and grandmother of two. She was a Research Scientist in Cambridge on the groundbreaking SX70 camera. She loved traveling, crossword puzzles and summers in Falmouth.

Smith, Jr., Edward J., 80, Raynham, 6/24/20 was the husband of Helen, and father of Kevin. He worked in Cambridge and New Bedford. He received special recognition from the employees at the New Bedford Plant for his role as morale booster. He served in the National Guard. He enjoyed all sports and walking the lake with his precious black lab Cody.

Socha, Michael J., 59, Plymouth, 7/25/20 was the husband of Karen, father of Jeannean, stepfather of Nicole and Nick, and grandfather of six. He

served in the U.S. Air Force. Michael worked in Film Production (New Bedford). He enjoyed riding his 2000 Kawasaki motorcycle, cooking, gardening, woodworking and working out. Michael was an avid football fan and especially enjoyed the New England Patriots.



Strachan, Ruth, 86, Ipswich, 7/27/20 was the wife of late Kenneth, mother of Andrew and Elizabeth and grandmother of two. She was a Photographer. She enjoyed crewing sailboats in the summers and skiing with friends in Jackson, NH, in the winter.



Valente, Salvatore C. "Sam", 84, Woburn, 5/27/20 was the husband of the late Rosemarie, father of Cindy, Patti, Rosemarie and Joanne, grandfather of seven, and great-grandfather of eight. He served in the U.S. Army National Guard. He was a member of the PRA.



Vink, Cornelius, "Connie", Snohomish, WA, 7/31/20 was the husband of Tina. Cornelius was a Design Engineer, Department 756, 103 Fourth Ave in Wal-

tham. Cornelius, at age 11, witnessed the death of his Mother in Holland during the Second World War when Nazi's opened fire on citizens walking too slowly in queue. He was a member of the PRA.



Warner, Dennis B., 76, Jamestown, NY, 5/14/17 was the husband of Sue, father of Scott and Lisa, and grandfather of nine. He worked in Atlanta.

Obituaries compiled by Maryann Hall

Assignment: Ireland by Larry Kivimaki

*In the late 1970s Polaroid needed room to manufacture the popular new SX-70 cameras and film. During that [1977-1980] time frame, the plant in Newbridge, County Kildare, Ireland was constructed. Along with several R2 employees Technical Manager **Larry Kivimaki** was assigned to support the startup of the plant. Here Larry shares some of his memories. Thank you, Larry!*

Phil Scaringella was the Polaroid Facilities Project Manager assigned to the project. As Phil relates, there were 5 buildings built on the site including the utility plant. While the camera building was a shell and never outfitted, the film building was laid out for 12 film machines but only 2 were installed. The entire complex (camera, film, administration, warehousing and utility buildings) was approximately 300,000 sq. ft. with a project cost of approximately \$20 million.

Joe Oldfield, another former P60 leader, was assigned as Plant Manager to oversee the entire operation. During the next few years, many Managers and Polaroid Mechanics, Electricians, and Operators were assigned to help install and operate the assembly machines, training their Irish counterparts. Recall at this time, manufacturing in Ireland was rather primitive; available workers were local farmers. This was to change dramatically over the next two decades with many US companies setting up facilities in Ireland similar to the Polaroid operation in Newbridge.

Tim Dwyer, Tom Hutchinson, Mike Polito, Art Jordan, Vern Addie, Bob Cunningham, Tom Lynch and others were assigned there for 2 years each with their families. My visit in 1981 was to monitor the folks - Mechanics - who were sent by my department for a rotational 3-month assignment without families, and to help with training needs and setting up the technical infrastructure such as spare parts. The expatriates were funded to either send for their wives or significant others at the 6 week point for a visit, or they got the option to fly home for leave. Then it was back to work again. My remembrances were of more than one Mechanic - many actually - who lived on the edge, especially those who were on the B shift (3-11PM). They got off at 11 PM in the rain, tired, in the dark, driving on the "wrong" side of the road in a rental car with the wheel on the right - and went straight to the pub. Nothing good ever came of this scenario. The trip home from the pub often led to unpleasant incidents. One I recall was a near head-on collision of our mechanic with a very high-ranking Irish Army officer. We managed to ship him home quickly, ahead of his normal tour of duty, and thankfully nobody got killed.

