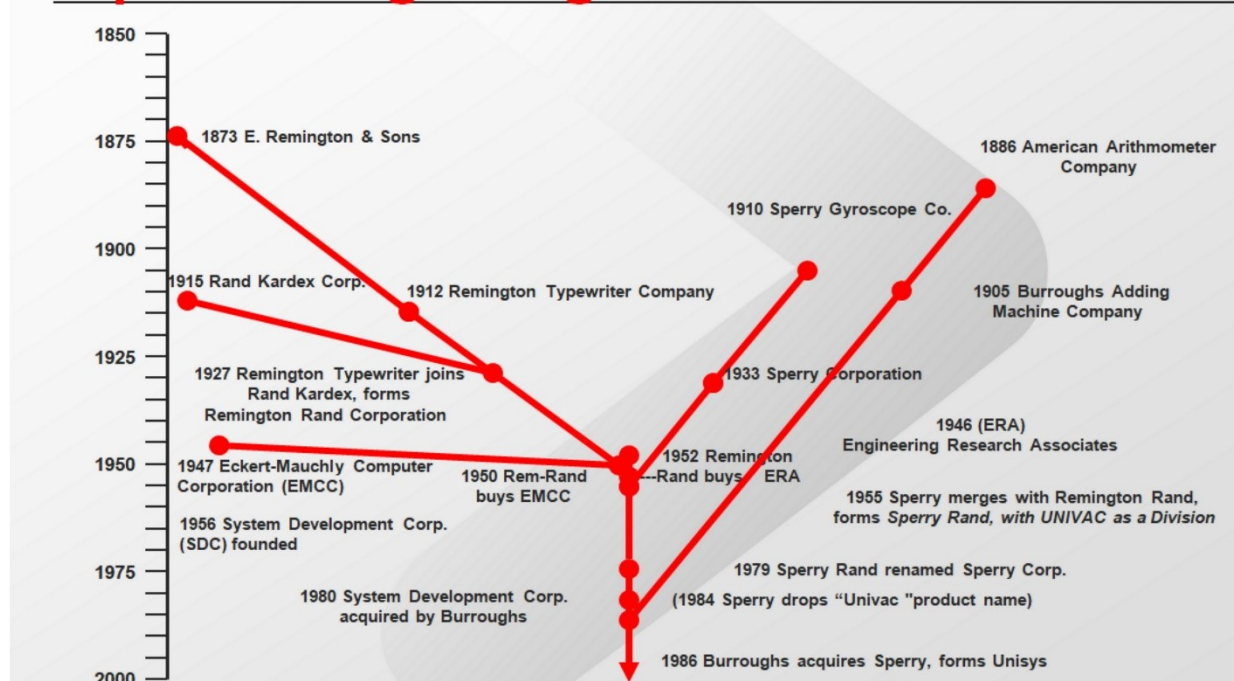# Burroughs, An IT Legacy Corporation

INTRODUCTION:

Mark Greenia, University of San Francisco Adjunct Professor, leads the Computer History Archives Project. This project has developed almost 50 videos, each based on research into books, history archives, personal contacts, web sites, etc. His most recent work presents films about Burroughs before they bought Sperry to form UNISYS in 1986.

The corporate ancestry tree leading up to the union of these two computer systems' companies is illustrated hereunder. The corporate name, UNISYS, came out of a naming contest – an acronym for **Un**ited **I**nformation **Sys**tems. In 1986 there were over 100,000 employees at locations throughout the world. At that time there were about 15,000 employees in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis/St. Paul, working in 28 facilities[1].

This chart originated with retired Unisys Fellow, Ronald Q. Smith. Mr. Greenia added the System Development Corporation data points (lower left) for chart use in the video.

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[1] See http://vipclubmn.org/TwinCities.html#TablePlt

Message from Mark (April 7, 2018)

"Hi Lowell,

I am pleased to share with you the link to the final version of the latest vintage Burroughs presentation. I also want to thank you, Ron [retired UNISYS Fellow Ron Q. Smith] and others at VIP Club for your very valuable help and encouragement. It has been quite a help.

It's a Three-Part Presentation:
1. Introduction and 1963 film (19 mins)
2. A 1962 film on the B270 (2 mins); and
3. Image Gallery, early Burroughs Computers w/some rare photos (5 mins).

About the films:

The first film talks about the Electro Data Division of Burroughs, at Pasadena, California in 1963. Various systems are shown including B5000, B200, B270, B280. It mentions installations such as NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center, Huntsville, AL; United Technology Center, Sunnyvale, CA; Community National Bank; and others. Good historical information. It includes info on BIPCO, Nixie, and the Burroughs mobile Data Van with B200 on board. Cool stuff for technocrats looking at technologies of the 50's and 60's.

Film quality is somewhat dark in parts and efforts to increase quality brought it back as much as possible. The video is best viewed when ported to large screen (LCD/LED) TV screen, perhaps via an HDMI connection from PC or laptop.

Film clip 2 is somewhat better quality, focuses on banking and finance application use of the B270 system.

Image Gallery has been expanded and mentions over 20 different machines, including some very early rare photos from 1950's. Hope you enjoy this attempt to preserve some vintage computer history about Burroughs' equipment and systems.

Link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eyOpO-040W8

Acknowledgements & Resources, Special Thanks to:

- David Melvin - Professional Narration.
- Tony Buglione, Manager of External Communications & Media Relations, Unisys
- Lowell A. Benson, Ronald Smith and others at the VIP Club, (Retirees, former employees, etc. of Unisys, and their Twin Cities predecessor companies) http://www.VIPClubMN.org
- Amanda Wick, Archivist, Charles Babbage Institute, Univ. of Minnesota Libraries
- Micah Mabelitini of the Vintage Technology Association (VTA), http://www.decadecounter.com/
- Nixie Tube Info courtesy of Tom Mayer's http://vinylsavor.blogspot.com

Established in 1980

- Burroughs Machines' site, by Chris Pickels,
  http://picklesnet.com/burroughs/index.htm
- Al Kossow's, great Bitsavers archives, http://www.Bitsavers.org
- T.J. Sawyer's Datatron 205 site and the Burroughs 205 & 220 blog
  http://datatron.blogspot.com/
- "Survey of Electronic Digital Computing Systems," 1961, Weik, Ballistic Research
  Laboratories, Aberdeen Prov. Ground, Courtesy of Ed Thelen; http://www.ed-
  thelen.org/comp-hist/BRL61.html
- U.S. Navy; U.S. Air Force; and U.S. Army Archives.

Mark Greenia

Computer History Archives Project"

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