PM WORLD TODAY – FEATURED INTERVIEW – OCTOBER 2008

Interview with Russ Archibald
Project Management Pioneer

Part II – The Formation & Early Years of PMI

Russell Archibald, PhD (Hon), PMP, PMI Fellow, is a globally-recognized author, consultant and lecturer on project management. With a career spanning more than 50 years, Russ has broad international experience in engineering, operations, program and project management. He has experienced three project management related careers: Management Consultant, Corporate Executive, and Military/Aerospace. In recent years, He has consulted to a wide variety of large and small organizations in many industries and in 12 countries on 4 continents. Russ Archibald is a Fellow and Certified Project Management Professional (PMP) of the Project Management Institute (PMI®) (member No. 6, one of the five original trustees), an Honorary Fellow of the Association of Project Management (APM/IPMA) in the UK, and is listed in Who's Who in the World. In 2006 he received the PMI-College of Scheduling "Jim O'Brien Lifetime Achievement Award." Russ is the author of 3 editions of the best-selling book, "Managing High-Technology Programs and Projects" (1976, 1992, and 2003, also published in Japanese, Italian, Italian, Russian and Chinese) and the co-author of "Network Based Management Information Systems (PERT/CPM)" (1967). Russ has presented many papers over the years at PMI and International Project Management Association (IPMA) conferences in North America, South America, and Europe, and is widely published in periodicals on professional project management. He holds Bachelor of Science (University of Missouri) and Master of Science (University of Texas, Austin) degrees in Mechanical Engineering. As a pioneer in the field, Russ received an honorary Ph.D. in strategy, program, and project management from the Ecole

Superieure de Commerce de Lille (ESC-Lille) in Lille, France in August 2005. Currently residing in Mexico, Russ Archibald's personal website can be found at www.russarchibald.com, and he can be contacted at Russell_archibald@yahoo.com.

Editor's Note: Russ Archibald is a founding member (#6) of PMI and one of the pioneers in the field of professional project management. He has been an active supporter of PMForum and PM World Today for many years. A recognized supporter and mentor for many professional leaders around the world of project management, Russ is well known throughout North and South America, Europe, Russia and elsewhere for his global knowledge, research, professionalism and personal warmth. Part one of our interview with Russ, published in the September edition of PM World Today, dealt with the first part of Russ' career as he witnessed and participated in the beginnings of professional project management. Part 2 focuses on Russ' participation in and knowledge about the formation and early years of the Project Management Institute. Part 3 will look at Russ' knowledge of the early days of INTERNET (IPMA) in Europe and professional PM in other parts of the world. Part 4 will deal with Russ' recent research, his observations about the state of the world of project management, and his predictions for the future of this field.

PM World Today (PMWT): From Part 1 of our interview, you indicated that you met Eric Jenett, one of PMI's other Founders, in the 1960s. When and how did you meet Eric, and did you work with him or Brown and Root? If so, in what capacity?

Russ Archibald (Archibald): When I was with Hughes Dynamics in Los Angeles about 1962 or 63 I got acquainted on the job with a fellow named Jim Campise, who worked for the Hughes Tool Company in Houston. Hughes Tool operated then (I suppose they still do) one of the largest machine shops in the Southwest US for manufacture of oil field tools, and also ran a major machine-tool rebuilding service. I discovered that Jim was using "a modified version of PERT" very effectively on "an IBM CPM in 1410 System mode" to schedule and control this operation, which was basically a classic, large 'job-shop.'

At my request, Jim wrote a 15 page case study on this, which you can read in Richard Villoria and my 1967 book (pp 280-295) "Network-Based Management Systems (PERT/CPM)". Along the way Jim introduced me to Eric Jenett, who was a chemical engineer (a bit later Vice President of Chemical Engineering – see what PM can do for you!) with Brown & Root, with whom Jim had done some consulting on CPM/PERT. Eric had developed a big CPM network plan that he called "Generalized Engineering Plan" that he wanted to get processed so he could optimize the logic and then adapt it to his specific projects for client facility design and construction projects. This network had a few thousand activities, so we had to use an IBM 7094 mainframe computer.

