

Family Tells The Man



**George Leighton '*Tim*' Peirce
A Remembrance**



Clockwise—Tim, in conversation with Pope John Paul II; with original founders of LaGuardia's philanthropic North Beach Club; Cary Peirce on Kid's Day; Amanda, Cary and Jenifer Peirce; with the entire LaGuardia staff on a snowy February day in 1978; Rocco Manniello; with Port Authority Of New York & New Jersey Aviation Director, Robert J. Aaronson; at a banquet with mentor Ed Ingraham at the head of the table; with Marine Air Terminal 'Flight' artist James Brooks and Air Cargo News flying Typers Publisher Geoffrey Arend and with Mrs. Fiorello H. LaGuardia.



Club where he served as president and member of the Board of Directors; he was past chairman and member of the Advisory Boards for the Salvation Army; he served on the Queens Lighthouse for the Blind and The College of Aeronautics, as well as a member of the Board of Directors of the Queens Chamber of Commerce and the Queens Historical Society. A lifelong sailor, Mr. Pierce was a major participant in the successful development of the OPSAIL

that man must seek perfection in his life or in his work. Tim got the best out of work and out of life. He cherished his friends and helped everyone.

He was also one hell of an airport manager. (Geoffrey Arend)

One of the small handful of truly great airport managers in history, Tim Peirce changed the way LaGuardia Airport was viewed by the public and the surrounding community during his nearly 20-year tenure. His passing January 31, 2000, recalls a life well lived.

Mr. Pierce was born March 9, 1933, in Worcester, Massachusetts, and graduated from the University of Massachusetts with a degree in Business Administration. His military service included active duty as a pilot with the U.S. Air Force and the Massachusetts Air National Guard, flying F-86 jet fighter aircraft.

Tim served as manager of LaGuardia Airport for 19 years, from 1975 to 1994. Along the way he was a rock—compiling a 33-year record of service with the airport operator, The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

While he was at the field, no one ever doubted that LaGuardia was very much Tim's airport. Mr. Pierce is credited with guiding LaGuardia Airport through its most difficult time, as the facility faced an uncertain future with both a critical surrounding neighborhood and the growing needs of air carriers constantly requesting space to operate at the small, 600-acre flying field.

New York City Councilwoman Helen Marshall, who represents the 27th district area bordering the airport, said:

"Tim Pierce was a one of a kind—a friend to everyone. He worked tirelessly to serve his airport, but also insured that LaGuardia was a good neighbor. The greatness of LaGuardia Airport today is due to his outstanding leadership during a very crucial time. His commitment and dedication to the airport and neighborhood in total represents the highest career fulfillment that we can all aspire to."

Richard Rowe, past general manager of JFK International Airport, said, "Tim was the best, a straight shooter who was always candid and full of humor."

Mr. Pierce was also a pillar of the Queens, New York, community. He was the guiding spirit behind the LaGuardia Airport Kiwanis

celebrations held in 1964, 1976, 1986, and 1992, when he served as treasurer.

In 1986, Mr. Peirce was awarded the highest honor of the U.S. Department of Transportation and Federal Aviation Administration for his work in preserving LaGuardia Airport's historic Marine Air Terminal, which up until Mr. Pierce's tenure as airport manager faced a date with the wrecker's ball.

The award was presented at a gala ceremony at the National Historic Trust in Washington, D.C., in 1986 by Secretary of Transportation Elizabeth H. Dole, who stated:

"To Tim Pierce—For Outstanding Contributions To Aviation and Historic Preservation at LaGuardia Airport's Marine Air Terminal."

Geoffrey Arend, publisher of Air Cargo News, who also received the award recalled:

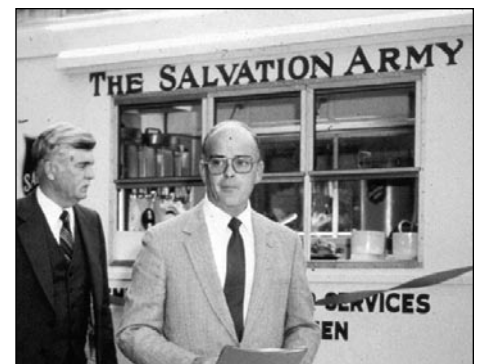
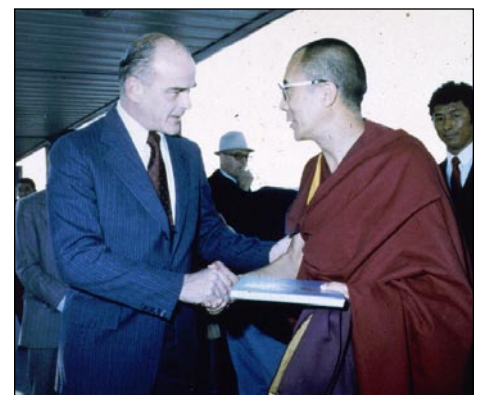
"Tim understood earlier, and better than most others, that the big public agency (Port Authority) had better pay attention and recognize the voices of all the people on and around its airports. That's why Tim encouraged Rocco Manniello, proprietor of a small pizza parlor near LaGuardia; to open a restaurant in the MAT. Today Rocky operates major employee food services at both LaGuardia, JFK, and other locations.

