faculty eulogies
2013-2014
Lester Gerhardt, President

Paweł Keblinski, Vice President

José Holguín–Veras, Chair of Faculty

Vincent Meunier, Secretary of Faculty

Lois Peters, Secretary of Senate

Matthew Oehlschlaeger, Recording Secretary

Chip Kilduff, Immediate Past Secretary of the Faculty
LISTING BY DEPARTMENT

Architecture:
  Professor Roland L. Hummel

Arts:
  Professor Robert F. Winne ’49

Biology:
  Professor Louis J. Castiglione Jr.

Civil and Environmental Engineering:
  Professor Robert K. Palmer ’37

Chemistry:
  Professor Sydney Ross

Electrical, Computer, & Systems Engineering:
  Professor Edward J. Smith ’66, Ph.D.
  Professor Harry E. Stephanou

History:
  Professor William H. Pease

Mathematics:
  Professor Bernard A. Fleishman
  Professor Horace Komm

Material Science & Engineering:
  Professor George S. Ansell ’54

Mechanical, Aeronautical, and Nuclear Engineering:
  Professor Edward A. Fox

Physics:
  Professor Robert Resnick

Political Science/Psychology:
  Professor Kenneth J. Comfort, Ph.D.

Psychology:
  Professor Gillray L. Kandel

MBA Hartford:
  Professor Robert C. Klein
Dr. George S. Ansell ’54 and his wife, Marjorie Ansell, both passed away on Friday, August 30, 2013. Dr. and Mrs. Ansell made important contributions to our beloved Institute. Rensselaer would not be what it is today without the effort, passion, and intellect of Dr. Ansell.

Dr. Ansell first arrived at Rensselaer as a freshman in 1951, earning his bachelor’s degree in metallurgical engineering in 1954 and a master’s degree in 1955. After serving on active duty in the U.S. Navy until 1958, he returned to Rensselaer, earning his Ph.D. in 1960, and joining the faculty of the Institute that same year.

Active in both teaching and research, he was promoted to Professor of Metallurgical Engineering in 1965, appointed as the Robert W. Hunt Professor in 1967, and named chair of the Materials Division in 1969.

Dr. Ansell published extensively, received several major national awards, and was the thesis adviser for some 75 graduate students. He was a fellow of the American Society for Metals, the Metallurgical Society, and the American Institute of Mining, Metallurgical, and Petroleum Engineers.

In 1974, he was appointed as Dean of Engineering. During his 10-year tenure, the School of Engineering greatly expanded its focus on graduate education and research. Engineering enrollment and research funding flourished under his leadership, and Rensselaer participated successfully in important technological initiatives in partnership with industry, including those involving interactive computer graphics, advanced manufacturing, and integrated electronics.

The hub of engineering activities on campus, the J. Erik Jonsson Engineering Center opened during Dr. Ansell’s deanship. His many contributions to Rensselaer were commemorated in that building when a central gathering space was named after him, the George S. Ansell ’54 Lounge. A large montage celebrating his accomplishments and time at Rensselaer is framed and on display in that room.

Mrs. Ansell, also a member of the Rensselaer family, worked in the Development Office of Institute Advancement.

Dr. Ansell left Rensselaer in 1984 to become the 13th president of the Colorado School of Mines. He served in that role until his retirement in 1998 with the title of President Emeritus. Today, Colorado School of Mines has both a department and an endowed professorship named for him. Dr. and Mrs. Ansell are survived by their children, Frederick, Laura, and Benjamin, and three grandchildren.

Submitted by:
Shirley Ann Jackson, Ph.D., President
Professor of Physics, Applied Physics, and Astronomy
Professor of Engineering Sciences
September 6, 2013
George Ansell was born in Akron Ohio in 1934. He grew up in New York City, attended the Bronx High School of Science and came to Rensselaer in 1950 as a 16 year old. He completed the requirements for the BS in Metallurgical Engineering in 1954 as a member of the Institute’s ROTC program. George being George, upon graduation he convinced the Navy to delay his commissioning so that he could pursue a Master’s degree which he completed in 1955. He was then commissioned as an engineering officer and arranged to be assigned to the Naval Research Laboratory. At the Laboratory he was able to collect data that was relevant to his research for his dissertation and returning to RPI in 1958 completed his Ph.D. in only two years. Upon completion of the Ph.D. he joined the faculty of the Metallurgical Engineering Department, becoming Chairman of what had become the Materials Division in 1969. He was appointed the Robert W. Hunt Professor in 1967. From 1974 to 1984, George inaugurated the transformation of the Engineering School from an outstanding undergraduate program with a prestigious but small graduate program to a world class powerhouse in engineering research. His “Build” program increased the size of the faculty by more than a third, and more than doubled the research expenditures of the School while continuing to enhance the undergraduate program. In 1984 George was appointed to the presidency at the Colorado School of Mines and served from 1984 to 1998. At Mines he changed the nature of the school from a regional undergraduate program to that of a national university, expanding its thrust into research and greatly expanding its diversity programs.

As a faculty member at Rensselaer, George was highly active in research and he was recognized for his work particularly in ferrous metallurgy. He was awarded the Hardy Gold Medal of the American Institute of Mining, Metallurgical and Petroleum Engineers, the Meister Award for outstanding Alumnus Award from the Bronx High School of Science, the Stoughton Young Teacher Award of the American Society for Metals, the McGraw award of the American Society for Engineering Education, the Distinguished faculty award from RPI and was elected a Fellow of the American Society for Metals and also a Fellow of the American Institute of Mining, Metallurgical and Petroleum Engineers.

