Pittsburgh is a vibrant, mid-sized city that has the feel of a small town. Incorporated in 1816, it is also a city in transformation. Located at the confluence of the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers and the head of the Ohio River, Pittsburgh was referred to as the “Gateway to the West” from its early days as a frontier fort. Today, Pittsburgh is the 2nd largest inland port in the nation.

Pittsburgh was home to Andrew Carnegie and Henry Clay Frick, the founders of Carnegie Steel Co. Andrew Carnegie’s generous public donations include the Carnegie Library, Carnegie Museum of Art, Carnegie Museum of Natural History, and Carnegie Science Center – all worth a visit while you’re in Pittsburgh. Public access is available to the Frick family home, known as Clayton, as well as their art collection housed at the Frick Art & Historical Center. Other notable Pittsburgh destinations are the Heinz History Center, and the Andy Warhol museum.

We’ll be staying at the Wyndham Grand Pittsburgh located in the Golden Triangle, right where the three rivers meet. Since navigating a new city can sometimes be a challenge, a complimentary local shuttle is available to get you to the sites you want to see. Friday night’s dinner will be served aboard a local clipper fleet riverboat while we enjoy a view of the city as it is illuminated at night from the rivers.

Host couples will be Tim and Barbara Womer and Steve and Jeanne Sopher. They promise you’ll enjoy your time in America’s “Most Livable City” – beautiful, historical, friendly Pittsburgh!
Looking at the list of PPA’s past presidents and all of their accomplishments in the plastics industry is a humbling experience. They brought so much knowledge, passion and dedication to PPA over the past 71 years. As I step up to this position, I have two emotions. I feel privileged to serve as PPA’s President, and am proud to be the first female to hold this office.

I’ve known about PPA since 1981 when I began my plastics career at the Society of Plastics Engineers. I got more involved with PPA when the SPE Foundation began to work with PPA on their scholarship program. I became a member in 2006 thanks to my sponsors Ted Debreceni and Peter Zacher. Over the last two years, I’ve been fortunate to work with Steve Hershfield as his Vice President, and am appreciative of the knowledge he shared with me – and the advice he gave me.

For the last 71 years, PPA has done a great job meeting its objectives to recognize achievements in the plastics industry, support industry-wide educational programs, support the study of plastics/polymers, and preserve the history of the industry. Over the next two years – with the assistance of the Board of Governors, Officers, Committee Chairs, Committee Members, and each of you – I will work hard to grow the Association and continue the good works begun by my predecessors.

Working with me on the Board of Governors are Al Hodge, Vice President; Wolfgang Meyer, Secretary; Ashby Rice, Treasurer; Steve Hershfield, Past President; and Governors Steve Sopher, Don Williams, Tim Womer, Roger Avakian, Sal Monte, and Lance Neward. Committee Chairs include Bill Humphrey, Dennis Meade, Roger Kipp, Glenn Beall, Stuart Swain, Jim Callari, John Fearncombe, Lance Neward, Steve Sopher, Steve Hershfield, and Carolyn Reed Hodge. Their knowledge, passion and dedication to PPA are already evident. I ask each of you to also take the opportunity to contribute to PPA by joining a committee of your choice. In doing so, you, too, can help PPA continue to be an organization we can take pride in for years to come!

Vince Witherup and Tim Womer had a great time in San Antonio and look forward to seeing you in Pittsburgh.

Gail Rotheiser models the blue polyester/cotton 50/50 heavyweight ultra blend fleece crew with the PPA logo. Available in sizes small, medium, large, XL, XXL, and XXXL, the sweatshirts cost $25 if picked up at the Fall 2015 meeting in Pittsburgh or $31.00 delivered to your home. Mail your sweatshirt order with a check payable to the Plastics Pioneers Association to Dolores Mack at 48 Old Nugent Farm Road, Gloucester, MA 01930. If ordered soon, Dolores can get the sweatshirt in time for the Fall meeting. Contact Dolores at doloresmack@cs.com or 978-281-3213 if there are any questions.

Also available are 100% cotton twill deluxe polo style “Palmer Caps”. They have Velcro closures and come in red, khaki, and navy. The caps cost $10.00 plus shipping. Cap orders are taken by Cathy Connell at 2900 W. Dayton Street, McHenry, IL 60050 (915-759-2118).
THURSDAY COCKTAIL HOUR
PALACIO DEL RIO IN SAN ANTONIO, TX

A CHANCE FOR OLD FRIENDS TO CATCH UP AND NEW MEMBERS TO BE WELCOMED
On Friday morning, 37 of us joined our tour guide, Luis, for an informative and entertaining bus tour of some of San Antonio’s missions followed by a Texas BBQ lunch at Augie’s. It should be noted that the first two missions are still active churches.

Spanish missions were not churches, but communities with the church as the focus. They were designed to take indigenous peoples and convert them not only to Catholicism, but to the Spanish way of life. In establishing the missions in Texas, the Spanish hoped to create a self-sufficient population of loyal Spanish subjects, thereby staving off any involvement of foreign powers like France. Indian converts were taught farming, livestock raising, blacksmithing, carpentry, stone work, and weaving.

