

The World Kodak Made

The tech giant of the 20th century changed the way Americans saw themselves and their country, Kaitlyn Tiffany wrote in the July/August issue. Now it's trying to reinvent itself.

At the beginning of World War II, Kodak management in Rochester offered to help employees at Kodak Ltd., in England, by evacuating their children to Rochester to live with kind Kodak families here. At the time, my grandfather was an employee of Kodak Ltd. His youngest child, my aunt, was 15 and had a heart defect that made her particularly vulnerable to wartime stress and shortages. She was evacuated, along with more than 100 other children, to live in the Rochester area. She went to high school in the U.S., met the young man who would become her husband, and got the opportunity to receive life-altering open-heart surgery, arranged for by Kodak people. She lived into her 80s, much of the time in Rochester (where her husband got a job at Kodak); raised four healthy children; and enjoyed a long career

as an artist, a future she had not been expected to live to see.

In the postwar years, three more of my aunt's siblings moved to Rochester; two of them got jobs at Kodak Park, as did the husband of the third. When my newly widowed mother and I immigrated in 1949, we were sponsored by the same generous Kodak family who had acted as foster parents for my aunt. As a family we owe Kodak a great deal. It was, in and for its time, a great company.

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