As a testament to George’s stature, Representative Bob Schaffer of Colorado presented a special tribute to him at a session of the 105th Congress in 1997, recognizing his accomplishments at the Colorado School of Mines. Among the many accolades in the tribute Representative Shaffer said: “Under the leadership of Dr. Ansell, the Colorado School of Mines has emerged as one of the nation West’s premier institutions excelling in engineering, applied science and earth sciences”. A similar statement can be made of George’s tenure at Rensselaer. George placed his Department the School of Engineering and the Institute on an upward path that continues today. He will be sorely missed by all who knew and worked with him.

Submitted by:
Professor David J. Duquette, Ph.D.
John Tod Horton Professor of Engineering
Materials Science and Engineering Department
Mr. SCHAFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the exceptional contributions Dr. George Ansell has made for America’s higher education system. As the president of the Colorado School of Mines, he has announced his retirement. Dr. Ansell is truly dedicated to the higher education system and the students he serves. Under the leadership of Dr. Ansell, the Colorado School of Mines has emerged as one of the West’s premier institutions excelling in engineering, applied science, and earth sciences.

Dr. Ansell has broadened the college’s scope to include high academic achievement and quality research, and insisted on seeing each strengthen the other. The Colorado School of Mines was recently recognized by the National Science Foundation for institution-wide reform in undergraduate education in science, mathematics, engineering, and technology. The selected colleges are now considered national models of excellence by the NSF.

Dr. Ansell, born in Akron, OH, in 1934, grew up in New York, attending the elite Bronx High School of Science. He attended Rensselaer Polytechnical Institute on a Naval ROTC scholarship, receiving a bachelor’s degree in metallurgical engineering in 1954, and later a master’s degree in metallurgical engineering and a Ph.D in metallurgical engineering in 1960. He served as an engineering officer in the United States Navy from 1955 to 1958, and physical metallurgist on the Metal Physics Consultant Staff, U.S. Naval Research Laboratory—1957-58. From 1960 to 1984, he was a faculty member at his alma mater, RPI. He became chairman of the Materials Division, RPI—1969-74, dean, School of Engineering, RPI—1974-84, acting dean, School of Management, RPI—1980-81, and finally, president of Colorado School of Mines in 1984.

Dr. Ansell leaves the Colorado School of Mines with a legacy of excellence. His efforts have truly enhanced the institution. His leadership there will be sorely missed. His never-ending quest for academic perfection has truly left its mark.

I thank Dr. Ansell for his contributions, on behalf of the State of Colorado, and I enter into the Record a quote by Dr. Ansell that expresses his sentiments about the Colorado School of Mines:

“It has been a great privilege for me to have served as president of Colorado School of Mines. My tenure has been filled with exciting challenges and opportunities to promote the vitality of this outstanding institution.

My proudest achievement has been improving the quality of an already outstanding institution by: increasing the number of under-represented minorities from three percent to 14 percent of the undergraduate student body, increasing the number of female students to 25 percent of the entire student body, insuring through fundraising that any student who has the desire and the ability can attend CSM, regardless of his or her financial means, expanding the base of the school’s first-rate faculty, and revitalizing the campus physical plant with state of the art facilities. Colorado is fortunate to have in its midst a university which has the commitment and dedication of such an excellent Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, and outside benefactors, together with its extraordinary student body and alumni.”

Mr. Speaker, the faculty, students, and all who have worked with Dr. Ansell are better people because of his integrity, leadership, and dedication to the Colorado School of Mines family.
Professor Louis J. Castiglione Jr.
1944 – 2013

Dr. Louis J. Castiglione Jr, age 68, of Gloversville, passed away peacefully on Saturday morning, June 8, 2013 at his home in Gloversville with his family at his side. He was born October 8, 1944 in Gloversville, the son of Louis and Anita Karas Castiglione. He was a graduate of Mount Carmel School, the Manlius School of Fayetteville, N.Y.; Assumption College of Worcester, Mass.; Long Island University at C.W. Post, and New York University where he received his PhD in biological oceanography in 1973.

Lou was a faculty member at various universities including Long Island University, University of Virginia, University of Seattle and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He also worked at the NYS Department of State. In 1976 he became president of Castiglione Jewelers, Inc. of Gloversville, the company his father started in 1929. He attained the title of certified gemologist appraiser in 1989.

He has earned many accolades from within the industry and the public, and has served as an example of integrity in both the science of gemology and the sale of jewelry. He was a long time member and past president of the Glove Cities Rotary, and was a member of the Gloversville BID, Gloversville Library, Glove Theater, and The Eccentric Club.

Lou was married to Barbara Keller on April 28, 1979. They have shared over 34 years of marriage. Barbara survives, as well as their two sons, Matthew and Andrew. Also surviving are his sister, Elaine; mother-in-law, Olga Keller; brothers-in-law and sister-in-law, William Keller III (Maria), James Keller (Jennifer) and Susan Duross (Glenn). He is also survived by many nieces, nephews, and cousins who have been very supportive and hold a special place in Lou and Barbara’s heart.

He was predeceased by his parents; his brother, George; and his father-in-law, William L. Keller Jr.

The family will receive relatives and friends from 4 to 7 p.m. Tuesday, June 11 at Walrath & Stewart Funeral Home, 51 Fremont St., Gloversville. On Wednesday a Mass of Christian Burial will be con-celebrated at 10 a.m. at the Church of the Holy Spirit, 151 S. Main St., Gloversville. Interment will follow in Mount Carmel Cemetery, Johnstown. Memorial contributions may be made in lieu of flowers to the Palliative Care Dept., c/o St. Mary’s Healthcare Foundation, 427 Guy Park Ave., Amsterdam, NY 12010 or to Mountain Valley Hospice, 108 Steele Ave., Gloversville, NY 12078. The family would like to extend special thanks to Dr. Nancy Knudsen and the staff at Home Health Care Partners and Mountain Valley Hospice for the wonderful care that they provided to Lou.