The first stop was at the best known, and largest, of the Texas missions – Mission San José y San Miguel de Aguayo. Known as the “Queen of the Missions”, San José, which was founded in 1720 and completed in 1782, was almost fully restored to its original design in the 1930s by the WPA (Works Progress Administration).

Mission San José exemplifies how all the missions might have looked over 250 years ago. At its height, the community contained about 350 Indian converts, supported by extensive fields and herds of livestock. Viewed as the model among the Texas missions due to its unique architecture, rich fields and pastures, and its communal lifestyle of agriculture and defense, San José gained a reputation as a major social and cultural center.

Next we toured the Mission Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción de Acuña. Established in 1716 in what is now Eastern Texas, Mission Concepción was one of six authorized by the government to serve as a buffer against the threat of French incursion into Spanish territory from Louisiana. The mission was transferred to its present site in 1731.

This stone church took about 20 years to build, and was dedicated in 1755. It appears very much as it did over two centuries ago. Due to the fact that it was built directly on bedrock, Mission Concepción never lost its roof, or its integrity, so this prevented the deterioration of many fine examples of frescos. It remains the least restored of the colonial structures.
In December 1835, in the early stages of Texas’ war for independence from Mexico, a group of Texan (or Texian) volunteers overwhelmed the Mexican garrison at the Alamo and captured the fort, seizing control of San Antonio. By mid-February 1836, Colonel James Bowie and Lieutenant Colonel William B. Travis had taken command of Texan forces in San Antonio. The Alamo’s defenders, led by Bowie and Travis, prepared to defend the fort to the last. These defenders, who despite later reinforcements never numbered more than 200, included Davy Crockett, the famous frontiersman and former congressman from TN, who had arrived in early February.

On February 23, 1836 a Mexican force comprising somewhere between 1,800 and 6,000 men (according to various estimates) and commanded by General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna began a siege of the fort. The Texans held out for 13 days, but on the morning of March 6, 1836 Mexican forces broke through a breach in the outer wall of the courtyard and overpowered them. Santa Anna ordered his men to take no prisoners, and only a small handful of the Texans were spared – primarily women and children. One of these was Susannah Dickinson, the wife of Captain Almaron Dickinson (who was killed) and her infant daughter Angelina. Santa Anna sent them to Houston’s camp in Gonzalez with a warning that a similar fate awaited the rest of the Texans if they continued their revolt. The Mexican forces also suffered heavy casualties in the Battle of the Alamo, losing between 600 and 1,600 men.

From March to May, Mexican forces once again occupied the Alamo. For the Texans, the Battle of the Alamo became a symbol of heroic resistance and a rallying cry in their struggle for independence. On April 21, 1836, Sam Houston and some 800 Texans defeated Santa Anna’s Mexican force of 1,500 men at San Jacinto (near the site of present-day Houston), shouting “Remember the Alamo!” as they attacked. The victory ensured the success of Texan independence. Santa Anna, who had been taken prisoner, came to terms with Houston to end the war. In May, Mexican troops in San Antonio were ordered to withdraw, and to demolish the Alamo’s fortifications as they went. As a result, there are few remnants of the mission still standing. The chapel of the Alamo Mission is known as the “Shrine of Texas Liberty”.

Spanish settlers built the Mission San Antonio de Valero around 1718. They also established the nearby military garrison of San Antonio de Béxar, which soon became the center of a settlement known as San Fernando de Béxar (later renamed San Antonio). The Mission San Antonio de Valero housed missionaries and their Native American converts until 1793, when Spanish authorities secularized the five missions located in San Antonio and distributed their lands among local residents.
FRIDAY DINNER
PALACIO DEL RIO IN SAN ANTONIO, TX
Plastics History & Artifacts Committee (PHAC) Update

Glenn Beall, chairman of PPA’s Plastics and Artifacts Committee, reported in San Antonio that the Syracuse University website (www.plastics.syr.edu) now includes 2,500 artifacts, 342 biographies, 561 company profiles, 2020 plastics books, 357 timeline dates, 48 links to other resources, and 9 essays.

The website provides a wealth of information on the history and uses of plastics. It includes links to their plastics collections, objects, manuscripts, books & journals, history & people, materials & processes, and other resources. One of the most fascinating links is to a 1944 black and white film about the importance of plastics in the war effort. It is well worth watching.

Unfortunately, Glenn also reported that the PPA Plastics Collection at Syracuse University has now been without a curator since September 2012. Artifacts are still being received, logged in, and cataloged. However, they are not being processed and included in the PPA website. There is a pressing need for funds to hire a PPA Plastics Collection curator.

Sadly, the PHAC recently lost two devoted members and donors. Frank Nissel passed away on August 28, 2014. Frank was an enthusiastic member of PHAC and a financial supporter of the PPA collection at Syracuse University. Dewey Rainville, a long time member and Past Chairman of PHAC, passed away on December 9, 2014. Dewey donated $77,000 for PHAC to use exclusively for the PPA Plastics Collection at Syracuse University.

