

AS I REMEMBER IT

Douglas Wilford Park

1933 --- 2020



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AS I REMEMBER IT

By Douglas W. Park

INTRODUCTION

This is the story of the life of one, Douglas Wilford Park, born January 19, 1933 at the London Ontario Victoria Hospital to the loving parents of Lila Marshman-Park and Dr. Wilford Edison Park, residing then in Brownsville Ontario Canada.

I believe I was extremely fortunate and blessed to have been born into a loving, patient and Christian family. As my uncle Clifford Park (buried in London Ontario), once said -- we all come from good Canadian, Anglo Saxon stock

This story will run from my earliest memories, in general sequence as best I can remember. I have to give credit for stimulating me to attempt to do this by my sister Betty's writing along with the publications of Uncle Clifford and Dad's memoirs.

Some will say this is nothing but an old man's ramblings but in creating this writing it is almost like living one's life over and to not include all these bits of worthless trivia would be a travesty. As I put together my feelings and thoughts in the following pages, it strikes me as interesting that most of what comes to mind is factual, positive or humorous. For some reason most negative and painful events have passed from my mind and been forgotten. I am sure there were many but perhaps this is a human blessing.

Brownsville, Ontario Canada: Jan.1933 to Feb. 1942

I don't remember a great deal about my mother, Lila Marshman-Park, as she unfortunately passed out of my life when I was very young. I was only one and a half years old. She died on July 5, 1934 of septic lobar pneumonia due to septic infection following influenza. In simple words, it was from blood poisoning. There were no antibiotic medicines in the thirties. I am told her full name was Lila Jane Marshman and that she preferred Jane, named after her mother. I do remember a few bits and pieces, in particular, parts of the funeral. Betty and I were presented to her body in the casket in the front room of the house in Brownsville. There were lots of flowers in the room and we watched while sitting near the casket, as people came and went. Lila was laid to rest in the Park plot in Tillsonburg Ontario,

Canada. After Lila's passing there were a number of housekeepers to take care of and watch over Betty and I until a remarkable lady, Catherine Leonard Park became the mother I really knew. I say remarkable because this woman had never been married and had to step into another woman's shoes in another woman's house where a family of two rambunctious children were busy declaring their independence. I must have been a handful as an inquisitive, carefree child. I have fond memories of those Brownsville days and have visited the town several times over the years as time and travel permitted. It is still a small farm community perhaps ten miles from Tillsonburg Ontario. These early days were truly a fun time. The community being small, neighbor watching out for neighbor, I don't remember any real disputes between any of us, children or adults, other than the normal sibling rivalries, but I was more interested in exploring the world to pay much attention to any serious disputes or disagreements anyway. This must have been the beginning of my wander lust which has persisted all of my life.

Our country doctor's house seemed like a rather large place to live in at the time, however I was amazed how it had shrunk when I went back thirty plus years later as an adult with my own children. It was interesting to hear from the then owners, that the basement still smelled of chemicals, probably part of my doing.

The community was made up of farming and small business families. A block away was the general store that had a high deck entrance under which we children would play and scavenge for any dropped coins that could be used to purchase candy or any other delectable items. As I think about it now, the porch height was there to make it easy to load and unload wagons at the store. A block or so farther down the road was a small stream that ran through the town which was the cause of one of my experiences of things not to do. If you turned the corner and went to your left you would find our grade school. At this age I guess my world was roughly a four or five block area in any direction.

Our house was a two story wood frame with a basement. It sat on a rather large corner lot. My guess would be perhaps one quarter acre. The house occupied the north east corner. A very large old tree, I believe a Manitoba Maple, was on the northwest corner along the street. This was a fantastic tree to climb. Large solid branches that stretched in all directions providing luxurious summer shade. There was an alley that ran past this tree on the west side. The alley ran past the back of the lot to the next street. There was a barn which opened to this alley somewhere near the back of our lot. Dad had no use for the barn that I remember other than perhaps keeping the model A or was it T, car in there in the winter. The barn had an upper floor and I seem to remember a horse drawn buggy in there at one time which somehow found its way to the top of the barn roof one Halloween. The rest of this lot was segmented into a large garden area where lots of garden vegetables were grown and harvested. Remember this was when most people canned their

fruit and vegetables for the long cold Canadian winters and the storm clouds of World War II were fast approaching which did result in severe shortages and rationing.

The garden produced many kinds of delectable root crops like potatoes, beets, carrots and radishes. Above ground crops included squash and pumpkins in the fall. Rhubarb and asparagus appeared in the spring.

Dad, coming from a long line farmers, I am sure felt he had to always be growing something. Each place the family moved to in the ensuing years, there was a substantial plot of ground set aside to always furnish fresh produce. I have a vague recollection of a root cellar where vegetables were stored for the winter. He grew many beautiful roses and many colorful varieties of prize winning gladiolus.

A lot of the yard had fruit trees. Apples and pears were the main ones I remember. The one main apple tree I remember dad had grafted to it many different varieties, which would ripen at different times of the summer. Dad showed me how to do this grafting many years later in Minneapolis Minnesota on a crab apple tree in the back yard.

The pear tree is particularly memorable because it taught me a meaningful lesson. At that time for some reason, if things seemed firm and strong it meant to me that it should be climbed. So one fine summer day I went about climbing and swinging from the branches as one is supposed to do on a strong inviting tree. Well I discovered that pear trees branches are not as strong as they look and frequently break under stress. I was probably seven or eight feet up the tree swinging on a seemingly strong branch when it let go. I immediately found myself flat on my back on the ground. I had the air knocked out of me and I was gasping for air as I ran to the house convinced I was not long for this world. Only those who have experienced this type of incident can know the feeling of desperation one has when you can't get your breath. As a small child you know the end is near and only mother can save you. Mother of course was able to solve my problem and life returned to normal in a very short time.

There were many hours of great fun tunneling through the asparagus patch after it had gone to seed. Those who know how asparagus grows when it goes to seed can appreciate this story. Asparagus weaves a rather dense lacy top growth as it matures. It is about four feet tall and dense enough that you can't see through it. It has a woody texture so it is ideal for tunneling by a small child. I can remember having several tunnel entrances and a substantial room inside where I could disappear with various toys for periods of time to imagine cave living in mysterious places. Some times when there was the game of hide and seek in progress this was a great place to hide.

There was a magnificent grape arbor walkway with more than one variety of grapes from the back door of the house to the three hole out house since the house

had no indoor toilet and toilet paper as we now know it was a rare thing. Old magazines were the paper of choice. I seem to recall that there was indoor water to a wash room upstairs which was supplied by water collected in a cistern in the basement.

This cistern in the basement was a cement, walled off section, that ran from the cement floor to floor joists above. This meant you could see the water level in the cistern if you looked over the wall between the floor joists. What a temptation on a hot summer day. There were no community swimming pools around as many places have today so as you may have guessed, one hot summer day, I did in fact slip between the floor joists and enjoyed a refreshing paddle around the cistern. This was certainly not the smartest thing to do. If I had drowned no one would have found me for days. Amazing what we did as children and still survived.

The front door of this house had a unique doorbell. On the inside there was a dome shaped bell, open side to the door secured in place with a large ornamental nut. Housed within this dome were two weights that would swing outward by centrifugal force when spun by a flat knob on the outside of the door. The sound would resound throughout the house to announce that there was someone waiting for recognition. Under normal circumstances a doorbell has little or no interest. However as a child small things have a lasting impression. Here in the normal way of things, sister, Betty (18 months older) and I would get along pretty well. However as it goes with children there is always childish rivalries from time to time and this one time she got the better of me. In retaliation for some long forgotten incident, I pushed her from behind and she landed against the doorbell and knocked out one of her teeth. Here again severe punishment quickly followed but I had the satisfaction of getting even.

As I recall the house had a washroom at the top of the stairs and two bedrooms, perhaps three bedrooms, I don't remember. The master bedroom was directly above the medical office on the main floor and front door. This bedroom had a talking tube to the front door so patients in need at strange hours could talk to Dad and explain the emergency without Dad descending to the downstairs office.

This downstairs office had all the emergency medical supplies available that the typical country doctor would need at that time. Major medical cases were rushed off to the Tillsonburg Hospital. In this office there was dad's desk, files and a cabinet housing his tools and supplies. A large operating table was in the middle of the room, where patients would recline during examinations.

This operating table was put to good use one first of July evening. July first is Independence Day in Canada which was celebrated with lots of fireworks. Skyrockets were a big favorite as they are today and at that time people would purchase them and light them off in their own yard. The rockets came attached to a long stick which was used to stick in the ground and thereby point the rocket

skyward. In this case I think it was a milk bottle that was used to stand and hold the rocket in a launch position. When this rocket launched off the exhaust gasses blasted down into the bottle and it exploded sending glass shrapnel in all directions. Unfortunately I caught a piece of this flying glass in my chin. Dad scooped me up and quickly had me on his operating table stitching my chin back together without any form of anesthetic. The scar from this I still carry today. My guardian angel was certainly on the job that night.

In the basement of this house Dad had a section set aside like a chemistry lab. It had rows of shelves with lots of bottles containing different colored liquids, powders and pills. In those days doctors frequently had to make up their own potions for a given illness. There was a Bunsen burner, test tubes, beakers, mortar and pestle, handling clamps and all the interesting utensils found in a lab. He even had a good microscope with some interesting slides which could be viewed with little difficulty. There were shelves of body things saved in a discolored liquid in sealed glass jars. Of particular interest was a fetus, old enough to recognize that it was an unborn child along with a tapeworm from someone's gut.

The door to this area was normally securely closed off. Naturally to a young curious boy this area had an irresistible temptation. One day I found the door accessible and as you can imagine I imagined myself a master chemist capable of creating wondrous things. I found a test tube and proceeded to add a little of this and that from the many colorful bottles, pulverize a pill or two and adding them, then put a rubber stopper in the end so it could be properly mixed. All was going well until I heated this concoction over the Bunsen burner. Needless to say the expanding gas in the test tube resulted in a small rocket when the rubber stopper gave way. The stopper bounced around the room like a loose ball, the test tube and its content disintegrated against the entrance door and I am left holding the test tube clamp over the Bunsen burner, shaken and knowing I was again in deep trouble. As quickly as possible I cleaned everything up and somehow disposed of the evidence, then departed this lab knowing that chemistry was not my best challenge at that time. I must have been a very trying child as curiosity frequently got me in trouble.

During this period of time there was a number of contagious diseases around. Diphtheria, smallpox and typhoid fever were some of the worries. As these popped up I remember Dad had a number of different colored poster signs he would secure to the front door of the unfortunate victim's house. Contaminated cloths were boiled in hot water for hours in an attempt to stop any spread of the disease. Sometimes the cloths were simply burned. If you remember the antibiotic wonder drugs were still experimental and untested in the mid thirties.

We had a dog named Trixie. A black and white spotted wire haired terrier. I

can't imagine where the name came from but it was a fun loving dog and liked to tag along on most adventures.

In those days cars were a relatively new thing, gradually replacing the horse and carriage. Since doctors were expected to make house calls on any and all patients, as well as go to the hospital, it was essential that Dad have a car. As I remember his car was a Ford, Model A, black of course, the only color available. Two seat in front and a rumble seat in the back. Betty and I enjoyed the rumble seat rides with the wind blowing in our face and Trixie in the seat between us. There is a picture Dad took of us on one such excursion. That must have been a strange site with dad laying on the car roof, facing the back, while someone, I presume Catherine driving, to get the wind effect of us in the rumble seat.

This car did not have a lot of horsepower and on the road into Tillsonburg a hill had to be traversed and the car could not make it without a good run at it first. Sometimes the hill had to be climbed in reverse, backing up the hill because reverse had a lower gear ratio than first gear.

There were enough children in the community to justify a grade school. I don't remember a whole lot about the school other than it was a multi story brick building, two or perhaps three stories high. There I attended my first grade with a teacher by the name of Miss Spring. The most impressive thing to me about the school was the fire escape. It was a large pipe maybe four feet in diameter which had a double door escape route from the upper floor. Fire drill was great fun to slide down this big tube. When there was no school we children would climb up from the bottom for the best and only slide around. The school was gone when I returned to the town years later.

Here in this little town we children would spend many fun hours playing "Kick The Can". This was like hide and seek except the last one caught would become "It" and be the one to search for everyone else. The game would begin by placing a can, usually an old vegetable can, in the middle of the street with plenty of running space around and everyone gathered around. Someone would kick the can as far as they could from this starting point and all the players would scatter to some hiding place. The player who was "It" retrieved the can and placed it back to its original location and begins searching for the hiding players. As the players are located the player who is "It" has to beat the identified player to the can and while touching the can call out, "One Two Three on --- "(there name). This means that this player is captured and has to wait for the next game or be freed buy one of the uncaught players running in and kicking the can and freeing all the captured players before the "It" player calls them captured at the can. If the player who is "It" captures all the other players before the can is again kicked, the game is over. The last person captured becomes "It" and the game starts again.

This part of the country had all four seasons, spring, summer fall and winter.

It did not seem to make any difference what season it was, we children would spend as much time as possible outside. One winter day I went exploring along the local creek where I had been sternly warned not to go. The ice had frozen and I found it most interesting to peer through the glass like surface and observe the active life below. Sure enough the ice gave way and down I went into the creek's cold water. It may or may not have been over my head. I only remember pushing off from the bottom to propel me back to the surface of the ice where I scrambled for home very cold and very wet. Knowing I was again in big trouble I attempted to slip in the back door and up stairs to the wash room where I could get some warm dry cloths. I had almost completed my change when there was a firm knock at the door. It was mother. She had followed the water trail from the back door and found me in the midst of changing. Needless to say ample discipline followed without delay.

Birthdays were a major event as they are today for young people and we took full advantage of inviting all our friends to the party in order to maximize the number of presents. There was one party in particular that stands out in my mind. It was probably my fifth or sixth birthday and since it was January most if not all the activity took place in the house. All was going well until it was time to serve the birthday cake. We were seated in a large circle around the front room as the cake was passed out to all hands present. In those days it was customary to hide things in the cake, pennies, nickels, small trinkets and maybe a couple of special dimes. I had been informed that since I was the host of the party it was only proper that I be served last. As it turned out, being last in this case meant I was forgotten in the shuffle and I had to go find the cake on my own in the kitchen. Here I was, my party, left out with no birthday cake and no hidden prize. Talk about a traumatic experience, this one I have never forgotten.

Another big event which took place on birthdays was the treasure hunt for our birthday presents. Sometime during the previous evening or day the non-birthday people in the house, probably mom and dad, would put together an endless list of hiding places and a note of instruction directing the searcher from one place to the next in anticipation of their prize. This usually led me all over the house and sometimes even outside, under, over and beneath any number of things. To keep my interest going there was usually small presents and prizes along the way as the search would continue until the big prize was found at the end much to my childish delight.

The war years closed in and Canada became actively involved because Canada was part of the British Empire and became a participant in the war when England was attacked and declared war on Germany. This would be about 1939 or 1940. Dad sold his practice to another Doctor operating out of Tillsonburg. This is when dad started his pioneering work in Industrial Medicine at the Ajax Powder

Plant east of Toronto. Our family now packed up our belongings, said our good buys to our friends and neighbors and moved to Whitby, Ontario, which is now a suburb of Toronto, Ontario. For me this was a whole new adventure opening up.

211 N. Byron St., Whitby Ontario Canada: Feb. 1942 to Nov. 1945

I had just turned nine and this was big time city living. There were lots of stores and places to explore in town. The town had many big and busy main streets, not like Tillsonburg with a couple of main streets and Brownsville with one. Coming from Brownsville to Whitby was like moving from nowhere to the real world.

We had a house on a corner. The front faced Byron Street. A very nice two story, red brick with a large back yard which dad immediately converted into a large garden area. The front of the house had a large covered porch with lounge chairs so evenings could be spent watching street traffic and people on the hot summer evenings. The back of the house had a small porch which led down to the back yard and a walkway which led a few steps around to the garage. The garage opened out to the side street. The garage was attached to the house but did not open into the house. This is strange arrangement from today's standards. Above the back porch was an upper deck, accessible from the bedroom on the second floor.

Again, much of our own food was fresh from the garden in season and from preserves in the winter. During the growing season I remember having to spend what seemed like many painful hours hoeing the weeds in the long rows of potatoes, carrots, beets, peas, beans and radishes. Sweet corn was always a big hit. I am sure there were many other grown food products that I don't remember. We, Betty and I, were paid a nominal fee to pick the tomato caterpillars, big juicy green creepy crawlers and potato bugs off the plants during the summer. Along the property line between the houses there were several kinds of berry bushes. Raspberries and thimble berries, commonly called black berries, come to mind.

Canning was the practice in order to preserve the food for the coming winter. Lots of glass mason jars were around the house. We were all involved in this activity. Washing, peeling, skinning, slicing and dicing whatever was required to prepare the product for preservation. After packing each jar with the appropriate product and the correct amount of added liquid, the jars, maybe six or eight at a time, were placed in a large pot on the stove where they steamed, cooked, until well done. I have no idea how long, but when it was determined that the cooking was complete they were transferred to the kitchen counter where the lids were securely tightened and then set aside to cool and then were placed into storage.

On two sides of the property, the street sides, there were large sugar maple trees spaced perhaps ten feet apart. In the spring we proceeded to tap the trees. We

would insert several spigots in each tree and collect the sap in a small bucket that would hang under the spigot to catch the dripping sap. This sap was boiled on the stove for many hours until most of the water was boiled away. Eventually the delectable maple syrup would appear much to our enjoyment. This product was appropriately saved and usually consumed on pancakes in the morning breakfasts. Sometimes the process was continued long enough to make sugar crystals on a stick. What a delight to suck on a sugar stick.

Keep in mind that this was the war years and everything was rationed and in short supply. Everyone had ration cards or stamps. Every man, woman and child was issued a book of stamps based on personal and professional needs. Different colors for different items. It was common to trade stamps with people. Our family had no need of tobacco or liquor products and a few other things I don't remember, so they were traded for such things as sugar, milk or clothing. Dad was entitled to have a car and I remember a new powder blue vehicle suddenly appearing in the driveway one day. Gas and oil products were naturally in very short supply.