Published in Albany Times Union on June 10, 2013

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Kenneth Jerold Comfort Ph.D., 86, of Columbia Street, passed away peacefully on Friday, August 9, 2013 as a result of a fall at his residence.

Born in Lawrence, Kan., he was the son of the late Harold and Winifred Cunningham Comfort. Ken had received his doctorate in political science from Columbia University and taught for six years at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy. He also had served for 10 years as the director of the Public Management Institute in the former New York State Department of Social Services.


Ken was a veteran of both the U.S. Marine Corps and the Merchant Marines. He was the husband of the late Harriet King Comfort who died in 2010. He is survived by his son, Kenneth Jay Comfort, and his wife, Becky of Albany; and is predeceased by two brothers, Harold Dean Comfort and Robert Comfort. Also surviving is his longtime caregiver, Cheryl Bobowski of Waterford.

A funeral service will be held on Wednesday, August 14, 2013 at 6 p.m. at the Philip J. Brendese Funeral Home, 133 Broad St. (Route 32), Waterford. Interment will be in the Gerald B.H. Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery. Relatives and friends may visit at the funeral home on Wednesday from 4 to 6 p.m. prior to the funeral service.

Published in Albany Times Union on Aug. 11, 2013
Dr. Bernard A. Fleishman, 87, a former professor within the Department of Mathematical Sciences at Rensselaer passed away on April 6, 2013.

As a mathematician, Dr. Fleishman spent much of his time working on and teaching non-linear partial differential equations that occur widely in science and engineering, as well as what are known as boundary value problems. He employed analytical techniques such as monotone iteration and perturbation to study a number of free boundary problems, which have applications in varied contexts, including heat conduction involving change of phase, chemical reactions, and equilibrium configurations in plasmas.

A second area of focus for Dr. Fleishman was education at pre-college levels. From 1972 to 1982, he directed a series of workshops aimed at strengthening the mathematical capabilities of elementary and high school teachers who are uncomfortable with mathematics.

Dr. Fleishman graduated from City College of New York and earned an M.S. in physics and a Ph.D. in mathematics at New York University. After a short stint as a researcher at Johns Hopkins University, he began a long and distinguished career teaching mathematics at Rensselaer, where he remained until retiring in 1990. A dedicated educator, he volunteered at the Robert C. Parker School, and continued to teach at Rensselaer even after his retirement. He was a community leader throughout most of his life, serving on the boards of various organizations, including Temple Beth El, the Capital District Transportation Authority, and Joseph's House and Shelter. He was president of the Brittonkill School Board for several years, and served as president of the Interfaith Alliance of New York State until very recently.

He is survived by his children, Daniel Fleishman (Barbara Shapiro), Nina Fleishman (Barry Leibson), and Leo Fleishman (Tracy Prebish); six grandchildren; and a great-grandchild. He was married for 61 years to Ruth Fleishman, who died last year. Born in New York City in 1925, Dr. Fleishman was the son of Saul and Anna Fleishman.

Dr. Fleishman will be greatly missed by generations of students, staff, alumnae, and alumni. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family in this time of mourning.

Submitted by:
Shirley Ann Jackson, Ph.D., President
Professor of Physics, Applied Physics, and Astronomy
Professor of Engineering Sciences
April 12, 2013
FOX—Edward Alexander, 93, retired Professor of Mechanical Engineering at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute died on September 26, 2013.

Father of Susan R. Fox-Erlich of Cambridge, MA and Barbara S. Fox of Wayland, MA and the late Deborah M. Fox and Patricia A. Fox. Also survived by four granddaughters, 11 nieces and nice nephews.

Husband of the late Sally Ingersoll Fox. Family services will be held at Garfield Cemetery in Stephentown, NY at a later date.

In lieu of flowers memorial donations may be sent to Center for Constitutional Rights, 666 Broadway, 7th Floor, New York, NY 10012.

Arrangements entrusted to the care of the John C. Bryant Funeral Home of Wayland, MA. For online condolences please visit johncbryantfuneralhome.com.

Published in The New York Times on Oct. 4, 2013
Roland L. Hummel, who served Rensselaer as Professor of Architecture for 39 years, passed away at Samaritan Hospital in Troy on November 1, 2013.

Educated as a structural engineer at Pennsylvania State University and the California Institute of Technology, Professor Hummel taught courses in wood, steel, and concrete structural design to generations of architecture students. His students in Modern Structural Systems erected experimental structures on campus lawns, adding spark to the Rensselaer experience. Prior to joining Rensselaer, he taught at the University of Connecticut, Swarthmore, and Robert College in Istanbul.

Following his retirement from teaching, Professor Hummel embarked on his greatest life adventure, joining full-time the studio of the renowned sculptor George Rickey, Professor of Art at Rensselaer from 1961 to 1968. Rickey’s highly innovative kinetic sculptures, such as “Six Random Lines Excentric,” erected in the Hassan Quad in front of the Greene Building in 2000 as a gift from Trustee Nancy S. Mueller, are marvels of structural engineering in their conception, realization, and installation. Hummel traveled extensively, testing and installing Rickey pieces all over the world. For many years, his own collection of Rickey pieces graced the front yard of his home in Eagle Mills, much to the delight of passers-by. Professor Hummel moved to Beechwood, near the campus, in 2010.

