

## Pierre de Beaumont, Brookstone Founder, Dies at 95

By MARGALIT FOX

Pierre de Beaumont, a nominal nobleman and inveterate tinkerer who founded Brookstone, the gadget-and-gift retailer that is a familiar presence in American shopping malls, died on Dec. 4 at his home in Manchester-by-the-Sea, Mass. He was 95.

Mr. de Beaumont's brother-in-law, Joseph C. Robbins, confirmed the death, which the family announced publicly only recently.

With his wife, Mary, Mr. de Beaumont began Brookstone in 1965, for \$500, in their Berkshires farmhouse. (The company, originally a catalog retailer of hard-to-find tools, was named after their farm.) After learning accounting by correspondence, the couple mailed catalogs to thousands of hobbyists, sowing the seeds of a going concern.

Today Brookstone, based in Merrimack, N.H., comprises more than 300 brick-and-mortar stores throughout the United States, as well as catalog and Internet business. Its wares include luggage, massage chairs and remote-control toys.

Brookstone's sales in 2009, the most recent year for which figures are available, totaled \$430 million, according to Deirdre Zimmermann, a company spokeswoman.

If it seems incongruous that so fundamentally Yankee an enterprise was conceived by a French count (for that, technically, was what Mr. de Beaumont was, though he did not noise it about, and, as his brother-in-law said on Tuesday, "he didn't think much of it"), then it bears noting that he was also a trained engineer who had worked for the Packard Motor Car Company.

Equally incongruous — and even less widely known — was the fact that Mr. de Beaumont happened to own the rights to an emblematic American art form, the "Mutt and Jeff" comic strip,



Pierre de Beaumont and his wife, Mary Deland, started Brookstone as a gadget catalog in their farmhouse in the Berkshires. It grew into a chain of stores that are now familiar presences in American shopping malls.

which he had inherited from his mother, a countess and occasional Broadway chorus girl. She had obtained them after a marital dispute that was widely covered in the newspapers and also involved frogs.

Pierre Stuart de Beaumont, familiarly known as Pete, was born in New York on Aug. 1, 1915, while his mother, a French beauty who had married a count, was on a visit there. After Pierre's father, Count de Beaumont, was killed in World War I, his mother, the former Aedita Stuart, settled in New York with her son.

Under the name Gypsy Norman, the countess found work in the chorus of early-1920s Broadway revues, including "Bombo," starring Al Jolson, and "The Whirl of New York."

Pierre de Beaumont attended Harvard, from which he earned a bachelor's degree in engineering in 1938; he later worked for Packard, General Motors and other companies.

Meanwhile, the Countess de Beaumont had married — and, in a welter of wooings and suings avidly chronicled in the press, separated from — the cartoonist

Harry C. Fisher. Mr. Fisher, known as Bud, had created what became "Mutt and Jeff," the long-popular comic strip about two mismatched tinhorns, in 1907.

In 1925, Mr. Fisher married Countess de Beaumont aboard a trans-Atlantic liner. In 1927, a New York judge granted her a legal separation after she testified, as The New York Times reported, to "her husband's cruelty" in "permitting her to be neglected by his servants while they looked after a number of live frogs he maintained in their former apartment on Riverside Drive."

Mr. Fisher died in 1954. Mrs. Fisher, who apparently never divorced him, retained the rights to "Mutt and Jeff." These later devolved on Mr. de Beaumont.

"Mutt and Jeff" is currently reprinted in syndication in about 40 newspapers worldwide.

Mr. de Beaumont's first marriage, to Barbara Anne Longstreth, ended in divorce. His second wife, the former Mary Deland Robbins Kelley, whom he married in 1960, died in 2001. He is survived by three stepchildren, Joan Kopperl, Kathleen McAllister and Edward Kelley; seven step-grandchildren; and seven step-great-grandchildren.

Brookstone was acquired by the Quaker Oats Company in 1980; it is currently owned by a consortium led by Osim International, a Singapore retailer.

In founding Brookstone, Mr. de Beaumont identified and closed a small but singular gap in the market. Where else could consumers find, all in one place, sought-after arcana like miniature anvils, wood-rot-cure kits and dental picks (prized by makers of model ships)?

