

Thomas Julius Rehfisch (later Rey) was born in Berlin, Germany, on 31 January 1918, to Lilli Dora Rehfisch (*née* Stadthagen; 1891-1941/42) and Hans José (Joseph) Rehfisch (1891-1960). The family lived in Charlottenburg, Berlin. The Rehfisches and Stadthagens were distinguished Berlin families who contributed to German life as doctors and lawyers, including Tom's grandfather Eugen Rehfisch (1862-1937), a pioneering urologist and cardiologist, his uncle Paul Stadthagen (1893-1943), a decorated First World War bomber pilot, and his great uncle Arthur Stadthagen (1857-1917), a Social Democratic Party member of the Reichstag.

As children, Tom and his younger sister Beate (later Beata Duncan) played in Fürstenplatz in front of Württembergallee 26-27. Tom cultivated a garden beside the house, initiating his lifelong pursuit of gardening, and he fashioned a darkroom within the family's apartment. His first area of scientific interest was astronomy; he built his own telescope for viewing the sky from his rooftop. Tom also developed an impressive capacity for debate and learning languages. He attended the Französisches Gymnasium (French lycée) Reichstagsufer, Mitte in Berlin.

In January 1934, Tom's mother brought her children Tom (then almost 16) and Beate (age 12) from Berlin to London with the help of distant family established there. The children first attended Bunce Court boarding school in Kent, and then settled in north London.

In 1939, Tom was registered as a Male Enemy Alien with an exemption from internment as a refugee, and was not interned in June 1940, likely due to his employment as a junior assistant in the test instrument department of Messrs Murphy Radio Ltd. On 1 May 1947, Tom became a naturalized British citizen, having had his German citizenship revoked by the German government in 1939. In the late 1940s, Tom changed his surname from Rehfisch to Rey.

On 29 November 1941, Tom's mother Lilli was deported from Nuremberg to Riga, where she was murdered. Her two siblings also perished during the Holocaust. Her sister Toni Salomon and her daughter Evamarie were deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau Concentration and Extermination Camp on 11 July 1942 and murdered there. Brother Paul, a decorated World War I bomber pilot for Germany, was deported from Berlin to Theresienstadt Concentration Camp on 23 September 1942, where he died on 6 February 1943. Other members of the extended family also perished in the Holocaust. These traumatic losses, of which Tom learned after the end of the war, led to many years of distress.

In England, Tom exemplified his family's focus on education and continued his schooling, often as an external or part-time student while he also worked. He earned higher degrees at the University of London, including a B.Sc. in electrical engineering with first class honors from Northampton Polytechnic Institute in 1938, a B.A. with honors in mathematics from Birkbeck College in 1947, an M.A. in mathematics from University College and Birkbeck College

in 1951, and a Ph.D. in electrical engineering from Imperial College in 1961. Following attainment of his Ph.D., Tom became known professionally as Dr. Thomas J. Rey.

In London between the late 1930s and 1955, Tom worked on test instrument development at Messrs Murphy Radio Ltd and United Insulator Co., as a lecturer in communications and radio at Northampton Polytechnic (University of London), investigating spark discharges by single transient oscillography at the Electrical Research Association, and on waveguide plumbing and circuits at Electrical and Musical Industries Ltd (EMI).

In the late 1940s, Tom married Joan Wilson and had a son, Julian (b. February 1949). This marriage ended in divorce.

In 1955, Tom immigrated to the United States with his second wife, Joyce Eke, to work for Westinghouse Electric Corporation in radar antennas and stabilization problems. After living first in Baltimore, in 1957 the family moved to the Boston area, where Tom worked for MIT Lincoln Laboratory in frequency control, waveguide theory and antenna measurements, and signal design. Following his work at MIT Lincoln Laboratory, Tom worked for several other engineering companies in southern New England, including Wang Laboratories and Pratt and Whitney. In addition to his work in industry, he held several patents as an inventor and founded a company called Digilog. He was a lifelong member of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) and published technical notes in the IEEE journal.

Tom and Joyce had three daughters, Pamela (b. December 1956), Lilli (b. December 1958), and Toni (b. December 1958) [twins Lilli and Toni were named for their grandmother and great aunt, respectively, who perished in the Holocaust], and later divorced. Tom became a naturalized citizen of the United States in 1963.

For about 34 years, Tom lived on a 14-acre property in Billerica, Massachusetts, which he dubbed "Rolling Acres." He was happiest as he planned and executed many gardening projects, calling himself a "Gentleman Farmer" and enjoying the fruits of his labors. He also continued to explore his many interests, including language, arts and culture, history, politics, and current events, usually through the lens of a deep-rooted commitment to social justice. A staunch conservationist, Tom enjoyed camping, hiking, skiing, and sailing. He enjoyed chess and other games. After a hiatus of 50 years, in the late 1980s Tom returned to Berlin for a class reunion as an honorary graduate of the Französisches Gymnasium.

Dr. Thomas J. Rey died of myelodysplastic anemia on 19 September 1991, at his home in Billerica, Massachusetts. He was succeeded by his third wife, Marcia Damon Rey (later Reinke, now deceased), his four children, and 12 grandchildren.

This biography has been written by Tom's daughter Pamela Rey, with the assistance of her siblings, California 2022

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Weblinks to be inserted:

Paul Stadthagen <https://www.berlin.de/ba-charlottenburg-wilmersdorf/ueber-den-bezirk/geschichte/stolpersteine/artikel.179349.php>

Toni Salomon <https://www.berlin.de/ba-charlottenburg-wilmersdorf/ueber-den-bezirk/geschichte/stolpersteine/artikel.1146363.php>

Evamarie Salomon <https://www.berlin.de/ba-charlottenburg-wilmersdorf/ueber-den-bezirk/geschichte/stolpersteine/artikel.1146363.php>