Roland Hummel lived a full life of 94 years, never outgrowing his passions for art, music (especially opera), travel, and his family. Predeceased by his wife, Betty, and daughter, Beth, he leaves three children (David, Tim, and Sally), six grandchildren, and a legion of students who remember his tenacity and wit, as much as his grounding in knowledge and thoroughness.

Submitted by:
Shirley Ann Jackson, Ph.D., President
Professor of Physics, Applied Physics, and Astronomy
Professor of Engineering Sciences
November 13, 2013
Former Rensselaer Professor Roland Hummel died on Friday, November 1, 2013 at the age of 94. He was an undergraduate at Penn State and did his graduate work at the California Institute of Technology before working at United Steel. He taught at the University of Connecticut, Swarthmore and Robert College in Istanbul before joining the faculty at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute’s School of Architecture in 1950 where he taught structures for 39 years. His deepest interests were in his family, music, art and travel. In addition to the professorate, he maintained a structural engineering practice for over 43 years, most notably dedicated to the person and work of sculptor George Rickey. He was predeceased by his wife, Betty Frie Hummel and daughter, Beth ReRubertis. He is survived by his children, David (Anna), Tim, Sally (Matt) Hummel-Gilchrist, and his son-in-law, Bart ReRubertis. He also leaves behind six grandchildren, Catherine, Diana and Liz Hummel, Liam and Graeme Gilchrist and Alex Hummel.

The Engineer behind the Artist

Birds without wings are an apt comparison to what George Rickey’s kinetic sculptures would be without the highly sophisticated, wonderfully refined and spectacularly underacknowledged engineering of Roland Hummel who, behind the scenes and without fanfare, enabled some of the world’s most universally captivating works of art. The difference between static sculpture fixed in relation to its environs and the work of George Rickey is made possible through the seemingly effortless balance of blades, panels and shards emancipated by Roland Hummel’s three-axis knuckle joints and precision balancing. His engineering design freed massive aluminum forms to rotate and sway gracefully in response to the slightest variants of the environment – so that even on the stillest of days they are moved as though by the breath of angels. Rickey’s and Hummel’s liberation of large-scale masses extend the work of Alexander Calder’s mid 20th century mobiles and are precursors to Theo Janzen’s moving machines.

“Freeee the Body”

Any of more than two thousand former students will recall the essential and ironically poetic core of Roland Hummel’s pedagogy; that to understand and analyze structure one must by diagram, “freeee the body” to analyze and resolve the forces at play. This ever-pervasive principle defined his teaching. How poignant that his work with one of the world’s celebrated artists would be dedicated to ‘freeing the body’ in a literal sense, to be anything but static and perform kinetically. Professor Hummel did not boast his collaborative work with George Rickey in the classroom, but in retrospect, the glint in his eye, raised pitch of voice and extension of syllables when exclaiming the need to “free the body” must for him have held a beautiful double meaning not limited to static structures held in place.

Many of the Rensselaer community will recall being caught in wondrous hypnotic gaze at “the Chrinitoid” in front of Rensselaer’s Greene Building - wind in a complex play with multiple metallic elements that should surely crash but never do, released into an elegant and exquisite dance; sometimes sweet, other times angry – but never the same. Similarly poetic, precisely balanced kinetic sculptures of Rickey have found their way to many continents and countries, the monuments and legacy to a brilliant, creative and inspiring engineer and artist—Roland L. Hummel.

Submitted by:
Mark S. Mistur, Professor, School of Architecture
Dr. Gillray L. Kandel, a longtime resident of the Capital District, died peacefully at home on April 18, 2013. Dr. Kandel was born in New York City on June 9, 1924.

World War II interrupted his college education when he entered the U.S. Army Signal Corps. He was involved in the development of the top secret SIGSALY project, a secure speech system used in World War II for the highest-level Allied communications.

Following his honorable discharge from the service, he returned to City College of New York and received his bachelor’s degree in 1950. While performing his postgraduate work, he received a research fellowship from Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School. In 1958, he received his doctorate of philosophy from the University of Rochester where he studied psychology and visual psychophysics.

Dr. Kandel had a long and respected career as a professor of psychology at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute from which he retired in 2001. He was a prolific inventor and the holder of nine patents. Following retirement from RPI, he began a second career as a successful inventor and entrepreneur. He was particularly proud of his accomplishment of researching and developing an ophthalmic medical device technology that has since been commercialized and approved for sale throughout the world.

His wife, Sheila Kandel; his sons, Denis and Joel; a daughter, Janet; and various stepchildren, cousins, nephews, and nieces survive him. He will be buried Tuesday April 23, 2013, with full military honors at the Gerald B.H. Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery in Schuylerville. To sign his online guestbook visit, levinememorialchapel.com.

Published in Albany Times Union on Apr. 21, 2013
Professor Robert C. Klein

1927 – 2013

HOPEWELL JUNCTION—Robert C. Klein, 85, a resident of Hopewell Junction for 40 years, formerly of Plainview, LI died on Tuesday, July 9, 2013 in York, Pennsylvania.

Born on December 22, 1927, in Vienna, Austria, he was the son of Leo and Martha Klein.

After serving in the navy at the end of WW II he entered City College. Robert received a Masters in Engineering from City College and his MBA from CW Post; graduating with the Dean’s Award. He had a long and successful professional life, first as an aerospace engineer with Kollsman, working on our first Apollo missions, and then with Macbeth Corporation and Kimberly Clark. After leaving corporate life he went on to teach as an Associate Professor at Rensselaer’s graduate business program in Hartford, Connecticut.

