

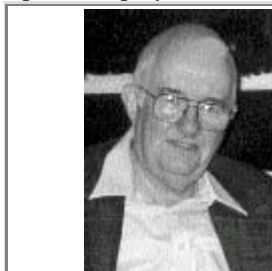
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Today's date: July 09 2001



AO Lens Designer, Donald Whitney, 73

SOUTHBRIDGE, Mass.—Donald Whitney, an influential lens designer and former American Optical employee, died here July 9 from complications due to myelodysplastic syndrome. He was 73.



Donald Whitney

Whitney joined American Optical in 1947 as a lens designer in research and development. He served as plant manager of the company's AOLITE plastic-lens department for 10 years. Whitney's final position was as director, vision technology, R&D, when he retired from AO in 1982. He later assumed a consulting role for AO and Gentex Optics.

During his career, Whitney was instrumental in numerous ophthalmic lens designs and low-vision aids, including the Ful-Vue cataract lens. He was closely involved in ophthalmic lens standards. Whitney headed up the U.S. delegation for the International

Standard Organization (ISO), Optics; was a member of the U.S. American Standards Institute (ANSI) Z80 Committee; and served as chairman of both the ANSI Technical Advisory Group for ISO TC172 and the OMA Lens Technical Committee.

He also penned over a dozen technical publications, including the Journal of Optometry. Whitney played a key role in obtaining the compromise on ISO reference wavelength, which prevented the mercury line from being the sole reference wavelength. His son, Richard Whitney, also a lens designer for American Optical, tells VM, "My father provided a great deal in the areas of lens design, standards and manufacturing."

A Harvard graduate who majored in astronomy, Whitney also was a World War II Navy veteran. Whitney is survived by his wife of 51 years, Janet; son Richard; and a daughter, Susan Koenig.

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