

Chief Engineer Linley Gumm:

Recalling the successes—and the flops

(The Chief Engineer/Scientist designation represents the highest level in Tek's six-step career path for engineers and scientists.)

Ninth in a Series

Meet Linley Gumm, an electrical engineer who always knew that's what he wanted to be.

"It's as if I was given a mission in life. I would have been crushed if I couldn't have gotten into a school someplace to study electrical engineering, because I was totally uninterested in everything else I looked at."

Linley's interest in EE began around the sixth grade when he started playing with radios and other electrical devices.

"I grew up on a wheat ranch near Tekoa, a small town in Eastern Washington near the Idaho border. The schools were great, but they didn't have much about radio, so I sent away for books and magazines on my own."

He's also indebted to a local ham operator who helped him get a license.

After high school, Linley pursued his EE studies in earnest at Washington State University, earning his B.S. degree in June, 1964. A week later, he married Cella, and they came to Beaverton after a two-week honeymoon to begin his 23-year career with Tek.

"My first job was evaluating the 422 portable oscilloscope in the old Sunset plant. At the same time others were moving on to the 453, the hotshot project for all of Tektronix. Everything had to stand aside for it to get done."

In the ensuing years, Linley's career covered successes such as having a hand in development of the 454 and the 7K Series, as well as some disappointments including "a jitterless trigger technique that never came to anything."

Another disappointment was the 7L18 microwave analyzer project, one of the earliest Tek products to have a microprocessor in it.

"We started work on developing this product in 1974, and finally shipped our first instrument in 1978. As I look back, it was a terribly crude microprocessor, and we made every error in the book. Of course, we didn't have any of the tools that are available today."

Although the 7L18 never did sell well, Linley and his crew developed components and technologies that later were used in the 492.

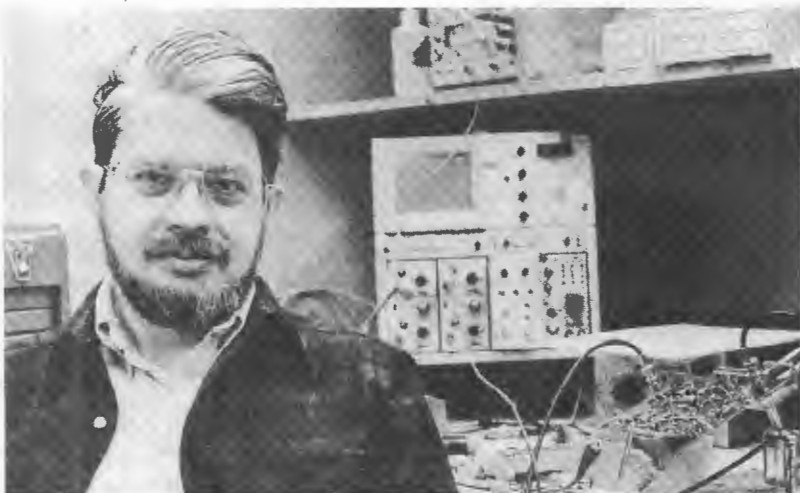
"It was an exciting time because the Navy placed a massive order for the 492 at the beginning of the project cycle. Ordinarily, it takes six to nine months for orders to ramp up."

"The Navy accepted our offer after they saw the first prototype of a 491A that Larry Lockwood and his crew put together. We decided that it needed more performance to sell to the commercial market, and it needed to be modularized for flexibility and manufacturability. Thus, the 492 was born. The challenge was to make the changes and get it out in 30 months."

"This was a real team effort. No one person could say 'It's mine.' I'm pleased to say our pioneering worked out quite nicely because we were able to make a really superb product."

In addition to helping develop outstanding FDI products, Linley is helping to bring talented engineers to Tek through his recruiting efforts at Washington State University and the University of Idaho. In a sense he acts as a broker between the schools and Tektronix. Tek has things the universities want, such as equipment grants and contacts for information, and the universities have students and technology.

