

August, 2014

Spartans Summer Newsletter 2014

It is still summer, but if this newsletter is delayed much longer it will have to be renamed the Autumn newsletter. Members increasingly rely on the Spartan Web presence to provide timely information, but there are members not wired, and this newsletter provides an opportunity to share news and comments with them and with others not able to attend the spring luncheon.

For the Spring Luncheon we enjoyed the comfortable ambiance and tasty food of Linguini Restaurant and were pleased to welcome several first time visitors and potential members as well. After several e-mail and phone exchanges with George Rout to clarify logistics, he arranged a trip from Saint Catherines to join us, and charitably said he recognized me after several decades, when I picked him up at his hotel. A chance meeting in a shopping center between Al Evers and former colleagues from the RCA Research department led to first time visits by Tony Crane, Armand Waksberg and Asoke Ghosh. We welcome them warmly and hope that they will join us again. Dr. Marc Donato representing MDA senior management gave a much appreciated briefing on current and prospective business at the Ste. Anne facility as well as describing key organization and personnel changes.

I want to thank our committee members for their continuing efforts in maintaining our group.

Al Lawson	Picture taker, list maintainer, communications director, and currently without his computer due to a basement flood.
George Larder Gil Kerr	Diligent Treasure, and understudy for Al Lawson during his trials Luncheon organizer
Nicole Bourdeau	Chief recruiter
Margaret Gross	Web master
Lorne Keyes	Editor

Newsletters will be posted on the SPARTans Website <http://clubspartans.weebly.com> .
Let any of the committee members know if you have a problem in accessing it.

A reminder that the membership list is intended for Spartan social purposes only.

News Items

It is with great regret that I inform you of the passing of former colleagues and Spartan members.

It was noticed in the obituary section of a recent Montreal Gazette that Janina Symeonides, the wife of a long time SPARTans member George Symeonides had passed away. The obituary has been posted in the Newsblog section of the SPARTans website. Our condolences go out to George.

SYMEONIDES, Janina Jadwiga (nee Babirecka)

October 20, 1926 - March 6, 2014

Passed away peacefully in her sleep at Vigi Mont Royal. She leaves behind George, beloved husband of 58 years, daughter Daphne and son-in-law, Phillip Weber. She will be missed by many and fondly remembered as a wise woman of indomitable spirit. A memorial service will be held later in July.

WEYMAN, Frederick E.

March 24, 2014

It is with a heavy heart that we announce the passing of Frederick E. Weyman on March 24, 2014 at the Veteran's Hospital in Ste. Anne- de-Bellevue. Frederick was born in Western Australia, near Perth in 1926. Frederick had three older sisters (Carly, Francy and Judy) who all preceded him. He grew up on the family farm in Bencubbin, WA until he enlisted in the Royal Australian Navy at 15, by exaggerating his age. He wanted to see the world and explore his interests in electronics; particularly radio communications. He didn't talk much about this period, other than to say he was a coder, and that he enjoyed winning bets he made with other crewmen, competing to detonate enemy mines floating in the South China seas, with a single shot from a rifle. Over time, he came to Canada to develop satellite receiver stations in Newfoundland and in the Arctic. His travels led him to settle down in Montreal to work for companies such as RCA, SPAR and finally CBC, and to get married and raise his family. Frederick was a uniquely generous, forgiving and patient man who loved the ocean, nature, being in the sun and keeping busy tending his gardens and repairing whatever he could find. He had a great fondness for horses and motorcycles. He was that rare type of individual who often put the considerations of others ahead of his own. Frederick will be fondly remembered by his two children Cathy and Craig, his wife Joan and his grandson Clark, and all of those he has helped over the years. We would also like to particularly thank all of the exemplary staff at the Veteran's Hospital who caringly tended to him over these past couple of years. Your efforts are greatly appreciated. As per his wishes, a simple Funeral Service will be held Tuesday, April 1, 2014 at 11:00 a.m. at Rideau Funeral Home, 4275 Sources Boulevard, DDO, H9B 2A6, 514-685-3344

George Larder noted: Fred Weyman was a field technician way back in the early sixties. I first met him on one of my first field trips, a CW20A microwave relay system for CNT spanning Newfoundland. I remember arriving at a microwave repeater site anxious to meet my fellow RCA employees only to be greeted by a large tool box being thrown out the door and just missing my head. The thrower was Fred Weyman. His wife happened to be my nurse at the Montreal General Hospital in 1964 when I was recuperating from my accident. Overall Fred was a very decent chap.

PASTUSZKO, George

April 6, 2014

George Pastuszko, and his wife Barbara were long time members of the Spartans. He was a long time employee of RCA and Spar working as a electronic technician in the Engineering Products division. He was also a keen member of the flying club organized among his fellow employees. Later he was a key member of the local chapter of the Royal Canadian Air Force Association. Our condolences go to his wife Barbara.