It was about this time I was becoming interested in cars and for some reason changing tires seemed like an interesting and worthwhile thing to do. For some childish reason I placed a large nail against one of the tires so that when the car was moved it would cause a flat and then I could be part of the tire changing operation. Needless to say when dad came to use the car he spotted the large nail propped against the tire and knew exactly how it got there. Another reminder of things not to do followed.

I am sure you remember the parental saying "this will hurt me more than it will hurt you". Well I know this was not true because Dad had a method of operation that I know never hurt him, the belt and straps were to hand around the house..

We children were recruited to help the war effort along with everyone else. I remember we would fan out in the cow pastures around town to collect milkweed that had gone to seed to be used in life preservers. Paper was never thrown away. It seemed like almost everything was recycled and reused.

Uncle Clifford was in charge of the United Church of Canada in Whitby at that time so we got to see their family quite often. Needless to say we attended church on a regular basis. Clifford and Aunt Lita had a single adopted daughter Bonnie, who was a couple of years younger than myself. The interesting thing here was that when Dad and Mom felt they needed some time off, I remember being deposited over with Clifford while they were away recovering and recuperating. I don't remember if all the children were deposited on Clifford or just myself. I do remember exploring the big United Church though.

I was one of three boys in the immediate area. Raymond Zierden, whose

father ran the shoe store down town, lived across the street while Billy German lived diagonally across the corner. Across Byron street lived a girl by the name of Mary. Her father was a judge and had a large white frame house and a yard with lots of grass.

In the summer I made pocket money by mowing the judge's lawn with their push mower. Power mowers were nonexistent at that time as far as I knew. It would not be safe for a ten or eleven year old to run a power mower anyway and gas was rationed. It always seemed like they had more lawn than most people needed. Their yard was always well manicured with well trimmed bushes and well spaced trees, like it was always ready for a lawn party. One tree in particular was a very large weeping willow which provided wonderful shade in the summer. Their house had a large front porch where we children would sometimes play monopoly for hours. We quickly learned in order to keep the peace it was best to let Mary win and so she did, much to our disgust.

On one occasion Mary had a birthday party at her house which stands out in my memory. By this time I was pretty much interested in mechanical devices in that I was usually taking something apart or putting it back together and sometimes not to successfully, a few parts left over was not unusual.

Recording of events at this time was usually done with black and white photos on a box camera. Well Mary's dad had all the latest gadgets including a new sound recording device which made records. This was a recorder that actually cut the sound into a 78 rpm acrylic resin record disk. At that time music was record on these 78 rpm disks or platters, about 14 inches in diameter and was the in thing. Perhaps you remember the RCA trade mark of the dog staring into the large horn of the record player. At the party Mary's father set this large cumbersome machine up and while we all loudly sang happy birthday and some other popular children's songs this machine recorded away peeling off long strands of acrylic plastic which he swept away with a small brush as the disk rotated. After we had finished we herd ourselves replayed to our delight and wonder.

For some reason in the case of we boys it seemed that three was always a crowd. Billy and I were always at odds and whoever came out on top, Raymond would be their best buddy. Billy and I it seems would fight a lot and Billy usually won. I guess I came home with enough bruises and bloody noses that Dad decided it was time for me to have some boxing lessons. He secured some boxing gloves from somewhere and proceeded to show me how to defend myself. I never was very good at the pugilistic sport but it must have done some good because one day Billy and I really came to serious blows and I sent him home with a bloody nose. For some reason I'm not quite sure why, his mother came out and congratulated me. Now that really made my day. That was the last time that I can remember having a real confrontation with Billy.

The Toronto Star was the big paper in the area at this time and I along with others had a paper rout. This being the war years the activity in Europe and the Pacific was conveyed to the public via newspaper and radio. News reels in the movie theater was very popular but would always be old news but it was live action movies, from the fronts as filmed by war correspondents in the war zones and front lines. Television was unheard of in these years. Some days especially the weekend paper was extra large and you can imagine the effort required to fold and deliver forty to fifty papers while riding your bike down the street, paper bag balanced on the front and throwing the paper to the front stoop without ending up in a wreck in the ditch or wrapped around a tree. Each day there would be maps depicting the troop movements with land gains and losses along with troop losses. This was a very sobering account for the older generation but exciting and adventurous to the younger and naive children.

We boys would parade around in our make believe military units and win every battle without any losses. I remember we built emplacements in Raymond's back yard with wood and cardboard boxes. Cap pistols were popular for sound effects. I had a real steel helmet and a real hand grenade with a hole in the bottom where the explosives had been removed.

It was about this time that I learned to ski during the winter. I don't remember a great deal about the ski equipment other than they were wood and had a strap-on harness to attach your boots to these wood boards. The land around Whitby was fairly flat but I do remember one hill in particular we used that was maybe within a mile of the house. It may well have been a hill at the gravel pit. It could not have been too big because I don't recall anyone ever coming home injured.

Betty and I kept pigeons for a while. Dirty and messy as they are Dad tolerated our strange pets. Dad helped build a pigeon house and saw to it that it was placed strategically as far from the house as possible. It was located way down at the far end of the garden as close to the neighbor's property line as possible. Sault and Pepper were their names and we diligently cleaned their house and kept them fed until it all became a chore and our interests moved on to other adventures. Betty never appreciated my collecting and eating the pigeon eggs for breakfast.

The dining room in this house was on the garden side which meant we could look out over the garden and see the house in the next lot behind us. It was about this time that it was discovered that the teen age girl in the house behind us had a habit of getting dressed by her uncurtained window. Mother was appalled and did her best to keep our shades drawn at strategic times. I remember Mother making quite a fuss about we children being exposed to such goings on.

The porch above the back door, accessible from the bedroom has a large door. It may have even been double French doors. Mother liked to sun herself on

warm summer days. This was also a sewing room and she would repair our worn cloths. Sewing on patches was the thing. Iron on patches were not yet around. I even was given instruction on darning sox. We didn't discard things then. We wore them until they could not be repaired.

I have to tell you that darning is an art unto itself. When there is a hole in your sox you take a light bulb of an appropriate size and slip it into the inside and locate it at the worn location. Now with a large needle and a long piece of yarn you start weaving. You start in one direction, back and forth until the hole is completely covered and then in the other direction 90 degree from the first. Always keep the yarn strands close, weaving over and under the first set of strands to complete the closure. This is definitely a lost art today since we just discard the whole sox and buy a new one.

Disciplining of me must have been a real challenge. Disrespect, bad language, bad conduct, and disobedience were undoubtedly some of the causes of my being punished. They had to be many and varied because I spent many hours in my room as well as receiving a paddling when it was warranted. Paddling in our family did not involve a switch. There was a product around which was much better. In those days dad always shaved with a straight razor. All good straight razor users had to have a razor strap to keep the blade sharp. For those who don't know, a razor strap is made up of two strips of leather, one coarse and one fine, about two and one half inch wide and perhaps thirty inch long, a formidable enforcer. It always hung in the bathroom, close to the sink and within easy reach. As time went by and after one of these capitol punishments I made up my mind that I had had enough of being severely punished with his enforcer. While dad was at work the next day I went into the bathroom and cut up his leather strap with his straight razor. Not the smartest thing to do.

Needless to say things changed around the house. Within a few days there appeared a new type of enforcer. This was a series of eighteen inch long leather harness traces hung in strategic, easy to reach, locations about the house. Harness traces are tough leather strips rather stiff, usually one quarter inch thick by one and a half inch wide. As you can guess they left a great impression when used. It was not to long after this and after further impressions made by these enforcers, I made up my mind I had to do something about these straps. One day they all disappeared. There was a lengthy search for them and I would die before I would tell what happened.

As it turned out either I straightened up or dad gave up or maybe a little of both, I don't remember any severe punishments after that. I am sure there were times when it was still warranted. What really happened was that after I had collected all the leather straps, I climbed out on the roof of the garage and laid them, one after another, along the eave trough. There they rested in

peace until a year or so later when dad found the rotting leather while performing some spring cleaning of the eaves.

I know I was attending school regularly but I don't remember anything significant about it. I don't think I was an outstanding student. My interests were outside and exploring. Time passed rapidly, 1945, the big war is ending and Dad's abilities as an administrator has not gone unnoticed. A whole new field was opening up and dad took the opportunity to join the Canadian Atomic Energy field. He was hired and given the assignment of setting up the medical facilities at the brand new, yet to be constructed, atomic energy research plant at Chalk River Ontario and at the new, yet to be constructed, town site at Deep River Ontario.

Deep River, Ontario Canada: Nov 1945 to Dec. 1949

I don't remember the exact time we arrived at number 9 Beach Ave, Deep River but it had to be about October of 1945. That would make me age twelve. Now for a twelve year old to be able to live in the wild was nothing but a whole new great adventure, especially when all the necessities of life are well taken care of, things like food, shelter, clothing and lots of places to explore. I don't think there could be a better place to have spent my adolescent and early teen years.

Since dad was one of the major managers on this new project, at the town site as well as at the new nuclear plant at Chalk River, our house assignment was in a prime location right on the river bank. Dad's assignment, as I remember, was to set up and operate the medical facilities at both the town site and new plant. I was fascinated by the building plans that he had at home on some occasions which laid out the design and construction. I remember there was a central steam heating system used for heating the main buildings around the town site. There was a lot of insulated steam lines hanging from poles, between many of the newly constructed community buildings and construction sites.

Our house was a well-constructed wood frame with asbestos shingle siding, a no-no under today's standard. It had a basement, main floor and upstairs. I think it had a boiler in the basement for heating the house with a hot water or steam radiator system. The upstairs must have had four bedrooms. There was no garage so all the cars had to live outside and survive the cold Canadian winter nights. To ensure that the car could wake up in the mornings it was standard practice to plug in an electric block heater at night to keep the oil from thickening from the cold.

The space I occupied in one of the bed rooms was enough for me to build model airplanes to be suspended from the ceiling and some that were flown out the window to crash to the ground in flames. One of the more interesting things I did at this time was build and operated a crystal radio set. This was a simple kit you could buy with all the required bits and pieces including a head set, crystal, wiring,

cat whisker and a board with instructions on how to assemble. When it was properly assembled and ready to operate you slip on the head set (ear phones) and carefully move the cat whisker around on the crystal until you find a radio station playing what you want to listen to.

It didn't take to long before the town site witnessed substantial growth. Families were arriving with children of all ages. Construction of houses and essential offices and municipal buildings was the frenzy for the next year or so as the town site became a living community. There was the grade school right down the street from us. A little farther down the road and up the hill was the community center, a building of major importance because of its multi-use functions. It wasn't long before there was a strip mall constructed past the community center. This strip mall was the first ever built in Canada.

The community center was the central meeting place for activities for quite some time. There was a nine pin bowling alley with eight lanes. Many rooms set aside for offices and a main recreation room like you find in most schools today. This recreation room played a vital part in our lives especially in the winter. Here we played basketball, badminton, volley ball, dodge ball and probably a few others which I don't remember. This room also had a stage where local plays were held. This was our movie theater on some occasions and it was also our community church, which dad had a major hand in starting, for some time.

Below the community center and behind the grade school a large play field was leveled out. Here in the winter a large skating rink was created where we skated and played hockey. Dad had me outfitted with the essential protective devices and pads. He was not satisfied with just shoulder pads and gloves. My pads came all the way down my arms to the wrist which made them overly bulky. I never did amount to much as a hockey star. The Toronto Maple Leafs was the big name team we all looked up to. In the summer this field became the football and baseball field.

Along about this time in the winter there was enough interest and participation in skiing to stimulate the generation of a real ski hill. I don't remember how far it was from the town site, but it was necessary to follow a trail up river perhaps a half mile to get there. After the first year there was a rope tow constructed to pull all the accomplished and unaccomplished skiers to the top of the hill. Many an embarrassing pile up happened until we learn the technique of letting the rope slip through your hands as you take a few quick steps to get moving on to the rope for the ride to the top. A quick firm grip on the rope guaranteed to land you in a heap. Betty and I both took the first aid courses to qualify as ski patrollers for a short time. Fortunately no major incidents happened while I was on duty. I seem to recall on one occasion, when I was not around, a panicked skier tried to stop by hugging a tree. Not a good idea.

This ski hill was also a favorite place to go tobogganing. If you don't know about a toboggan, its like a long board with a big curved, "C" shaped nose. Depending on the length of the toboggan you would load up as many as possible and all go down the hill together. Now the unique thing about our ski hill was that it had two major ski areas, one on each side of a central gulley which had been cut by a steam a long time ago. The sides of this valley were quit steep so it was ideal for a great toboggan run. There was only one problem. Once you got to the bottom of this hill it abruptly came up the other side. Unless you knew just where to end your run at the bottom, catastrophe was waiting. There is nothing worse than trying to get three or four of us kids untangled from being crammed into the nose of a toboggan because of an unintended abrupt stop.

Continuing on this winter review, we also had another major ski hill that someone created across the river in Quebec. In the winter in this part of the country the Ottawa River freezes over completely. The thickness of the ice would be over a foot thick because things usually get really cold and the river flow is relatively slow. In addition the river width here is over a mile wide. On the Quebec side of the river runs a part of Lawrence Highlands. Here there is one particularly high hill called Mount Martin. You have to keep in mind that this area of the Province is heavily forested. There is no wide open hills as one finds above the tree line in Colorado so any skiing has to follow a cut trail through the trees. As you can imagine some very ambitious people had the foresight to create a ski trail from the top of Mount Martin down to the river water line. I have no idea how long the trail was but it was an all day adventure to hit this trail. One of the older boys in the town had a power sled, something like what we now know as a Skidoo and he would pull a line of us, ambitious skiers, across the river on a rope. We would then climb the trail on skis, taking about four hours to reach the top. There we would recover from the climb, eat our carefully carried lunch and prepare for the downhill plunge. The run to the bottom would take about twenty minutes, swishing past trees, bushes and boulders all big enough to do you in for good. Somehow we all survived. I don't recall any who were carried home. One trip a day was all anyone attempted.

At this time electric refrigerators was a real luxury and rather rare. The way people kept their food from spoiling was to keep it in an ice box. During the winter months large blocks of ice were cut from the ice in the river and stored in a large well insulated warehouse under high piles of sawdust. On occasion we boys would venture out to watch the operation only to be ushered away for reasons we never understood.

Ice fishing was also popular. We would clear away the snow to get down to the ice and then drill or chop a hole down through the ice to the water below and then sit with line in hand for some foolish fish to take the bait. Usually things got

to cold waiting for the fish and we would retreat back to the warmth of someone's house. Summer fishing was much more enjoyable. Pike, Bass and Croppies were the usual fish of the day.

Hunting was another activity I participated in. Exploring the woods for squirrel and rabbit was the most common thing to look for. I never went for the bigger game until I lived in Colorado many years later and that is another story. During this time it was quite common for us boys to have a gun of some kind or other, usually a 22 caliber rifle. Fire arms were not a popular thing around our house and yet for some reason I felt I had to obtain one of my own. I don't remember how I obtained my prize 22 caliber rifle but I got one and with great trepidation snuck it into the house. Needless to say dad almost immediately found it and much to my surprise the world did not end. Instead dad in his calm and meticulous patient way instructed me in the safe operation and handling of weapons and helped find a safe locked storage location in the basement floor joists.

Along in the spring in April or May, the country side would start to come alive again from its winter rest. The first indication that spring was on its way would be the buds forming on the trees but most dramatic would be the breaking up of the ice in the river. In the winter we would hear on occasion the river ice crack. A sharp creak or grown that started somewhere out there where no one knows, and we would hear it travel along the ice until the pressure is relieved. In the spring this is an amazing thing to see and hear as the ice weakens and the winds start to help move the fractured ice to places it doesn't belong. The wind and water current frequently moved large sheets of this ice onto the shore right behind the house. Ice overlapping ice, turned up on edge and pushed ashore in incoherent piles.

As soon as the ice has disappeared from the river there would be large log booms floating down the river to some sawmill that had been waiting patiently all winter. Upstream somewhere lumber jacks have been cutting and storing these logs just waiting for the big spring thaw. Now what was so interesting about these log booms was that on occasion one of these booms would be blown into our bay and be stuck there until a boat of some kind would come by and drag the boom back out into the main stream of the river. These booms were made up of several hundred free floating logs of twenty to thirty feet in length, and a feet or more in diameter, all retained in a cluster by a ring of chained together logs around the outside. This in itself was quite a site to see but the real challenge for we adventitious and not to smart boys, was to run across the boom from one side to the other. The chained logs around the outside were always large, stable and easy to walk on however the free floating logs were free to sink and roll if not stepped on just right. So there you have it, not to smart boys running across log booms until one of us got wet, fell in or some adult ran us off.

Spring was the time of awakening. The trees would seem to come alive and spread their new green growth. Flowers would appear from nowhere. Young new animals were found in the most unexpected places. One day an abandoned baby porcupine came to live with us for a while until it died. I don't remember who found it but the interesting thing was that this little creature seemed to recognize us because when first approached, it would puff up its quills until we spoke to it and then the quills would lay back down and allow us to handle it.

Spring had other drawbacks though, it was a time for planting. It was never my most exciting thing to do. Dad being an old farm boy and a survivor of the depression years, always felt he had to be planting things in the spring. As it was, the town planners set aside a large area of ground which had been an old farm field or an area cleared for farming, and made available for any of the, back to the basics, town members. Dad, being one of these planters and growers claimed one of these large sections of ground for his personal family garden. Naturally we children were drafted to participate in the ground preparation, planting, nurturing with hoe in hand and harvesting when the time came. I will have to give dad a lot of credit for his persistence in growing award winning gladioli flowers. They were truly colorful and well represented when on display. He always got great pleasure taking and showing 35mm color slides of his many flowers.

Summer as normal was a big thing for us. There were plenty of activities to keep us out of the house and out of trouble. There was a great swimming beach within eye sight of the house. The unique thing about this beach was that it gradually deepened as you walked on out into the river. At about 100 yards out we would be up to our neck so we had to swim to a raft well anchored about another 100 yards further out. Once past this raft the bottom suddenly dropped away to unknown depths where we were sure all the big fish lived. There was always a life guard on duty. I never knew where he came from but that was not my concern. What really was impressive to we teens was that the life guard had a long red boat equipped with what seemed to us, a monstrous 100 horsepower motor. It was always impressive to see him on a run to some place or other around the bay. Back then the outboard motors had no electric starter so a starter rope was wrapped around the exposed fly wheel and pulled with a mighty tug to turn over the motor.