It was easy for Brown & Root and Eric to give us a contract, as a part of the Hughes empire, to process and debug Eric's network in Los Angeles and ship the reports to Houston. We provided that service to Eric and B&R for several of their big DPC projects, until they built up their internal capability. There is another case study (written by H. S. Coumbe of Brown & Root) in our 1967 book (pp.295 to 308) about the design and construction of a Champion Paper plant in Pasadena, Texas, by Brown & Root.

PMWT: How and when did you meet Jim Snyder, another PMI Founder and key participant in the early years of the Project Management Institute (PMI)?

Archibald: Eric and I kept in touch in the 1960s, noodling with ideas about how to exchange experience and knowledge about PERT/CPM. Eric had also been talking with Jim Snyder (who was with Smith, Kline and French, a pharmaceuticals company, in project management) about these same ideas, and in 1967 (I think it was) he invited me to a meeting in New Orleans to get several of us together to see what we might be able to do to get some kind of organization started. He also invited Jim Snyder (or maybe Jim invited Eric) and Ned Engman from MacDonald Automation in St. Louis, plus probably others.

My memory of that first New Orleans meeting (I could be wrong) included only Eric, Jim and me, plus Eric's wife Dottie and Jim's wife Ann in attendance – my wife Marion had to stay home in Los Angeles with our 4 young kids (ages 6 to 15.) I still have a copy of a letter from Ned dated January 29, 1968, listing Eric Jenett, Jim Snyder, Gordon Davis, Georgia Tech; John King, AT&T; and me, as the potential Board, and indicating that we planned to have a later "founders' meeting" in New Orleans on February 15-16 that year. I was scrambling across the country at that time leading a series of 5-day seminars on PM as a consultant with Booz, Allen & Hamilton, and was unable to make that February 1968 meeting.

PMWT: How and when did the idea of forming a project management professional association first surface?

Archibald: Initially, the discussion was primarily focused on PERT, CPM, and related planning and scheduling methods and systems. In fact, the January 29 1968 letter from Ned Engman that I referred to above says "we are discussing forming a National CPM Society." At our later meetings in New Orleans we had long discussions on the scope and name of the association and gradually the group moved toward a consensus that we should be targeting the broader subject of project management, while including the very important areas of planning and scheduling within that broader field. We need to remember that in those days you rarely saw ads for project managers, and "project management" was a seldom used term. There were very few books in that field and the only one that I recall in the early 60s with the title "Project Management" was by John Stanley Baumgartner, 1963, 185 pages, published by Richard D. Irwin. There were no certificates or university degrees or even courses with those terms in their titles in universities. So I guess we were 10 to 20 years ahead of the times in choosing the name "Project Management Institute."

I think it was at our first 1968 New Orleans meeting that Jim Snyder reported that he had recently attended a seminar at Georgia Tech University led by Prof. Dr. Gordon Davis, who encouraged Jim to plan a formation meeting linked with one of Gordon's seminars, which is what actually materialized. My surviving hard copy of my 1969 paper says this on the title page:

Seminar in
Advanced Project Management Concepts
Co-Sponsored by
The School of Industrial & Systems Engineering
Georgia Institute of Technology
and
The Project Management Institute
October 9-10, 1969
Atlanta, Georgia

Gordon and Georgia Tech helped a great deal in publicizing our initial meeting. We had around 80 people at that first meeting, as noted in Eric Jenett's minutes of the Board of Trustees meeting held on Oct. 11, 1969, which we thought was a pretty good turnout.

PMWT: Can you say a little more about the first PMI conference in Atlanta in 1969? How did that come about? What were the objectives for that event?

