



LANGLEY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



Lecture during Langley Alumni Association
Zoom Virtual Meeting
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Voyages to the Far South and Far North Latitudes of Our Planet

By

Geoff Tennille

Retired(2005) NASA IT Security Manager. Currently Treasurer of the LAA

Abstract

Mr. Tennille's talk covers a portion of two of his cruises that visited the south and north polar regions of Earth – lots of ice: glaciers, ice caps and icebergs – beautiful sunsets (never made it up for sunrises) – geysers – penguins & puffins and minefields.

About the Speaker

Geoff Tennille is a native of Norfolk County, raised in Portsmouth and a graduate of UVA (physics and astronomy). After winning the grand prize in the first draft lottery, he served 6 years in the US Navy. After the Navy, he accidentally got a degree in mathematics from ODU. He began working at Langley Research Center at ICASE in 1976 on the first full turbulence flow model using the SL/1 programming language (developed at LaRC) for the STAR-100. After ICASE, he was hired by Computer Sciences Corporation to develop subroutines for LaRC mathematical libraries for the CDC Cyber computers and the STAR-100 supercomputer.

Geoff was hired to work at LaRC in April 1980, by Dr. John Shoosmith, as a member of the Computer Applications Branch in the Analysis and Computation Division (ACD). His primary tasks were to assist the research community in using the new supercomputing resources at the Center; writing mathematical library subroutines for the supercomputers; and working directly with other researchers, primarily in the Atmospheric Sciences Division. He developed the concept for the STAR, VPS, CRAY and Convex Mini Manuals. He was also served on the board of the Langley Activities Association (President and Treasurer) and the Langley Exchange Council.

He was on the ACD team that planned for the CONVEX mini-supercomputers as well as the CRAY-2 and CRAY Y-MP supercomputers, including acceptance testing at the CRAY factory. He was part of the LaRC team that won a GIGAFLOP Performance Award from Cray Research in 1989 for the CRAY Y-MP as well for the CRAY-2. It was the only team to achieve the award on a CRAY-2. He served in the High-Performance Computing and Communications Program (HPCCP) as the manager of LaRC's highly parallel supercomputers and worked closely with colleagues from other Centers, primarily at Ames' Numerical Aerodynamic Simulator. Under his guidance, LaRC was the only Center to have an Intel Paragon pass its acceptance testing.

In the mid-1990s, he became the Center's IT Security Manager (ITSM) and was on an inter-Center team of IT Security professionals to co-ordinate standardization of practices and policies. LaRC was the first Center to have a regular Top 10 scan of the network for viruses, which was adapted by the System and Network Security (SANS) Institute. He pushed the idea that IT Security was an enabler of research rather than an inhibitor and developed the first fully functional firewall to protect the internal network from malicious software and hackers. He was one of the developers of NASA's annual IT Security training. He retired in April 2005, after turning the duties of ITSM over to his deputy, Kendall Freeman in January 2005, while Geoff worked on policy issues for the Agency.

After retirement, Geoff read over 600 Star Trek books; worked on his US stamp collection; worked with Habitat for Humanity on the Mississippi Gulf Coast from 2006-2010, helping build 17 houses; started playing golf on a regular basis; became active in a variety of civic organizations; and began international traveling: cruises through the South Pacific, from Alaska through the Panama Canal to Florida, 4 Grand World Cruises from/to Ft. Lauderdale, and the Voyage of the Vikings – roundtrip from Boston to Amsterdam. He and his wife Marty were delegates on 5 trips to 4 of the Sister Cities of Hampton and Newport News.