Melamine History

On Saturday, Glenn gave an in-depth 45 minute presentation on melamine, its history and applications, and its tableware niche. As Glenn reported, melamine was discovered by Justus Liebig in Germany in 1834. However, no commercial applications were identified at that time.

One hundred years later, melamine was rediscovered by two U.S. scientists at American Cyanamid, Palmer Griffith and Paul Schroy. It was used in electrical devices, small housings, bathroom wash basins, brightly colored products that could not be made from dark colored phenolic, and, of course, dinnerware which became melamine’s signature product. The development of in-mold glazing produced a high gloss, china like surface with excellent stain and abrasion resistance. Cyanamid compounded a special grade of melamine for tableware, well known in the industry as Melmac™.

Glenn chronicled the development of melamine dinnerware for the U.S. Navy during World War II and various commercial uses from the 1940s to the 1960s. Several exceptional dinnerware products are shown in the accompanying photo. The pink bowl and yellow sugar bowl with lid are Lucent products. The blue bowl was produced by International Molded Plastics. The square yellow cup is a Brookpark product. By the mid-1960s, the glory days of melamine were coming to an end as cheaper and lower quality dinnerware products became available.
THE PTACEK MELAMINE COLLECTION
Beginning in 1982, Robin Ptacek became interested in the field of melamine dinnerware and amassed a large collection before he passed away suddenly in 2012. Fortunately, Christopher McPherson, part of Robin’s research team, contacted Syracuse University to ask if it had any interest in acquiring the collection.

Through the collective efforts and persistence of Harry Greenwald and Glenn Beall, Greg Ptacek, brother of Robin, offered to donate the melamine collection to Syracuse University if the University would pick up the $180/month storage unit rent, which it did.

The dishes shown on the previous page are from the Ptacek collection. The Pioneers PHAC offered to share the cost of acquiring the Ptacek melamine collection. However, Syracuse University picked up all the cost.

The Plastics Pioneers and Syracuse University now have possession of another important plastics collection at no cost to the Pioneers. The collection is not yet cataloged or up on the web site. This will have to wait until funds to support this work are available.

Does anyone have a 1983 copy of The PPA’s Who’s Who of the Plastics Pioneers Association, Inc. they would they be willing to donate to Syracuse?

If so, please contact Glenn Beall at glennbeallplas@msn.com or 847-549-9970.

OFFICERS

Gail Bristol  President to 2017
Al Hodge  Vice President to 2017
Wolfgang Meyer  Secretary to 2017
Ashby Rice  Treasurer to 2017

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Stefan Hershfield  Past President

*The President is an ex-officio member of all Committees
An effort was made to organize a Thursday evening game at the newly opened Top Golf, but all succumbed to the many other attractions of San Antonio and the ideal location on the Riverwalk.

On Friday, seven players challenged The Quarry Golf Club. Overcast at the beginning, the breeze blew the clouds away to a mostly sunny afternoon. The opportunity to play at the top and then drive into this limestone quarry is unique. The threesome of Paul Dumesnil, Jay Gardiner and Mark Wolverton defeated the foursome of Sandy Guthrie, Sal Monte, Dave Murdock and Stu Swain in scramble play.

Saturday dawned bright and temperatures passed 80°F at The Republic Golf Club. Despite some confusion and delay, The Republic rallied with Texas hospitality for the 11 players. The team of Charlie Sears, Dennis Meade & Sal Monte proved victorious over those of Dan McGuire, Stu Swain & Mark Wolverton, and Jay Gardiner, Sandy Guthrie, Dave Murdock & John Schmidt. Jay’s planning had them first off the tee!

Cash awards were presented to the winning teams of each day. The coveted ‘Horned Spoon’ was not awarded at the discretion of the Golf Chair.
The PPA Education Committee has budgeted $50,000 for scholarship awards and other education funding for 2015. This action is in keeping with a major objective of PPA, that being to support industry-wide education programs. The distribution of these funds is planned as follows:

- $15,000 payment for an endowment to University of Massachusetts - Lowell plus a $3,000 scholarship for the 2015-2016 year to a Lowell student
- One $3,000 scholarship each to Ferris State, Penn State Erie, and Pennsylvania College of Technology
- $7,500 to the PlastiVan program
- $5,000 to the Intersociety Polymer Education Council (IPEC) for the Polymer Ambassadors program
- $4,500 to Syracuse University
- $6,000 to the SPE Foundation for 2 scholarships @ $3,000 each for the 2015-2016 school year

On Saturday night, Jay Gardiner, acting on behalf of the Plastics Academy, SPI, Plastics Industry Trade Association, and Future of Plastics Foundation, presented Steve Hershfield with a $5,000 check for the PPA’s Education Fund in support of future education programs and scholarships. In addition to this preliminary donation, the Plastics Academy, SPI, and the Future of Plastics Foundations have agreed to donate 10 percent of the proceeds from the 2015 Plastics Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony to the PPA Education Fund after the ceremony takes place in March.

Jay also presented a check for $200,000 to benefit the SPE Foundation to Russell Broome, Managing Director of SPE, and Roger Kipp, PPA and Foundation Board member.
**PPA WEBSITE UPDATE**

Tim Womer reported at the General Business Meeting that the website is up and running. The hope is that PPA members will use the website more often if there could be a recurring email blast.

