

## My first Howard Vollum Story

By Bob Rosenoff

The time, approximately the fall of 1966. I had been newly employed by Tek as a calibration tech and was fresh from 6 years in the US Navy. My assignment was calibrating 500 series Oscilloscopes. On this particular day I was in the finishing stages of calibrating a 545B. I was making a particular adjustment located on the upper right rear internal shelf of the instrument while watching the screen for the optimum shape of a specific test signal. Just below and offset slightly from this adjustment's location was a test point used much earlier in the procedure, namely the test point for the 350 volt power supply.

Now to fully understand the magnitude of my experience one needs to understand that as a member of the US Navy we were trained to respect officers, no, to really respect officers. We called them sir or Mr. and had to salute them when meeting them on the street. At Tektronix everyone was on a first name basis. Even the Commanding Officer, oh, I'm sorry, the president of the company was simply called Howard. At the time of this event, I by no means had digested this concept.

So back to my calibration experience in process. My right arm was up and extended over the adjustment in question and my head was down slightly to my left as needed for viewing the on-screen waveform. As I was making this rather sensitive adjustment, I had that feeling most people have had, specifically the

feeling that someone is watching you. So I turned my head to my right and there watching over my shoulder was Howard, my latest deity. OMG!! My reaction was to drop my little finger of my right hand ever so slightly but just enough to touch the 350 volt test point. The electrical shock knocked me rather violently back in my chair that was on wheels and then back further until I slammed into the back wall of my cubicle. The back wall was made up of pegboard on which I had several tools hanging, one of which was a yellow plastic hammer that promptly fell and hit me on top of the head. Words really can't describe how I felt.

Had you asked at that moment what was going to happen next, I'm sure it would have had something to do with job loss, re-enlisting in the Navy or maybe just running away from everything. Hurt pride and embarrassment were understatements.

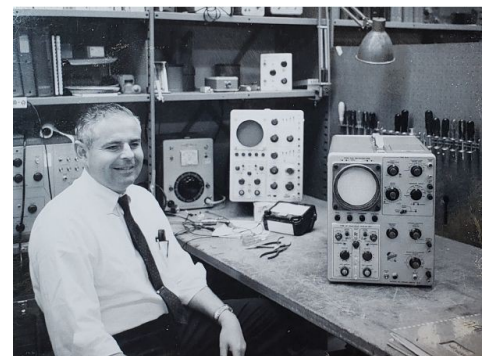
So what really happened? Howard's arm was around my shoulders preventing me from falling off my chair and he was very concerned. "Are you alright? Are you hurt?" Well no, I was not hurt and once I caught my breath I probably said something brilliant like " WOW! You're Howard Vollum." Once the dust settled he explained that he just got bored sometimes at his desk and liked to come down and "watch the action". We laughed, chatted a few moments, he left and I went back to work. Most astonishing was that in my years at Tek I saw Howard numerous times and he never forgot my name.

*Ed. - Bob Rosenoff was at Tek from 1966 to 1991.*

## Aaron Eisenbach

In September, I received a note from Larry Eisenbach who wanted his father's career at Tektronix to be remembered. Larry was an Industrial Designer in Wilsonville's Information Display Division in the early 1980's. I was struck with the fact that his father's career was unique, yet parallel to so many Tek employees. The Tek culture led to curiosity, curiosity led to study, study led to pursuit of the next challenging job. Larry writes:

Aaron Eisenbach was born in the Bronx, New York and grew up fascinated with anything technical. He would take apart radios and attempt to put them back together again in working order. He wasn't always successful. Aaron moved to Oregon with his new bride, Ruby, in 1952, where he co-owned and operated a television repair service.



He began his career at Tektronix as an oscilloscope repair technician in the Beaverton, Oregon manufacturing facility. In 1962, with three children in tow, he moved the family back East, and after a brief stint in NJ, settled in Baltimore, Maryland in the spring of 1964, working at the

Baltimore Test & Measurement Service Center.

He eventually took over management of the entire East Coast Service Center operations. In 1972 Aaron joined the then new Information Display Division as a Salesman. In the first three years he was the top sales person, nationally, and in the subsequent seven years was always in the top 2 in annual sales generated.

The majority of his sales were to military operations such as the Aberdeen Proving Grounds. His sales style was characterized by a low pressure, well researched, honest, friendly approach. He was noted for recommending competitor's products when products in Tektronix's catalog did not meet the Customers requirements. Ironically, that approach only generated more sales for Tektronix from those same Customers. He was a 27-year veteran of Tektronix between 1960–1987.