Boating was a big thing in the community. A natural thing since we were right on the Ottawa River. In a short time there was a yacht club formed and many of the adults started building their own boats. Y-Flyers were the favorite sailing craft made along with smaller blunt nose tenders. One of the scientists even had a sail boat with a fixed keel. This created a special problem when winter approached and all the boats had to be pulled from the water before the big freeze. We had a canoe with fat gunnels sides for added floating safety. Dad had equipped this canoe with a sail and side boards for sailing so that the normal paddling was not the only

enjoyment to be had with this craft. In addition to the canoe we had a dingy sail boat with a cat-rig sail and a outboard motor boat, both of which were anchored off shore during the summer tied off to large cement blocks strategically located so they could be found after the spring thaw. Needless to say there were many, many boats anchored in our bay during the summer as time went by. I learned my sailing in the dingy and canoe in those summers. I even participated in the sailing races from time to time.

I think the power boat was Dad's favorite because he would round us all up on occasion to go blueberry picking on the Quebec side of the river at some big blueberry patch he or someone had discovered. I have to admit this was not one of my most exciting things to do but it was a family activity we were all expected to participate in so we went. I am sure I ate more than I ever gathered in my assigned bucket.

Among other things dad tried to be involved in Scouting. He had one of those smoky bear scout hats he wore as a scout leader while I earned the various scouting badges and awards.

Along about this time I was at the right age to obtain my drivers license. This in itself was not out of the norm. What was is that I was a non drinker of intoxicating liquids while many of my friends enjoyed getting inebriated. Now it was hard for teenagers to find a source of drinks in Ontario however just across the river in Quebec there was a ready supply. Added to this anyone found driving while under the influence carried a severe penalty so the simple answer was to have me drive the boys up the river to a bridge that crossed over to Quebec where they could all indulge. Yes I was their designated driver for the evening.

I graduated from grade school at Deep River and moved on to High School at Pembroke some twenty seven mile south of our town site, past Chalk River and camp Petawawa Army Base. We were expected to enthusiastically climb aboard the bus for our hour or so ride to our internment for the day. It was strange how some days, especially when it was nice out, we missed the scheduled departure time and got left behind.

I was not much of a student at this time. While Betty rattled on about the required Latin verbiage, I struggled on with Math, English and French. We never got to participate in any after school activities because of our scheduled return trip on the bus. It is strange how some of these French words have stuck with me over the years in spite of my poor performance in the language. La Plum, the pen, la port, the door, parlay vois angles, do you speak English. I was so bad in French that on the final test I had a minus score. Perhaps this was part of the reason I was sent off to the vocational school in North Bay the following year to continue my second year of high school. Betty maintains that I was the sacrificial lamb to create more room in the house for a house keeper. Language was not a required subject at

this school. Whatever the reason for this move it created a whole new adventure for me. By this time dad was sure that medicine was not going to be my field of expertise.

It was this summer or the following summer that dad and mom decided they needed to take a good summer vacation so they settled on a train trip across Canada. Across the prairie provinces, into the Rocky Mountains, past Calgary, Lake Louise and Banff, then on into British Columbia. This struck me as the most boring way imaginable to spend the summer, all cooped up on a train with nothing to do. As an alternative I was offered the option of spending the summer on my uncle Hugh McDonald's farm. Hugh's wife, Alta, was a Marshman, from my mother's side of the family. This farm is between Brownsville and Tillsonburg Ontario. They had a daughter, Betty, my age, and a son several years younger. This I eagerly chose with great anticipation of a fun and active summer. What an education I got about farming.

At this time this was an active dairy farm. There was about twenty milk producing cows and an obnoxious bull. The cows all had to be milked twice a day so their dog and I would go out to the grazing field, round them up and bring them in for milking. Next there was the feeding to be done while the milking was in process. I did learn how to do the hand milking but fortunately most of it was done by a milking machine. After the milk was collected it was stored in the cooling house in cold well water. The only water on the place was well water and it was heavy in sulfur. This was something that really took getting used to. After the milking was complete and the cows were turned loose for the day and the next thing was clean up. Unless you have been there, seen it, smelled it and shoveled it, you can't get the full flavor and excitement of being ankle deep in manure. The whole milking area had to be shoveled clear and hosed down. After this there was the two horses to be fed and groomed along with cleaning their stalls and replacing their soiled straw with new.

The fields had been planted with corn, wheat and oats so while they were growing and ripening there was the hay fields to be mown raked and harvested. I remember working the horse drawn rake to rake the hay into long rows to dry. When the hay was dry enough I helped load the hay on to the horse drawn hay wagon for transport to the barn where it was deposited in the hay loft using a large fork that would grab large piles of hay and hold it long enough it to be winched up and through a door high in the barn.

Uncle Hugh had a relatively new Oliver tractor which came into full use when harvesting the main crops. The operation I most remember was the harvesting of the wheat and oats. Hugh had a new thrashing machine that he pulled with this tractor. This thrasher would mow the grain, then separate the grain from the straw, and while the straw was blown out the back the grain was sent down a

shoot to be collected in cloth bags on a work platform on a back side platform. This whole caravan traversed the field, driver on the tractor and bagger on the back platform, ready to bag the grain. You know where my assignment was. The grain shoot had two nozzles to which a bag is attached for filling, with a deflector to direct the flow of grain to one side or the other. When a bag was full it is removed, tied, stacked and a new empty bag replaced ready to be filled while the other bag is being filled. The filled and staked bags were to be dumped off at a particular location for later pick up each time the caravan passed a specified location in the field. I never knew if the year I was there was a particularly good year or if good uncle Hugh was in a hurry but I can tell you this particular experience cured me of wanting to be a farmer unless I could always be the one driving the tractor.

I must admit that there were some fun times that summer also. It was not all work and no play. When the hay loft was full we got to play in the loft, sliding down the huge piles of hay. The summer was hot so we cooled ourselves in the algae lined drinking trough and searching for mice in the hay field along with riding the old work horses. We attended several tent revivals and got to watch a few programs on a strange thing called a television.

All in all I have no regrets for that summer. It was a real education and gave me some insight into how earlier generations lived and what farm life was all about. It also stimulated my interest in other fields of endeavor.

North Bay, Ontario: June 1948 to Dec. 1949

Dad went to great length to find me a respectable place to stay while away at school. Mrs. Conley had a third floor room in her house at 630 McIntyre Street, which she arranged as an apartment to house borders. In this case it was myself and another boy, Harold Moran, my age, also attending this same Vocational school. Now this apartment was really the attic of the house. It was one large room extending the length of the house. Access to this room was via a narrow stairs, almost like a ladder, but it was just fine for us boys. There was a window at each end so we could see out to the world. Lighting and storage was quite adequate since we didn't have much and we required little other than regular meals to keep us going and the quiet to complete our homework.

North Bay Ontario was relatively small at that time and the boarding house that dad found was probably ten blocks from the school. This meant that walking to and from school was the expected method of travel. In the spring and fall this was naturally no problem and a rather pleasant trip. However in winter things were much different. This town is far enough north and on the shores of Lake Nipissing where the wind and snow would blow without mercy. We did have to wrap up well and wade through the snow drifts on occasion to make the trip to and from school.

Mr. Conley was a railroad man working at the nearby rail yard. Mrs. Conley was a tea toddler, non smoker and ran the house with an iron hand and in full control. They had a son whose name I don't remember but he was the pride of Mrs. Conley and he got away with anything and everything while Mr. Conley always had to toe the line. This son raised many colorful Parakeet birds, a type of small parrot and liked to ride equestrian jumpers. Mr. Conley enjoyed a good smoke so he had to smoke outside, whether it was hot or cold, winter or summer. I think Mrs. Conley was unaware of her husband's drinking because there was never any evidence about the house however when Mrs. Conley was away for a few days, Mr. Conley would go on an extended bender and be completely sound and sober upon her return.

Harold and I became great friends so on many weekends when I did not make a trip home or no weekend school activity we would take the bus to his house near Calendar Ontario, close to where the Dijon Quintuplets were living. Harold's father was also a railroad man and they lived in one of the company owned houses right beside the tracks. The location was really great as long as you like trains. The real waker upper for me was the first time in the middle of the night when I was awakened by the shrill loud train whistle and a very large bright light bearing down on me as though it was coming right through the house. Fortunately it thundered on by much to my relief as the house shook and remained standing. For some reason this family liked to eat blood sausage, something I could never quite fathom.

Harold and I did a few strange things while living in our sky high bungalow. Drinking was never a problem but we had heard that one could get drunk by consuming aspirin and cocoa so we had to try it. The result we had was a lot of foaming pop and very sticky residue all over the place to be cleaned up post haste. This didn't do much for the taste either. Another odd thing was the idea that hairy legs was the in thing to have so we proceeded to shave our legs in anticipation of a massive forest of hair. The result was a lot of wasted time and effort.

As Harold and I progressed through school he became very proficient at Morse code. This was the railroad's main way of communication at that time and he became a station master at a remote location in Quebec near the head waters of the Ottawa River some years later. He died at an early age of about 28 of a heart attack leaving a wife and a couple of small children. Strange how or why some are cut down so young while others continue on for some as yet to be found purpose.

The Vocational School at North Bay included all the major trades. This was right down my line. I would be taking things apart to see how they worked and be putting them back to gather and make them run.

At school we built a portion of a house from the ground up, then wired it with outlets and lights. There was the auto mechanics shop where a team of three

of us started with an old, straight, six cylinder car motor, took it completely apart down to the last nut and bolt and then had to put it back to gather. If it ran after assembly we passed, if not we got some lesser grade. This shop had some old rotary airplane engines as well as auto engines. Needless to say these engines did not have the electronic sophistication of today's engines. On occasion people would bring their cars in for cheap service. I can only assume they still ran well after their repairs were completed by the students. There was also the drafting department in which I seemed to accelerate. I got to create structures and mechanical devices and create them pictorially in three dimension and perspective. There was also a great wood shop. There we made cabinets and tables. The sweet smell of fresh cut wood still brings fond memories to mind.

Needless to say I did not escape the math, English, science and other required high school subjects but they all had a purpose now.

Now that I did not have to catch a bus for the ride home there was after school activities to work on. I was never heavy enough or strong enough to be part of the football team but I still got to go to the games as part of the Royal Canadian Army Cadet bugle core. We paraded around at the half-time shows in great disciplines formations and loudly trumpeting bugle renditions. I even played a French horn rather badly for a while. Not learning to read music was one of my down falls.

This being my teenage years we naturally liked to party at every opportunity. Teen town was a big thing. This was a club house set up by some one for the exclusive use of teenagers. Beer and alcohol was strictly not allowed and fortunately there was no drug problem as there is today. We mingled and danced to the latest fox trot, waltz, and jitterbug to our heart's content. I naturally had a favorite girl by the name of Loraine Robinson. Like any teen I thought the world turned around her and we would spend hours sitting on the steps of her house telling tales of what was bound to happen in the future.

As December of 1949 came along things came to a climax here in North Bay as the families move to the United states became painfully real. I probably could have stayed in Canada as Betty did but there was a new school awaiting me in Minneapolis Minnesota. I had some real regrets in departing but the US seemed like a whole new world and once again a new adventure.

Minneapolis Minn. Dec 1949 to Sept. 1953

We arrived in the cold and dead of winter to a new and even bigger big time city. Dad had purchased a large three story house at 1804 Humboldt Ave s. in a very upscale part of the city. This city had street cars, lots of bus service which passed a block from the house not to mention lots of cars rushing to go somewhere.

Here there was big churches, big down town office buildings, big schools, big parks and even the University of Minnesota by the Mississippi River.

The house dad had chosen was in an older, well established, upper middle class residence on a nicely shaded street. It was a three story unit with a full basement. In this basement was the oil burning furnace which had been converted from a coal burner some time before our arrival. The cloths washing, laundry, was located down here along with an old mangle for ironing which was an item of great curiosity. I don't remember that it was ever put to serious use. At any rate the laundry shoot from the second floor terminated down here and it was always in use.

On the main floor as you entered the front door you were facing the main stairs leading to the second floor, all nicely carpeted to keep the noise down. On your immediate left was the study, more like a small library, which immediately became Dad's office. This was the ideal use for this room for one wall was completely shelved for reference and reading books. Dad's large wood desk and file seemed to just fit along the opposite wall. This was the room where sober meetings took place with me behind the closed doors. The walls in the entry hall as I remember, were a dark brown wood panel which produced a sobering formal effect. Just past the office or study was the large front room which had a large bay window out to the front porch. There was a fire place at the other end of this room. Regardless this is where all the formal front room furniture resided, including a large radio with the large 78 rpm disk record player. This record player could stack perhaps four to six disks on the central pin and play them one after another as they dropped into position. This allowed recorded music, frequently long hair stuff, being my parent's favorite, being played for hours. Rachmaninoff, Bach and Handel often echoed throughout the house. On occasion, in this room dad would hold devotions. I don't remember that the events were to frequent. Perhaps he gave up and continued his practice more in private. This was the room where I had parties when dad and mom would take a short vacation alone. I never could explain the empty beer can that was found behind the big red sofa chair. I was sure I had made a meticulous clean up job before they got home.

Proceeding down the hall one comes into the formal dining room and the kitchen on the left with a large pantry. Somewhere down in this end of the house is another set of smaller stairs which lead to the second and third floor, the servants stairs. Betty became more familiar with these in later years. There was also a back door leading to the back yard.

In the dining room resided the large formal dining table. This table was constructed in such a way that it could expand and have several leaves added as necessary. This capability allowed for additional leaves to be hidden under the main table top.

For some reason, I don't remember exactly why, at that time I detested eating the bread crusts. This was the ideal location for me to deposit the unwanted bread crust when no one was looking. It took a number of years for my parents to figure out why dried bread crumbs kept being found under the table on the floor.

In the kitchen along with the normal kitchen necessities there was a dumb waiter which led to the second floor. I don't remember this being used much during my time in the house.

On the second floor is where the bedrooms were. There must have been at least four along with at least two bathrooms. I was assigned the large front bedroom just off the main bedroom at the top of the stairs. Mom and dad occupied the next one which had a bathroom. I don't know if this was so they could keep a close watch on me or I just lucked out. It had a walk in closet and large drawers to store folded cloths. Somehow or other on various occasions there would be found questionable girlie magazines which were promptly confiscated when found. About this time I did a little smoking. It was the fashionable thing to do. Needless to say it was not the thing to do around the house. To my surprise, dad did not react as you might expect. He calmly and forcefully informed me that if I must smoke it was to be limited to my bedroom. He even located and presented me with a stylish standing ashtray.

The third floor had a small but comfortable apartment for a maid if the family was to have or need one. There was a call box up there that was linked to various rooms in the house. I don't know that it was ever activated or used, at least not while I was around.

This house was the second from the corner so there was a driveway between the houses to allow access to the back yard and a separate garage building. The house on the corner was occupied by another doctor.

The driveway led to a car garage in the back yard large enough to house a car and enough space for storage or a workshop. The garage was important because it provided a warm shelter for the car in the cold snowy winters of Minnesota otherwise a block heater was required.

To complete the coverage of this house I have to make note that the back yard was not particularly large as compared to the previous places the family had had. For that matter the front yard was not that large either, but remember, now we were living in the big city and space was at a premium. In spite of its relative size it was a comfortable yard. In the back there was sweet smelling lilac along one side and a crab apple tree by the back steps. It was on this tree that dad taught me how to graft branches to obtain more desirable fruit. Take note that there was no big garden to maintain as in all previous places the family stayed. Maybe farming was finally out of his blood.

Dad had disposed of all the water craft except the canoe which was

located on Lake-of-the-Isles about five blocks from the house. On nice summer days I would make use of the canoe to paddle around Lake-of-the-Isles and the larger connecting lakes.

On some occasions I would try my hand at fishing. There was lots of sea weed to drift over and watch for a hole in where a fish might be lurking. On one occasion I caught a large dog fish that was hungry enough to take the bait.

Near Lake-of-the-Isles there were a number of public tennis courts that were well maintained. You have to give the city planners and managers credit for reserving and maintaining large areas within the city for public parks and recreation.

In short order after our arrival in Minneapolis I found myself back in the Minneapolis vocational school. As it turned out Drafting was my strong area of expertise so drafting became my major. We also found that the Canadian school was well ahead of the American school so for the next one and a half years I spent to get my diploma was a breeze. As a matter of fact my last year in the drafting class I spent on a large professional type drawing board while the rest of the class had to work on their small three by four foot personal boards. I spent the entire year drawing up a drill press. A full assembly and detail of every part. Every casting, weldment, gear, chuck, shafts and belts. Right down to the last nut and bolt.

While in high school I was involved with the tennis team and played in inter school competition. We even played on the Lake-of-the-Isles courts on occasion. I played first singles matches. Not that I was that good, it was just that every one else was worse. I may have won one in ten games. Not an outstanding record.

Not to long after the family arrived at our new home in Minneapolis dad purchased a new car. It was a 1950 Nash Ambassador. Looked like an upside down tub. It had smooth dynamic contours, supposedly for speed and smooth ride. It was all of that as I can attest to because it was shortly after that that the family made a vacation trip to Brownsville Texas and on the way back I was driving at close to 100 mph when dad who was in the passenger seat woke up and quietly suggested I slow down to a more sensible speed. One other thing that impressed me was that you could sleep comfortably in it with the front seat laid back. I convinced dad I should try this one night in the garage, which I did and played the radio all night and killed the battery so car could not be started in the morning without a jumper.

It was during this period that I worked a number of odd jobs after school to pull together enough money to buy my first car, a 1940 Desoto. This was my pride and joy. Black, straight six cylinder, four door and running boards on the sides. Dad allowed me to keep it parked in front of the house which was ok except in the winter when I had to dig it out of the snow banks.

My friends at this time were probably not the most reputable and most came from the rougher part of town, from nonprofessional type homes. The hard working and hard drinking middle class type of people. In spite of all this dad and mom did their best to nudge me into the more refined direction.

The church the family attended was the big Methodist Church where Hennepin and Lyndale Ave meet, very formal and proper with all the ritual and trappings. This church prided itself on its youth ministry. On Sunday evenings there was the “University of Life” experience for the youth, covering high school and up through college. I was encouraged at every opportunity to attend and straighten my life out.