"Although I represent Tek's interest in recruiting, I firmly believe that any worthwhile deal is a win-win



Linley Gumm, Chief Engineer, always knew that he wanted to be an EE.

situation. Winning at the expense of someone else, especially in the university setting, is very bad business."

One indication of Linley's success in recruiting is the two-year-old intern program in FDI, a program he'd like to see emphasized in other divisions.

"We need to work on getting to the students earlier. Other companies such as HP and IBM are attracting a significant number of students because of their intern programs."

As a recruiter, Linley tries to find the best candidates. At the same time, he urges hiring managers to take the time to hire someone who's really good.

"That's paid off. There are a lot of things I can't take credit for, but I believe I have managed to bring in a bunch of good people."

Linley's also proud of his proposal to endow a chair in analog electronics at WSU, with half of the money to come from industry and matching funds, from the Washington State Legislature.

"If things keep going as they are, it appears it will be oversubscribed by industry, and now we're waiting for the legislature to act. I'm really pleased. It's one of the few things in recent times that I did. Everything else I do is something 'we' do. And that, of course is appropriate, since this is very much a 'we' business."

Away from Tek, Linley lends his expertise to the Oregon Commission on Public Broadcasting. As chairman of the Technical Advisory committee, he helped develop a plan for public broadcasting in Oregon, as mandated by the 1985 Legislature.

"Working on this project took a lot longer than expected, but I certainly did get a good inside view of public decision-making."

What free time he has, Linley likes to spend with his family, his wife and daughters, Lisa, a senior at Aloha High School, and Deborah, a ninth grader at Five Oaks.

Travel has been high on Linley's list of likes, but he's been to China and Europe, as well as most of the U.S., mostly on Tek business. In China he represented FDI at a trade show in Beijing in November, 1984.

"That was hard work, mainly because I wasn't ac-

customed to talking to someone whose face is only three or four inches away. The Chinese people crowd very tightly together, and there was a constant jostling on the show floor. For me it was very tiring."

Linley took an educational leave for nine months in 1968-69 to earn his Masters degree in electrical engineering at the University of Washington. The degree was awarded in 1970, and five years later Linley was licensed as a Professional Engineer. As a result he spent a number of years consulting outside of Tek, primarily with radio stations.

"This gave me a great opportunity to use our test equipment in the field, and to gain an insight into other people's businesses. I found I had a better understanding of Tek's business when I made comparisons. This has broadened my base considerably."

Linley confesses to having good work habits, a quality he developed as a boy working on the family wheat ranch. Every summer from the age of 13 until university graduation at 22, Linley worked all summer, including the harvest, sometimes as much as 84 hours a week.

"I'm the youngest of six, two sisters and three brothers. Two of my brothers are farming with my father, but I wasn't cut out for that kind of life. I suffer from hay fever, a miserable allergy for a wheat farmer."

As Chief Engineer, Linley views his role as a person who pulls together ideas and opportunities to see if they're worth chasing. He looks for new products, or he takes an old product and tries to fit it to a new market.

"It's like the business version of 'Let's Make a Deal.' You try to set up win-win deals. You know what people's needs are, and say, 'If I provide you with this, can you provide me with that?'"

"By the time you get done, you have a situation where everybody wins. That's what I keep my eyes open for, to benefit FDI and Tektronix."

"Of course, that's easier said than done. You don't win all the time, to say the least." □

—Ken Cushman



Tek Heerenveen has been awarded Class A+ MRP with a perfect score of 100. It is the second Dutch company and one of 200 or so companies in the world to attain this recognition. Roger Brooks of Roger Brooks & Associates (left) congratulates Jan Gielisse (Tek Holland N.V. GM) with the Class A+ MRP award.



LID's Debra Seifert and Sam Strang hold award from *Electronic Design News*, honoring Tek's ad for new 11000-series scopes. Ad was called "most useful, informative and attractive" in EDN's semiannual readership vote. It will appear in special section of May 14 issue.