The Website Committee has created a PPA Group in LinkedIn. You must be a LinkedIn member to access the group (it’s free). Tim or Steve can help anyone who wishes to join and will offer assistance in setting up the account. The group can be accessed by logging into LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com) and searching in the GROUP section for PLASTICS PIONEERS ASSOCIATION. Eventually, there also will be links to various plastics societies.

The current committee consists of Tim Womer and Steve Sopher, both of whom would appreciate additional members.

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**THE SURVEY SAYS.......**

The Alamo is a famous San Antonio landmark. Knowing this, the intrepid interviewer posed the question, “What is America’s most impressive landmark?” The responses are summarized below. Unless indicated, each response occurred once.

**NATIONAL PARKS (44%)**:
- Grand Canyon (18),
- Denali/Mt. McKinley (2),
- Arches,
- Bryce Canyon,
- Glacier,
- Petrified Forest,
- Yellowstone

**MT. RUSHMORE (16%)**

**STATUE OF LIBERTY (16%)**

**WASHINGTON D.C. (11%)**:
- Lincoln Memorial (2),
- Jefferson Memorial,
- Senate Building,
- Vietnam Memorial,
- Washington Monument

**NIAGARA FALLS (5%)**

**OTHERS (8%)**:
- Crazy Horse Memorial,
- Freedom Tower (WTC),
- Hoover Dam,
- Independence Hall,
- Montezuma’s Castle
New Member Induction

The Plastics Pioneers Association announced that four new members have joined the organization. The membership is limited to 250 active members who must have 25 or more years of experience in the industry to be considered. In addition, two members must sponsor the nominee who is judged on contributions made to the advancement of the plastics industry.

Stanley J. Glover

Stan Glover has spent the last 25 years of his professional career in plastics. He is currently Director of Sales for Zeiger Industries, where he has worked for a total of 15 years in his career. Stan worked at Crucible Materials Corp., where he was responsible for all sales and marketing functions, as well as new product development. Stan also worked for Herzog Corp. as Vice President of Sales, responsible for the company’s sales of injection molding shut-off nozzles in North America.

Stan routinely speaks around the world on issues concerning wear and corrosion technologies as they relate to injection molding. He has also been actively involved in writing the Society of the Plastics Industry’s Machinery Safety Standards since 1997. Stan has been involved with the SPI Equipment Council, serving a term as Vice Chairman; the SPI Equipment Council Executive Committee; the SPI Board of Directors; the NPE Operations Committee; and has been a member of the NPE Rules and Regulations Team for the last three NPE show cycles.

Stan and his wife Colleen live in Bowerston, Ohio. He is the chairman of the local White Tails Unlimited Club which raises money for local youth and veteran’s programs. He is also Vice President of Operations of Dog’s 4 Warriors, Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization providing highly trained service dogs at no cost to veterans of all eras suffering from combat related PTSD, Traumatic Brain Injury, and/or physical limitations. Stan’s outside interests also include hunting, fishing, ATV riding, and working to teach children about the wonders of nature and the outdoors sports.

Alexander D. Guthrie

Sandy Guthrie has been involved in the plastics machinery business for more than 35 years. He started his career at Sterling Extruder, where he worked for 11 years, rising to the position of Director of Sales. For the next 16 years, he was CEO and President of Merritt Davis/Merritt Extruder/Merritt Electric, companies he co-founded. When he sold Merritt to Davis-Standard, Sandy stayed on as Davis’ Business Director. For the last four years, Sandy has been President and CEO of ADG Solutions, a company he founded that represents numerous other machine builders focused on plastics recycling. Sandy introduced grooved-feed throat technology to the North American extrusion market, and also developed the first-ever complete U.S. reclaim system that went from shredder to pellet.

Sandy has been a member of the Society of Plastics Engineers for 25 years. He has served on the SPI Board of Directors, on the Executive Board of the Equipment Council, as Treasurer of the Equipment Council, on the Committee for Equipment Statistics, and on the Recycling Committee. Sandy has also served three terms on the board of the Wire Association. He was acknowledged by SPI with a Service Award for his volunteer work on the Committee for Equipment Statistics.

Sandy and his wife Jennifer reside in Fairfield, Conn. He enjoys golf, tennis, skiing and boating and has been heavily involved with his local church, currently serving as its Treasurer.
**Dr. Charles F. Pratt**

Dr. Charles Pratt has worked in the polymer science industry for four decades. He earned both his Bachelors and Masters Degrees in Chemical Engineering from Clarkson University and joined DuPont as a textile fibers engineer. Then he went to work for General Electric and served in a variety of technical and technology leadership roles during his 25 years with the company. In 1980 he earned a PhD in macromolecular physics. In 1997, Charles joined Owens Corning, and over the next 13 years worked in capacities that included R&D leader, Vice President of Technology, Global Technology Leader and General Manager. Since 2009, Charles has been President of his own consulting firm, Pratt Materials Consulting LLC.