On June 15, 1951 he married Carla (Thal) who predeceased him on December 18, 2008. They were married for 58 years and had a wonderful life together, traveling around the world, wintering in Siesta Keys, Florida, and taking courses with the Center for Lifetime Study at Marist College.

He is survived by a son and daughter-in-law, Dr. Michael Allen and Kim Klein of York, PA; a son, David Scott Klein and Nilsa of Manhattan, NY; grandchildren Joshua, Andrew and Alyssa Klein; his sister Susie Zwerling; and longtime friend and companion, Alyce Gould.

Published in the Poughkeepsie Journal on Aug. 18, 2013
Horace Komm, 96, a former professor and chairman of the mathematics department at Howard University, died of sepsis Feb. 19 at Suburban Hospital in Bethesda.

His son Ted Komm confirmed his death.

Dr. Komm joined the Howard faculty in 1962 and retired in 1987. He was a Bethesda resident.

Horace Komm was born in Kharkov, in what is now Ukraine. In 1925, he immigrated with his family to Buffalo. He graduated from what is now the State University of New York at Buffalo in 1937 and received a doctorate in mathematics from the University of Michigan in 1943.

Before joining Howard, he was an aeronautics designer at Curtiss-Wright Co. in Columbus, Ohio, and a mathematics teacher at the University of Rochester in New York, the University of the South in Sewanee, Tenn., and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, N.Y.

In 1952, he founded Graylock Press, a Baltimore-based publisher of English translations of works by leading Russian and German mathematicians. With two colleagues, he translated and published 19 volumes.

His wife of 55 years, Asya Dohn Komm, died in 2002. Survivors include three children, Stephen Komm of Upper Darby, Pa., Laura Richardson of Rockville and Dr. Gregory ‘Ted’ Komm of Bethesda; and five grandchildren.

Bart Barnes, Washington Post, February 28, 2013
Robert “Bob” Palmer graduated from RPI in 1937 with a BS in Civil Engineering. He worked in construction for several years and served in the US Army for three years during WWII, where he was in charge of the maintenance of surveying equipment in the Italian campaign. After WWII he returned to RPI to obtain a master’s degree in Civil Engineering and joined the faculty of Civil Engineering. He specialized in transportation engineering, construction and surveying. Shortly after WWII many of the RPI students were military veterans attending on the GI Bill. Bob and many other RPI faculty often said these students were some of the best students they ever had; mature, serious about an education, and worked and played hard.

Up until the late 1960’s all Civil Engineering students were required to attend a one month summer surveying camp between their junior and senior years. Bob was in charge of the RPI camp in Pownal, Vermont, and had many stories to tell about the summer camps. In theory local bars were off limits. However the students often snuck out in the evening to partake of the local scene. One year, shortly after WWII, a group consisting of several combat veterans took offense at being referred to as pansy college boys by some of the locals. In the ensuing disagreement, the bar was essentially destroyed, and as Bob put it “the locals lost the Battle of Pownal”. Things were simpler then, and no one was arrested or sued, and the next day the whole surveying class repaired the bar to better than new condition.

Bob taught the surveying courses, and at the end of each term after all maps were turned in he would say “well, some RPI buildings have moved several inches again”.

Bob established a state of the art asphalt technology lab, as well as surveying and photogrammetry labs. When faculty research became important he was involved in a number of practical projects, usually solving problems for the NY State Department of Transportation and the NY State Asphalt Producers Association in paving and asphalt technology.

The students liked and respected Bob, because they knew he was a dedicated teacher who truly wanted them to learn the course material, and he always had time for students. In fact when you went into his office he was usually working with students.

Bob retired in 1977 after more than 30 years on the faculty. However for a number of years he returned in the fall to teach surveying. He was an accomplished musician and composer, and after retiring from RPI wrote church music for his church, the Mt Ida Community Baptist Church in Troy. Bob liked to stay active and he walked a lot, 10-20 miles daily, and was often seen walking from his North Greenbush residence to and from Troy. He kept up his walking until recent times.

Submitted by:
Thomas Zimmie, Professor, Civil and Environmental Engineering
CHAPEL HILL, N.C.—William H. Pease, son of Arline G. Brooks Pease and Clarence A. G. Pease, was born Aug. 31, 1924, in Winchendon, Mass. For the last 17 years he had lived in Chapel Hill, N.C., where he died June 20, 2013. But his love of coastal Maine and the chamber music he heard at Kneisel Hall every summer never waned.

Despite having moved with his parents and two older sisters to Quakertown, Pa., when he was five, he remained a fiercely committed Yankee, his pride of place reinforced by three years at the Phillips Exeter Academy. Drafted as soon as he graduated in 1943, he was assigned to the Army Specialized Training Program which allowed him to complete the courses at City College and New York University that admitted him to Columbia University’s College of Physicians and Surgeons. Nonetheless, he chose to pursue a career in the humanities, completing a bachelor’s degree at Williams College and a Master of Arts degree in American history at the University of Wisconsin before he taught for three years at Mount Hermon School. After marrying and deciding to pursue a Doctor of Philosophy degree in history at the University of Rochester, he taught for nine years at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, two at the University of Calgary, and 22 at the University of Maine. His books, all researched and written with Jane Hanna Pease, took him to libraries and archives across the United States and Canada. They were, however, mostly written in their summer cabin on Penobscot Bay’s Cape Rosier. Those from 1955-1975 attested to his interest in pre-Civil War free people of color, Black Utopia: Negro Communal Experiments in North America and They Who Would Be Free: Blacks Search for Freedom 1830-1861, and abolitionism, The Anti-slavery Argument and Bound with Them in Chains. Thereafter his attention shifted to 19th century Charleston, S.C., its economy and politics, The Web of Progress: Private Values and Public Styles in Boston and Charleston, 1828-1843 and James Louis Petigru: Southern Conservative, Southern Dissenter, and the experience of its women, Ladies, Women, and Wenches. Choice and Constraint in Antebellum Charleston and Boston and A Family of Women. The Carolina Petigrus in Peace and War.

