



Smithsonian  
*National Museum of American History*  
*Kenneth E. Behring Center*

## Guide to Plastic Pioneers Association Interviews

NMAH.AC.1235

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2016

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
<b>Title:</b>	Plastic Pioneers Association Interviews
<b>Identifier:</b>	NMAH.AC.1235
<b>Date:</b>	1952 September 18-20
<b>Extent:</b>	1 Boxe
<b>Creator:</b>	Plastics Pioneers Association
<b>Language:</b>	English
<b>Summary:</b>	Audio recordings of interviews with members of the Plastics Pioneers Association about the plastics industry, its origins, and evolution.

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## Administrative Information

### Provenance

The collection was transferred from the Division of Science and Medicine in 2011.

### Related Materials

Related Archives Center collections:

Albany Billiard Ball Company Records, 1869-1973 (011)

Leo H. Baekeland Papers, 1881-1968 (005)

Celluloid Corporation Records, 1892-1935 (009)

Earl S. Tupper Papers, circa 1914-1982 (470)

Grace Jeffers Collection of Formica Materials, 1913-2003 (0565)

### Available Formats

Reference CDs made by the Archives Center.

### Processing Information

Collection processed by NMAH staff in 2011.

### Processing Information

Collection processed by Wendy Shay, undated

## Preferred Citation

[Plastic Pioneers Association Interviews, September 18-20, 1968], Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Tape number x.

## Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

## Conditions Governing Use

Copyright status unknown. No releases exist. Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning intellectual property rights. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply.

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## Biographical / Historical

The Plastic Pioneers Association (PPA) was formed in the 1940s to provide individuals involved with plastics invention, innovation, and manufacturing an opportunity to meet with colleagues to share stories about the history of plastics. In 1948 the PPA became a formal organization "of individuals who are persons of accomplishment in the Plastics Industry, and who wish to foster the bonds of friendship and fraternalism among them." At the time, in order to be a member an individual had to have made "a contribution to the growth of the industry and worked at least fifteen years plastics. According to the PPA website, membership currently "is capped at 250 active members, and the term of service in the industry required is 25 years or more."

The PPA is dedicated to education as well as documenting and preserving the histories of people who contributed to the plastics industry. The Plastic Pioneers Interviews represents part of this effort

<http://www.plasticpioneers.org/Home/tabid/52/Default.aspx>

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## Scope and Contents

The collection consists of four 1/4 inch open-reel audiotapes produced in 1968.

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## Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements

Researchers must use reference audio CDs. Original 1/4 inch open-reel audio tapes are not available for research use.

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## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Bakelite  
Celluloid  
Laminated plastics  
Molding -- Plastics  
Plastics  
Plastics -- 1920-2000  
Plastics industry and trade  
Plexiglas  
Styrene  
billiards - equipment and supplies

Names:

Albany Billiard Ball Company (Albany, New York)  
Bakelite Corporation  
Celanese Corporation of America  
Dow Chemical Company  
Formica Corporation.  
General Electric Company

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## Container Listing

Plastic Pioneer Association Interviews - Reel 1, Side 1 (Reference CD 1),  
September 18-20, 1952

Stuart Landas Celanese Corporation of America, vice president (retired) in charge of plastics division -injection molding process: origins and development

*Box 1, Disk Reference CD 1*

Sandy Brown, Condensite Company -thermosetting plastics

Allen Brown, Bakelite Company, vice president in charge of advertising and public relations -applications of plastics, radio industry, 1932 symposium on industrial design

Frank Shaw -Transfer molding

Allen Cole, Bresslin Publishing Company, vice president/general manager, *Modern Plastics* magazine - plastics industry trade magazines: circulation, advertising, and revenues.

Walter Rom, Bolton Molding Company,consultant -developments in the plastics industry: celluloid, molds, presses, and hydraulic equipment, evolution of the molding process.

J.J. Greeby, PhD, Dow Chemical Company, research councilor -development of modern plastics: Styrene

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## Plastic Pioneer Association Interviews - Reel 1, Side 2 (Reference CD 2), September 18-20, 1952

*Disk Reference CD 2, Box 1*

**Garson Meyer, Eastman Kodak Company**, Camera Works Division, chief chemist -plastics in relation to photographic equipment

**Fred C. Meechum, Northern Industrial Chemical Company of Boston**, New York office -early work with commercial plastics: celluloid, speed of production in modern manufacturing: auto-injection machines

Gordon Brown with footnote to Meechum interview

**Herb Spencer, Durex Plastics and Chemicals**, Advertising and publicity -history of Durex, application of plastics in production processes, men involved in plastics industry, ends with a poem recited by Spencer

**Hans H. Wandas, Northern Industrial Chemical Company of Boston**, vice president -development of semi-automatic molding machine,influence of German processes in plastics industry,use of plastics in light fixtures.