1930- 2014, beloved husband of Mrs. Barbara Pastuszko, passed away on April 6, 2014. He leaves to mourn his wife, his sons Greg, Jack (Barbara), John (Guylaine) and Peter (Sylvia), his grand children Kelsey, Jessy, Alexandra, Nicholas, Carter, Hudson, Chance, Justin, Angelina and Catherine, and Monik and other family members as well as many friends. Burial was at the National Field of Honour cemetery, Pointe-Claire.

I knew George well both in his role as technician at RCA and Spar but also as a fellow recreational pilot, receiving our private pilots licenses at the same time as Henry Hore and Joe McNally. Observing him as a private pilot, I always felt he would have been more comfortable at the controls of a fighter aircraft.

ART REDHEAD

April 6, 2014

George Larder noted the passing of **Art Redhead** on April 6th after a long illness. Art was a long time employee of RCA and Spar. George said he knew Art for many years as head of the test department for Engineering Products. When George returned to work for Spar after his retirement in 1988 he worked for him as he was now the head of Equipment Engineering, his boss Lloyd Slaven having switched that position with Gil Kerr who was now head of Production. When Art retired in the early 90's he and his wife Hazel returned to England. George stated that he was an interesting man to work for and a fine gentleman.

Regrets

A relative of **Hazel Osborne** phoned to let us know that she has a change of address. She is still at the Cambridge residence but has moved to a different building in the same complex. Her new address is 2228-300 boul Hymus, Pointe-Claire, QC, H9R 6C3

Hazel later called to say she won't be attending as she uses a walker to get around her building, but needs a lady helper for outside excursions and she was not available on the luncheon date.

George Symeonides: Dear Committee members. I will not be able to attend the luncheon. I will be on holiday in Paris. Will certainly have a glass (or two) of wine to your health. Greetings to all attending the luncheon.

Dave Whitton: I would love to attend the lunch May 8th but unfortunately I am actually coming to Montreal May 18th to May 30th, maybe I can get in touch with a few retirees then! All the best.

Charlie Albright: I am sorry I will not be attending the spring luncheon this year. I will be minding my grand children to give the parents a much needed rest. My regards to all, sorry about Al's basement.

Mike Morris: I was waiting until the last minute but it looks like I will, unfortunately, not be able to attend this one. Should be ok for the Winter event though. Good that you sent your e-mail otherwise I would have e-mailed Al early next week not knowing he was underwater. Hope he gets back to normal soon.....he may be able to rescue his hard drive if he's careful/lucky and connect it to the new PC his insurance policy will (hopefully) pay for.

Please give my regards to all.

Joe McNally: Carmen and I will not be able to make it. I am going to be up in Toronto getting dentistry done by my niece. A bit of news, we are moving from Aylmer to Manotick. We got fed up with the food here and the nursing care is a disaster. The move is slated for end of June. Give our regards to everyone. Otherwise we're hanging in there.

One can always count on Joe for a direct assessment of a situation. I am not as fortunate as Joe in having a dentist in the family, as a recent visit to my dentist has demonstrated amply.

Stefan Zadrozny: For years Thursdays were my golf days. I already complained a number of times that for once in the spring our lunch could be on the other day – in the autumn Thursday is all right because it is past the golf season, in the spring I have 12 active golfers eagerly waiting to hit the balls. Surely you understand that I cannot disappoint them! Well, then, I'm sorry to miss you all, but see you in the autumn.

Saul Koblin: Hope all is well with you. I have been trying to tie the luncheon dates in with trips to Montreal but unfortunately Jackie and I will not be able to make it this time. Say 'hello' to everyone for me.

Also Sending Regrets

Svend Berg	Colette Besner	Nicole Bourdeau	Mary Buchanan
Henri Claireaux	Dean Collis	Peter Garland	Lionel Giasson
Ian Grier	Louis Laroche	Roger Louie	Doug Paul
Ted Phillips	Jane Robinson	John Runeckles	Sim Shek
George Skinner	Georges Vaillancourt	Bronwen Williams	

Honorary Members

Mary Buchanan	Bill Corless	Letty Cox (Bob)	Jane Gondos
Ella Hall	Elsa Hore	Pam Leahy	Hazel Osborne
Barbara Pastuszko	Hazel Redhead	Nancy Renz	Claude Richard
Pierrette Stewart	Mary Zacharatos		

Other News

Many Spartans took advantage of a well organized family day or open house, to tour the Ste Anne MDA facility on May 25. **Joe Soul** summarized the appreciation of the Spartans in his thank you note to **Marc Donato** as follows:

Greg Baylis and I arrived at MDA at 11AM and spent an hour forty five minutes making the tour. I would like to congratulate everyone involved in the planning and manning the whole operation. The planning must have been done meticulously and handling the very large crowds of families from babies to adults was done very well. The volunteer MDA personnel running the exhibits, explaining them and answering the many questions posed did a very fine job. Doubtless they would have been rather tired at the end.

We were rather impressed with the huge investments that must have been required for the purchase and maintenance of the intricate manufacturing equipment and complex test facilities. MDA has come a long way from the days when Greg and I were at Spar Aerospace.