He is survived by his wife of 63 years; sister, Barbara Pease Stuart; nephews, Robert Carels and Peter Carels; and grandnephew, William Noble.
Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to salute Prof. William H. Pease, Jr. as a Point of light for the citizens of New York City and for all Americans. Professor Pease is a teacher, a former engineer, and a forceful advocate of the study of African-American history. Tomorrow, October 2, 1997, Professor Pease will be 76 years old. He presently serves as professor emeritus, professor of electrical engineering and assistant dean of instruction at Suffolk Community College in Selden, NY.

In his own right, William Pease is a Point of light; however, he would proudly acknowledge the fact that he is also a reflection of the flames left burning by two of his mentors, Rosetta Gaston and Carter G. Woodson. In addition to all of his other labors, the promotion of African-American history has always been a passion of Professor Pease. He was a teenage pupil of Mother Gaston who first introduced him to the work of Carter G. Woodson, the founder of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. It should be noted that Dr. John Hope Franklin, the current chairman of the President’s Advisory Board on Race, was also a disciple of Carter G. Woodson.

Professor Pease’s great passion for the promotion of African-American history increases his effectiveness in his work with youth. Wherever possible, he is always ready to assist youth-serving programs. Together with his daughter, Denise Pease, he has sponsored a scholarship awarded through the Central Brooklyn Martin Luther King Commission to student winners of essay and art contests. As a teacher and a counselor he has directly inspired young people. In his quiet and forthright presentations, he keeps the spirit of Frederic Douglass and Martin Luther King alive.

Professor Pease is a graduate of Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn and Fordham University. Prior to assuming his position at Suffolk County Community College, he was a senior instructor at RCA Institute and a microwave engineer at Tungsol Electronics. At Suffolk, he has served as the director of the educational opportunities program and the facility advisor of the Black Students Organization.

Numerous organizations has previously recognized William Pease as a great Point of light. He won accolades as the Tuskegee airmen welter-weight champion in 1945. He was the first African-American president of the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers. Over the years he has received awards from: The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History; the New York University Weekend Tutorial Project; the Professional Achievement Award of the Brownsville Association for the Study of African American Life and History; the Teacher of the Year Award from the New York University Outreach Program for Mathematics and Science; the Mary McLeod Bethune Award for the motivation of black youth; and a proclamation from the Suffolk County Executive for outstanding service and leadership.

Hundreds of the students and disciples of Professor Pease occupy leadership positions throughout the city and the Nation. For his community and for all Americans, Prof. William H. Pease, Jr. is a great point of light.
Dr. Robert Resnick, a world-renowned physicist, educator, mentor, and member of the Rensselaer Alumni Hall of Fame, passed away on January 29, 2014.

Dr. Resnick was a dynamic and beloved member of the Rensselaer campus community for nearly four decades. He is widely known as the co-author of the famous 1960 textbook Physics, which revolutionized how the discipline of physics was taught at universities around the world. The book, now in its 10th edition with the updated title Fundamentals of Physics, continues to be used in undergraduate physics courses in colleges and universities across the globe. In total, he was the author or co-author of seven physics textbooks, which appeared in 15 editions and more than 47 languages.

After earning his bachelor’s degree and doctorate from Johns Hopkins University, Dr. Resnick served as a faculty member at the University of Pittsburgh. He joined the Rensselaer faculty in 1956, received the Distinguished Faculty Award in 1971, and in 1974, was named the Edward P. Hamilton Distinguished Professor of Science Education. He served in this capacity until transitioning into the role of Professor Emeritus in 1993.

Students, faculty, and staff who shared their time on campus with Dr. Resnick remember his reputation as an expert limericist. Legend has it that a group of students once challenged him to a limerick face-off, which he handily won—one among a bounty of stories that demonstrate that Dr. Resnick touched the lives of many members of the Rensselaer family.

Dr. Resnick introduced the Rensselaer interdisciplinary science curriculum in 1973, and chaired the initiative for 15 years. On campus, the Robert Resnick Center for Physics Education was named in his honor. The Robert Resnick Lecture was established in 1994, and continues to be an impactful event.

In 1975, the American Association of Physics Teachers bestowed upon Dr. Resnick its highest honor, the Oersted Medal. He later served as president of the association, which said of him, “Few physicists have had greater or more direct influence on undergraduate physics students than has Robert Resnick.”

Dr. Resnick was predeceased by his wife, Mildred, and is survived by his two daughters, Abby and Gina. Our thoughts and prayers are with them, and the rest of the Resnick family, at this time of personal loss and mourning.

Submitted by:
Shirley Ann Jackson, Ph.D., President
Professor of Physics, Applied Physics, and Astronomy
Professor of Engineering Sciences
January 31, 2014
Robert Resnick is professor emeritus at Rensselaer and the former Edward P. Hamilton Distinguished Professor of Science Education, 1974-93. Together with his co-author David Halliday, he revolutionized physics education with their now famous textbook on general physics, still one of the most highly regarded texts in the field today.

He is author or co-author of seven physics textbooks, which appear in 15 editions and more than 47 languages.

Resnick introduced Rensselaer’s interdisciplinary science curriculum in 1973 and was its chair for 15 years. He was awarded the American Association of Physics Teachers’ highest honor, the Oersted Medal, in 1975, and served as its president, 1986-90. A Distinguished Service Citation issued in 1967 by the association said, “Few physicists have had greater or more direct influence on undergraduate physics students than has Robert Resnick.”