Charles is the holder of 19 patents and has given 20 technical presentations at ANTEC® and other conferences over the course of his career. In 2012, he co-chaired the SPE’s Biopolymers Topical Conference. For 36 years Charles has been a member of the Society of Plastics Engineers. From 2010-2011 he served as President of the Pacific Northwest Section, and sits on its board today. He has also been a member of the American Chemical Society and the American Institute of Chemical Engineers.

Charles and his wife Marcia reside in Gig Harbor, Washington, where they enjoy travel and music. He also lists woodworking as among his outside interests.

**Charles Fremont Sears**

Charlie Sears has been involved with plastics machinery since 1980, having served in numerous management positions for Polymer Machinery, Automated Assemblies, and AEC/Nelmor. He graduated with a BS in mechanical engineering and received a Master’s Degree in mechanical engineering from RPI. He holds patents in the area of dryer design and frequently holds seminars on the often-misunderstood topic of resin drying. Charlie has been involved with the Society of the Plastics Industry and the Society of Plastics Engineers. At SPI, he is currently a member of the Auxiliary Equipment and Standards Committees.

Charlie and his wife Esther, founded, Dri-Air Industries. Today, Dri-Air has desiccant-bed drying equipment running at plastics processing plants all over the world.

Charlie enjoys golf, travelling, rebuilding antique cars and flying airplanes. A resident of Connecticut, Charlie has served many roles in all community sports programs, including coaching. He has also been active in his local church, serving many positions, including Deacon.
Over the past 71 years, while PPA has developed many traditions, none has been as clearly defined as the awarding of The Much Travelled Shirt. This tradition started 60 years ago when Gordon Brown, a Charter PPA member, appeared at breakfast wearing a particularly garish looking Hawaiian shirt, giving rise to many disparaging remarks. He stripped off the shirt and awarded it to his loudest critic with the proviso that he present it to another deserving member at the next meeting. That same shirt, bearing the signatures of each member receiving the award is presented at the Annual Meeting to a member, who, in the opinion of the current President, typifies the “Spirit of the Plastics Pioneers”. This garish Hawaiian shirt is now considered PPA's most prestigious award and is called “The Much Travelled Shirt.” Last year’s recipient, Tony Mack, could not attend this meeting, but the Much Travelled Shirt was modeled by Glenn Beall, the 2000 Awardee.

PPA President, Steve Hershfeld, stated that this year’s awardee was an easy and natural choice. He has contributed to our industry and especially to PPA and continues to contribute with his wisdom and sage advice. This year’s nominee is a natural born salesman. Upon graduating from college, our recipient went to work for a major resin company and continued his professional career in sales. The list of accomplishments in his career are too numerous to mention, but include being President of two chapters of SPE during his 50+ year membership.

Our winner, with his lovely wife, has four children, five grandchildren, and loves to travel. In fact, he’s been to all the continents.

Our awardee has been a member of PPA since 1991, and has moved through all the chairs and now is active on committees as well as being a mentor to the officers and members of PPA.

He has provided Steve with great advice, has always had a love for everything “Plastics”, is a member of the Plastics Hall of Fame, and a friend that we can always call upon. It is a pleasure, and honor, to present this year’s award of The Much Travelled Shirt to Dan McGuire.
Recipients of the Much Travelled Shirt

1954  A.R. Van Horne
1955  Neil Broderson
1956  Gordon Brown
1957  Donald Dew
1958  Frank Shaw
1959  Clint Blount
1960  Allan Brown
1961  Hans Wanders
1962  Stuart Landis
1963  Horace Gooch
1964  Allan Fritzche
1965  Bill Cruse
1966  Lionel Kavanaugh
1967  Don Kendall
1968  Garson Meyer
1969  B. Frank Hantz
1970  Ed Vaill
1971  Sherwood Young
1972  David Plume
1973  Spencer Palmer
1974  George Whitehead
1975  J. Harry DuBois
1976  Bob Whitlock
1977  Nick Backschieder
1978  Bill Cleworth
1979  Stanley Jones, Jr.
1980  Ed Borro, Sr.
1981  Chris Groos
1982  Ralph Harding
1983  Sterling Cramer
1984  Edward Rowan
1985  G. Palmer Humphrey
1986  Jack High
1987  Albert Spaak
1988  Bill Willert
1989  Charles Kleiderer
1990  Louis Hull
1991  F. Reed Esterbrook
1992  Guy Martinelli
1993  Bruno Wessinger
1994  Jack Keville
1995  Pete Rodts
1996  Fred Schwab
1997  Harold Holz
1998  John Reib
1999  Robert Sherman
2000  Glenn Beall
2001  George Schmitt
2002  Frank Nissel
2003  John Hull
2004  Bob Munns
2005  Dave Woodman
2006  Bob Swain
2007  Michael Gigliotti
2008  Irvin Rubin
2009  Ted Debrenci
2010  Paul Colby
2011  Harry Greenwald
2012  John Michael
2013  Vivian Malpass
2014  Tony Mack
2015  Dan McGuire
All of us know what the letters in PPA stand for, names of people who are members, etc. but most of us don’t know how the Pioneers came to be. There are several versions of its inception, and each of them probably has many of the facts correct (minus outrageous exaggeration). The following is a brief history compiled using the following sources: The 2004 edition of *The Who’s Who of the Plastics Pioneers Association, Inc.*, an article from *Plastics Industry Services*, and from a program given by Mr. Glenn Beall at a History Club joint meeting in 2009.