One of the very cool and foolish things we liked to do in those days was play rotation while driving on one of the more traffic free back roads. We would usually have four to six in the car, equally divided in the front and back seats. As we would roll along at about 30 or 40 mph, someone would sing out “rotate” and the move was on. The passenger in the back seat behind the driver exited the back door to move along the running board to the front driver's door, there he would open the door and slide into the drivers position. While that was going on the front seat passenger had to exit the passenger side door and move along the running board to the back seat door and slip back into the back passenger seat position. Thus every one shifted over one position clockwise. Providence prevailed. None of us were ever injured and soon the style of cars eliminated the running boards which probably saved some of our lives.

It was about this time that I learned that friends can't always be depended upon. I loaned my supposedly best friend my car one night because his was not working and as things would have it he had an accident. He smashed in the front grill far enough to put a small leak in the radiator. Sure there were promises that he would have it all repaired but as time went by nothing came of it and I learned to live with a less than perfect front end and a slowly leaking radiator. This is where I learned that putting some raw eggs in the radiator cooling water to stop a leak only works on small holes and for a limited amount of time.

I think it was the summer vacation of 1950 that my heart was still in Canada and I had to make a trip back to North Bay to see if my puppy love was for real. Dad did not discourage me from going. He probably had it all figured out ahead of time, that I had to break the ties and move on but he never hinted one way or another so I made my way back across Wisconsin and Michigan upper peninsula to Ontario and North Bay, stopping at numerous streams and stations to replenish my radiator water.

Since I was totally on my own I needed to find a job to support my summer stay. Jobs were plentiful and not too hard to find so I started by driving a taxi cab for a local cab company. This worked well except I had to work nights and this

infringe on my dating time and the evening customers liked to know where the best bars and brothels were so this job didn't last long. Next I found a much more suitable job with the local Cocoa-Cola Bottling Company. They not only bottled cocoa-cola but an assortment of fruit drinks. On this job I had a delivery rout delivering soft drinks north east from North Bay to Timiskaming, stopping at garage stations, restaurants, parks and campgrounds.. I would load the flat bed truck up in the morning about six AM with cases of regular pop and quart size bottles and head out to deliver full orders and bring back the empty bottles for cleaning and re-use. If all went well I would get back about four PM.

My housing accommodations was a shared apartment with two other young men on various summer jobs. For cheap batching it worked out well. We each had our own little corner to keep our personal items. We shared cooking on a hot plate and an icebox type refrigerator. Rather primitive but we were all on a tight budget.

And so the summer passed and as it did I found that my infatuation with my high school heart throb, Loraine Robinson was not as solid and earth shaking as was thought and we parted ways, heart broken yet relieved and convinced our paths were not meant to be entwined. In later years I heard from Harold that she married a young airman who was killed in flight training.

With summer ending I somehow made my way safely back to Minneapolis in the same 1940 De Soto stopping as needed for gas and frequently for water. The most memorable part of the return trip was driving across the upper Michigan peninsula at night. The road stretching long and dark, closed in by the dense forest on both sides. This gave me the feeling of driving in a long endless tunnel. This gave me plenty of time to meditate on my future and why things happen the way they did, why was I here, where was I going and what was the purpose of all this.

March 1951, I had graduated from High School and started my first serious job as a Jr. Draftsman at the C. W. Olson Manufacturing Co. in Minneapolis. This was a impressive big red brick structure that had an engineering department on the second floor where I was assigned. There was a foundry below on the main floor. This company did a lot of casting operations in brass, bronze and iron. My job was laying out drawings of placards or signs that would be later cast in brass and hung on some office building or sign post. Along with this I was the official blueprint maker.

At this time there were no blueprint machines or if there was they were to new and to expensive when you could hire a new boy to do the job for far less cost. Drawings were done on vellum paper with pencil and in more permanent cases on a special cloth with black India ink. The blueprint process in the early fifties was a wet process. The light sensitive blueprint paper and vellum paper were exposed together to an intense light. The blueprint paper was then hung in a washer where I

would wet it down with water and then wash it down with a strong ammonia solution which developed the blue back ground and left the pencil or ink lines white, and then a final water rinse to get rid of the excess ammonia residue, and finally hang the print on a line to dry. It was bad enough to spend several hours taking care of the printing process during the day but every morning I had to fill the ammonia holding tank from a large gallon jug. If I had no headache when I started this operation, I sure had one when I finished. This job lasted six months and then I decided this was not for me.

As a little footnote to this six month working experience I got some valuable and interesting experience and knowledge on the casting and foundry operations.

November 1951, I quit my job at C. W. Olson and started classes at the University of Minnesota. Getting into the University after a vocational high school was practically unheard of at that time but there were two things that worked in my favor. First dad had some political influence and second the university was offering a special two year mechanical design major leading to a Technical Aid Certificate. This exposed me to the mechanical engineering field, heavy in practical, hands on design and experiences. We did not get the detailed mathematical analysis but we were deep into the uses of material and the operations of design and fabrication.

The whole purpose of this program was to stimulate our problem solving abilities. Someone would explain to us what they wanted to do or what needed to be done and it was our job to come up with a practical design solutions to get it completed. I always used a stress analyses engineer to verify the structural loads on any and all of my designs.

This was the Korean war years and many of the students at the university were returning vets attending school on the GI bill. One of those was a lad named Robert Roser. We became close friends while we took the same courses at the U of M. After graduation our lives separated for a number of years. I went on to serve in the US Army for two years and he developed his labeling company in the Los Angles California area.

The U of M years had a number of interesting events which took place outside of our concentrated study time. I had to finance a substantial part of the costs of attending the university so I missed participating in the extra curricular activities which took place. The panty raid fad on the sororities was a fun activity for a number of the men's dorms which naturally was followed by stern university reprimands. There was always a friendly rivalry between the forestry college and the engineering college so when we came to class one fine Monday morning and found a thirty foot long, two foot diameter log cradled on the second floor ledge of the engineering building. Retribution had to follow. Within a couple of weeks there appeared the front portion of a pickup truck securely wrapped around the most

prominent tree on the aggie campus. The cab had been cut in half and a hole added to the top to match the tree diameter so once in place, it was welded back together.

When I started at the university dad took me into his study office and informed me he was setting aside two thousand dollars for my education and this would include tuition, books, transportation and any other cost outside of a place to sleep and get fed if I was around at the appropriate times. Needless to say this put things into a rather tight budget situation. It was not to long before I was supplementing my small income by working, selling shoes at the Kinney Shoe store in the Miracle Mile Shopping Center in St Louis Park during the rush season and then the Main Shoe Store on Hennepin Ave., making a seven percent commission on what I sold. This was 1952 - 53 and tennis shoes sold for \$1.99 a pair. Men's dress shoes were around \$5.00 and \$6.00 a pair. Women's shoes ran between \$4.00 and \$5.00 a pair. Along with this I pushed sox, nylons, polishes, insoles, and the big item was the matching purses for the women.

When the rush season was over at the shoe store I found another job at Steel Structures Inc. Here is where I was a welder's helper. Angle iron was laid out on a very large work table in a predetermined pattern and after doublers were added at the joints the whole structure was welded together. After a while and with a lot of practice I got to be pretty good at welding and laying a uniform bead. I have to admit that early on I had to weld up a number of donut holes that fell out because I lingered to long in one spot.

Another event that took place in the 1951 - 52 period was that Mom's brother, Wesley, paid us a visit in Minneapolis. He was a self employed auto mechanic who had decided to make a round the world trip. He had a big motorcycle which he had equipped with a coffin like sidecar, large enough to carry all his auto mechanic type working tools on a bottom layer and all the camping type necessities in a top layer. Rather clever I thought. But what was most impressive to me was the motorcycle. He took me for a long ride around and though the various parks in Minneapolis and I was hooked.

It was not long before I was the proud owner of an Indian Chief motorcycle. I don't remember how old it was, probably a 40's vintage, but it ran well, had a stick shift, crash guards, leather saddle bags, windshield and a very large buddy seat. In short order I had added to my clothing attire a leather jacket with long leather fringe on the arms and hanging off the back, a leather bill cap topped with a St Christopher medal and of course leather boots. To top all this off I had a foot wide riding belt which had a large leather back with an Indian Chief head painted on it. Good and patient dad took all this in stride and gave me no serious reprimand until I started the machine to many times in the driveway between the houses and apparently drove the doctor neighbor up the wall. He must have sensed my wild days would soon be over. This was my favorite mode of

transportation until good old Uncle Sam decided he needed my services.

There is nothing like the feeling of freedom one gets when riding a motorcycle and I enjoyed it at every opportunity. I even went on a short tour with a club one time. Here are some interesting side notes though. When riding in the city where there are railroad or street car tracks, if they are not crossed properly they will flip you in an instant. Always be alert for mud puddles and wet streets. Riding with a girl friend on the big buddy seat was great because she always had to hang on that is unless she falls asleep and then that becomes a different problem.

On a number of occasions I filled one of the saddle bags with ice and beer and the other side bag with blankets to have a picnic at the top of the ski jump on one of the golf courses in the city. All in all it was a rewarding experience and free and easy time. One thing that I always kept in mind which was told to me by an experienced rider was -- If you ever think you are the complete boss of this big animal, you are headed for trouble. -- so I always road with some caution and respect for my machine and never got in to serious trouble.

Departure From the Nest and Entrance into the Real World 1953 --1956

September 1953. Sure enough the military draft finally caught up to me. The Korean war was still raging and I was caught in the draft lottery. I remember the letter well. "Greeting from your friends and neighbors. You have been selected to participate in the United States active military service or return directly to Canada since you are a Canadian citizen". The wording isn't all exactly correct but close enough. I had a decision to make.

It was an easy decision for me to make. It was pretty obvious that there were more opportunities here in the US so I sold all my toys, motorcycle and car, and reported for duty in the US Army. The Korean war was still grinding on so it looked like that would be my destination after boot camp training. I was sworn in at Fort Ryley and transported to Camp Attaberry Indiana just outside of Indianapolis in short order.

The military life was a real awakening. No longer was it a case of doing whatever seemed like a good idea and the fun thing to do. I had others in charge of me and my actions. I had responsibilities to others as well as for myself. Others were depended on me to complete whatever assignment I might be given.

Boot camp was a combination of learning and doing both physically and mentally. Early morning physical exercising and running, frequently before the sun was up, in September, winter wind or rain, it didn't matter. I learned the typical military tactics and weapon handling, hand to hand combat, gas drill with tear gas and fox hole digging since I was assigned to George Company of the 61st Infantry. As events happened I was never required to test these killing skills because the

Korean conflict ended just as I completed all the required training and orders were being cut to ship us all to the Pacific.

There were the constant guard duties, day and night. Continuous barracks area clean up, bed making, inspections. Cleaning and polishing, keeping my uniforms folded and pressed just right and of course I had to keep my M1 rifle shining clean and ready for inspection at all times. There was class instruction on the Code of Military Justice and the soldier's conduct under innumerable conditions. And to top all this off there was KP, (Kitchen Patrol).

Upon completion of the first six weeks of training, the company in its entirety, was moved to Fort Carson, CO just outside Colorado Springs. During this move, lucky me, I was again on KP duty so I was involved with cooking on the train for the trip to Colorado. I became really good at making tossed salads, peeling potatoes, cleaning pots and pans and serving on the food line. I learned that the service as a cook sounded like a better job than digging fox holes and getting shot at on the front line somewhere so I worked my way into the mess hall as a salad maker and helped with the general cooking.

As one of the cooking team I had good working hours, twenty four on and twenty four off and every other week end off. Better sleeping quarters and the pick of the best food. Being part of the cooking team did not totally relieve me of the remaining general training. On one of the exercises the company hiked on foot into Camp Hail from the east side of the Rocky Mountains which required us to cross 13000 foot mosquito pass in full battle gear.

As it turned out I was given a browning automatic rifle along with the prescribed ammunition so I had an additional forty plus pound to carry. The view from the top of the pass was striking. The weather was clear with an occasional patch of snow hiding behind a rock out cropping here and there. You could see for what seemed to be forever. The rest of the division was clearly visible snaking its way like ants up one side of the pass and down the other. This was an all day hike which started early in the morning and ended at dusk as we set up camp with our shelter half and field gear on an open lush green field in Camp Hail. In the morning we crawled stiffly out of our warm sleeping bags only to find six inches of snow on the ground.

This was during the summer of 1954, an exercise with the Cold Weather and Mountain Training Command which I truly enjoyed. We not only got to do a lot of hiking around the mountains of Colorado but we learned how to scale rock faces which on first look, would seem un-climbable. We also became proficient at repelling down the rock faces, an operation which was terrifying at first but soon became routine and exciting. That winter there was a request for volunteers to go to Camp Hail to help on the office staff. I jumped at this so I could take advantage of the skiing. My typing was atrocious and my spelling was even worse. Back then

there were no computers with spell check and I am sure that winter the army got the worst reports in history.

Needless to say, we young soldiers were quick to taste the favor of the local communities. We explored not only Colorado Springs but we ventured on south to Pueblo. There were three of us, the three musketeers, exploring the main City Park in Pueblo Colorado on a beautiful weekend adventure when we chanced to meet three of the local lovely young ladies.

The world changed again for me that day. It was no longer me it was US. Nina Ruth Kittinger and me. I can't explain how major things happen at just the right time and place other than there seems to be a guiding hand nudging me on. We spent the next six months getting to know each other and I getting to know her family. Who we were, what we were, where we wanted to go and do. The only comment I heard from dad when I announced that I was going to get married was, "well he is at that marring age".

Six months after we met in July, 1954, we were married in the First Nazarene Church in Pueblo Colorado and what a ride for the next forty five years. At this point this story changes from my life story to our life's story for there were two which now were becoming one. She was 20 and I was 21. Dad and Catherine were there for the wedding and on rehearsal night I was on guard duty so dad got to rehearse for me. I turned up just in time to complete the bridegrooms part on wedding day.

The Nazarene Church at that time were quite strict in their belief's, no jewelry, no wedding rings, long skirts and long hair for the girls among other rules and regulations however they bent the rules for us a little since we insisted on having the wedding as we wished. It was the first double ring wedding at this particular Nazarene Church.

Our honey moon was short but truly memorable. We spent the next three days at Canon City Colorado, west of Pueblo, exploring the mountains, the Royal Gorge and the foot bridge 1053 feet above the canyon floor. We had a lovely secluded little cottage by a babbling brook that could be heard through the window. Back then there was no television in the rooms but who was interested in TV at a time like this.

We set up our first early matrimony apartment in a house on the third floor in July of 1954. Access to this place was via an outside wooden stairs that wound its way to heaven. At least it seemed that way. It was a long way up and a long way down. We had the minimum of furniture. Used table and chairs, bed, book shelves constructed with blocks, bricks and unfinished boards. I had to spend my weekdays at Fort Carson and would make it home on the week ends. This was convenient for Ruth to be close to her family while we were making our early adjustments. Ruth's brother Glen was in the early throws of developing his junk

yard and used car business. This was a real asset for us in that he arranged for me to buy a good 1947 Buick Roadmaster. What a going machine this was. Straight eight, blue with the long sloping fenders. It looked and was every bit the going machine it portrayed.

It did not take long before we agreed that we would like to find a more convenient place, closer to camp where I could come home each night. By October of 1954 we had found another apartment in Fountain Colorado, a very small community just outside the south gate of Fort Carson very convenient and not beyond our means. Here we spent the next eight months on kind of an extended honeymoon. It was really a motel converted so that it could be rented to service men and small families. The owner of this place had a monstrous great Dane dog. This dog had the habit of leisurely and quietly approaching you from the back and sniffing your neck. Needless to say this made the hair on Ruth's neck stand up more than once.

Life was good here. We had plenty to eat since I was able to bring home surplus food from camp on occasion. One such incident happened on thanksgiving that year. I was on cooking duty and we had prepared our allotment of food for that day and we proceeded to feed the company as usual. As it turned out this was also a company holiday and anyone who was not on guard duty had skipped town so that they would not get drafted for extra duty. Upon completion of feeding the company and anyone who was hanging around we found ourselves with three very large un-carved turkeys which had to go somewhere. In the service, each day there is an allotment of food for a prescheduled menu, based on the number of personal in the company, that is to be prepared and served. Well rather than let one of these twenty pound, or so turkeys go to waste I packed it in a box along with its stuffing and padded with several pounds of butter so it would travel well, I took it home to my waiting wife. Needless to say we ate well for the next couple of weeks.

During fishing season, on weekends when I was not on duty, Ruth and I along with a couple of other cooks would camp out along one of the many trout streams. We would load up the trunk of the Buick with my army issue camping gear, along with food from the mess hall and we all would disappear for the next couple of days. The lead cook would always bring along this two foot by three foot cast iron grill, on which we cooked almost everything. He would also always have pre-made pancake batter along with bacon, eggs and on occasion steaks to cook along with the fish when we caught them.

It was on one of these outings that Ruth caught her first fish. I had been baiting her hook with nice fat worms, since she did not know how and it was one of the less desirable things to do when fishing. When a beautiful rainbow trout, about fifteen inches long could not resist her fat worm unknowingly sacrificed itself by taking to big a bite, the forest awoke to the screams of a very excited young



lady. As I rushed to her aid not knowing exactly what had happened, I found she had landed this treasure well up on the bank. She was not about to let it get away but she was afraid to touch it so she was holding it down with the fishing pole and calling for help. Needless to say we ate that fish that night with great celebration.

On another of these outings we were having great success with our catch and not paying much attention to where we were fishing. Low and behold a game warden appeared out of nowhere. To our surprise we were all fishing on the wrong side of a bridge. Up stream of this particular bridge was off limits, whereas down stream fishing was allowed. Since we were all spread out along the stream on the wrong side, the ranger was unable to approach all of us at the same time. Ruth and I were the first to be approached so while we were being informed of our misdeeds the others came down stream to see what the excitement was. Now here was a case of not knowing when to keep your mouth shut and don't try to be the shining star. I had two fish, nothing exceptional, the others upstream had stashed their catch and come down to see what was going on. When the warden casually mentioned how good I was at fishing, they had to claim how much better they were and went back and got their stashed catch to prove how much better they really were. Needless to say, fishing violations were passed all around. We moved our camp down stream. Paid our fines a few days later, and I am sure there was one satisfied game warden with tales to tell.