**M.M. Mckiver, The Megalot Corporation (DL)** -incompetence in forming companies in plastics industry, problems with resin fumes, problems of production.

**Charles A. Norris Jr., Bakelite Company**, assistant general sales manager -development of welding molds

V. Victor Sammet (reading comments by B.E. Schlesinger, treasurer of Northern Industrial Chemical Company). -patent controversies over Bakelite, development of Roxite and other plastics.

**Garson Meyer, Eastman Kodak Company**, Camera Works Division, chief chemist - plastics in relation to photographic equipment

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## Plastic Pioneer Association Interviews - Reel 2, Side 1 (Reference CD 3 and CD 4)

*Disk Reference CD 3-CD 4, Box 1*

**Ronald (Chick) Kameak, Albany Billiard Ball Company, Niagara Insulbake Company** (plastics division of Albany Billiard Ball Company) -recollections of John Hyatt, applications of celluloid, billiard ball market and industry, organization of the Society of Plastics Industry.

**C.W Vaunt, Bakelite Company**, a division of Union Carbide and Carbon Corporation, general sales manager -milestones in the compression molding industry

**George Schribner [Scribner?], Bolton Molding Company**; Bolton, New Jersey, president -molding Bakelite: development of, demands for, and manufacturing processes

**R.E. Brannum, Bakelite Corporation**, manager of molded material sales -washing machine agitators, new phenolic molding material applications

**Gordon Brown, Bakelite Corporation**, vice president and **The Society of Plastics Industry (SPI)**, president -formation of SPI, use of phenolic materials: phonograph discs, records, aircraft maintenance, development of molders' associations

**Sandy Brown, Condensite Company** -development of caps for collapsible tubes

**Lionel Canenoff (Canenauve?), Standard Tool Company** of Leominster, MA, president and treasurer - die production in the plastics industry, history of Leominster MA, early use of injection molding machines.

**James S. Wilson, Bestway Products Company**, Raway, NJ M+W Company; engineering and development for manufacturing of record industry equipment. -die production processes,automatic injection machines for record production.

**J.G. Swanson**, Independent consultant -Bakelite applications, pencil barrel mold, free-form molding

Unidentified speaker: reading Gordon Brown notes -cellulose-ester plastics and their applications, injection molding applications, non-solvent method of manufacturing, tenite acetate and its applications.

**Donald S. Frederick, PhD, Roman- Hawes Company** Interviewed by John R. Lawrence, editor, *Plastics World magazine* San Diego, CA, February 22, 1968 -personal education at home and abroad, development and application of acrylics, development and application of Plexiglas.

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## Plastic Pioneer Association Interviews - Reel 2, Side 2 (Reference CD 5 and CD 6)

*Disk Reference CD 5, Box 1 (audio)*

*Disk Reference CD 6, Box 1 (audio)*

**William T. Cruise, Society of the Plastics Industry**, vice president - **Luis Francisco, American Cyanide**, general manager, plastics and resin division - **D.J. O'Conner, Formica Company**, founder -discusses the companies, market, development and applications of Formica, lawsuits over Formica patents

**J. Harry Du Bois, originally with General Electric** -uses of plastics in refrigerators, promotion of plastic in general public, problems in plastic production, mold design applications and problems in World War II, post-war planning for General Electric's plastics department

**Willard Crane, Cincinnati Milling Machine Company**, vice president -development of interlayer sheeting for laminated glass and its use in the automobile industry, machines used in extruding plastics for lamination and their problems and solutions, new uses of extruding plastics: film

**Al Manoville, Apollo Manufacturing Company**; Bronx, NY -evolution of company's plastic manufacturing processes and applications

**Charles Lichtenberg, Resinox Corporation**, vice president (retired)Monsanto Chemical Company, assistant to the general manager -history of the Resinox Corporation: evolution of manufacturing

**N.A. Backscheider, Recto Molded Products**, Cincinnati, OH, president -outline of products produced

**B. Frank Hantz, American Insulator Corporation**, New Freedom, PA -history of corporation: cold molding materials, injection molding