Rensselaer named its Robert Resnick Center for Physics Education in his honor.
Dr. Sydney Ross, Emeritus Professor of Chemistry, passed away on December 4, 2013. He was 98 years old.

Dr. Ross was an active faculty member for more than three decades, and made an indelible contribution to the renown of Rensselaer for research and education in the field of chemistry. He joined Rensselaer in 1948 as an associate professor, and in 1952 was named a full professor. His status changed to an active emeritus in 1980 and retired emeritus in 1994.

The accomplishments of Dr. Ross as an author, researcher, and educator are extensive. In his time at Rensselaer, Dr. Ross authored four books and edited three, published upward of 150 research papers, and mentored more than 30 doctoral students. He was a physical chemist with a special interest in colloidal phenomena, and identified himself as a colloid chemist. The focus of his life-long research was foam, and he was recognized as an international leader in the field.

Prior to joining Rensselaer, Dr. Ross earned a bachelor’s degree in 1936 from McGill University in Montreal and a doctoral degree in 1940 from the University of Illinois. Both degrees were in chemistry. Following a postdoctoral role at Stanford University, he held a faculty appointment at the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa, and served as a researcher at Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

In 1996, in honor of Dr. Ross’ 80th birthday and his lifetime of achievements, friends, colleagues, and former students established the Sydney Ross Lectureship on Colloid and Surface Chemistry. The popular lecture series continues today.

Throughout his long career, Dr. Ross was a strong advocate for promoting education in the physical sciences. To amplify this message, and to honor the great scientist and fellow Scotland native James Clerk Maxwell, in 1977 he founded and endowed the James Clerk Maxwell Foundation. In 2001, Dr. Ross was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Science from Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh for his distinguished career in science and for his role in developing the Maxwell Foundation.

Submitted by:
Shirley Ann Jackson, Ph. D., President
Professor of Physics, Applied Physics, and Astronomy
Professor of Engineering Sciences
January 16, 2014
Edward J. (Ed) Smith, Associate Professor Emeritus of Electrical, Computer, and Systems Engineering was born in Patterson, New Jersey. He honorably served his county in the United States Air Force from 1942 to 1946. He was educated at Manhattan College (1951) and Rensselaer (1955, 1966). He worked at General Electric until beginning his 30 year teaching career at RPI, retiring in 1992.

He had been doing some control engineering at GE and decided to pursue a PhD in what was one of the hottest areas in Electrical Engineering at the time. In the late 1960s, most top EE seniors preparing for grad school thought they would be specializing in controls. He studied under Rob Roy, who had a research group doing work for NASA, developing a control system for the Saturn V booster. Since Ed was an instructor, he also developed and taught a special topics course in Control Systems while he was finishing his doctoral studies. The course included modeling and control of space ships.

After finishing his PhD, he developed an innovative new course called Engineering I, which was required of all sophomore engineering majors (in the Pre-Engineering program) and focused on problem solving. The course took a completely new approach: Problem Sessions and Recitations, rather than formal lectures, and forced students to confront problems that they had never encountered before. Students worked in teams of two and solved very challenging problems in a short amount of time. It eventually evolved into Engineering Modeling and Design and remained a key course in the Pre-Engineering program for many years. Ed was ahead of his time in developing this completely new course with a totally new teaching approach.

While working for Rob Roy, he began pursuing engineering solutions to medical problems. His research moved in the direction of what has become Biomedical Engineering. According to the excellent history of BME written this year by Jonathan Newell, Ed became Chairman of the BME group in 1970, and held this position until 1974, when the School of Engineering underwent a major reorganization under Dean George Ansell. Along with Rob Roy and another EE professor – Dave Gisser – Ed was part of a long term project on brain research with Albany Med that led to probably the most unusual event in his life. At a pistol contest, he met an FBI agent and during the conversation a strange thing came to light. It turned out that the agent knew all about Ed and had trailed him. Apparently the Unabomber Ted Kaczynski had sent Ed a package which was intercepted at the Post Office and examined by the FBI. The Unabomber was sending explosive packages to people who did brain research and Ed’s name had been associated with some research work. Ed never knew that he had been a target for this madman.

In addition to enjoying target shooting, he was a fine skier, and served on the ski patrol at Willard Mountain for many years. He is survived by his wife Anita Levens Smith; predeceased by his parents and his brother Kenneth Smith. In addition to Jon Newell’s BME History, much of what is written here is from the excellent memories of Ed’s former colleagues: Bill Jennings, Rob Roy and Les Gerhardt.

Submitted by:
Kenneth Connor, Professor, and Michael Wozny, Professor
Electrical, Computer, and Systems Engineering
Harry Stephanou joined the Rensselaer community in the summer of 1990 as Professor in the Department of Electrical, Computer, and Systems Engineering (ECSE), and as the Director of the New York State Center for Advanced Technology in Automation and Robotics. Harry came to RPI with a strong background in fundamental engineering systems theory and applications, and had experience working with academic, industrial, and government institutions. As Professor in ECSE, Harry contributed to core academic programs in the areas of intelligent systems and robotics. He helped to forge and manage the CAT Center of Excellence designated by the New York State Science, Technology and Academic Research Foundation in 1988. Harry sought to harness the intellectual capacity of the Rensselaer community to conduct research that would ultimately lead to economic development within New York State. Harry took the mission of the CAT Center seriously—crisscrossing the state to find ways to help companies, big and small. His constant fear was that he would exceed the mileage allowance of his leased Audi. His passion for industrial collaboration was genuine—he wanted to be a real partner to companies, even to the point of being in their critical path. He worked hard, staying long hours in the office. To relax, he would indulge in his love for cigars and wine once in a while.