"As far as we could tell, no one else was selling those types of things," he told The Times in 1981. "We didn't know whether it was a hole in the market or a hole to fall into."

## David E. Rumelhart, 68, Who Simulated Perception

By BENEDICT CAREY

David E. Rumelhart, whose computer simulations of perception gave scientists some of the first testable models of neural processing and proved helpful in the development of machine learning and artificial intelligence, died Sunday in Chelsea, Mich. He was 68.

The cause was complications of Pick's disease, an Alzheimer's-like disorder from which he had suffered for more than a decade, his son Karl said.

When Dr. Rumelhart, a psychologist, began thinking in the 1960s about how neurons process information, the field was split into two camps that had little common language: biologists, who focused on neurons and brain tissue; and cognitive psychologists, who studied far more abstract processes, like reasoning skills and learning strategies.

By starting small — showing, for instance, that the brain's ability to recognize a single letter was greatly influenced by the letters around it — Dr. Rumelhart and his colleague Jay McClelland, around 1980, built computer programs that roughly simulated perception. Later, he devised an algorithm that allowed computer programs to learn how to perceive. Using his program, a computer could interpret underwater sonar signals with roughly the accuracy that a person could. It was an important early step in machine learning, a critical component in artificial intelligence.

Working at the University of California, San Diego, he eventually developed a simulation of how three or more layers of neurons could work together to process information — as is required for the brain to engage in any complex task, like reading. Previous models were far cruder. In a landmark 1986 paper, written with Geoffrey Hinton and Ronald Williams for the journal *Nature*, he described how the system worked.

Dr. McClelland, director of the Center for Mind, Brain and Computation at Stanford, said the neural processing work "led to extremely powerful systems for doing things like visual object recognition and handwritten character classification." In 1987, he and Dr. Rumelhart wrote a book, "Parallel Distributed Processing," that became a central text in the field.

In their work Dr. Rumelhart and Dr. McClelland argued that language, like most knowledge, relies mainly on memory and is represented in the brain by sets of associations between elements of sound and meaning.

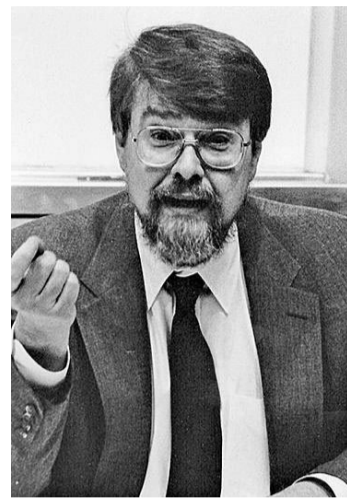
This put them in opposition with scientists who argue that the brain generates some words by using rules shaped in part by

brain biology — for example, adding "ed" to a stem to form a past tense.

"Rumelhart was enormously important in the 1980s in reviving this neural network approach to language and cognition," said Steven Pinker, a psychologist at Harvard and a leading proponent of the rival "rules" theory.

Even though they sometimes disagreed, Dr. Pinker said that Dr. Rumelhart's computer simulations "prompted me and many others to ask very fruitful questions, and that in the end is about all a good scientist can ask for."

David Everett Rumelhart was born on June 6, 1942, in Wessington Springs, S.D., the eldest of three sons born to Everett, a printer, and Thelma, a librarian. He graduated from the University of South Dakota in 1963 with a



David E. Rumelhart in 1990. He created computer simulations of how the brain works.

degree in psychology and math and completed his Ph.D. at Stanford in 1967.

He spent 20 years on the faculty of the University of California, San Diego, before returning to Stanford in 1987. He retired from Stanford in 1998, when the symptoms of Pick's disease became disabling, and moved in with his brother Donald in Ann Arbor, Mich.

In addition to his brother Donald and his son Karl, his survivors include another son, Peter; another brother, Roger; and four grandsons. His marriage to Marilyn Austin ended in divorce.

Dr. Rumelhart won a number of professional awards, including a MacArthur fellowship and the American Psychological Association's Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award.

He also had one named after him: the David E. Rumelhart Prize, a \$100,000 award given annually by the Glushko-Samuelson Foundation to any individual or team making a contribution to the "theoretical foundations of human cognition."