Outside of Tektronix, he indulged his significant creative talents in sculpture and cabinetmaking. His work ranged from dressers to display cabinets, busts of heads, (often times his own), ducks, elephants, birds of prey, songbirds, some abstract work, and even bugs. Aaron Eisenbach, 91, passed away on July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018 and is survived by his wife Ruby, 3 children, 12 grandchildren and six great grandchildren.



Baltimore Field Office, circa 1964  
Blue Jay and caterpillar

## Old Operators Never Die - They Just Get Outsourced!

Part One - By Wanda Toler

Operators come in all sorts of shapes and sizes. They are kind of like 'mothers.' They have a lot of qualifications. They have to be an interpreter, a counselor, a 'screener', with lots of patience and have to know how to be firm. They have to know how to 'probe' which simply means, to ask the right questions in order to get the right answers. In the beginning, they had to have lots of fingers to push and pull the right buttons, and long enough arms to reach all the 'holes.' They have to have a pleasant voice, a courteous manner and a helpful attitude!

I am pretty sure most of us had the same training, back in the 'old days', you know from Ma Bell. We were all schooled to sound generic, (like the recordings, now) "Operator, may I help you?" or "This IS the operator, how can I help you?" This is YOUR operator, I WILL help you! Whatever you may answer, the idea is that you make the caller realize that he/she will be helped, whether they want it or not! And of course, those magic words, Thank you! Even when the irate caller says, "You gave me a wrong number!" Of course, the customer is always right, and even if he is wrong or another operator did it, you have to take the blame and say, "I'm sorry, I will ring the right number for you!" We are just clones, an automated voice. And we are taught to be polite and apologetic.

When I became an operator in

1956, for Pacific Bell Company, in California, I was thrilled to be trained as a long-distance operator. We sat on high stools at switchboards arranged in long rows, sitting side-by-side facing the 'board', with a cord in our hand.

There was lots of jargon for our equipment and occasionally it would slip into our conversation.

***"I guess your party hung up, his light went out."*** or ***"I don't know what happened to her, her light is still lit!"***

The job was fun, I really enjoyed talking to customers over the telephone. Especially when I would have a call for someone way out in some little town and the operator would know if the person was home or not or where they would have gone, and usually when they would be back!

***"Oh, I'm sorry Mable won't be home for a couple hours. She's at a wake for old Mister Callahan."***

But I remember the long days, when it wasn't busy, and you were not allowed to talk to your neighbor, the time would drag by. Getting a reprimand for talking felt like being in elementary school again.

The phone company business has always been pretty consistent with the same busy times of the day for other businesses, so without seniority shifts for the operators were often split to match. It was common to work from 8 am to noon, then be back for a 4 pm to 8 pm shift. I was there for

three years, and I never got beyond the split shifts. I think I preferred them at the time, because I had a hard time sitting for such a long time!

The next six years, I stayed home, being a full-time mom. When my youngest child was beginning school, I decided maybe I could handle a part time job outside the home, and what job experience did I have? Now, a telephone company wasn't appealing, because I couldn't work those crazy hours, so I sought a private company with switchboard that I was familiar with. I took a position at Tektronix that offered a part time schedule that was perfect for me. I chose to work just two or three days a week and managed to do so for the next twenty-two years. I knew that with a growing company, the work would not get stale.

See all of Wanda's story at [www.tekretirees.com/](http://www.tekretirees.com/).

## New Hours for VintageTEK Museum

From Dave Brown – President

The VintageTEK museum changed its days of operation from Friday & Saturday to Thursday & Saturday when we moved to the Tektronix campus.

Due to a number of factors, the museum is changing back to a Friday/Saturday schedule. Regular open hours will be:

**Friday - 10am to 6pm**  
**Saturday - 10am to 4pm.**

The museum will also open on request if volunteers are available. The effective date for this change will be November 29<sup>th</sup> so the museum will not be open that day but will be open on Friday November 30<sup>th</sup>. Thank you.