It is an historic fact that Mr. Herbert Spencer, a member of SPI, suggested starting “an oldtimers branch” of SPI. The membership of SPI had grown so large that the older members were having difficulties finding their friends at meetings and catching up with them. Mr. Spencer passed along his idea to several others, and after a few informal meetings, the organization was formed in 1942. Initially the purpose of the organization was to gather the members strictly for social purposes.

In the beginning, the membership requirements were two-fold: a minimum of fifteen years of employment in the plastics industry and membership in SPI. To promote membership, letters were sent to all of the members of SPI. Originally membership was limited to 75.

In May 1943, the Directors of SPI approved the formation of the group, to be designated as “Plastics Pioneers”. The first officers were Herbert Spencer, President; Nick Backsheider, Vice President; and Hans Wanders, Treasurer. The first Board of Governors included Jim Neal, Al Manolvil, Ed Bachner, Alan Cole, Garson Meyer and Doug Woodruff.

In 1948 the Plastics Pioneers Association formally became an affiliate of SPI with a constitution and by-laws.

By the end of the 1940s the Pioneers were becoming concerned that some of their members were passing away with no written record of their pioneering work in the plastics industry. In 1953 a series of tape recordings were made by many of the Pioneers to record the early days of plastics; these tapes are on file at the Smithsonian Institution.

Several years later, Mr. Spencer was quoted as describing the Plastics Pioneers as “…the men who have contributed so much to the progress of the industry throughout the years; men who recall the many and varied efforts to develop and organize the industry; men who remember the days when they looked for (plastics applications) that met material limitations rather than materials that met the (applications). They are the men who remember many little everyday annoyances that were headaches, but annoyances that made for better understanding, respect, and liking (for each other) – even among competitors. So the old timers, the Pioneers, are organized to honor those of long service to the industry. “

Other historic firsts include Mary Whitlock’s induction as the first woman member in 1983 and Gail Bristol becoming the first female President of PPA in 2015.
Steve Hershfield recently completed his two-year term as President of PPA. He provided the following responses when asked some questions regarding his tenure and experiences.

I FIRST HEARD ABOUT PPA: at an SPI meeting in Chicago and was quite impressed when I was told about the requirements of membership.

I WAS INDUCTED INTO PPA: in 1998 and Bob Swain and Alan Zimmerman were my sponsors.

MY MAJOR CONCERN ABOUT BECOMING PRESIDENT: was could I live up to what was expected of me? Dan McGuire was a tough act to follow!

THE ACCOMPLISHMENT DURING MY TERM I’M MOST PROUD OF: is the fact that we set up an endowment at U of Mass, Lowell for future scholarships.

THE POSITION: was a bit harder than I expected. It’s not like being a President of your own company, where people are obligated to do what you ask. When President of PPA, or I guess any organization of volunteers, you have to rely on the dedication of the members to participate and contribute. As one of our former Presidents said “It can be like herding cats”.

IN 5 OR 10 YEARS, I SEE PPA: I’m very optimistic for PPA over the long term. The new members want to be active and the older members still want to contribute their time and expertise.

IF I COULD CHANGE THREE THINGS ABOUT MY TERM AS PRESIDENT: I should have pushed harder for more endowments, such as the one at U of Mass, Lowell. I firmly believe that setting up endowments is the way to handle scholarships. Also, I should have pushed the Site Committee to set the calendar for meetings, and their venues three years out. By doing that, everyone has the schedule on their calendars and can schedule around PPA. Unfortunately, the Chair of the Committee got quite ill and the meetings were planned more by the Officers than they should have been. Lastly, I should have seen that the business of the PPA was done more by teleconference, so that the meetings could be more social and with more group activities than in the past.

I THINK MY LEGACY AS PPA PRESIDENT WILL BE: I hope it will be that I was a President under whom the members enjoyed coming to PPA meetings, having fun, and socializing with others while supporting our programs on education and the history of our industry. I also must say I really enjoyed my tenure as President as I found it very rewarding and fulfilling. Our members are terrific and will really participate when given the chance.
On Thursday afternoon, at the Hotel Palacio del Rio, the PALS held its second Tea. Open to both new and returning partners of PPA members, thirteen women enjoyed cookies, coffee, and camaraderie. The Tea provided an opportunity to meet new members’ spouses and to get to know them (and the rest of us) in a more relaxed surrounding.

Tickets, again, were sold on Friday and Saturday for the 50/50 raffle benefitting the PPA Education Fund. Brisk sales totaled almost $1,000 and after the installation of new members on Saturday evening, Veronika Thorne drew Steve Petrakis’ name as the raffle winner. Although this is supposed to be “fun money”, Steve and Jane donated his portion of the prize money to the PPA Education Fund. In the last two years, PALS raffles have contributed almost $2,000 to the Education Fund.