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## James Tyree, 53; Aided Sun-Times

CHICAGO (AP) — James C. Tyree, the Chicago businessman who helped lead the Sun-Times Media Group out of bankruptcy, died Wednesday. He was 53.

The cause was "an unexpected complication" of stomach cancer, said Richard S. Price, president of Mesriow Financial, where Mr. Tyree was chairman and chief executive.

In 2009 Mr. Tyree led an investment group that bought Sun-Times Media, the parent company of The Chicago Sun-Times, for \$5 million in cash and the assumption of around \$22 million in liabilities and took the company out of bankruptcy.

"I certainly believe this is a good business opportunity, though certainly very risky," Mr. Tyree said in a 2009 interview.

Sun-Times Media, which also owns dozens of suburban Chicago newspapers and Web sites, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in March of that year, after months of cost-cutting measures. The company's troubles played out during the 2007 federal trial of Conrad M. Black, the chief executive of The Sun-Times's former owner, Hollinger International. Mr. Black was convicted of siphoning millions of dollars from Hollinger.

Among other concessions, Mr. Tyree asked unions to agree to lock in 15 percent pay cuts that were originally intended to be temporary.

Mr. Tyree, who earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Illinois State University, is survived by his wife and three children.

### Deaths

Braverman, Toni  
Coughlan, Philippa  
Green, Helen

Johnson, Frank  
Landau, Lee  
Rothschild, Edmund  
Silverman, Sandra

**BRAVERMAN**—Toni, peacefully on March 16, 2011. Beloved wife of the late Lester. Mother of Peter and Susan and the late David. Dancer and Golfer Par Excellence. Funeral services in Florida on March 20, 2011 at noon. For information, please call Star of David, North Lauderdale, FL, 954-722-9000. Donations in her memory to the Japanese relief fund of your choosing.

**GREEN**—Helen, of Great Neck and Roslyn Harbor, on March 17, 2011. Beloved wife of Abner (deceased). A loving mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and aunt. Service Sunday 2pm at Star of David Memorial Chapels in W. Babylon. For information go to: jewish-funeral-home.com

**COUGHLAN**—Dr. Philippa Mathieu, 75, a clinical psychologist, the founder and for 40 years the Director of the Office of Behavioral Health for Students at Wesleyan University, passed away peacefully at Middlesex Hospital in Connecticut, on March 17, 2011. She was a resident of Middletown, Connecticut, and had a home in Newport, Rhode Island. Philippa was born in Boston, Massachusetts, graduated from Boston University, where she was President of the Newman Society for three years, and received a Ph.D. from University of Wisconsin-Madison, where she worked with Carl Rogers. At Wisconsin, she was a principal in the post-Vatican II transformation of the University Catholic Center. In addition to her long professional career at Wesleyan, Philippa taught in the Psychiatry Department of the Yale School of Medicine, served for eight years as Chair of the Connecticut State Board of Mental Health and was a Governor's appointee to the Community Health Strategy Board. In her youth Philippa was an accomplished figure skater with the Skating Club of Boston and later a respected judge for the US Figure Skating Association. She was a pioneer in the field of behavioral health for college students and spent a lifetime making a positive difference in young people's lives. Philippa was a loving wife, mother, and grandmother, and she was a generous friend. She is survived by her husband Neil and her daughter-in-law Karen and grandson Patrick (to whom she is "Pippa"), brother-in-law Paul, sister-in-law Nicole and Monica. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 10:30am on Monday, March 21 at Corpus Christi Church, 529 West 121st Street, New York City, preceded at 9:30 am by a viewing in the church. There will be a noon reception for friends and family at the New York Athletic Club, 180 Central Park South. Philippa will be buried in a private family service at Gate of Heaven Cemetery, Hawthorne, New York.