Our lead cook was a black man with a white German wife. This was my first close encounter with a mixed marriage. It has always seemed to me that mixed racial relationships are not quite right. Marriages have enough problems to be resolved without adding the racial prejudices into the equation. Regardless they seemed quite happy with two children, the youngest well over one and still breast feeding. They were looking forward to their next assignment to Germany.

By June of 1955 it was becoming obvious that we needed to find a more economical place to so we would have a bit of cash reserve for the coming release from the service and the resulting relocation and adjustment to civilian life so we combined our resources with four other married couples and rented a house in Colorado Springs. This worked out well since all the couples were young, and willing to put up with the many inconveniences. That is, almost all inconveniences. One couple had a small child and the mother had a lazy tendency when it came to keeping herself and the child cleaned up and reasonably presentable.

One evening we troopers came home to find the other three girls had had enough. They got together and cleaned up the wayward girl's apartment, cleaned up the child who had been playing and living in filth and then even scrubbed the mother down. She was pink from the scrubbing when we all arrived home. Thankfully she got her act together after that and all went well as we all shared the

living room and general living quarters along with the refrigerator and washing facilities.

There was an incident which happened about this time which stimulated our commitment to future planning and savings. I asked dad if he would help us buy a trailer big enough for us to live in. His answer was a flat and emphatic no. You are now married and you must step up to all your responsibilities. At the time I felt this was rather heartless but over the long run it was definitely the right and appropriate answer to be given. I never asked him for any support again which proved to be the most beneficial and educational thing he could have done.

Because the Korean conflict was drawing to a close, thankfully, and my discharge from active duty time was only a few months away, I was given the option of reenlisting and taking a tour in Germany or spend the balance of my time at Fort Carson. I elected for the latter since the chances of a growing family were strong and the army did not provide relocation funds for noncommissioned personnel. Noncom families would have to pay their own way overseas if they were to accompany their service man husband and the pay for noncom military personnel was barely enough to make ends meet as it was.

In mid 1955 while on duty and out on field maneuvers I was informed of the death of Catherine in Minneapolis. I immediately got leave to fly back for her funeral and subsequently dad and I escorted her body back to the Park family plot in Tillsonburg Ontario. There also is the internment of Lila, my mother and Winifred, Catherine's first born. There are two empty spaces there yet to be used. I have frequently thought that it would be ideal to have dad and Evelyn (Dad's third wife), relocated there from their present burial site in Sun City Arizona. If I were to do this or be involved in doing so, Evelyn would probably rise up and haunt me for all of eternity.

September 1955. My active enlistment was completed and my eight years of inactive service started. We loaded all our worldly possessions into and on top of, the big blue 1947 Buick Roadmaster, and prepared to move east to Minneapolis. After a few day with the Kittinger clan in Pueblo we said our good-bys, faced the new sunrise and headed east. We probably resembled a homeless couple who had just gotten ejected from their home but we didn't care, we were young and on a lifetime adventure.

We wound our way through eastern Colorado, then Nebraska and Iowa and then north to Minneapolis Minnesota. The big thing now was that we were on our own. We just enjoyed each other, talked of adventures and places yet to see.

Upon arrival in Minneapolis I quickly found a small apartment and we quickly settled in. First into a little back apartment at 2417 S. Dupont Ave for five months and then a second move to 429 & 1/2 Jefferson Ave. I don't recall the reason for the relocation other than for convenience.

Within a few days of our arrival in Minneapolis I had a job at the Champion Motors Co., 1325 N. E. Quincy. I was a design draftsman taking on mechanical design assignments for parts to be used in the Champion outboard motors.

This was where I got my first lesson in humility and human relations. I was young, twenty two, and fancied myself as an expert in creative ideas and I knew it all. This is how it happened. I was assigned the problem of coming up with a design for a part that would prevent the outboard motor from powering itself up and out of the water when put in reverse. After careful analysis of the shifting mechanism I designed a hook like linkage that would pivot and drop over a pin to lock the motor in a down position. Everything looked good on paper so I proceeded to have the parts made in the machine shop by their longtime machinist. After the machinist had reviewed my drawings in preparation to making the parts he pointed out the size of the pivot pin hole and commented that the hook would not hold with that size of hole. I, with my young, know it all attitude informed him that what I had designed was exactly what I wanted. Without further discussion the good machinist made all the parts exactly as the drawings called for. Needless to say, when the test run was made with the newly installed parts, the motor rotated itself out of the water. Failed because the hook jumped off its locking pin. The pivot pin hole was too large. So what did I learn from this. First and foremost don't be so quick to think that I have all the answers. Listen to old machinists and weigh other people's comments, sometimes they may lead to a more perfect solution.

Along about December that year, at the Dupont apartment, the typical Minnesota weather had settled in and this winter cold was having its impact on Ruth. Being a Colorado girl where the weather gets cold for a day or two between warm sunny days this was pretty rough and besides that we now knew there was a young one in the cooker. To top all this off one bright sunny day she did the wash and hung it outside on the line to dry where it promptly froze solid as a board. It was very upsetting for her to realize they would probably be that way until spring.

At the second little apartment it wasn't long before things took on new meaning. A pregnant stray cat adopted us and had its litter in the back closet. We wanted to purchase some inexpensive furniture but I had no credit so to eliminate the credit problem I purchased a thirty inch black and white TV on time.

Betty and husband Murray had moved into the Humboldt house at this time. Betty was to function as house keeper for dad and Evelyn while Murray attended the University of Minnesota for his Phd. To escape the pressures of the newly married dad and Evelyn household Betty and Murray would come to our little apartment on Sundays, her only day off duty. We would usually eat oriental food, talk of the week's excitement and watch Alfred Hitchcock on the TV.

I still had a key to the front door of the Humboldt street house much to

Evelyn's dislike. One evening I came to the Humboldt street house as usual, unannounced, let myself in and as usual bellowed my arrival. "Anybody home?" As you would have it this set Evelyn off as she came down the stairs in a great huff. Later that evening dad took me aside into his private office and quietly requested the house key and informed me it would be best if I always call before coming to visit henceforth.

Over Christmas that year Ruth's brother, Kit, suggested I put in an application for employment with the Dow Chemical Co. where he worked. At that time Dow Chemical was running the secret nuclear weapons plant at Rocky Flats, west of Denver Colorado, in the hills between Golden and Boulder. They were looking for my type of talent. It would bring Ruth back closer to some family and the opportunity for advancement looked good so by the first of the year, 1956, I had submitted my resume.

Rocky Flats and Dow Chemical Co 1956 -- 1966

By April 1956 I had accepted the offer by Dow Chemical Co and we again pulled up stakes, loaded all our worldly possessions in the car and rented trailer and moved west to Arvada Colorado. The cost of this move was paid for by Dow Chemical Co. With the help of Kit we quickly located and snuggled into a one bedroom apartment at 7520 W. 62nd Ave Arvada Colorado. In addition, again, with Kit's help, we were put in touch with a good family doctor because Ruth was nearing her due date.

This little apartment was the lower level of a very nice house built on a hill just east of Wadsworth Blvd. Being built on a hill allowed the whole south wall to be exposed and permitted a great view to the south over what was then, farm land. The remainder of the apartment snuggled back into the hill. From here I reported for work at Rocky Flats and visits to the doctor with great anticipation of our first born.

Rocky Flats Plant at this time was one of those super secret government operations run under contract by Dow Chemical Co. This was the Cold War period when the super powers, US and USSR mostly, seemed to be competing to see who could develop, build and stockpile the most nuclear weapons. I had been granted a "Q", (super secret), clearance by the FBI or whoever made the final blessing on the workers at this location. This operation was so secret that Ruth never knew what I actually did for the next 10 years while I worked there. There was never any conversation of what went on once we left the plant area. Even when I left Rocky Flats in 1966 I had to sign a paper stating that I would not divulge what transpired at this location for the next ten years or so, under penalty of prosecution and incarceration in the federal pen. Since I am well beyond that ten year threat I have

no qualms about writing about my activities from that time period.

As we all know now, Rocky Flats was building nuclear weapons. We were working with uranium, plutonium and other radioactive elements along with the appropriate known shielding. The biggest concern was getting over exposed to radiation as we went about our work. My major activity was designing equipment that would allow handling and processing the radioactive elements and yet protect the workers. There was always the danger of too much material collecting in a single location and thus going critical, resulting in meltdown from heat and extreme radiation. In fact many years after I had left Rocky Flats they actually lost one of the buildings. I don't know if it was ever recovered.

Shortly after I started my work at Rocky Flats I, along with a small group of other new employees were given a lecture on how the bomb weapon was made and what portion was made here at the plant. The bomb was made of two layers of hollow half spheres, of radioactive material, probably uranium and plutonium, perhaps each layer one quarter of an inch thick, and about twelve inches in diameter. The two half spheres fit smoothly, one inside the other, then they were mated together to form a perfect sphere. Suspended in the exact center of this sphere on thin stainless steel wires is a small sphere, a solid ball, probably plutonium, about two inch in diameter, covered with a layer of nickel. The outer sphere of radioactive material is encased in a third layer of two stainless steel half spheres. A skin, perhaps an eighth of an inch thick welded together at the mid seam and forming a complete sealed ball. Protruding from the top of this ball is a stainless steel tube through which tritium gas is injected into the weapon at the time of detonation to boost the critical reaction. The obvious intent here is to keep the radioactive material separated far enough so that radiation is kept at a non critical level. High explosive, shaped charges are placed around the sphere at some other location. Where I never heard. To detonate this type of weapon the high explosive compresses the outer radioactive material uniformly into the center, cracking the center ball open to create a critical mass and along with the tritium gas to boost the nuclear instability and get an immediate big boom.

We were also given some insight on how the nuclear cannon shell worked even though none of these components were made at Rocky Flats. Basically at the forward end of the projectile there would be a series of radioactive hollow donut rings. At the other end of the projectile is a solid cylinder of radioactive material. When the projectile hits, the cylinder is driven forward from the momentum of the shell, into the rings to create a critical mass. No explanation was given on the other components that had to work together to make a successful explosion.

While walking through the machine shop one day a casting of a hemisphere was pointed out and I was requested to go pick it up. It had a convenient riser, about two inches in diameter, protruding from the top, and looked like a piece of

cast iron so I complied without hesitation. To my very great surprise when I attempted to lift it, it didn't budge. Uranium has the weight of lead. In fact the end stable element of this radioactive material is lead, after it passes through a number of element changes in its atomic structure.

Not only was the plant working with solid radioactive materials in casting form but also there was an extensive liquid processing and refining operation of radioactive material, specifically plutonium nitrates and plutonium oxides.

I designed any number of glove boxes for the production line. These are boxes similar to what you see in a chemical lab where the operator must work with their hands and arms inserted into the work area inside long sleeve gloves. In our case they were heavily lead impregnated. The viewing windows were always thick Plexiglas. It was common practice to join the boxes to gather with an air lock so the product could be handed from one work station to another without any contamination.

Here at Rocky Flats I learned my second lesson in good design. In this case I was shown a granite inspection table about three foot square by about ten inches thick. After calculating the weight I proceeded to design a frame with legs for it to rest on so that the working surface would be at a convenient working height. After the stand was completed and installed I got my education. The size and strength were all correct but it looked like it was about to collapse. It was made of one and one half by one and one half by one quarter steel angle iron. The lesson learned was that a product must not only have the strength but it must also look capable of safely doing the job.

One assignment I was given was to encase a large machine lathe so that the machining operation could be done inside a closed glove box while the operator controlled the operation safely from the outside. To get the full flavor of all the operations that were involved I needed to get my hands and body close and around the lathe to understand the full working environment. The only problem was that the only duplicate lath was already in a contaminated area and not approachable without being in a full body suite. It was a very enlightening experience to discover the restrictions a worker has to deal with when working in a space suite. On top of all this the preparation a worker must go through to enter a contaminated area and again the extensive decontamination procedure needed to evacuate a contaminated area was also very enlightening.

If you ever see uranium being machined, it's not likely a thing you would forget. It is always machined while being heavily washed at the point of cutting with a cutting oil. This sounds simple enough but every once in a while the cutting tip gets exposed and when this happens the material comes off like a large fourth of July sparkler, throwing multicolor fine chips in all directions.

One of the more interesting projects I was given was to design and test

shipping containers for plutonium nitrate and plutonium oxide. The design requirements were as follows: under no circumstances can the transported material be allowed to consolidate, compile or compress into a configuration which would allow a critical mass. This would include the result of a vehicle accident, train wreck, airplane crash and or fire.

May 1956, all the preparation was complete. The basinet with super soft bedding, baby blankets of various color since the sex was unknown and lots of washable diapers awaited its arrival. The emergency bag was waiting patiently by the door for that exciting announcement that it was time to make the dash to the hospital. As the eleventh hour on the eleventh rolled by and it became obvious things were about to happen and sure enough on May 12th 1956, our son Kevin came noisily into this world. These events at that time were never witnessed by the male participant only mother, doctor and nurses, so I was banished to the waiting room with all the other nervous fathers and excited family members.

For the next several weeks Ruth's mother and sister in law Peggy hovered around the house providing instructions, encouragement and general support to the new mother and father as we learned the dos and don'ts of the baby handling business. Feeding, changing and visits to the doctor for reassurance and check ups became the prime activities and routine.

The next twelve months were spent observing and helping this new wonder develop and grow. We watched with parental excitement each new endeavor. The first roll over in the basinet. The first utterances of sounds that seemed to sound like words. The first time he pulled himself to a standing position. There was the crawl to the kitchen cabinet where all the pots and pans were extracted from the cabinet to be spread around the floor. The first steps and with this we knew we were well on the way.

By May of 1957 we recognized that there was a strong chance our little family was due to expand. With this in mind and Ruth's motherly pressure, we began to investigate the possibilities of buying a house. New construction in Westminster looked pretty good so we settled on the house at 7908 Stewart Place. We put our application in to the bank for a GI loan and to our delight it was accepted. The odd thing about this whole deal was that the banker who took and helped with our loan application turned out to be our neighbor on the north side.

John and Joyce Greene turned out to be the ideal neighbor. They had three sons, Roger, Scott and Paul being the youngest and just about Kevin's age. John always liked to brag about how great the neighborhood was because he got to pick all the neighbors. On our south side were Dave and Connie Cunningham. Dave was a land surveyor and lived in the house until his death. They had two children, Bill and Marci.

The house at 7908 Stewart place was a three bedroom wood frame with an

almost flat roof. There were no shingles and no attic. The inside had all open beams and the roof insulation was laid on the outside ceiling, then covered with tarpaper, more tar and then gravel. The house was heated with a hot water baseboard radiator system. No air conditioning. The front room, dining area and kitchen were all one room separated by a kitchen counter. There was one bathroom.

We were all young and ready to work together to get our fences up and sharing the costs where appropriate. We all had lawns to put in and you could tell which neighbor was working by the smell of the rough cow manure being rototilled into the yard. We had red flagstone patios laid with great care off the back door. We had a hill in the back of the yard that sloped up to the neighbor behind. On this hill I tried to terrace using rocks collected from numerous trips to the mountains on weekend outings. I even built a sand box up there for the children to play in.

To landscape the front yard and make it unique I built a raised round flower bed about six feet in diameter, using red flagstone leftover from the back patio. To make it extra unique I planted a large tree root which was shaped like an "L" so a name or number could be hung on it like a sign post.

November 7, 1957 and then we were four. To our delight we were blessed with a precious little girl that we named Kathy Renee. As it turned out Kathy was an extremely popular name at that time so we shortly resorted to the use of her second name, Renee, to make group identification easier. We went through all the preliminary preparations as we had done for Kevin and as the events unfolded we did the same thing again on October 29, 1959 with the blessed arrival of Donavon Richard. With each addition came the excitement and help from grandparents and friends. With the arrival of Donavon, Ruth and I agreed that three was enough so we made every effort to keep our growing family at five, not counting the pets that seemed to appear from time to time.

One of the most rewarding things any parent receives in their life is the observation and thrill of guiding these young lives into maturity and sending them off to the world we helped preserve and hopefully in some small way make it even better.

With the addition of each child it was striking how each of the older child would want to be involved. They each seemed to enjoy the opportunity to feed them, rock them and play with them even before they were big enough to crawl.

We had a player piano that I got from some unknown source. It had been well used but after careful cleaning and replacing some of the air lines I got it working like new. There was also a door I covered with tile and added legs which we used for quite some time as a front room coffee table. These two items were

used many times when Kevin was about five, Kathy about three and a half and Donavon about a year and busy crawling on the floor. I would put a music roll into the player, like “The Piano Roll Blues”, and we all prepared for a jumping evening. Kevin would hold the front of the piano while pumping the large peddles to generate the air for the bellows and get the keyboard playing. He was too small to reach the peddles while sitting on the piano bench. With the music resounding through the house, Kathy would proceed to demonstrate her dancing expertise on the coffee table while Donavon would be wiggling, and squirming to the beat of the music.

We had a lot of good times in those years. We had block parties which included the whole neighborhood. On a couple of occasions we blocked off the street to have a street party. Each household would bring out some special food to share.

All during this generation, while the children were small, it was always assumed that father was the bread winner and provider while mother was the home maker and supporter. That was the norm for our generation and we stepped into it without question. As a result of this way of family raising I felt I needed to supplement our family income by finding a second job. This resulted in my working at the Kinney Shoe store in the Lakeside Shopping Center part time from time to time.

At this same store, working full time, was a young man my age by the name of Richard Harrington. Our families became very close and we became god parents to each other's children while we were in Colorado. Unfortunately we lost track of each other after our move to California. Donavon got his second name from our friendship with the Harrington's. We had a great relaxed and fun relationship while working together at the shoe store trying to out sell each other.

One busy Saturday while working at this store Ruth came in to get some shoes. The store was very busy with almost all the seats taken. In fact it was so busy that the manager, Mr. Edwards was also on the floor fitting some customers just down the row from me. As it was customary and proper to always measure the customer's foot in order to determine the required shoe size, I proceeded with the normal operation for Ruth. After determining her size I said in an extra loud voice, “my god lady, you have a big foot”. Upon hearing my words Mr. Edwards, who was on his knees in our normal working position, was instantly standing and moving ominously in my direction. Upon recognizing who I was talking to he realizes it was a setup and took it all in stride and we all had a good laugh. I ran into this same Mr. Edwards in California many years later still working for the Kinney Shoe Company.