At the happy hours, cards were signed and sent to PPA members or partners unable to attend the meeting: Carol Harper, Sue Kretzschmar, Tony Mack, Jordon Rotheiser and Don Rainville. Rozann Caldwell brought extra cards to be signed for mailing between meetings.

PALS encourages all partners to participate in its social and volunteer events. There are various ways in which to participate – attending the Tea, greeting members at the Welcome Table, selling raffle tickets, making phone calls prior to meetings, decorating tables, assigning seats for Saturday dinner, etc. Please join us!
Paul N. Colby, a Plastics Hall of Fame member who founded Spirex Corp. and was a leader in the design and production of screws, barrels and front-end components for plastics, died March 7, 2015, in California at the age of 86.

Known affectionately as “Nick”, he was born to Jesse Van Horne and Paul N. Colby in Trenton, NJ on August 16, 1928. Nick played football at Princeton University and graduated with a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering in 1950, then served in the Korean War on the USS Rendova from 1950 to 1952. Nick was also a skilled pilot.

His plastics career began at Winner Manufacturing Co. in the early 1950s, where he designed, built and helped test a 60-foot floating pontoon bridge, one of the largest reinforced plastics items ever built.

Later he worked for Union Carbide Corp. as a sales engineer then at Sterling Extruder Corp. selling Lombard and Farrel injection molding machines at Metropolitan Machinery Corp., a manufacturers’ representative firm. Nick also worked at David-Standard Corp. and Prodex Corp., where he supervised the national sales force. Prodex’s parent company, Koehring Corp., merged Prodex with HPM Corp. Nick left HPM in 1970 and moved on to Feed Screws Inc., later known as New Castle Industries where he was Vice President of Sales and Engineering, then General Manager.

After eight years at New Castle industries, Nick and wife Illene founded Spirex in Youngstown. Spirex grew to become an internationally known business when it was purchased by Xaloy Corp. in New Castle, Pa. in 2009. That same year, Nick was inducted into the Plastics Hall of Fame.

Nick designed and patented some major plasticizing components. Under his direction, Spirex pioneered many methods of screw design and production. His screw designs included a retrofit vented-barrel conversion. He invented a portable machine to cut a grooved-feed section in a barrel, at a customer’s plant. Nick also designed and patented the Pulsar, the Flex Flight, the Z-Mixer and the V-Mixer. When he launched Spirex, barrier screws were not commonly being used for injection molding. Nick focused on the market. He opened a laboratory in 1985 dedicated to research and development of new screw designs.

Nick was a Past President of PPA.

He is survived by his wife, Illene Colby; his daughter, Gale Colby Mirzayanov, of Princeton, NJ; his son, Nick T. Colby, of Incline Village, CA; his daughter, Sarah Colby, of Oakland, CA; his grandchildren, Ted Colby, Steve Schauer, Sarah Schauer, Matthew Colby, Nicholas Colby, and Lucas Massa; and his great-grandchildren, Camilla Colby and Angelo Pasquerella. Nick’s sister, Marylou Sharrett, died in 2005.
We Fondly Remember . . .

T. KEVIN DARRAGH

T. Kevin Darragh of So. Wellfleet, MA, formerly of North Andover, died at Massachusetts General Hospital on Wednesday, September 17, 2014. Kevin was the husband of Norma (Andreason) Darragh, with whom he would have celebrated their 62nd wedding anniversary on September 29, 2014. He was born in Lowell, MA, son of the late Bernard and Margaret (Brady) Darragh, both of whom emigrated from County Antrim, Ireland. He was also the brother of the late Suzanne D. Pinette and Eleanor Perocchi.

Kevin graduated from Lowell High School and Suffolk University. After retiring from Sweetheart Plastics as Vice President of Packaging, he became a Principal in Virginia Design Packaging, a start up Plastics Company, from which he retired in 1995.

Kevin was a veteran of World War II, having served in the South Pacific with the Navy. His ship, the USS Harris, was singled out and awarded the Presidential Citation for its speed and efficiency in deploying troops in the face of enemy fire. He was involved in the invasions of Saipan, Southern Palau, Leyte, and Luzon, Iwa Jima, Okinawa, Zambales-Subic Bay, and was awarded the Navy Occupation Service Medal and the Chinese Service Medal. The crew of the Harris was also awarded the Philippine Presidential Citation years after the war ended.

Kevin was a member of the Chequessett Yacht and Country Club and served on their Board of Governors for many years. He was a communicant of Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Wellfleet.

Besides his wife, Kevin is survived by his daughter, Maureen Darragh Magro of Dunstable, MA, a son, Kevin T. of Greenfield Center, NY, four grandchildren, Thomas D. Magro of Dunstable, MA, Ryan W. Magro of West Virginia, Kristen D. Magro of Bedford, NH, and Jeffrey P. Magro of Dunstable, MA. He is also survived by a former son in law, Thomas A. Magro of Nashua, NH.

PPA MEMBER SINCE 1995
Dewey Rainville, who overcame a depression-era childhood of abandonment and homelessness to become a pioneer and innovator in the plastics industry, died of heart failure on December 9, 2014 in Summit, New Jersey. He was 91.