All in all, the support from the U.S. and the shorter visits of technical people from Enschede were exemplary. Tim and Tom and their families embraced the culture. A few guys got in large with the horses that ran in the Irish Sweepstakes nearby. We heard about some money they

made but never heard much of what they lost. A few invested in the ponies themselves. **Frans Kiens**, the Enschede Technical Manager, traveled weeks at a time from the Enschede film plant. **Gerard Kienhuis**, one of his resident Electrical Engineers, kept all of us in stitches telling the hilarious and crazy stories about his family's trials and tribulations with the Irish plumbers, appliance people, and landlord regarding his bizarre washing machine. In that regard Tim also recalls the appliance culture shock of the Americans. The washer/dryer was a single machine operating - very slowly - to process each small load and it took some time to learn about these tiny creatures. Moreover, the Americans were determined to solve their food buying experience by buying meat for the whole week and eliminating all those unnecessary trips to the butcher. Ignoring the puzzled looks from the Irish, the next problem that reared its head was discovered on arriving back home. The refrigerator was much too small to store all that meat, never mind the other food! And the Irish didn't need their beer at home to be kept cold either - warm was fine and most of the drinking was down at the pub anyhow. But the Americans had to deal with the dual problems of refrigerator space for cold beer and meat storage. Both of these problems were eventually solved by buying a second refrigerator!

When I arrived for a week in Newbridge in 1981, Joe Oldfield (who was Plant Manager, Site Manager and Country Manager) and I talked about his job setting up the entire operation with the IDA (the Irish Development Authority). There had been intense and important negotiations between Polaroid and the IDA to establish financial incentives and the labor and workplace rules to satisfy both parties. Tax breaks for this Polaroid operation were lucrative. I spent my time during the visit helping him set up the maintenance and spare parts system and the Mechanic training program ahead of production operations. Companies like Digital Equipment had preceded us to the land of tax-break heaven and by 1980 there were local people with knowledge of computers and electrical controls, but we had the darndest time finding qualified mechanical people. In that part of Ireland the closest skill set came from the lads who fixed farm equipment. The IDA economic incentive program was too far ahead of the talent level and we had to search hard for the right people. I remember hiring - eventually - the future Engineering/Maintenance Manager and heard about his subsequent firing less than 6 months later.

Joe also told me about his problems of keeping the grass mowed. The lush green carpet kept growing from all the rain, and every day about 4 o'clock the local lads would show up with a mower or two stuffed in their car's bonnet, but before they got too far in their mowing the rains came, so they quit and came back the next afternoon. Often the same thing happened again with the grass grow-

ing faster than their ability to cut it. Eventually Joe fired the mowers and got sheep, and that did the trick.

The subsidies for the workers were attractive. The noon cafeteria meal became their main meal because of the low cost. I remember going in there each day for lunch and the lunch ladies insisted on loading up my plate with pork chops, veggies, three kinds of potatoes...and more. Refusal was not allowed! Bob Cunningham among others also made the inexpensive and prolific cafeteria meal his main one, pocketing much of the per diem 20£ he was allocated – to be used for other things! The workers arrived every day wearing the same clothes as the day before, just more or less - another shirt layered on or peeled off vs. the day before depending on the weather. Many worked for 6 months or so and then abruptly quit. They had earned enough, or more than they ever had at any other job, so they just stopped showing up and chose to spend it down until they needed to work again. We had to educate a lot of people about work habits; some of it sunk in but for others it never did.