As the family grew we were not only deeply involved in the development of our local neighborhood we found it satisfying to be involved in the church. The

Nazarene church with its strict ideas did not seem to meet our beliefs so we became part of the Methodist church in Arvada. I got great satisfaction in being part of the choir. Even though I still did not read music, I could read the words and always stood close to a fellow songster who kept me on to the correct note.

About this time I became involved with a man by the name of Chip Folden. We had gotten our heads together and we had big ideas of creating a business that would sell liquid fertilizer along with an applicator that would be attached to the sprinkler system or watering hose. I designed a spherical tank with a metering bushel on the side to which a standard hose could be connected. Someone had several made for us to test. As the water rushed thru this bustle it would draw out a metered amount of liquid fertilizer from inside the ball and thus water and fertilize the lawn all at the same time. We also convinced a couple of golf courses to try our material on their lawns using a metering system I also devised. We had a rented space in an old ware house down by the railroad tracks in Denver. The railroad tracks were important because we envisioned a lot of production and we would need to have our raw material brought in by the train load and we would be shipping our product out in tank cars. Did we ever have big ideas or not. The system and material worked great but investors were hard to find. One serious investor who was an avid golfer was ready to sell his furniture business and go for broke however events suddenly changed. The Folden family suddenly moved to the Los Angeles area with the belief Chip could find deep pocket investors and sell our product to large users such as golf courses. Chip suddenly died. The common belief was that he had a stroke or heart attack. There were no big investors waiting to take up this big business opportunity so all faded into wishful dreams. In looking back on all this there must have been a guiding hand somewhere behind all this. The primary ingredient in this product was urea and ammonium nitrate. Had this operation continued I may well have been convicted as a bomb maker or even blown up some building by mistake. I always wondered why, when I was mixing this product, the mixing drum would get almost too hot to touch.

When Chip Folden and family moved to the California area we sort of inherited their pets. One was Rick, a military trained German Shepherd guard dog that had been repatriated and the other was a white miniature poodle that was called Pa-Tefe. As a general rule these dogs got along pretty well, no fighting or bad manners. However the poodle liked to pester the much bigger police dog. Rick would tolerate this for an hour or so and when he had finally had enough he would take the poodle in his mouth and hold him in that position for about thirty seconds. Not biting down hard enough to cause injury but long enough to let it be known he had had enough. This dog was so well trained I could walk with him by my side, not on a leash, past another snapping and lunging dog which was on a leash even

though Rick wanted to take him on so badly his legs would shake. His response to voice command was amazing. He had only one problem and that was that he hated cats. Cats learned to stay away from our yard. Every day when we let him out in the morning, the first thing he would do is patrol the fence to be sure nothing had entered our area over night. Rick would rest on the floor and ignore any or all of the children climb on him, pull on him and even poke him in the face. It took him about a week to figure out that Paul Greene, the neighbor boy Kevin's age, was not part of the family. At that point Rick refused to let Paul come into the yard and play. He would stand in front of him and block him out until someone came to his rescue. Paul was broken hearted.

We had one small boy from a rather obnoxious family well down the street from us who would not heed our warnings to stay out of our yard. Eventually Rick got hold of him one day when he tried to climb over our fence and held him. Not enough to do any real damage but the possibility was there. I eventually had to send Kick to live on a farm where he had more freedom and we found that one small poodle along with three very active children was enough.

Hunting is a big thing in Colorado and ever year there is the normal male instinct to become the great big game hunter. A man thing. One year I succumbed to the urge and went hunting with one of our friends who had the hunting fever. He was gracious enough to let me borrow his Remington 30-06 with a telescopic sight. We roughed it in the Rocky Mountain range somewhere west of Denver. By the second day I had my opportunity and I brought down a large female deer. It was a good clean shot through the head. I hung her, dressed her out and we ate deer for many weeks after the curing and processing was completed. In all honesty this hunting with a rifle did not seem to me to be very sporting. If you are within range and you are any good at aiming with a telephoto sight, the animal has little chance of surviving.

On the other hand however archery hunting is a whole different game. I belonged to an archery club that had their own range and I had been making bows for a number of years. The bows at that time were all long bows with recurve ends. I had one made of hickory and lemon wood, a metal one made of a copper alloy and a third of fiberglass. They all pulled 55 to 65 pounds so they were more than enough for hunting. On several occasions I loaded up my gear and headed into the hills after a deer. I will admit that I never was successful at making a kill while hunting with a bow, probably because I never really mastered the art of stalking. To me archery hunting is a sport, were as rifle hunting is more target practice.

While living in this house which had no garage, only a carport, I had a number of interesting cars. To mention a few there was a yellow two door Studebaker that had a top that looked like a small tank. Then there was the Chrysler Windsor, the 1958 Edsel and an interesting Austen, all two door models.

We favored the two doors because there is no door for children to open. When we traveled any distances, like to grandma's house, 115 miles away. I would put a bench behind the front seat at backseat ay seat height and spread out pillows so the kids could lie down and sleep while we were on the road. There were no seat belts in those days.

This Austen was a convertible with little arms that lit and swung out to indicate your turning intentions. The top could be opened part way to expose only the driver and front seat passenger to the elements while keeping those in the back securely covered in place. Alas, this little gem wet its demise when Ruth made a turn in front of an oncoming car. Thankfully, Ruth only suffered some knee damage along with some bruises. Here again, no seat belts and the car was a goner.

As the year 1962 moved along it was noted that our children were nearing school age and it would be nice if everyone had their own room and it would be nice if we had a garage so we convinced ourselves it was time to look for a bigger place.

By February 1963 we had found our new house at 6773 Reed Street, Arvada Colorado. This house was a red brick by-level which meant that half of the basement was at ground level. When you go in the front door you either go up to the main floor or down to the lower level. Here was a house with lots of room. Everyone had their own bed room, I got a study, a formal front room, large kitchen and dining area and best of all it had a large play room down stairs.

As usual each house has to be customized to fit our special tastes. I immediately built a large deck off the back door. Along with that I added a large fire pit in the back yard where we could sit around it in the evenings and tell tails about the day's events. In the front yard we added trees and hedges and a substantial rock garden with rocks we would bring back from our weekend excursions in the mountains.

Our weekend excursions frequently took us to the old gold mining towns such as Leadville, Dillon and Georgetown. On one outing when we were looking for especially large rocks for the rock garden I carefully parked the car under an out cropping so that any falling stones would be deflected away from the car. As I rummaged around the hill for just the right bolder I finally found it and proceeded to roll it down hill toward the car. All of a sudden the bolder got a life of its own and took off rolling down the hill. You can imagine how the rest of the story goes. That bolder rolled right along the outcropping where the car was parked and disappeared as it went over the edge. I could not see the car but I did hear a loud boom. With that sound I imagined I had a large rock sitting on the roof of the car. When I finally got back down to the car I found that the bolder had come down within inches of the side of the car and bounced up under the door to leave a permanent and substantial reminder of my folly.

On another outing we explored the old abandoned white marble quarry where much of the marble for the Colorado capitol was from. I brought several large blocks back for the front yard flower garden.

This house had a couple of problems, one of which we discovered when the spring rains came. This whole subdivision was built on a gently sloping wash area which had been graded to have the water carried away in appropriate drainage ditches. They neglected to allow for the ground water so when we got excessive rain the sub water table rose enough that we got water seeping into the house which was below ground. To remedy this problem I determined the leaking area around the footing and created a pit in the back bedroom floor, lined it with cement and installed a sump pump to pump any seeping water into the regular house drain.

The other problem was discovered when we tried to take the player piano down the steps and into the play room. We had failed to measure the width of the door and the turn required in the lower hall. We discovered our oversight when the piano was on the lower steps during our move in. There was no going back so that is where the piano sat for the next several days while I widened the doorway.

During our ten years in Colorado we had the rewarding parental experiences of watching and helping our three offspring grow and become active in so many things, most of which I have forgotten.

One of the major things we did in the winter would be to play in the snow. The snow in this Colorado area was never exceptionally deep but it was adequate. The best snow was in the mountains a few miles away. Many times as a family we went tubing, sledding and later skiing. On one such trip we went as far as Aspin to ski and stopped for a dip in the hot springs pools at Glen Wood Springs on the way back.

On another winter trip we were coming back late on the main highway to Denver and had stopped for gas and a snack at a gas station. As we proceeded carefully along in a snow storm we realized a member was missing. Petefi the little white poodle was not with us. The family was in tears for fear we would never find him. After a "U" turn at the first opportunity we hopefully drove back up the highway, all eyes looking for a moving snowball. After a couple of miles we came across a car eased over to the side trying to tempt what looked like a moving ball into their car. We stopped and called out from our open car door and sure enough that moving snow ball turned out to be our Petefi and the world was saved. He apparently knew which direction we were going when we left the stop and was doing his best to find us.

School for the children was right down the street from the house so it was convenient for Ruth to escort the school age children to and from.

This was the time when we first got involved in scouting. At first I was mostly on the side lines, helping where I could, until I became the cub scout leader.

Ruth was a den mother of about eight loud and rambunctious boys. Meetings and projects were frequently conducted in our play room. Nature hunts frequently brought home strange samples and live species for examination and identification. All of these activities went well until one of the garter snakes escaped from its prison and went looking for a more suitable home. Needless to say things around the house were a little tense until the snake was found and returned to its proper box. It was not to long before snakes and other creepy crawlers were relocated, mostly to the back yard.

It was about this time that Kevin started to develop his talents as a fireman. We came home from somewhere, to find Kevin on my ladder he had requisitioned from the garage and carefully positioned it to extend to the main floor bedroom window. In the bedroom window was Renee with one of her dolls waiting to be rescued.

Drive-in movies theaters were big in those days. We called them “passion pits”. They were also an ideal way for young families to escape for an economical evening. I had traded the two-door Edsel for an Edsel station wagon so this allowed us to spread out blankets and pillows in the back for the children to play and sleep while we munched on popcorn and watched the movie in Pease.

Somewhere in the time period of 1963 we decided we had had enough of the roughing it while camping with tents and portable shelters so I began looking around for alternatives. We needed to be conservative so I came up with an acceptable solution. Pop-up trailers did not seem like an acceptable solution. New trailers of any size were to expensive. Finally I found a used 15 foot Terry trailer that had a big double bed in back and the dining table made into a single bed in the front. The cost was a little more than I wanted to spend but once ready to roll I planned to rent it out during hunting and camping season for a little extra cash, which I did.

This little Terry trailer was intended to accommodate three or four. By the time I finished my modifications we were able to handle six. First I added a double size bed above the bed in the back that folded up against the ceiling when not in use. Second I added a window high on the side of the trailer at each end of the new bed. Third I added a single bed above the dining area that again folded up against the ceiling when not in use. Now we could sleep four in the back area and two in the front area.

I only encountered one problem in this whole trailer experience and that was very early on. I was moving long the interstate highway at about fifty MPH when the trailer passed over a small pot hole which caused the trailer to lurch to the side. On recovery the trailer lurched back in the opposite direction. This very quickly resulted in an accelerated fishtail affect. It was so severe that with each swing, left and right , that the tires squealed. Needless to say there was almost a big

wet spot on the driver's seat. After I got things slowed down and under control I eased back home and weighed the trailer and the tong load. Sure enough, the tong load was about 40 pounds shy of what it should have been. To remedy the problem I made a wood mold the shape of the trailer tong where it attaches to the towing ball and added 100 pounds of lead to the tong. With that added weight I never had another towing problem in all our trips into Canada and across the US.

Somewhere in this time period, along about 1964 we took a summer vacation with the trailer, intending to go to California and to visit friends along the way. For some reason which I did not understand, this trip was going to have its challenges and blessings and heartaches all rolled up together. At that time I was towing the trailer using the Edsel station wagon. As we reached Pueblo Colorado where Grandpa and Grandma Kittinger lived along with Glen, Ruth's brother, the Edsel gave up the ghost. It would go no further. Glen, who by now was somewhat successful in his junkyard and used car business arranged for me to buy a used Pontiac Chief which he had and was in good condition. After a quick modification of the Pontiac to add a trailer towing set-up we proceeded with new hope on our run to California and awaiting Disney Land. I visited with my old University of Minnesota classmate, Bob Roser and family and then spent several days at Disney Land to the delight of us all. Our next stop was with one of Ruth's high school friends in San Diego. Here we were notified that Ruth's mother had just died of a stroke so we went back to Los Angeles and left the children with the Folden family while Ruth and I flew back to Pueblo for her mother's funeral. After collecting the children in California we returned to Pueblo to visit a few days with Grandpa Kittinger before returning home. By the time we arrived back in Pueblo the Pontiac had had enough and was ready to call it quits. Once again brother in law Glen happened to have just acquired the solution to our problem. He had an almost new Mercury Monterey, two door, stick shift with overdrive. This car proved to be the best towing car I ever had.

Now I have to pause a bit and wonder how do I explain that good come out of such a sequence of bad events. Is it plain good luck or is there something deeper behind this whole thing.

The next summer rolled in and as we prepared for the 1965 summer vacation it was suggested that grandpa Kittinger go along if he could stand the confines of a 15 foot trailer and three rambunctious children. He had never seen the Atlantic Ocean and had expressed an interest in such an excursion so plans were made for a summer trip to the East. This trip took us to the New York City World's Fair and Niagara Falls near Buffalo NY.

Being relative new in the trailer travel game on a cross country trip I think we camped at most of the rest stops because it provided us with the bathroom facilities that we needed. In the New York City area the only camp ground we

found was way out on Long Island close to the nuclear power station. Each day we drove the 30 or 40 miles into the city to the fair and other interesting sites. The city traffic was something we were not used to so on the day we started our return trip I decided we should head west very early in the morning to get through the city before all the working people would be driving into the city. What a mistake that was. I did not realize that the night and early mornings belonged to the delivery trucks. Thousands of trucks, big and small, all on their way in to make their daily deliveries. Needless to say we didn't make the head way I expected and to top the insult off as we passed the fair location on our way out of town, we passed a large open field which had been set aside for campers while they attended the fair.

On the return trip to Colorado we made it a point to stop at Buffalo NY and Niagara Falls. I had not been there in many years and it was the first time for the rest of the party. All the other times I had seen the Falls from the Canadian side so a view from the US side would be new for me also. To make Ruth's experience complete I decided to cross the rainbow bridge and view the falls from the Canadian side. We left the children with grandpa and spent the early evening in Canada sightseeing. Everything went as anticipated until we attempted to make our return to the US and the rest of the family waiting in the trailer. At the border the US customs asked the normal questions, citizenship, birth place etc. When they heard I was a US citizen born in Canada they weren't sure they wanted to let me back into the US. They asked for more identification and proof and when I could not tell them the color of my US citizenship papers they became even more suspicious. Needless to say this generated a few minutes of serious explaining on my part and convincing them that our children were waiting in a trailer for our return on the US side. After a few tense minutes it all ended well with our release and my receipt of the information that my US citizenship papers were brown and black, a point I have never since forgotten.

As my ten year mark approached here at Rocky Flats it became obvious that in order to move up the ladder in the company it was going to require more education or know the right people. I did not have the right political connections so that was out. The cost of extended education at the University of Colorado was prohibitive and time consuming. Another point to be considered was that only after ten years of service would a Dow employee become eligible to start building their retirement fund.

After considerable thought and meditation and serious conversation with Ruth I decided to look around and cast out a few feelers. I never quite understood why or how but within a couple of weeks of making my decision to look around there before me in the Denver paper was an add by Lockheed Missile and Space Corp, looking for mechanical design engineers. I updated my resume and mailed it off with apprehension but hopeful that something good might happen. Within a

matter of weeks I had a positive interview and a signed offer in my hands. The title of the job wasn't much but it was an increase in salary, time and a half for overtime, pay for schooling if I wished to go, progression in the company depended on your demonstrated abilities, full medical coverage, and a retirement program available upon accepting employment. On top of all this there was a reasonable moving allowance to move family and belongings to California. It looked to me that the writing was on the wall. I accepted the offer and a reporting date was established in July 19, 1966.

Since I had a month of paid vacation time due me from Dow Chemical it seemed like an ideal time to make use of it and visit points East before heading West into the sunset. So now it was 2 adults, 3 children ages 6, 8 and 10 along with a small dog in a 15 foot terry tear-drop trailer ready for our new adventure.

Our little caravan headed East into the sun rise. On this trip we were headed for New Brunswick and a few days with Betty and Murray Neilson before our move to California, our western adventure. On this trip I wanted to cover as much as possible my old stomping ground in Canada as possible so we went through the Michigan Upper Peninsula, crossing at Sault Ste Marie into Canada through Sudbury and on to North Bay.

Here in the North Bay area I located where Harold Morin was working as a Canadian Pacific RR station master in Quebec not too distant so off we went to pay him a visit. We found he was at a large lumber station where timber was peeled into plywood sheets then glued into the plywood boards and shipped out throughout Canada and the US. Naturally being the station master he had connections with the railroad so when a locomotive was available we all, except Ruth got to take a ride in the engine for a few miles up the track and back. The reason Ruth did not go was because railroad engineers are very superstitious and very opposed to a female being in the locomotive engine. Since Kathy Renee was only eight the engineer allowed an exception but I was told this would be the only time she would be allowed up in the engine.

Next stop was Deep River where they all got a quick look at where I was as a teenager, then on through Pembroke, Ottawa and Montreal to camp at a small campground near Trois-River. The interesting thing on this stop was that this was an active campground geared for children. Donavan took off to explore the area and make some new friends. In about ten minutes Donavan was found on his way back looking very down trodden and dejected. When queried as to why the long face, his sad comment was, "I can't talk to them and understand them". We had to explain to him that we were in the province of Quebec and here the predominant language spoken and taught was French.

One other incident that came up about this time as we explained we were going to meet their cousins whom they had never seen or met. This was the time in

the US when the integration and civil rights movement was big news in the papers and on the radio. The question on their mind was, are their cousins going to be colored. We reassured them all was well and they would be the same color that they were. Whew we did arrive in Fredericton New Brunswick it was a great surprise to find that Linda, who was close to Kevin's age looked enough alike to be mistaken as twins.

