

LITTLE KNOWN FACTS ABOUT PATUXENT
Gabrielson Lab Blue Prints
by Matthew C. Perry

Most folks at Patuxent know that Gabrielson Laboratory was dedicated in 1969, and that the building was named for Dr. Ira Noel Gabrielson, who was the first Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service. The dedication took place on a beautiful Saturday afternoon on October 11th and Dr. Gabrielson was one of the speakers. A little known fact is that in early 1968 there was only one set of blue prints and the engineers were scrambling to obtain extra copies so the various contractors could conduct their work. For unknown reasons, it apparently was impossible for the government to create more copies. The engineers appealed to the drafting teacher, Mr. Gene Daniels, at Laurel High School to assist in their predicament, by making extra copies. The teacher agreed and selected a unique group of students, who had the expertise to make professionally accurate copies of all the blue prints. During the spring semester of 1968, the selected students worked one hour of class per day until the project was completed. The high school students were paid minimum wage, which was \$1.00 per hour. The copies looked just like the originals and each sub-contractor now could have their own set of blue prints. One of the students selected for this unusual project, and who remembers it well - is none other than Stuart Robbins, the oldest son of Patuxent's senior biologist Dr. Chandler Robbins.



Dr. Ira Noel Gabrielson (left), former director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, with Dr. Russell Train, Undersecretary of the Department of Interior.

Contact Matthew C. Perry at: mperry1209@verizon.net