

McMurtry, George

Thank you very much for your message informing me about the E-Lab reunion being planned for Sept. 28. I have fond memories of my time there. It's nice to know that my relatively short time there hasn't been totally obscured after 37 years!

I was at E-Lab from June 1965 until June 1967, working under Herm Lintner in the Information Processing section. I still have some notes about Herm's call to me saying that he was offering me a position, and my notes indicate that I was particularly pleased that Herm said I would be working with Bill Whyland. Al Vosburg came to the Information Processing section at the same time as I did, and we both left in June 1967. I do not know where Al is now. He went to work at Mitre in 1967, and after that was at a think tank in the defense area (something American Defense Institute?). I then lost track of him. Dave Bray was a prominent member of that group, and the last I knew of him was that he left E-Lab to teach at the college level. (I want to say he went to Clarkson, but I'm not sure of that.) John Buchta was another member of the group. I, of course, remember Jerry Suran, although I did not really work with him. I also remember LaDon well. Harry Mayer was the head of E-Lab when I was there. I can visualize others, but am drawing a blank on names right now. I looked briefly at your Web site, and am impressed with all the names you have. I'll go back to it when I have more time and am sure I'll recognize several individuals.

As you know, I came to Penn State in 1967 with an initial joint appointment as a project engineer in the Ordnance (now Applied) Research Laboratory (ORL, now ARL) and as an assistant professor of EE. At ORL, I performed work very similar to what I had been doing at E-Lab, i.e. pattern recognition and information processing. After 2 years, I became a full time professor in EE and then, from 1970 to 1980, served as co-director of an interdisciplinary research group processing and interpreting multispectral digital imagery of the earth obtained by remote sensing from satellites. In 1980, I was appointed associate dean of engineering for instruction, served as acting dean for one year, and then became associate dean for administration and planning. I retired from the dean's office in March 1998, but was asked to come back in August of that year as a special assistant to the Provost to help lead the development of a new School of Information Sciences and Technology (IST). That School started operation on July 1, 1999, and I retired for good in December 1999.

Although I did not go to school at PSU (I have a BS from the U.S. Naval Academy, MS from Notre Dame, and PhD from Purdue), my wife, Margaret, and I were both given life associate memberships in the Penn State Alumni Association for my retirement. We have 6 children, all married and all graduates of Penn State, and 9 (soon to be 10) grandchildren. All our children also have life memberships in the Alumni Association. Thus you, Bob, and I have more in common than just being alumni of E-Lab! Two of our children were born in Syracuse while I was at E-Lab. We lived in a townhouse complex called Hollyrood Park just outside Liverpool at the time. It may no longer be there.

I cannot say for sure that I can attend the E-Lab reunion on Sept. 28, but will put it on our calendar and make a sincere effort to be there. It would be nice to see any of the folks I knew there 35-37 years ago. (Has it really been that long?!)

Thanks again for contacting me.

George J. McMurtry, Sr.