

**Written/submitted by Addison C. (Cal) Sheckler**  
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I believe the Lab at the Park opened in January or February 1948. I arrived in March and worked for J.P. (Paul) Jordan (deceased). The Lab was very small (about 16 professional people). I believe that Larry Leeds (who I knew very well) was still in charge, but Tiny Fink took over immediately after I arrived.

Org chart shows Tiny Fink, with these direct reports:

Mike Evans, Administrative Assistant

Catherine Lukens, Librarian

Frank Kissel, Supply

H.B. Marvin, Electrets Cesium Clock

J.P. Jordan, Nuclear Instruments

Dr. Anderson, Nuclear

R.F. Shea, Circuits

L.J. Neelands, Radar

Walter Hausz, Associate Director – had as direct reports

Chem. & Materials

Instrument Standards

Machine Shop – Andy Lachner

The diagram/org chart may or may not be correct but it is functionally correct. Harry Marvin always worked alone. Larry Leeds was omnipresent, especially when it came to nuclear work.

J.P. Jordan and I worked on nuclear instruments and designed some of the instruments that became standard. In late 1948 Frederick Pingert joined us (a brilliant and eccentric man and a superb pianist). Fred died in Jan. or Feb. 1950. We were the physicists of the Laboratory and when the Germanium Diode Dept needed help they came to us, and then we became the Semiconductor Group (or section?), which was eventually comprised of the following people (including some new hires):

Jordan, J. P. (deceased)

Doris Knoche, secretary

Brown, Norman L. (Janet)

Cronemeyer, Donald C. (Anita)

Engel, Jan (Janet-deceased)

Jillson, Dave (deceased)

Keihn, Fred

Lesk, I. Arnold (deceased) (Arlene)

Markham, Dotty

Ozarow, Vernon (deceased) (Ruth)

Saby, John S. (Mary)

Sheckler, A. Calvin (Marjorie)

Steele, Earl L (deceased)(Martha)

Szupillo, Ray (Rita)

Other Laboratory personnel who did the semiconductor circuits research:

Shea, Richard (deceased)  
Chow, Wao FOUNG (deceased)  
Ghandhi, Sorab K.  
Keonjian, Edward (deceased)  
Mathis, Vernon P. (deceased)  
Rosen, Charlie (deceased)  
Schaffner, Johannes (Hans) (deceased)  
Stern, Arthur P.  
Suran, Jerome J.

Dr. Anderson (you could only address him that way, so I don't know his first name) had Charles Wayne and Ed Eachus, and did a little nuclear work. He disappeared about 18 months after the Lab opened. Charles Wayne went on to build GE's first computer, which became the basis for the Bank of America computer and the Computer Division in Phoenix, Arizona.

R.F. Shea was the Circuits man and when we came up with the junction diode and the transistor, he leaped on them. His group (after expansion) was the listed authors in the book (Principles of Transistor Circuits), except for Saby, who was in our Semiconductor group. Incidentally, the book was in print for 20 years (to 1973). I believe it was Wiley's longest running textbook. Wiley threw a big party for the authors in 1973.

Lou Neelands was the Radar man and had 4 or 5 people working for him. I only remember one of them, Joe Pachuta, who was a classmate of mine. I know they did some exciting work.

A few more details: GE and Bell announced the junction transistor on the same day in back-to-back papers. Bell and GE (our group) exchanged visits. We taught Raytheon how to make transistors (in exchange for some radar information). Raytheon, three years ago, surprised a history researcher and told him that we taught them!!! We also taught RCA, British Thompson Houston (Bob Hibbard), CFTH (Compagnie Francaise Thompson Houston) and I believe Sylvania, but I'm not sure of that.

An anecdote about Doc Baker: When JP Jordan and I started working on semiconductors, people thought we were crazy. Lab management (I believe it was Walter Hausz) told us that we better stop the foolishness and do something useful, like circuitry, or we were going to be thrown out of the Lab.

Doc Baker (a truly exceptional man) solved the problem very simply – he gave Paul Jordan a 3x5 piece of paper with the notation

“You have \$10,000.  
W.R.G. Baker “

Needless to say, there was no one at G.E. willing to challenge that. He did that 3 or 4 times and that's how the semiconductor world started at G.E.

By the way, Ronald Reagan visited E.Lab in 1954 (?) and spent considerable time in our lab, talking to John Saby and then to me. He wanted to know what we were doing, and was the sharpest Layperson I ever spoke to. They took pictures and one of Reagan and Saby was published. John has supplied that picture.

Another couple of anecdotes that Cal Sheckler shared in a conversation:

The E.Lab supply person, Frank Kissel, was soundly scolded – for making a profit! He would go to the docks of buildings 5 and 7 during his lunch hour and go through the “junk” they were throwing away. (Back then, when a government contract ended, you had to discard anything that wasn’t used on the program.) A lot of the material was brand new. Frank would bring it over to the Lab and put it in stock, and ended up making money.

Cal said that he came to the E.Lab auction 5 years or so ago, and there was a precision balance there, which he had purchased in 1949. It was in like new condition. It was gold plated, and probably always looked too nice for anyone to throw away. Cal bid on it, but a Canadian collector drove the price to the point that Cal stopped bidding. He said that auction was a very sad day for him.

In response to the question about the quality of the E.Lab library in the beginning, Cal said it was really an excellent library, and they had a wonderful asset in Catherine Lukens, the librarian. He said there were other excellent technical libraries in the area, including SU, Carrier Corp, Allied Research, etc., and they had a library loan program with each other. They could usually get resources from one of the other libraries within a day.

Cal also had this very humorous story about an early E.Lab Christmas party:

“We had a Christmas party in 1949 and 1950. One of those years the people in the Lab said they couldn’t afford a Christmas party (my salary was \$3500/year). So Fred Pingert said that was nonsense, he could set one up that everybody could afford. Fred was rather earthy and direct; he arranged the party in a little roadside restaurant that was one step above a hamburger stand. Everybody was a little sheepish, but as I recall we had a good time.” Cal