I would be interested to know what your responsibilities are as V.P. Operations: all quite a challenge, I imagine!

Good luck to you and the organization as you continue into the future.

Best regards, Joe

To which Marc responded with appreciation for our interest and gave additional information on his current responsibilities:

You are very welcome. I think the Montreal team did a truly fantastic job organising and staging this event.

As for myself, I am VP of operations at the Information System Group level. ISG is roughly one half of the company (SSL being the other). It is where all the Canadian and US divisions except SSL report into. My functions include overall management of the operations in the individual divisions, including monthly review of divisional performance, overall program performance monitoring (all external review teams report to me), Capital expenses approval (beyond divisional limits), overall IT, institutional relationships, monthly reporting to corporate, special presentations to the board. I report into the president of the ISG group Don Osborne (who is moving to Vancouver in a few weeks) and on a weekly basis to the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of the corporation.

Although **Rick Allen** has not joined the Spartans, he does keep in touch as the following exchange demonstrates: Hi Lorne

I was having a discussion at a bar with a friend a few days ago. His father worked at Lenoir in the 1960s. His last name was Tidd. He was an electrical engineer from England. Do you remember him or did you work with him? The question arose as to when the move from Lenoir to the new RCA building in St. Anne de Bellevue happened. Do you remember what year that was? Hope you are doing well. P.S., I have now been retired for 11 months, to which I replied: Good to hear from you Rick. No, I do not recall clearly the name, but Peter Tidd raises a faint recollection. I may have forgotten a name as there was a sharp build-up in the engineering staff in the late 60s in anticipation of a contract for the first Canadian communication satellite. This was not to be for a variety of reasons that I can discuss with you the next time we meet. I recall with some bitterness handing out seven pink slips one day and six the next, all very decent and capable people, sort of a mini version of the Arrow cancellation. After this debacle, I went to CRC in Ottawa to work on advanced planning for the CTS experimental communications satellite. When I returned from Ottawa almost two years later in early 1970, the move to Ste. Anne was essentially complete except for a few communication earth station orphans at Lenoir. Think about becoming a member of the Spartans retirement group and joining us for lunch. Regards Lorne

Mike Morris sent this touching bit of nostalgia while trying to reduce the clutter in his storage area. Hi Lorne, hope all goes well back in Quebec.

While trying, yet again, to reduce the mass of stored paper we are sitting on, the attached December 1981 Spar Newsletter "Among Ourselves..." fell out. It celebrated the testing in space of the Remote Manipulator System (apparently not yet named the "Canadarm"), Anik C completion (you may be able to recognize some of those under the shower caps!) , etc.

While I recognize some of the names/faces appearing in the Newsletter others, from other Spar locations, are unknown to me. I well remember the Thanksgiving lunch event referred to on page 2 and the team involved. I seem to have had some serious hair at the time. I attribute the freehand addition on page 3 to my eldest daughter.

(To George: Mike sent four photos in PDF format that I will forward to you for inclusion. I tried once to do so, but failed to insert into the word document)

Gil Kerr posted thoughtful some interesting bits of history and comments that included the value of the many practical engineers who contributed to the success of RCA Montreal and subsequent companies. I replied as follows:

I just finished rereading your Web posting on the subject and thoroughly enjoyed it. If only others would take up the pen as you have done. I agree whole heartedly with you on the value of the practical engineers that you mentioned. I had the privilege of working with Jean Labelle, as fine and hard working and personable gentleman as you are likely to meet. Fred Grosvendhager was another top performer, if only he had not been such a heavy smoker he might still be around. Peter Oldfield was another exceptionally inventive and hardworking fellow. The list could go on.

Although you participated actively in the formation of the engineers union, you did not become a member. I was on the staff engineer stream so I was a union member and carried a sign, marching up and down in front of the plant several times

Thanks Gil
Lorne

Paul Weijers has posted an interesting vignette from his early days at RCA that I hope you have read on the narratives section of our web site. He assures me that he will comb his memory for similar material and I encourage others to do likewise.

George Rout was very pleased that he attended the luncheon and renewed contact with several old colleagues. He sent this thoughtful note of appreciation. Hello Lorne. Just a note to thank you personally for your part in making my trip to the recent Spartans luncheon an enjoyable success. It relieved me of any concern on how I was going to get to Linguini's and back to the hotel. It was a great pleasure to see all the folks there some I knew very well from the ISIS project. You asked for a sort of bio of folks what they did after RCA. You can refer to my personal website: <http://geogerout.com/careerBio.html>

I've enjoyed my whole career in contracts and procurement. I've worked on some interesting projects and met lots of nice folks. I retired in October 2001 and still enjoying a leisurely life of playing and teaching Hawaiian steel guitar and lots of bicycling in the summers. I would like to thank all those who put the Spartans organization together and make it work so nicely.

Best wishes to all.
George Rout
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Your reporter
Lorne Keyes