Archibald: Again, I've covered much of that in my earlier remarks. The objectives were to see if there was any interest in forming such an association, and see if we could bring together a few of the people like James Kelly, a Remington-Rand computer expert, and Morgan Walker, a DuPont engineer, who are known as the inventors of CPM, and others, and hear their opinions on these systems and their applications. Copies of documents recording that first meeting that were provided by Eric Jenett listing the actual speakers at that first PMI seminar show these names– Oct. 9: Dr. Arthur G. Hansen, President of Georgia Tech., "Welcome"; Dr. Gorden Davis, Georgia Tech, (Seminar Co-Chairman) "Introductions"; Russ Archibald; James E. Kelly, Jr., CPM Engineers, Inc; Computer Panel: Abe Deshpande, Burroughs Corp.; James A. McAndrew, IBM Corp.; B, J. McGovern, RCA; and reps from CDC, GE, Honeywell, and UNIVAC; Luis Richard Shaffer, Construction Engineering Research Laboratory, U.S. Army; after dinner speaker: James R. Snyder, (Seminar Co-Chairman) Smith Kline & French Laboratories, "PMI – An Organization Profile." The speakers on Oct. 10 were: Dr. R. L. Martino; the late John W. Fondahl, Stanford University, who died in mid-September, 2008; and Orville S. Beard, Foster Wheeler Corp.

PMI's first news release, dated October 21, 1969, announced the launching of PMI and stated these three objectives:

A. The providing of a forum for open exchange of information
B. The coordinating of industrial and academic research in the project management field
C. The fostering of professionalism in the field of project management"

PMWT: How did you happen to be the first speaker, for what turned out to be the first speaker at the first event held in PMI's name? *(Editor's note: Russ Archibald's original 1969 paper can be seen at* https://pmworldlibrary.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/pmwj53-Dec2016-Archibald-planning-efforts-of-knowledge-workers-second-edition.pdf*)*

Archibald: Well, I don't recall the details of putting that first program together, but I believe we discussed who to invite to speak when we met in New Orleans. Eric Jenett has always been a good arm twister, and you know when a good client asks a consultant to write a paper and make a presentation at a meeting, it's pretty hard for the consultant to refuse. Also, I guess I

was pretty well known because of our 1967 book, which had sold rather well and was in the Harvard Business School core library for some years.

PMWT: One of the key milestones of that event in Atlanta was the signing of PMI's official formation documents. How was it that you missed that event, therefore not being officially recognized as a PMI Founder after all of these years?

Archibald: I was one of the 6 PMI Trustees prior to our incorporation that are documented in the minutes of various meetings. The Trustees last met at 10:30 am on Saturday, Oct. 11, 1969, the day after that first seminar. The minutes of the first of two meetings held on Oct. 11 state that the Trustees "appointed themselves the Directors of PMI [presumably including me even though I was absent from that meeting], thereupon the Directors of PMI immediately called a meeting ...and proceeded with the business of the Corporation as detailed below…." Prior to that, the minutes state that " Messrs. Archibald and King were absent and unable to attend; Mr. Archibald had verbally assigned his voting rights to Mr. Jenett the previous evening indicating that he would concur with the majority vote on any matter requiring his assent."

The reason I was unable to stay in Atlanta that day was because late the night before I was on an airplane headed to Monaco (my very first trip to Europe, in fact, at 45 years of age), where I attended a 2 day OECON (Offshore Exploration Conference) in Monte Carlo and I presented a paper there on planning and scheduling the design, fabrication, and emplacement of off-shore drilling platforms. After the conference I went on to Greece to consult for 2 weeks with Frank E. Basil Inc., the largest architect-engineering firm in the Middle East in those years (now headquartered in Washington, DC) who had completed many projects in Greece, Spain, Saudi Arabia, and elsewhere, and had many more projects on the books to do. In fact, both Frank Basil and his son Rodney were Georgia Tech graduates, and Rodney attended that 1969 first PMI Conference. That consulting gig remains stamped in my memory – not only for all the sights and history in Greece, and for the fun of cruising the Greek islands near Athens on Frank's 100 foot yacht, but mostly because of the cable I received informing me that my mother had died suddenly in St. Louis of a stroke and that her funeral had been held one day before I received the cable.
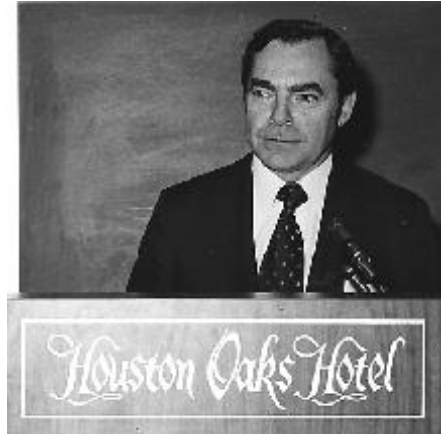
PMWT: How were you informed of PMI's registration and official formation? What did you hear about the signing in Atlanta? Who participated?