Mr. Rainville’s childhood was spent in an orphanage and a series of foster homes until he ran away and began supporting himself at a very young age while attending school. He signed up for the military program in his high school because the uniform came with something he desperately needed: a new pair of shoes. He then earned a position in the first Naval Officers’ Training Program at the University of Colorado, from which he graduated in 1945 with a degree in aeronautical engineering.

After serving his tour of duty in the South Pacific, Mr. Rainville focused his career on the plastics industry. Mr. Rainville started a number of companies, several of which survive to this day, including Conair, Una-Dyn - Universal Dynamics, Inc, and the Rainville Company.

Mr. Rainville was awarded more than 15 patents for his unique engineering contributions to the plastics industry. He developed technology that made it possible to make large blow molded plastic containers, including the first portable plastic fuel container known as the “Jerry Can,” and he was awarded a patent for developing the technology that made quality neck finishes for plastic bottles possible – enabling the bottles to have form-fitting tops – that is still the standard method used today. Mr. Rainville’s innovations lead to the broad acceptance of plastic bottles by consumers.

Mr. Rainville received many honors during the course of his career. He was a Society of Plastics Engineers Fellow; received the Milacron David Noffsinger Award for Engineering & Technical Excellence, the New Jersey SPE Award for Technical Achievement and the SPE “Blow Molding” Achievement Award. Mr. Rainville was also dedicated to improving safety and education in the industry. He was active in developing safety standards for Blow Molding and Auxiliaries, was a major contributor to the ANSI safety standard for Injection Blow Molding, and he lectured around the world on safety issues. In his later years, Mr. Rainville, dedicated much time to the Plastics Museum at the Syracuse University.

Mr. Rainville was also a patron of the arts. He served as President of the Newark, New Jersey opera and was a longtime patron of the Metropolitan Opera. Mr. Rainville is survived by his beloved wife of 69 years, Nancy, and their children and their spouses: Denise and Sandy Hoe; Jeffrey and Rosanne Rainville; Mark and Gay Parks Rainville; Donald and Marilyn Rainville; Christina Rainville and Peter Greenberg – as well as eleven grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

Contributions in memory of Mr. Rainville can be made to the Plastics Pioneers Education Fund.
WE FONDLY REMEMBER . . .

JORDAN I. ROTHEISER

Jordan Ira Rotheiser, 77, beloved husband and best friend of Gail, (nee Slafer) for 53 wonderful years, died on March 24th, 2015 in Highland Park, IL.

Jordan graduated from the University of Illinois with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Industrial Engineering and a second Bachelor of Fine & Applied Arts Degree in Industrial Design. One of his first jobs was designing disposable plastic hospital equipment for Abbott Laboratories. In 1963, he got a job with world famous industrial designer, the Raymond Loewy Studio in Paris, France. When he returned in 1964, Jordan started his own company - Rothesier Design. He and Gail also owned and ran the Concepts I & II stores featuring only products that met Jordan’s strict criteria of good design. Jordan was an inventor with eight patents.

Jordan was an industry activist who was interested in the well being of the plastics industry and especially in the education of young people joining the industry. He was active in the Society of Plastics Engineers and a charter member of SPE’s Product Design and Development Division, serving that group as Chairman of the Technical Program Committee for 5 years. Jordan served as Chairman of the Board of Directors and went on to represent the Division on SPE’s National Council for 3 years. Jordan was also a member of SPE’s Decoration and Assembly Division where he served on the Board of Directors and the National Council. Jordan’s work for the Society of Plastics Engineers was recognized when he received the Honored Service Member’s Award. In 2000, he was elected as a Fellow of the Society. Jordan was also a member of the Board of Directors of the Chicago Section of SPE.

Jordan wrote a series of articles for that Division’s Plastics Decorating Magazine. In addition to the Plastics Decorating series, he wrote at least 10 technical articles for other publications and, in 1999, Jordan’s book Joining of Plastics was published. He also authored chapters in four other Plastics Technology books. In 1981 he introduced a series of plastics technology seminars and eventually presented over 100 of those one- and two-day programs in addition to numerous technical papers to plastics conferences all over the United States.

Jordan was a loving and devoted father of Anne (Howard) Zavell and Brenda (David) Bergen; adored Grandpa of Max, Benjamin, and Shayna Zavell and Daniel Bergen; cherished brother of Penny (Mark Wolfinger) Rotheiser; dear brother-in-law of Deena Perlstein; fond uncle of Scott Schneider and Brian and Todd DeLevie; dear cousin and friend of many.

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What’s New With You?

Let us know what is new and exciting in your life, or that of another PPA friend, so we can share it with the rest of the PPA membership.

Please feel free to view or download this or past versions of the newsletter at http://www.plasticspioneers.org/

Keep the letters coming in! Write, phone, or email to:

The Much Travelled Sheet
27248 Twin Pond Road
Lake Barrington, IL 60010
Phone 847-381-1670
johnblc@gmail.com

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THE UPCOMING MEETING:

October 15-18, 2015
Pittsburgh, PA
Wyndham Grand Pittsburgh