## Death Notices

**Addison, Stephan M.** –  
d11/2017@Tek 21.85 years

**Baker, Clifford E.** -d110/3/2018

**Bernert, Ray** -d10/6/2018 @Tek 27 years

**Chartrey, Mary Alice** -d4/10/2018

**DuBrau, Harold R.** -d4/18/2018  
@Tek 32.77 years

**Eyck, William 'Ross' Ten** –  
d1/10/2017

**Hency, Gerald** @ Tek 9.28 years

**Hyde, Mary Virginia** -d5/5/2014  
@Tek 17.85 years

**Keenan, Lyle Thomas** -d10/30/2018

**Langerveld, Edward Roy** -  
d7/14/2018 @Tek 30+years

**May, Macel Evella 'Micki'** -  
d9/26/2018 @Tek 30+ years

**McCracken, Louise A** -d10/4/2018  
@Tek 30 years

**McNiel, Lorraine Marie (Teague)** -  
d1/18/2018

**Mensah, Kwaku** d10/8/2018

**Metzler, Robert"Bob"** -d8/11/2018

**Mock, Richard "Dick"Leed** –  
d2/17/2017 @Tek 22.5years

**Oswald, Robert J. "Bob"** -  
d10/14/2018

**Overman, Dennis Leo** -d8/28/2018

**Tomlinson, Jefferson H.** d6/26/2018

**Turcotte, Alvin Joseph** -d6/5/2016

**Wagemann, Agnes Ann** -  
d8/12/2017

### RETIREE BENEFIT INFORMATION & ADDRESS CHANGE PROCEEDURE

#### Retiree Medical and/or Life Insurance

Anyone who is a past employee with Retiree Medical and/or Life Insurance will need to request information or make changes in writing to A & I. You must include your signature and Social Security number.

Tektronix Post Employment Services  
A & I Benefit Plan Administrators, Inc.  
1220 SW Morrison St., Suite 300  
Portland, OR 97205-2222  
Toll Free: 1-800-778-7956  
Fax: 503-228-0149

#### 401k Benefit

Anyone who has a 401k benefit must contact Fidelity for information or to change their address directly with them at:

1-800-835-5092

#### Cash Balance Plan

The Cash Balance Plan has been transferred to Danaher Pension Plan Processing Center with Hewitt. Questions or changes should be directed to:

1-800-580-7526

#### Tektronix Retiree Volunteer Program

M/S 13-400  
PO Box 500  
Beaverton, OR 97077 - 0001

Phone: 503-627-4056

Email Address:

Tek-Retirees@Tektronix.com

## Tek Retiree News

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Office Telephone: 503-627-4056

Email: [tek-retirees@tektronix.com](mailto:tek-retirees@tektronix.com)

TRVP Web Page:

[www.tekretirees.com](http://www.tekretirees.com)

TRVP Office Hours Thursdays 10-3

## Tektronix Retiree Volunteer Program

M/S 13-400, PO Box 500

Beaverton, OR 97077 - 0001

## VintageTEK Hours

Friday - 10am to 6pm

Saturday - 10am to 4pm

Other times by request

## TRVP Hours

Thursdays 10-3

## TRVP News

Louis Sowa

As some of you know we lost the website that we were using. The Internet Service Provider (ISP) went out of business without advance warning. We now have a new web site **TEKRETIREES.COM**. Note **.COM** not **.NET**. We also have a new webmaster, Randy Winkel as Neil informed us several months ago of his desire to retire from the TRVP webmaster job. We have contracted a new ISP (GoDaddy). The Tek museum uses GoDaddy. Pete Nelson has been working on the transition with help from Neil and Randy.

[Tekretirees.com](http://www.tekretirees.com)

If the above fails use:

<https://www.tekretirees.com/>

## CALENDAR

### Redmond Breakfasts

8:00 a.m. 1st Monday monthly  
Shari's Restaurant; Redmond, OR  
1565 SW Odem Medo Way  
Spouses welcome  
Details: Nick Hughes 541-548-1201

### TERadio Amateurs Club

Weekly on Friday 6:00 p. m.  
Round Table — Beaverton  
SW Beaverton Hillsdale Hwy and  
SW Western Ave  
Next door to Bi-Mart

### Previous Tek-Employees Luncheon

11:30 a.m. 2nd Monday monthly  
Peppermill Restaurant  
17455 SW Farmington Road #26B  
(Corner of Farmington  
& Kinnaman Rd)  
Aloha, OR 97007  
Details: Annetta Spickelmier  
503-312-8825

## READ YOUR TEK-RETIREE NEWSLETTER ONLINE

Would you like to help save postage and read your Tek-Retiree Newsletter on our webpage? Send your name, address, phone number and email address to:

[tek-retirees@tektronix.com](mailto:tek-retirees@tektronix.com)

We will send you a notice when the newsletter is posted each quarter. If your email is changed or rejected for any reason you will receive one phone call to request an update. If you don't respond we will return your newsletter to the US mail list. To preview the web page and previous issues of the newsletter go to: [www.tekretirees.org](http://www.tekretirees.org)

Please send questions, information or correspondence not involving the newsletter online to TVRP at [tek-retirees@tektronix.com](mailto:tek-retirees@tektronix.com)