While we were in Fredericton that week end we attended a colorful highland outing. Murray wore his full highland colors, kilts and all. There were a couple of other thing that have stuck in my memory on this trip. First while Betty and I were conversing and leisurely walking through some field, she kept picking all the dandelions. When asked why, I was told she planned to make dandelion wine, something new to me. The other thing I remember was that Betty had found an old spinning wheel on some old farm which she gave to us for a reminder of our trip to the old country.

Time was passing to rapidly as we had the major move to make to California as soon as we got back to Colorado so I don't believe we wasted much time on the return trip.

This was a major undertaking for me to uproot the family and move half way across the country to a new job, new friends, new environment, new everything. We decided to rent or lease the house so we made arrangements with a close friend who was in the rental business to manage this problem. Next I coordinated with the moving company to pack and pick up all our household goods and store them in California until we identified our new residence. With all the utilities off and terminated we were ready.

Once again we were on the move. I decided to take a Northerly rout to California so I headed for Yellowstone National Park where we camped for a couple of days, caught a fish and while it was being cooked in the trailer by Ruth a bear leisurely saunters by on its way, I presume, to the trash dump. The bear apparently had better things on its mind than the fish we were cooking much to our relief.

After departing Yellowstone by the south exit, we traversed the Grand Teton National Park and then west to Idaho Falls and on to Craters of the Moon National Monument where we Camped for a couple of days.

The Grand Tetons were as spectacular as ever with its sharp snow covered peaks and large tree and grass covered valleys where cattle and elk freely roamed. I visited this same area many years later when I was skiing and observed the world had changed to a fresh blanket of white snow.

The pass to Idaho Falls through the Grand Tetons seemed to be unusually steep or it may have seemed that way because I was pulling the trailer. It was a gorgeous drive though, twisting and turning on the climb up and down the other

side. What a spectacular view of nature and what had been created and left from the ice age and subsequent years of natural erosion.

The Craters of the Moon area is a completely different time in the development of our country. Here is found old lava flows. Rolling waves of volcanic rock curling back on itself like an un-kept bed cover. As we roamed over the exposed crust of rock we soon found the open lava tubes which tell of the liquefied rock that poured across the face of this country untold years ago. These tubes were large enough for us to venture inside for short distances. It was amazing to stand in these tubes in a cool 50 or 60 degree temperature while only a few feet above the air was close to 100. The whole area is similar to what we found in Hawaii on the big island years later.

From the Craters of the Moon area we went south through Salt Lake City, Utah and then west past the Great Salt Lake and into Nevada following interstate 80 to Reno, the so-called greatest little city in the west.

Salt Lake City is a striking city, unique in its layout by the original planners. The streets are unusually wide and give the impression of spaciousness. Of central importance in this city is the great Latter Day Saints Cathedral. Truly an impressive building, accessible only to the true believers of the Latter Day Saints (LDS, Mormon) belief. To be successful in business and gainfully employed in this Utah area it is only prudent to be a recognized believer. I myself cannot accept their idea of judgment day and their existence in the next life. Their beliefs expressed in their Book of Mormon and variations from the biblical teachings of Jesus Christ gives me an uneasy feeling. To a Mormon the church has and is the total and unquestionable authority. A true Mormon has to follow the dictates of the church as laid out by their believed prophets, similar to the beliefs within the Catholic church. On the other hand the Mormon belief of saving up supplies and food stuffs against an unpredictable future is a fine philosophy most of us fail to recognize.

The Great Salt Lake area is a spectacle to see. Miles and miles of flat white, almost white, salt which has gradually accumulated over eons of time to some unmeasured depth. It is easy to imagine the speed races that have taken place out here from time to time. In some places where the lake has risen and fallen you can spot low pillars of solid salt. I am told by those who have taken a swim in this lake that you float unusually high and when you exit the lake you are quite gritty and require a long hard scrub in fresh water.

Crossing the Nevada desert area is a surprise in itself. Scrub grass, low small bushes searching desperately for any drop of water. Lots of cactus with innumerable barbs to keep any would be seekers away from their stored up internal moisture. An occasional sand devil sucking up a bit of sand to be deposited in a new location on some lost lizard, retil snake or scorpion. As we drive we make up

imaginary stories of how the pioneers traveled and survived while traversing this desolate part of our country and the excitement of anticipation as the Sierra mountain range finally came into view.

We paused only briefly in Reno long enough to regroup and take a quick look at the maze of lights on all the gambling casinos that exist one after another, on both sides of the street. They all beckoning to the tired traveler to come in and rest while being relieved of any cash to be wagered on one of the thousands of gambling tables.

Our caravan proceeded into the Sierra Mountain range following the Donner Party rout on Interstate 80 into California. Now in place of flat seemingly endless flat desolate almost shrub-less country side we find ourselves surrounded by lush green vegetation and in a dense forest. We climbed over the pass in our comfortable car with our covered wagon securely in tow. I think of how miserable and desperate those Donner party people must have been in attempting to cross this rugged range on horseback in the midst of a snow storm. They too were in search of a new life. We easily made the drive over the twisting paved trail, over the top and down the western side to Sacramento and on to San Jose, our new home for the next several weeks while I started work at Lockheed Missile and Space Corp, and searched for a more permanent residence than a small trailer park camp ground.

Lockheed Missile and Space Co. 1966 -- 1995

A bit of historical background here can add to the understanding of the whys and wherefores. Lockheed Missile and Space Corp. was a spin-off of the Lockheed Aircraft Corp. located in Burbank CA, just off the Burbank Air Terminal. The Lockheed Aircraft Corp had made a solid name for itself-building successful military aircraft and launching them from the Burbank area during WWII along with its super secret "Skunk Works" which specialized in the development of advanced aircraft. Lockheed had an exemplary reputation for their ability to manage and execute military contracts. As the "cold war" evolved in the mid 50's missile development became of national strategic concern. US missile development was being developed on the shoulders of Dr Vaughn Braun, the captured German V2 missile expert. Silo launched, liquid propelled defensive missiles were well along in development however silo stored and launched missiles were known prime targets. Shipboard launched missiles which could be constantly on the move was a much better solution but an obvious better defense solution was a submarine launched platform. The new nuclear powered submarines are capable of staying submerged for an indefinite period of time and could approach the surface only when needed or ordered to.

In this time period the submarine launched missile evolved. Lockheed

became a key working partner in the development and maintenance of the nuclear missile submarines for the US Navy. In 1956 Lockheed, along with the Electric Boat Corp in Groton Con., who build the boats, and Aerojet General Corp. who developed the rocket motors, and later Hercules, joined together to execute this new navy program. Lockheed's special area of concern was to be the missile itself, which included assembly, disassembly, maintenance and servicing hardware and training along with insertion and extraction of the missiles on the boats.

Lockheed participated in the first successful solid propellant launch in mid 1959. This was the Polaris A-1 missile, after 6 failed previous attempts at Cape Canaveral FL. From this there evolved two more Polaris missiles, the A-2 and A-3, all three being two stage solid propellant missiles. After that the next step was the Trident 1 missiles, C3 and then a larger C-4. Lockheed moved its Missile and Space division from Burbank to Sunnyvale CA about 1964 to separate this part of the corporation and have better control over security. Sunnyvale CA is where I joined the operation on July 19, 1966.

By 1966, when I became involved with this missile program, the Polaris A-3 was in the process of being deployed by the navy and the next generation of larger missiles and boats were in the throes of labor pains and birth. At this time the whole program was very hush-hush and very limited information was available for public consumption. All that was known was that there were submarines out there, capable of carrying sixteen missiles roaming the world oceans. The second generation missile boats were much larger, capable of carrying twenty four missiles. The fact that these new missiles were ICBM's, (Inter Continental Ballistic Missile), and carried multiple targetable RB's (Reentry Body), was top secret. Trident 1 C-4 FBM / SLBM, has now all been declassified. An interesting note here is that only after joining Lockheed and this program did I become aware of where some of those nuclear weapons from Rocky Flats were destined to go.

I need to make clear here that I was not directly involved in the design and or function of any of the missiles themselves, rather I was part of the mechanical support section. This involved handling, processing and maintaining all the hundreds of parts and packages that go together to make up the full missile. This also included the RB's and the insertion and extraction of the complete missile on the boats. As an added function there was the training of the sailors in the proper use of all these pieces of support equipment.

In order for this mechanical design organization to operate smoothly and efficiently we were divided into specialty groups.

First there was the systems group. Their function was to define the problem, document the requirements including any special functions limitations and environments involved. This group was the primary interface with the customer, (the Navy). This group was also prime in writing the operating and

maintenance procedures for our specialty hardware.

The second group was the design group. This is where all the creative thinking and problem solving took place. Where the pencil met the paper. Back then there was no such thing as computer aided design. It was a drawing board and drafting machine, T-square operation.

The third group was the test and operation group. To be able to test all the hardware being built for use in the field and on the boats, Lockheed built a special facility called MESSA, (Mechanical Equipment Surface Support Area), where every piece of mechanical support equipment was tested before being delivered to the field. This MESSA facility had a full size launch tube and enclosed work area as existed inside the submarines. In addition to this there was a layout which simulated a four launch tube cluster as would exist on the top outer deck of the boat, one of which was fully functional. This was for both the Polaris and Trident size boats.

The fourth group was a field operations group. This group's primary function was to work with the vendors who were contracted to making the hardware that we had designed and see that it met all the documented requirements. This meant a fair amount of traveling and coordination with the design group and the vendors. They also were responsible for accepting the hardware at the vendor prior to shipment.

In addition to our four major groups we had a special analysis group that constantly performed stress and strength analysis on our designs as they developed and a group of buyers who performed the legal contract letting and monitoring the vendor's financial performance. This included contract expenditures to each of the vendors.

As you can see there was a lot going on and we each needed to know what our part was in order to keep the flow of information moving.

My first assignment at Lockheed involved designing containers for shipping electronic components. This new C3 missile had many new packages which had to be safely shipped and stored, ready for installation or stored as replacement parts. Safety, Size and Weight were always of prime design concerns. Safety – protect the part being shipped. Size – space is at a premium especially for spare parts on the boat. Weight – heavy items are hard to handle especially in confined spaces. Some of these special shipping containers even had to have a shock mounting system.

Before too long I became involved with the hardware needed to handle and insert electronic packages into the equipment section of the missile. This had to be done while the missile was in the launch tube on the boats. This is where the MESSA facility played a key role in developing the needed body support tray and handling tracks and fixtures to hold and position the heavy packages in just the

right location inside the ES (Equipment Section). The body trays supported the sailors while on their backs or sides inside the missile ES while checking or replacing needed components.

There were many interesting and challenging specialty items that had to be designed, tested and exercised before delivery to the customer, in the field.

There was the lifting fixture that interfaced the nose faring (NF). This was a cone shaped item upon which the whole missile would hang when in a vertical position, while being inserted or extracted from a launch tube. Along with this was the so called loading tube which housed and protected the missile while ashore in storage or being shipped. This item interfaced the boat's launch tube to insert or extract a complete missile.

Other items included slings, dollies and special fixtures to handle the disassembled missile for assembly, disassembly, maintenance and general servicing.

Some of the most complicated specialty items were the ones needed to service and maintain the multiple RB's on the front, top end of the missile. Since at this time the RB world was considered top secret, a portable room called a service unit, (SU), was designed and built which was large enough to sit on the deck of the boat and cover four launch tubes. The openings in the floor provided access to two tubes even thou only one missile was allowed to be worked on at a time. Inside the SU, secured to the walls were all the specialty tools and fixtures needed. There was an overhead cranes and tracks to facilitate lifting and moving the heavier items. With this equipment RB could be serviced and exchanged depending on the specified mission without exposure to inquisitive eyes.

A real plus in working for Lockheed was that they continually offered personal development courses that could be taken on your own time at no cost. I took full advantage of this and completed every course available. These courses dealt with personnel management and administration, some twenty six plus courses. In addition to this I became a registered and certified manager from the Institute of Certified Managers from Harrisburg VA. The California State University, at Hayward, was offering night courses at the Lockheed and other local facilities so Ruth and I both completed and accepted BS degrees, majoring in business from CSU.

My personal exposure and responsibilities in each of these groups grew as time went by and I moved more and more into the Management side of the operations. I became supervisor and manager of the design group then the systems and field operation group and then the MESSA test operation a short time before the whole department was relocated to Cape Canaveral FL in 1994 at the request of the navy. The department relocation is a story to be told by itself.

As the C4 and D5 missile programs evolved the US government persuaded

the United Kingdom, (UK) that they needed to purchase and implement our US missiles. The UK developed their own RB's to interface with the US missiles. Their boats were smaller in length so they carried fewer missiles but the needed support equipment was the same. In order to further encourage the UK's participation in the missile program we were required to include UK vendors in the competitive bidding process for the fabrication of our mechanical support equipment. As a result of this directive the UK obtained a number of substantial contracts. We also had a multi axle transporter that was fabricated and delivered out of Italy. In order to implement the program with the minimum amount of confusion and misunderstanding we set up a field office in the UK at Meacham England and a second field rep was located at the UK sub base in Scotland.

As my administrative responsibilities grew it became necessary that I personally interface with the vendors, our customer, the US Navy reps, and the UK reps. This meant I, on occasion, would travel to Washington DC for meetings in Chrystal City, our field office and vendors in the UK and a number of the vendor in the US. When I traveled to the UK on business it only seem appropriate that I should combine this with some vacation time as long as it did not interfere with the job responsibilities. My management had no objection to this so I took full advantage of it at every opportunity. I will talk of some of these trips in another section of this book.

CADAM, (Computer Aided Design And Manufacture), started to come into its own in 1977 and 1978. My first exposure in the serious use of this new system was in the layout and development of the heat insulating tiles for the space shuttle. Lockheed was instrumental in the development of this new remarkable material. Every tile on the shuttle is unique in its shape and thickness. They fit together like a monstrous jigsaw puzzle. The evolution of NC, (Numerical Control), milling machines and other manufacturing machines meshed ideally with the computer aided design system.

At one time I had a sample of this tile, about four inch square and one inch thick. I took it home and out of curiosity I placed a corner, about an inch of it on the kitchen stove to get hot. When it was glowing, red hot, I picked the block up off the stove with my fingers, gripping the block about three inches from the red glow. The area that I was touching was close to room temperature. Very remarkable material.

After 1978, it seemed like no time at all and the big drawing boards and drafting machines disappeared to be replaced by computers, monitor screens and element boxes. In the traditional system the engineer intuitively knew where he wanted to put his points, lines and circles, but with this new system the computer doesn't know where to start or where to go. It took a while to get used to working with a very dumb computer. Over the next several years there were a number of

program improvements, all of which required some cross training for those engineers deep in the design activities. By this time the majority of my activity was in the administrative area.

With the evolution of the computer world, the CADAM design system and the idea of being able to share information electronically created a whole new world of problems as well as an exciting new way of doing business.

Gone were the days of drawing boards, print files and machine shop set-up time. Now information could be stored electronically on disks and moved into the shop to an NC machine by tape, later by disk. Naturally this created a new world of security problems. Fortunately there were special people designated to deal with this far from my area of concern.

The deepest I ever got into creating a program was to set up a system so that each of the engineers responsible for a particular piece of hardware could write up a brief status on his computer and add it to the mutually shared daily activity report. In so doing, I, along with other interested managers and the customer could watch the item's progress and any problem development resolutions. The system worked well even when our department was in Florida and key managers were in Sunnyvale CA.

The Loading tube and the service unit were two of the larger pieces of our support equipment hardware. They were being built in England, so it was necessary that I make periodic visits to the vendors to review their progress and stimulate the mutual enthusiasm of our two countries working together for a common cause. I also made a number of trips to Scotland to review the implementation of the hardware and provide the diplomatic assistance where needed. I found it very interesting that though we both, US and UK, have a common background and speak the same language, English, we hear and interpret things differently. Their material specifications are different. They work to the metric system. They like to have a little nip at lunch time and they drive on the other side of the road. During the time I was over there it seemed as though everyone smoked and in meetings the air was never clear. It was almost like working in a fog.

On trips to the UK, I would normally spend two weeks visiting the vendors to taking care of the company business and then take a two week vacation to visit that part of the world. On such occasions Ruth would fly to the UK and we would meet for a planned vacation. We made several trips exploring the historical parts of England, particularly the London area.

I climbed to the top of St Paul's Cathedral while Ruth patiently waited and explored the alcoves of the lower floor level. We walked the impressive spaces of Westminster Abbey. We heard and marveled at the history while visiting the Tower of London. We stayed at the historic Royal Horse Guard Hotel on Whitehall Ct. in

the mornings you were usually awakened by the sound of the Royal Horse Guards parading out on horseback to their daily assignments. We visited as many of the historical and famous places as we had time for. Trafalgar Square, the National Museums, Saint James Park, Buckingham Palace, the war rooms that were so critical in the defense of the free world during WW II. We became quite familiar with the unique subway underground system where so many of the Londoners spent their nights during the WW II bombings.

When it was necessary to fly in to the UK, I was always allotted a car so my travels were by no means limited to the London area. There was a contractor in the 00000Chatham area east of London. Lockheed had a field office in Melksham, west of London. Other contractors were located in the Birmingham and Chester areas. On a few occasions it was necessary for me to fly in to Glasgow Scotland to attend meetings at the UK submarine base near Inverary. On these occasions I was booked into Rosley Hall, a very old estate converted into a hotel outside Helensburgh. This is where I got my first exposure to driving on the left side of the road. Truly a hair raising education on the first go around. When I made a right hand turn coming out of the Glasgow airport, I found myself almost face to face with an oncoming car. I quickly dove into an open parking space to recover and get my thinking adjusted. When in the UK, think left – think left. Needless to say at every opportunity I explored the UK country side, castles, historic sites and cities.

The missile loading tube was being built by a company in Northern Ireland just outside the city of Belfast. This was the 1985 to 1987 time period when there was a lot of bad feelings between Great Britain (England) and Ireland and the Irish Liberation Army (ILA), was making a lot of people nervous. It was a very strange feeling to drive through a city with barb wire stretched across roads and along roof tops and observing armed soldiers patrolling on both sides of the street. On top of this, the civilian population, including mothers pushing baby carriages calmly going about their business. I was warned to never leave the car parked unattended because it would be assumed to be a planted bomb and the army was instructed to blow up any suspicious looking vehicles.