**Oscar Gold**, Hyattsville, MD -claims to be first to produce nitro-cellulose (molded buttons), cast- phenolic (jewelry, radio cabinets), acrylic (umbrella handles), and Lucite (presidential telegraph key) products

**Fred Behr**, Long Beach, NY, **Pacific Novelty Company** (Dupont Corporation-1926), assistant buyer and designer -history of PNC: manufacturing and applications of plastics

**Allen F. Randolph, Arlington Company** (nucleus of the plastics department of Dupont Corporation),Wilmington, DE

**Emery Cleaves, New Jersey Button Works**, chief executive officer -different uses of plastics in button production, history of New Jersey Button Works

**J. Frank, Albion Realty Corporation** -founder of Gemlite Corporation

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## Plastic Pioneer Association Interviews - Reel 3, Side 1 (Reference CD 7 and CD 8)

*Disk Reference CD 7, Box 1 (audio)*

*Disk Reference CD 8, Box 1 (audio)*

**[Plastic Pioneers Association Written Histories and Interviews]** Read by J. Harry Du Bois **John J. Kevel, Plastics Technology**, general sales manager -History of plastics in Leominster - comb making history and the manufacturing combs, apprenticeships in the plastics industry

**John G. Slater, Tennessee Eastman Plastic Sales Department** (marketing in the western United States and Canada) -cellulose plastic, applications of plastic in the automotive industry, difficulties in developing thermoplastic materials, applications of polyethylene

**W.T. LaRose, Sr., W.T. LaRose and Associates**, Incorporated, president -high frequency heating equipment, difficulties in design, production, and use, different applications in the plastics industry

**Sven Mocsmesh(?), Honeywell Company**, Minneapolis, MN -development, use, and effectiveness of steam heating equipment

**Lloyd G. Schenck, Bootin Rubber Company**, Lufkin, TX -plastics in radio insulation and parts

**Sam Moore, Interchemical Corporation**, Clifton, NJ, manager, Market Development -use of polyester resins during World War II to seal plane engines

**Siegfried Higgins, Williamson and Company**, Caldwell, NJ -started Condensite Company in 1911, use of plastics in brake linings and vinyl printing plates, has collection of early plastic products and magazines.

**F. Reed Estabrook, Jr., Brook Molding Corporation**, Norwood, MA -use of beryllium in copper molds

**Elmer E. Mills**, Highland Park, IL, Manufacturers' representative -application of phenol resins in radio and electronics, history and possible future of industry.

**George H. Bowmer**, Dunedin, FL -career history in plastics industry

**Ruth Rossitor**, wife of **John G. Rossitor**, a leader of the plastics industry in the 1930s-1940s. -discusses John Rossitor's health problems

**William Morris Lester, Pyro Plastics Corporation**, Union, NJ, president -designed and developed injection molding machine

**Edwin L. Hobson**, Cranford, NJ -career history in plastics industry

**C. William Cluworth, Plastics World**, founder and consultant -plastics advertising in publications

**E.O Wokeck, Bangor Plastics, Incorporated**, Bangor, MI -applications of plastics in furniture

Note by J. Harry Du Bois on the first group to use injection molding: -Grote Manufacturing Company; Madison, IN

**Walter F. Grote, Grote Manufacturing Company** (Grotlite Co.), president -Bucholz hand machine: hydraulic injection molding machine (1922)

Note by J. Harry Du Bois: Kuneschtaufa Vol. 55 March 1965 pg. 173-180 (German Magazine) -refer to magazine for historical development of plastics processing techniques

Arthur R. Tennom, Chairman of the Board and Treasurer -molding techniques and applications, application of quality control in production.

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## Plastic Pioneer Association Interviews - Reel 3, Side 1 (Reference CD 9)

*Disk Reference CD 9, Box 1*

Dictated by J. Harry Du Bois (written histories) Arthur R. Tennom (continued), Chairman of the Board and Treasurer -applications of plastics, molding techniques and applications.

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## Plastic Pioneer Association Interviews - Reel 4, Side 1 (Reference CD 10)

*Disk Reference CD 10, Box 1*

**Meeting of the Pioneers of Plastic Association at the Bald Peak Country Club, September 1968] Bill Cullom**, Manufacturers' representative -marketing of specialized products and injection machines, aided in forming 2nd Society of Plastics Engineers, formed manufacturer's representatives business, history of plastic materials

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