**JOHNSON**—Frank A. Jr. (Bud), on March 16, 2011 at a young 88. Survived by his beloved wife of 69 years, Evelynne. Loving father of Barry (Bobbie Congress). Adored grandfather of Deborah Johnson Rothenberg, Katie Congress, Susanne Congress and Elna Congress. Cherished by Jackson the wondercat, Dear uncle of Bredine, Cheryl and Roger. Decorated WWII Veteran with active service throughout Central and South America, 40 years of additional service to America as the Regional Director, appointed by President Kennedy to the NDER organization under the U.S. Coast Guard. He was an active and Past Master of Maimonides Lodge F & AM. A polo player, professional dancer with a stellar professional career in executive sales management, the last 40 years working hand in hand with his adored wife Evelynne.

**LANDAU**—Lee, on March 16, 2011. Wife of the late Irving, mother of Eric. School teacher and librarian, NYPS. Funeral on Sunday, 1pm at Riverside Memorial Chapel, 180 West 76th Street.

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### Deaths

**ROTHSCHILD**—Edmund O., M.D., died on March 16, 2011, surrounded by his family. Beloved husband of Kathy Loneragan; wonderfully devoted father of Emily, Sarah, Anna, Oliver, and the late Joshua and Adam; loving brother of Charles; father-in-law of Josh and Tara. A lifelong New York City resident, Ed graduated from Bronx Science High School, NYU University College, Cornell University Medical School. His lengthy and full career began as a Research Fellow, Associate and Attending physician at MSKCC. He served as the Senior Vice President of Affiliation Contracts at NYCHHC, Director of Community Medicine Queens Hospital Center, Vice President Professional and Academic Affairs of St. Luke's Roosevelt Hospital Center, Senior Vice President of Temple Beth-El. He served on many volunteer boards and committees, including NYCHHC, Red Cross of GNY, NYC-DOH Lead Poisoning Advisory Committee, NYS Office of Professional Medical Conduct, NYDOH Block Grant Committee. He was an Honorary NYC Police Surgeon, an Honorary Medical Officer of NYC-DOH and the Medical Director of the Honor Emergency Fund. He was a loyal community supporter and activist. On City Island, he was a member of the Board of Temple Beth-El. He served proudly as the co-President of the PTA and co-Chair of the SLT of PS 175 of City Island, and organized substance abuse education programs for his students. Ed loved his two islands; he loved the ocean, and, more than anything, he loved his family and his friends. He will remain a huge part of us forever. Services will be Monday at 9:30 at The Riverside at 76th & Amsterdam Ave. Donations in Ed's honor can be made to The PS 175 Ed Rothschild Fund for Substance Abuse Education and Scholarship, PS 175, 200 City Island Ave, City Island, NY 10464

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF DEATHS MAY BE TELEPHONED FROM WITHIN N.Y.C. TO (212) 556-3900; OR OUTSIDE N.Y.C. TO TOLL-FREE 1-800-458-5522 FOR THE FOLLOWING EDITIONS: Until 5:30 P.M. the day before for Tuesday through Saturday editions. Until 5:00 P.M. on Friday for Sunday's Nationwide edition, until 12:45 P.M. Saturday for Sunday's New York Region edition, until 2:00 P.M. Sunday for Monday's editions. Photos must be submitted by noon the day prior to publication Tuesday through Friday. Photos for Saturday, Sunday and Monday must be submitted by 12 noon on Friday.

### Deaths

**SILVERMAN**—Sandra. The Board and staff of the Schermer Foundation are deeply saddened by the death of our former President. A proud daughter of Chicago, she embraced her adopted home of New York with characteristic passion and energy. Beginning in the Lindsay administration, she served the city in numerous capacities including: press secretary of the 1975 Charter Revision Commission, member of the 1992 Democratic Convention Host Committee; and member of the Taxi and Limousine Commission. In addition to a distinguished career in public relations (M. Booth, Soref and Silverman, Inc.) she was the founding executive director of the Citizens Committee of New York City, the city's leader in supporting black associations and neighborhood revitalization. She joined the Foundation's board in 1984 and served as its president until 2009. Her dedicated and dynamic leadership increased both the effectiveness of our giving and the visibility of the Foundation. She played a particularly significant role in the reproductive rights field, leading funders groups and inspiring frontline organizations. Meetings with grantees were defined by her generosity and warmth, as well as her genuine curiosity. She loved politics, she loved do-gooders, and she deeply loved her colleagues and her gang of friends, who will all desperately miss her warmth and intelligence. We extend our love and condolences to her brother Marvin and sister-in-law Barbara of Jerusalem as well her many nieces, nephews and other family members whom she loved so much.