Worldwide sales of SX-70 film leveled off in 1980 and Polaroid now had excess assembly capacity. Construction of a plant in Andover was terminated and the stage was set to wind down the Irish operation. The Irish plant produced

saleable film during the last half of 1981 on two machines running well with excellent quality and for less cost than other sites. Three shifts ran for about six months starting in July, but ceased operations by Christmas 1981 with the US expatriates getting notice on Thanksgiving to prepare to return home. The plant was sold a short time later to a meat packing firm. Presently the site is occupied by the pharmaceutical company Pfizer.

While the total experience was costly to Polaroid, the Polaroid employees who assisted the opening of the Newbridge plant had a wonderful cultural experience. Tim Dwyer reported that on December 21st, as he and his family were packing to leave in two days, an unusual cold snap with snow hit that part of Ireland, freezing the pipes and cutting off the heat. Those two days for his family were the most miserable of the two-year period. After weathering the ordeal and arriving in the U.S. on the 23rd, Tim's wife turned to him and asked when they could go back again!

The early 1980s in Ireland were the beginning of one the greatest industrial western renaissances of the late 20th century and made Ireland the envy of much of Europe. Polaroid, with its early foray at Newbridge, played a small part in establishing a manufacturing base in Ireland.

Ted Theodores remembers...

On June 12, 1987, President Ronald Reagan, standing on the west side of Berlin's Brandenburg Gate, gave a speech that many believe signaled the beginning of the end of the Cold War.

In this extraordinary moment in history, President Reagan openly and boldly challenged Mikhail Gorbachev, then General Secretary of the Communist Party, and President of the Soviet Union:

“General Secretary Gorbachev, if you seek peace, if you seek prosperity for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, if you seek liberalization: Come here to this gate!
Mr. Gorbachev, open this gate! Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!”

This memorable event occurred after several years of persistent effort and legislation initiated by President Reagan to reduce or eliminate the fear of world-wide nuclear weaponry.

President Reagan's initiatives began immediately after his 1st term election in 1980, when he addressed his White House transition team with the statement; “I want to be able to walk into a White House room and see on a screen, everything that is happening anywhere in the world.”

His transition team immediately began to arrange a facility and assemble a technology team that would have the capability of meeting President Reagan's mandate.

At that time, my role at Polaroid as Director of Technical Products Development, resulted in my being invited to participate in meeting the President's mandate to his transition team. Polaroid and Dr. Edwin Land were involved in designing and developing the optical systems that were being used in the SR-71 high-altitude reconnaissance aircraft, for imaging the earth's surface.

We also had the capability of creating instant 20x24 inch color photographs, from transparencies. A well-established California photo-optical company, EG&G Reticon, Inc. had been engaged to develop and manufacture the cameras for the high-altitude reconnaissance aircraft with the designs provided by Polaroid's Chairman, Dr. Land.

These aircraft, based at a secure Nevada government facility were capable of long-distance flights at high altitude, and would make regular flights for the purpose of filming strategic sites and activities around the world. The films would be flown to Washington daily for processing and use in President Reagan's briefing room.

My specific role was to transport and set-up a Polaroid 20x24 instant photo camera, with an optical system capable of enlarging the high-altitude films for display to President Reagan and his invited participants.

Sailing Life for George Ward



Track of Mayflower II Sailing Off
the Port of New London

“We spent almost two weeks sailing out of the port of New London doing sail training and Coast Guard inspections with a crew of 27,” George said.

“Lots of sailing! Our stop at Newport was cancelled due to the crew being too many for the RI governor’s new gathering group rule. The sail to Plymouth was great and though the crowds were a bit much for COVID, we were isolated pretty



Mayflower II Arriving at Plimoth Plantation

Photo: Jessica Rinaldi, Globe staff

George Ward, once a Polaroid Senior Illustrator, spent the past several years assisting the Mayflower II restoration in Mystic, CT (See the Q2 2016 PRA Newsletter).

What has George been doing during the most recent of his 22 years with Plimoth Plantation?