Archibald: Of course I knew about the meeting on Oct. 11 and its purpose – which is why I had given Eric my proxy to vote for me if necessary. I think Eric, just then appointed PMI Corporate Secretary, sent me and the other Directors copies of his minutes of meetings plus other announcements and notices that were mailed out regularly to all PMI members. The early growth curve of paid (US$15) members was: 1968: 15 Feb. > 5 members; 1969: 11 Oct.> 28 members; Dec. 19. > 68 members; 1970: Jan. 27 > 91 members.

PMWT: Were you involved in drafting or reviewing PMI's original mission, objectives or governing documents?

Archibald: I participated in helping a bit to thrashing out the mission and objectives at the meetings in New Orleans that I mentioned above, but I really did not do anything related to the incorporating and governing documents. Jim Snyder did most of that work, I believe, along with some help from others including Ned Engman, Eric Jenett, and Robert Anderman, whom I believe is a lawyer.

The minutes of the Oct. 11th 1969 meeting state that Jim provided the draft Constitution that was adopted after considerable discussion and some modification, and he also provided the Application for Charter documents for signature at that meeting and led the follow-on work to write and ratify the By-Laws. Those minutes also show election of these officers, which we had previously discussed I believe, and I was completely happy with. I was traveling more than I wanted to at that time.

Russ Archibald – Giving the keynote paper at the 1971 Third Annual PMI Seminar/Symposium in Houston, Texas

Chairman of the Board: E. A. Engman
President: J. Snyder
Vice-President: G. J. Davis
Secretary: E. Jenett
Treasurer: Ms. S. C. Gallegher

The following standing committee chairmen were appointed:

Finance: A. M. Pollard
Membership: D. G. Monefeldt
National Meeting: J. N. Campbell
Program: R. D. Archibald
Professional Activities: G. J. Davis

PMWT: What role or involvement did you have after Atlanta during the first few years of PMI's existence? How much interaction did you have with the other founders and leaders?

Archibald: As Chair of the Program Standing Committee for the first few years (I don't remember how many) I was involved in planning our annual programs, with plenty of help from the officers and other committee chairs listed above. I probably had the most interaction with Eric Jenett of those on the above lists, but over the years I worked a lot with Jim O'Brien, Bob Staples, who developed our quarterly PMI publication into a monthly one, Bob Youker, who's PMI number is 24 I believe and who contributed a lot of editing ideas for the 1992 second edition of my "Managing High-Technology Programs and Projects" book, plus Dave Cleveland, and Bob Gillis, to name just a few. I am hesitant to start naming individuals because I will miss many and there are so many great individuals who contributed so much to PMI and who I regard as very good friends. Bob Gillis and I were on the IPMA (International Project Management Association) Board together for about 10 years when that was still named the

original INTERNET, along with Max Wideman and David Curling, all 3 from Canada. David Curling was the founder of the great web site PMFORUM around 1993 or 1994.

PMWT: It is well known that Jim Snyder did a lot of the early administrative work to get PMI started, and to keep it alive during the early years. What can you say about Jim's role in PMI's formation?