**SILVERMAN**—Sandra. Beloved sister of Marvin and Barbara Silverman and cherished aunt, cousin and friend. Sandy's loving arms enfolding family and friends from New York to Chicago to St. Louis to Florida and Israel. The loss of her warmth, her contagious laugh, her absolute integrity will leave an empty space for the rest of our lives. New York City, Democratic politics and women's reproductive freedom have lost a passionate advocate. Sandy's devotion to Jewish tradition and ethics informed every aspect of her life. She will be buried in Israel, as she wished. Family and friends gathering at 140 E. 81st St on Sunday, March 20, 2-8pm. Memorial service later this spring. In lieu of flowers, please make donations to the THANC Foundation, 10 Union Sq. East, Ste. 5B, NY, NY, 10003, attn: Erika Markowitz.

### In Memoriam

FUDJIM—Murray, 3/19/07. Missing you, and your zest for life. Remembered with love. Love, Marilyn



BRIAN LANKER

The key image from Brian Lanker's 1973 Pulitzer Prize-winning photo essay, "Moment of Life."

## Brian Lanker, 63, Photojournalist

By DAVID W. DUNLAP

Brian Lanker, a photojournalist who showed that small-city newspapers could have large-scale impact through the empathetic and intimate visual portrayal of American lives, died Sunday at his home in Eugene, Ore. He was 63.

The cause was pancreatic cancer, said Rich Clarkson, the former director of photography at The Topeka Capital-Journal in Kansas, where Mr. Lanker earned his reputation — and the 1973 Pulitzer Prize for feature photography.

It is hard to say for which image Mr. Lanker was most renowned. Was it the Pulitzer-winning photo of an ebullient Lynda Coburn and her newborn daughter? Or the elegant portrait of the civil rights pioneer Septima Poinsette Clark that graced the cover of his book, "I Dream a World: Portraits of Black Women Who Changed America," and a 1989 exhibition of the same name at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington?

It is easier to say what the pictures have in common. "It's all about explaining life," said Carl Davaz, the deputy managing edi-

tor of The Register-Guard in Eugene, Ore., where Mr. Lanker was picture director in the 1970s and '80s.

Mr. Lanker arrived at The Capital-Journal in 1970, when the paper was a training ground and showcase for some of the ablest talent in photojournalism. "He was constantly thinking," Mr. Clarkson recalled. For instance, Mr. Lanker proposed attending a class in the Lamaze method of natural child-bearing, picking one of the couples there and following them through the delivery of their baby.

The key image of his essay, "Moment of Life," showed Jacki Coburn, umbilical cord still intact, on the belly of her ecstatic mother, Lynda. Ms. Coburn eventually divorced her husband and married Mr. Lanker.

She survives him. Mr. Lanker is also survived by their son, Dustin, of Portland, Ore., and two stepdaughters, Jacki Coburn, of Corvallis, Ore., and Julie Coburn, of San Francisco.

Brian Lanker was born in Detroit on Aug. 31, 1947. He grew up in Phoenix and was working for The Phoenix Gazette at the age of 18. After four years as a staff pho-

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A slide show of Brian Lanker's photographs can be viewed on the Lens blog: [nytimes.com/lens](http://nytimes.com/lens)

tographer at The Capital-Journal, from 1970 to 1974, he moved to The Register-Guard. He remained there until 1982.

As a freelancer in recent years, Mr. Lanker took on high-profile clients to finance the documentary work he thought needed to be done. So it is that photographs of Elle Macpherson from the Sports Illustrated swimsuit issue can be found in a portfolio that also includes the elderly Alfred M. Landon, who as the governor of Kansas ran unsuccessfully against President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1936.

Mr. Lanker's debut as a documentary filmmaker came in 2000, on PBS, with "They Drew Fire: Combat Artists of World War II." He sought to preserve the work of artists who had been commissioned to paint scenes of warfare. Shortly before he died, Mr. Lanker whispered to Mr. Davaz, "There's just so much left to do."