Success in the CAT Center mission was measured by the number of jobs created or retained, increased economic activity, and improved productivity. Areas of research focus included sensor based robotics, materials processing, industrial automation, and manufacturing. In the late 1990’s, Harry decided to move the center in the direction of microsystems automation. This was a controversial move, but he stuck with it, cultivating expertise and teaching courses in the area. It was characteristic of Harry—once he decided on a path, he pursued it with all his energy.

During his time as CAT Director Harry led efforts to improve CAT laboratory facilities, hire talented research staff members, engage Rensselaer’s faculty to conduct multi-disciplinary research, and build a strong client base of both large and small companies within New York State, across the Nation, and in several foreign countries. By the end of the CAT’s ten-year designation many considered Rensselaer’s CAT to be a model for how universities can work closely with industry, without sacrificing the quality or rigor of scientific research. At the end of its first ten-year designation Rensselaer competed for and won re-designation as a New York State Center for Advanced Technology, and the Center continues to thrive at Rensselaer as the New York State Center for Automation Technologies and Systems.

In 2004, Harry moved to the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) as an electrical engineering professor and director of the Automation and Robotics Research Institute (ARRI, now the UTA Research Institute). Harry was ambitious and creative, and he always wanted to make a difference. He dedicated much of his last decade to UTA’s Texas Microfactory initiative. After suffering a stroke, he worked to develop a tailored rehab strategy and co-authored a paper on engineered therapy for improved stroke recovery.
In his career, Harry was active in professional and academic organizations. He was Conference Program Chairman and Associate Editor for the IEEE Society for Robotics and Automation. He published more than 130 papers, journal articles and conference proceedings. He earned a Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering from Purdue University in 1976, focusing on robotics and intelligent systems. In his long and distinguished career, he worked for the Exxon Production Research Company in Houston, served on the faculty of the School of Information Technology and Engineering at George Mason University, was part-time Program Director for Robotics and Machine Intelligence at the National Science Foundation.

We will remember Harry’s commitment to his work and dedication in all of these roles, and we will miss him as a colleague and friend. He is survived by a son, Phillip, and a daughter, Dorothy, both engineers and graduates of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He also had one granddaughter, Dana.

Submitted by:
Art Sanderson, Professor, Electrical, Computer, and Systems Engineering, John Wen, Professor and Head, Industrial and Systems Engineering, Ray Puffer
Robert Frank “Bob” Winne was born in Brockport, New York in 1924. Shortly after graduating from high school, he was drafted into the U.S. Army and served in World War II. On his return home, he was accepted into Julliard School of Music, but instead chose to study architecture under the G.I. Bill, graduating from the School of Architecture at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1949. After working for architecture firms in Houston and Boston, he joined the architecture faculty at RPI, retiring in 1988. He earned a Master of Architecture in 1960, and also had teaching appointments at Barnard College and Pennsylvania State University. He taught architectural design and offered courses in the history and theory of architecture and urban planning, principally to fourth-year students.

Bob firmly embraced the belief that the design of places, ranging from small interventions in existing structures to new buildings, urban spaces and, indeed, entire settlements, is grounded in the social and communal lives and desires of the people who inhabit them as well as in the historical, cultural, and technological contexts in which they are conceived and built. Using towns and cities as laboratories, Bob took students to the streets and, using a workshop teaching methodology, he and his students assisted communities in understanding how to improve their well-being through strategic design interventions. Publications coming from this work included, Market Square, the study of a neighborhood in Troy, New York (1968) and Back to Main Street: A Downtown Study of Gloversville, New York (1986).

Bob was fascinated by the world’s iconic buildings and cities—which he could sketch, from memory and in detail, on the chalkboard as a prelude to an in-depth class discussion—as well as small-scale communities built around the common goals, values, and interests of their members. He was a gifted artist, photographer, musician, and furniture and cabinet maker.

A man of perspective and quiet strength, Professor Winne was especially appreciated by his students for his careful but gentle touch. A design critique, and even an hour-long lecture, comprised a few carefully-chosen words and long periods of meaningful silence. For all his passion for architecture, he was an extraordinarily “still” presence among his students and colleagues.

Following his death at age 88, we learned of a time in Bob’s life about which he never spoke—a time that, in retrospect, must have had much to do with his particular alchemy of strength and stillness: Following his conscription into the U.S. Army in 1943, he served in the 75th Infantry Division, 289th Infantry Regiment. He spent his 19th birthday in full combat in the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium. His shooting accuracy lead him to be selected as a sniper, and he was given a Browning Automatic Rifle as point man for his unit. The inexperienced division was thrust straight into combat in what is widely acknowledged as the toughest fight encountered in the whole of World War II, described by Churchill as “undoubtedly the greatest American battle of the war.” Among his platoon of 40 men, Bob Winne was the only man to survive.

From this experience, Bob fashioned an extraordinary life as artist and teacher, one of deep commitment to high ideals and the importance of all persons—a life pursued in abiding and steadfast calm.

Submitted by:  
David Haviland, Professor Emeritus, with assistance from 
Professor Mark Mistur
Albert Einstein said, “The value of a man should be seen in what he gives and not in what he is able to receive.” These faculty were people who gave. They gave much to their work, to their students, their fellow colleagues and their family.

They led lives that demanded notice…lives that exemplified brilliance…lives that inspired emulation…lives that burned so that others’ paths were lit.

We are deeply grateful to have known and worked with these outstanding faculty.

*Members of the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Faculty Senate*