Archibald: Jim Snyder played a very active and important role not only in founding but also building and keeping PMI alive and growing throughout all its life. There is no question in my mind that PMI would not be where it is today without both Jim and his wife Ann, who also enthusiastically assisted Jim wherever she could in supporting him with her strong moral support and I'm sure many, many hours of her own time over 39 years until her recent untimely transition to the next world.

PMWT: What role did the other founders play during that period?

Archibald: Only 3 of the original 5 official founders were very active in PMI after the first year or two of its existence, in my recollection: Jim Snyder, Eric Jenett, and Gordon Davis. A number of other great people stepped in to take over, as you can see on PMI's web site in the Hall of Leaders and list of PMI Fellows and past Presidents and Chairs of the Board. Like many others on those lists, I went through periods of several years in my career when my jobs took me away from project management somewhat for a time. When I took my early retirement in 1982 from the Bendix Corp., I returned to my area of major interest as a full-time individual PM consultant, and also returned to more active roles with PMI.

PMWT: What was PMI's next big event after Atlanta? Did you participate, and, if so, in what capacity?

Archibald: That was PMI's "Second Annual Seminar-Symposium: CURRENT APPLICATIONS AND SYSTEM DEVELOPMENTS -- a two and a half day conference for those who plan, organize, staff and manage projects – and for the executives to whom they report." This was held Oct. 22-24, 1970, at the Chase-Park Plaza Hotel in my hometown, St. Louis, Missouri, jointly sponsored by PMI and McDonnell Automation Company. I was Program Chairman, and also Chairman of the Saturday morning Oct. 24 session so I did not present a paper. We had a field trip Saturday afternoon to the McDonnell Douglass production facilities and MacDonnell Automation Company computing facilities. At that time I was with the Office of the President, ITT Corp., in New York. The Conference was a success with about 150 participants, as I recall. Dr. Dave Cleveland gave a luncheon address on "Key Problems for Project Management System Developers." I remember we were all pretty excited by the turnout.

PMWT: Did you participate or present papers at other early PMI conferences? Do you remember the topics and dates? Are any of those early papers still available?

Archibald: In 1971 I gave the keynote paper at the third annual seminar-symposium, which is what we called our conferences until just a few years ago when they became "Global Congresses." That was held in Houston, I believe in October, and if I recall correctly discussions at that meeting started the ball rolling to form the Houston Chapter of PMI -- which was the first local chapter of the Institute. That happened officially a couple of months later, and the Houston

Chapter was three months ahead of John Fondahl and others establishing the Northern California Chapter of PMI, according to Eric Jenett.. The title of my keynote paper in Houston was "Wanted: A Better Understanding of Project Management." I have not been able to locate a copy of that paper, but I'll keep looking. A number of my papers from more recent years, when we could more easily save digital copies of them, can be downloaded from my personal web site at www.russarchibald.com (go to <author> then <recent papers>.) I do have some of the older papers in hard copies, and many of those ideas can be found in my books. I recall that I arrived in Houston in October 1971 with very little time to spare from Buenos Aires, where I had been spending a lot of time implementing IBM's PMS 360 (with modifications) at Standard Electric, S. A., which was ITT's telephone equipment manufacturing and installation subsidiary in Argentina. Here is a picture from that 1971 Houston PMI meeting.

L to R: Eric Jenett, Russ Archibald, Col. Parker, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the late Dottie Jenett at the 1971 Third Annual PMI Seminar/Symposium in Houston, Texas – October 1971

Editor's note: We want to thank Russ Archibald for the time he took to answer these questions, answers that reflect developments worldwide during the exciting early days of the project management field and of PMI. In Part 3, Russ answers questions related to the early days of INTERNET (now IPMA) in Europe where he presented many papers beginning in the early 1970s. Russ was there and actively involved when the PM profession began. This interview was conducted in person in Washington, DC and via email.

Don't miss Part 3 of the Interview with Russ Archibald

in the November 2008 edition of

PM World Today