From the *Boston Globe*, “There is no auxiliary motor on the ship, just as there wasn’t when the original Mayflower II sailed from England to Plymouth in 1957, a gift from Britain to the United States for its support during World War II. Time, weather, and water had taken their toll over six decades, not to mention the foot traffic of 25 million visitors. About 70 percent of the ship was replaced in the restoration project, with Massachusetts white oak for framing, Southern live oak for the “knees” that support the deck, and 40-foot-long boards cut from the Danish Royal Forest for planking.”

After working on the restoration, George was part of the crew as the ship sailed “back home” to Plymouth in July.



Working Lines Underway

well from them until the hoopla was over.

“Much of the celebration was curtailed,” George said. “However, even missing all the special sails and events planned for Mayflower and Plymouth 400, the sail was great.

“In the final leg from Mass Maritime Academy, the whole Cape Cod Canal was lined with cheering folks. After leaving the canal 150 boats were around us all the way to Plymouth with Mayflower’s pure white new sails showing brightly.

“It was great.”

October Luncheon Cancellation

The PRA Board of Directors has cancelled our October 2020 gathering and luncheon to protect our Membership from the risks of contracting the COVID-19 virus.

We hope to hold the Spring Luncheon on May 19, 2021, and ask that you stay safe, wear a mask and wash your hands. We will be doing the same.

Our best wishes for health and happiness go out to you and your loved ones.

Updated May 2021 Luncheon information will be included in the Q1 2021 *Newsletter*.

PRA Dues Moratorium

When board member George Murray proposed suspending 2021 dues payments for PRA members in good standing, he was met with enthusiastic agreement from the directors. Yes, Treasurer Nino DiIanni had to run the numbers and, yes, Membership Committee Chair Bob Ruckstuhl had to plan the process, but the September Zoom meeting of the group gave a conditional unanimous thumbs-up.

Board members note that some organizations have reduced costs in recognition of people's lost income and the increased charitable donations needed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Directors wanted to ease burdens on our PRA members and recognize these difficult times.

After working to get the plan in place by this *Newsletter* issue, the directors announce the following:

- The Polaroid Retirees Association 2021 Membership dues will be waived for all Members whose dues are current as of the printing of this *Newsletter*.
- **Current dues** are dues that are paid through 2020 or beyond as noted in the first line of this *Newsletter's* address label indicating dues status.
- Members whose **dues are overdue** as indicated in this *Newsletter's* address label will *not* participate in this program.
- Members whose **dues have been paid in advance** will have their "Dues paid through" date advanced by one year.

Take a look at the line above your address on this *Newsletter* to see whether your 2021 dues will be waived.

Your dues status reflecting the results of this program will be printed in the first line of the address label appearing in the Q1 2021 *Newsletter* issue. If you have questions contact any director listed on the front page or email praemail@comcast.net.



Welcome New Members
Robert McNulty of Billerica and Thomas Liakos of Chelmsford

POLAROID RETIREES ASSOCIATION, INC.
P.O. BOX 541395
WALTHAM, MA 02454-1395

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

CURRENT DIRECTORIES ARE FREE, UPON REQUEST, BUT A CHARGE OF \$6.00 IS REQUIRED TO COVER SHIPPING & HANDLING.

PLEASE MAKE YOUR CHECK PAYABLE TO **POLAROID RETIREES ASSOCIATION** AND MAIL TO :
POLAROID RETIREES ASSOCIATION, P.O. BOX 522, ROWLEY, MA 01969 ALLOW 3-4 WEEKS FOR DELIVERY.

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What's new in your Life After Polaroid?

Send your updates, stories & comments to
Bob Ruckstuhl's address below or to
newsletterpra@gmail.com.

We want to hear from you!

**The note above your address is meant
to alert you to your dues status at the
time the Newsletter is sent.**

Membership fees are due and payable the first of the year.
See page 11 for details about your 2021 membership.

Yearly Dues \$15.00 See page 11 for information about your membership.

Make check payable to **POLAROID RETIREES ASSOCIATION, INC.**
and mail to R. Ruckstuhl, Polaroid Retirees Assn, P.O. Box 522, Rowley, MA 01969

Please **Print:** New: _____ Renewal: _____ Change of Address: _____

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