"He loved LaGuardia in every meaning of that word—its history and its future, and he never got tired of working for all of it."

Anyone who saw Joe DiMaggio stroke a baseball; or hears Ella Fitzgerald sing a song; or stands in awe of artist James Brooks' mural which covers the walls of the Marine Air Terminal, can appreciate what Tim Pierce did. Like any great pro, he made running LaGuardia Airport look easy.

They like to name places after people who become so closely identified with the site that no other name will do. That's why the field was named LaGuardia, a couple of months after the airport opened in 1940. They should name the main entrance road or some big portion of the Central Terminal Building at LaGuardia Airport for Tim Pierce.

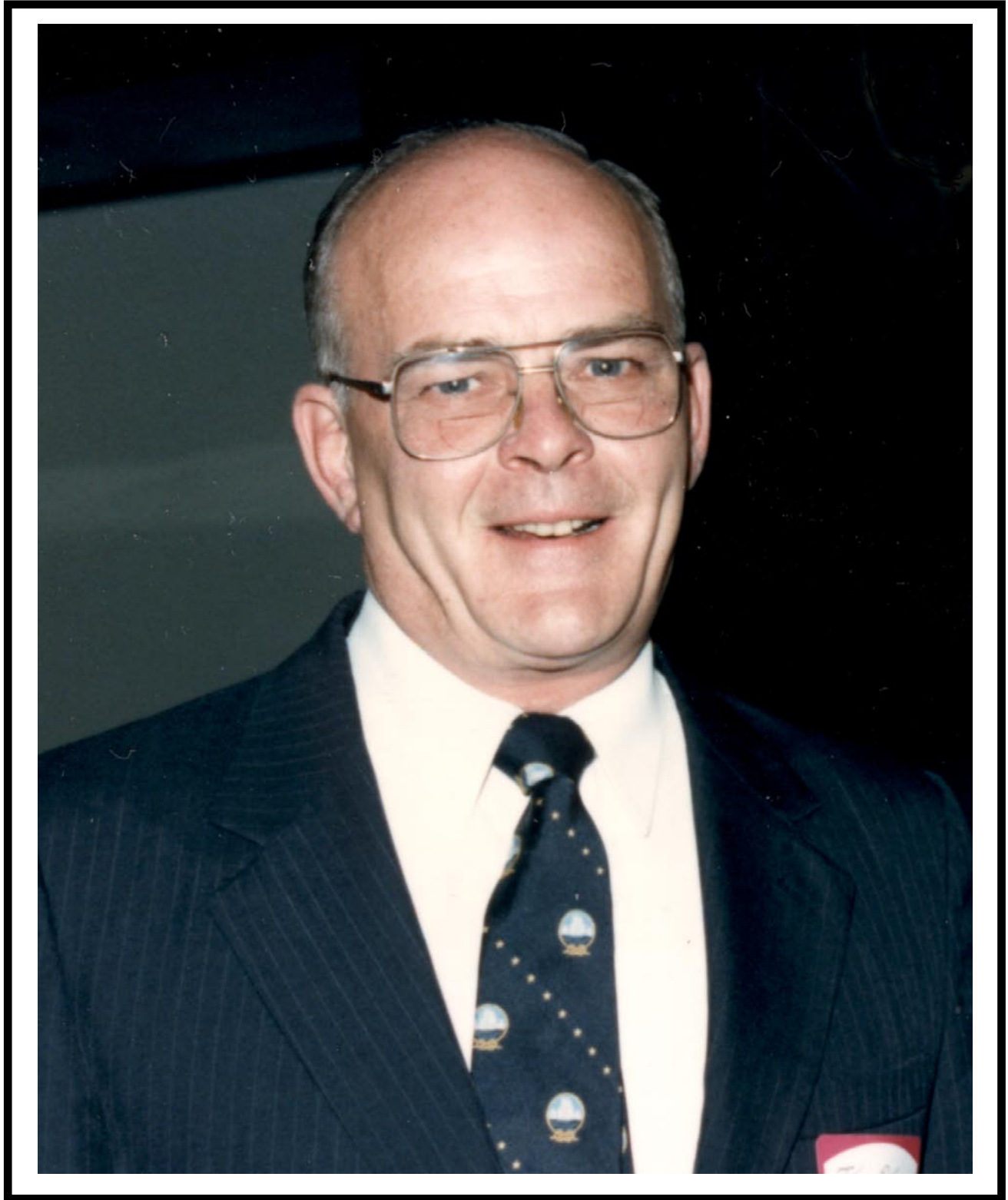
The Irish poet, William Butler Yeats wrote



Whether coaching the Jackson Heights Little League, at a golf outing, greeting Secretary of State Henry Kissinger or the Dalai Lama, Tim understood that the successful integration of the public agency and the private sector lifted everyone.

In Memoriam

March 9, 1933-January 31, 2000



A Life Well Lived