While in Ireland I took every opportunity to travel this beautiful emerald isle. Its lush green rolling country side is well worth any trip. The fields are divided by endless stone wall fences, the handy work of generations of hard working farmers. There is the very large basalt crystal formation in the north east corner of Northern Ireland which stretches under the sea on over to Scotland. Ireland has a number of interesting castle ruins to explore, one in particular along the north shore that, as the story goes, had a kitchen collapse and fell into the sea during some big festival, which brought on the demise of this structure. The Irish people are hard working, party loving and always ready for that tall pint of fresh Guinness beer.

There are so many historical and interesting places to see and visit one can spend a lifetime exploring England, Scotland and Wales alone. Some of the places I visited and explored was the walled city of York, Hadrian's Wall, the city of Edinburgh and Edinburgh Castle. I saw the famous Loch (lake) Lomond and Loch Ness, (did not see Nessie), along with so many beautiful lakes throughout the Scotland country side. One of the striking things about Scotland is the lack of trees and the many hills that are plowed up and down the slope rather than following the ground contour in order to allow the water to run off instead of trying to hold it.

In Wales there is Cardiff Castle and east of there the old shipyards of Bristol. The Roman Baths at Bath and historic Stonehenge are a must to see. The city of London has unending places with history. The great Gothic Cathedrals throughout the country like Westminster Abbey in London are always striking to visit. There are many things that can be dated back beyond the Roman conquests.

While working for Lockheed during the 1980 – 1990 period Ruth and I were able to combine some great vacation trips to the European part of the world.

In 1985 I was scheduled to make another trip to the UK so Ruth and I scheduled a land and sea trip vacation in the Mediterranean. As events evolved that summer terrorists hijacked a ship called the Achille Lauro, captured a disabled American citizen and dispatched him overboard. The US government immediately responded by encouraging US citizens to cancel their travel in the Mediterranean area. Many did just that but Ruth and I did not. Because we pressed on, everywhere we stayed, our accommodations on shipboard and hotels, were upgraded because of the shortage of tourists. We flew from London to Athens and boarded our ship bound for Alexandria with a brief stop at Crete. A bus delivered us to our hotel in Cairo not too far from the Sphinx and Great Pyramids. We had that evening and the next day before again boarding our ship at Port Said. The Sphinx and Pyramids are truly spectacular but the city was crowded with people in a hurry to get somewhere with their overloaded animal drawn carts. Add to this hundreds of noisy vehicles constantly blowing their horns and innumerable people pushing and shoving while loudly voicing their objections. The city in general was dusty and drab, I would suspect this is from the sand blowing in from the nearby deserts.

Next stop was Ashdod Israel and a day long trip to Jerusalem. This included a directed tour of all the major Christian historical points of interest and the crowded market place. I really think the wailing wall, which is the remains of Solomon's temple, is held together with all the prayer notes stuffed in the chinks. An added stop was a quick look at the archaeological digging constantly going on beneath various parts of the city. The most striking thing about Jerusalem is how clean it is. Most of the structures are clean and painted white or constructed using white rock. The streets though crowded with people, many with beards and various religious attire, for the most part are considerate, courteous and helpful.

Two days were spent with a stop at the Island of Patmos where we visited the cave where the disciple John spent his last days and then on to Kusadasi and Ephesus in Turkey to see where Christianity had spread early in the first century after the death of Christ

The last stop in our sea-land excursion was three days in Athens Greece and the surrounding historical area before flying back to London and on to California. In the Athens we were provided with guided tours of the historical Acropolis, the grounds where the original Olympian games were played and the colorful changing of the guards in their ornate uniforms which included skirts knee high white socks and tasseled shoes. The only disturbing event that took place on this trip was that some disgruntled group blew up a car outside our hotel while we were sleeping one night.

In 1987 Ruth and I booked a bus tour trip with Cosmose Travel Co. called Wonders of Europe, which started in London. This tour took us to Brussels in Belgium, through Luxembourg to Lake Lucerne in Switzerland. Next, on to Liechtenstein, by way of the Arlberg Tunnel to the Innsbruck area of Austria. The next several days were spent exploring the Venice area, Assisi, Rome and Florence areas of Italy. Our return was by way of Pisa and the French Riviera, on to the Lyon area and Paris France. After Paris it was back to Calais and London for our flight home. This was a great trip. It is best to be done while still young because you had to be up early and ready to go almost every morning. On this trip we quickly learned what a continental breakfast was, very strong black coffee, a roll so hard you could use it to breakdown a door and a sweet roll

Our third and most daring trip, again with Cosmose, was I believe in 1989 just before the notorious Berlin wall came down. The cold war between the USSR and USA was cooling off and Russia was interested in developing tourism. I had to get special permission from the Lockheed management because I was involved in the navy ballistic missile contract and debriefed upon my return. This trip took us by way of Frankfurt and Berlin Germany. We looked over the infamous Berlin wall to observe the no-man zone and the guard posts a hundred yards or so away. At that time the famous Brandenburg Gate was still in place. Next we moved on out of Germany and into Poland for a stop in Warsaw. Here we toured the ghetto where the Jews were isolated during the German occupation of WWII and the many resistance memorials. From Warsaw we rolled on to Brest, Minsk, Smolensk and into Moscow. One of the interesting things was that when we crossed the border into Russia, we were provided with a Russian escort who stayed with us day and night while we were in the country. We were told what we could and could not photograph. Each day the escort had to call Moscow to report our location and find out where we were to be billeted that night. We had no contact with the outside world. The roads between cities at that time were only two lane paved roads. Not

the highways we are accustomed to. There were long distances between towns with guard towers strategically placed along the way. The rest stops were few and far between and when there was one it was obvious that it had not been serviced in many months, if ever, so “bush stops” became the thing to do. Men to one side of the road and ladies to the other. Fortunately there were enough trees and bushes to provide the required modesty. One of the hotels we stopped at was in the process of being renovated and our bus arrived an hour or so ahead of a French tour. This hotel room was so small the rooms only had two single beds, in line along the wall. In the bathroom you had to slip under the wall heater to sit on the bowl and when you turned on the shower the whole room took a bath. We could not complain too much because the French tour had to sleep on the bus.

In Moscow we were assigned to the Cosmos Hotel, very modern and a big change from the places we stopped at on the way into the capital. There were people in the hotel from Cuba and another group who appeared to be Chinese. The hotel staff had obviously been instructed to keep our groups separated at all times. We were escorted around to see all the important impressive spots, the walled historical Kremlin with the monstrous bronze bell sitting just inside its wall, Lenin's Tomb just outside the Kremlin wall to one side of the massive Red Square. At one end of Red Square stands the famous onion roofed St Basil's Cathedral, empty and unused. Just off Red Square was their big three story shopping center built in the shape of a hollow rectangle. In the center of this rectangle stood a towering guard post to watch the shoppers. The big push was to sell fur coats, while we were there. We visited the famed underground Metro station and saw a play at the Bolshoi Theater and many other interesting and historical points of interest.

From Moscow our tour took us to Novgorod and then on to St. Petersburg to see some of the historical sites in this 300 year old city. The Hermitage Museum in the Winter Palace complex and the Pavlovsk Palace are a must see for any visitor in this area. This city withstood a 900 day siege by the German army in WWII, taking a great deal of destruction and very high losses of life before the German forces had to withdraw. On the week end our tour was in this city there was a big navy day and the Russian fleet was sitting in the middle of the city. My video camera was busy recording the fleet as we rolled by.

On this trip I had a Panasonic VHS video camera with me and I made full use of it at every opportunity. I have lost track of those large cassettes over the years but if they ever show up they would be very interesting to revive. As an added note, most of the places we stopped at, the local people were extremely friendly, still struggling to make a good life for themselves, but eager to show us their Hero City memorials to those who suffered in WWII. Our exit from Russia into Finland felt like we had just escaped from a controlled cloistered world into freedom. On to

Helsinki.

In Helsinki at this time Dr. Evelyn Hartman (Dad's third wife) and Dr. Ereki (something), (Evelyn's husband after Dad's passing), were in Helsinki on their vacation. To understand this I need to provide a bit of background. Evelyn and Ereki were both of Finnish decent. Evelyn was in Finland during WWII and her family had lost their property when Russia confiscated part of Finland during WWII. Ereki's brother was an ambassador, I believe to the US, and had his home in Helsinki. Ruth and I had accepted an invitation to stay with them at the ambassador's residence when we completed our trip through Russia.

Ruth and I spent the next two days absorbing the Finnish culture and enjoying the sights of Helsinki. What a striking change in cultures. In Finland people were all well dressed and up-beat. They had things to do and places to go. At one of the diners I got my first taste of reindeer and lingonberry, a berry similar to cranberry grown in northern Finland. From Helsinki we took an overnight ferry to Copenhagen and our flight home.

In 1991 for some reason the US Air Force who controls the activity at Cape Canaveral (or Cape Kennedy) got it into their mind to take over the US Navy's area at the Cape because the Navy's activity was slowing down with the deployment of the submarines to Charleston SC and Kings Bay GA. To counter this the Navy pressured Lockheed to move some of their missile activity to the cape in order to strengthen the Navy's position and stay. After several months of negotiation the high up management decided that the mechanical support group would be the least disruptive organization to fill the Navy's request.

At that time I was managing the MESSA testing operation and there was a need for someone to go to Florida and coordinate the relocation of our operation and personnel. I had made several trips to the Cape Canaveral facility as well as Kings Bay GA so I was quite familiar with the area. Also because I had supervised each of the engineering groups over the years I was familiar with the needs of the operations that would be moving to Florida.

The next several months involved careful planning and identifying specifically what operations were to be relocated and when their move would take place. Not all of our personnel were willing to make the move so their reassignments had to be identified, some would retire and others would move into other support organizations. Once it was clear who, when and what was involved in the move the where part of this move needed to be resolved in Florida. This is where my physical move had to take place so as 1992 rolled to a close I was in the midst of relocating to Florida.

Once on site I proceeded to coordinate the layout and office space needed for each of the design groups, their desks, telephones, computers and files etc. Naturally the office space for the relocating managers was of prime importance. I

had to play the political game with the base manager to get the moving personnel and managers in to their new locations without upsetting the rice bowls of the existing personnel and managers. The electrical group was successfully integrated as they evolved into the computer integration and maintenance operation since we now would maintain a full time, online interface with the computers in Sunnyvale California while operating in Florida. The mechanical design group operated independently while tied to Sunnyvale for the final stress analysis verification. The systems group essentially stayed in Sunnyvale because they had to be hand in hand with the program office and the Navy office in Sunnyvale. The MESSA test facility in Sunnyvale was to be eventually shut down and dismantled but the hardware that was still in the fabrication pipeline had to be fully tested before being released to the Navy. This meant a limited test facility had to be set up by salvaging the key components from MESSA and relocating it in a special building at the Cape.

Within four months of my arrival the first of the relocating people and equipment started to show up. This continued over the next six months as the scheduled move was executed. Within the first year we were well established and operating successfully in our new location. We were even able to hire new people to fill the openings that happened because of the move.

Once the move was completed I again took over the mechanical design group and was successful in filling all the personnel shortages in the department.

One of the young engineers I was able to bring into my design group shortly after this big move was John Putman. I have to mention this young man because he was in inspiration in a special way to our whole group. He was a young man within a year of my Kevin's age. He was a top notch creative, clear thinking contributing engineer. It was always a pleasure to work with him. He had a wife and two small boys. He had a fine house and spent all his spare time with his family, doing family things, working and playing together. One day in late 1993 he came into my office and informed me he had been diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease. We had a serious discussion of his condition and what his prospects were. He made it clear he had no intentions of slowing down and wanted to continue working as long as possible. His attitude and resolve continued as long as his life lasted. He continued for about another year before his condition forced him to take a retirement under sick leave conditions. Before long he was unable to get around much but he had access to his computer and he was able to continue communicating with all of us, which he did regularly with his letters he dubbed "Pilgrim's Progress". In these letters he told us of his condition, what he was able to do and not able to do. How he looked forward to each day and the blessings he was given and how he was given time to write about his belief in our Creator God and his expectations of a new existence with the closing of this life. He wrote extensively about his life and experiences so that his children would be able to

know more of him when they reached maturity. They were only five to eight at that time. He died a year and a half after I retired.

The year 1995 came rolling along and by June that year I would be sixty two and a half and could qualify for an early social security retirement and I also had enough time working for Lockheed to qualify for a Lockheed retirement.

In addition to this Lockheed Missile

and Space Co was about to be combined with the Martin Aircraft Co under the new Lockheed Martin Corporation banner. There were strong indications that with the merger the Lockheed employees would be absorbed into the Martin Co employee benefits package and lose some of their accrued sick leave and retirement. All this was tolerable and understandable but the event that convinced me that it was time for me to go was when a new manager was selected and it turned out to be the young engineer I had hired and trained. That was the clincher. The younger generation was moving into place as it should be.

In June of 1995 I submitted my retirement notice and was given a memorable retirement party at the Lobster Shanty in Coco Beach. My time had passed and it was time for the next generation to spread their wings. Did I have any regrets? Perhaps a few but I always tried to lead by example, be patient and listen to others opinions and concerns. Try to collect all the facts before making a final decision or judgment. I was told I was a good supervisor and manager but how well those that I trained while under my wing are able to solve their challenges in the future will be the proof of the budding.

Family Life 1966 to 1999

At this point I will pick up where I left off as it relates to our family. I have to talk in terms of our, because everything that is happening at this point in my life is built around family, all five of us and don't forget the dog.

Our caravan arrived safely to San Jose CA in July 1966 and that year California was in full bloom. The weather was absolutely ideal. Not too hot and not too cold. We settled into a small trailer park in south central part of the city which had a park nearby with a small stream that kept the underbrush well watered. While I went to work our children, Kevin, Renee and Donavon took full advantage of exploring the park and local surroundings.

Within a few days our first crises arose. Kevin had found what exposure to poison oak can do to an explorer. Within a matter of hours his face swelled to a point where his eyes were narrow slits and he looked more Oriental than Caucasian. Needless to say we got our introduction to the emergency ward at the

San Jose General Hospital.

After a week or two of strenuous driving and looking we found an apartment large enough to accept our family with a dog at 380 Northlake Drive, the Northlake Ambassador Apartments. We rented the second floor corner three bedroom apartment that overlooked a cherry orchard on the east side and a walnut orchard on the south side. Because there was the orchard next door we had a place to safely park the trailer and have easy access to it when we needed it.

This apartment became our home for the next twenty two months. All the children were in school and we settled in to our family routine. De Anza Junior College was not very far away and in those days the cost of College was next to nothing so while the children were at their school Ruth started taking courses in art and psychology. Kevin was into scouting so I was also involved in the scouting program.

Somewhere in this time period I acquired a little black two door Renault auto. It was a great little car but it needed a motor overhaul. Naturally being the tight wad that I was I stripped the motor down and resleeved the cylinders in the outside carport much to the dismay of our neighbors.

In this apartment complex there was the family section with children and the adult section with no children. It was intended to allow those with no children to have some peace and quiet. Naturally this didn't always happen.

Most of the families in our end of the complex had children about the age of ours so there was no shortage of children's activities. As an example, one day I was on a business trip to San Diego to see about some hardware being made down there and Ruth was watching over the three very active children. For some reason a group of the children decided it would be fun to play in the laundry room. The washers and dryers made an ideal stage to demonstrate ones dancing talents. Renee was one of the enthusiastic participants. Some of these machines had glass top windows to provide visual access inside. As she danced she broke through one of the tops. Needless to say there was a messy leg and an emergency trip to the hospital. As a result all children were banned from the laundry room.

The family next door had a son Kevin's age so they were frequently playing together in the orchard out back. All went well until one day there was a mud clod bombardment between the children's fortifications and some of the children suffered bodily injuries. Years later I ran into this boy from next door. He had become a lumber jack and suffered a disabling injury which put him permanently in a wheel chair.

This place had a very nice swimming pool so many hours were spent there with the children under strict adult supervision.

As is always the case in apartments renting, the rent never seems to stay put and the owner feels justified in increasing the rent at every opportunity. Over the

period of our stay at Northlake, the rent was increased several times.

Finally in the summer of 1968 I had had enough and with the notice of a new rent increase I announced it was time to move. We put all our unessential clothing and furniture in storage and moved into our 15 foot trailer and relocated to the Aloha Trailer & RV Park at 915 E. El Camino Real, Sunnyvale, CA.

Right over the back fence from this trailer park was the Sunken Gardens Golf Course. On more than one occasion I understand the boys would slip through the fence to collect golf balls and sometimes slip an unsuspecting golfer's ball into the cup to watch their reaction upon them thinking they had made a hole in one.

For the next three months we haunted the local communities for a house we could afford. This turned out to be a modest place at 2039 Larson Place in Santa Clara, at the corner of Larsen Place and Larsen Court.

This place had a large fenced back yard which I easily modified to accommodate the trailer and still keep plenty of play area. We now had three bedrooms, bathroom, front room or family room, small kitchen and small dining area. Not the most ideal but it was adequate and served us well for the next two years.

Because the kitchen was so small I give it a feeling of space by painting a French street scene, a picture which I found in some book, on the wall in perspective. It proved to be quite effective.

Somewhere in this time period we adopted another police dog to become part of the family. I don't remember how this exactly came about but she acquired the name of Princess and proved to be a gentle, child loving, family guard dog and survived with us for many years. She was well trained and must have added a bit of security for Ruth.

Princess ruled the back yard and always checked out any visitors at the front door. During our time at Larson Place we acquired a rabbit. This was a project Renee was overseeing with great enthusiasm. We were all aware of her practice of letting her big white rabbit out in the back yard to munch on miscellaneous food and to get its exercise and during this period princess was restricted to the garage or house. All went well for a while until someone slipped up and princess was found in the back yard alone with the white rabbit. Needless to say the rabbit did not survive for long. This was a traumatic and tearful evening when I was presented with the remains of a rabbit leg bone for dinner

There was the Remillard family at the end of the end of Larsen Ct where Renee seemed to spend a lot of time. A nice enough family but they had so many children they lacked the family supervision that we felt was needed. As a result the children ran wild and had a negative influence on our family.

Somewhere in this period I remember stories of Renee taking changes of cloths with her to school. Outfits that she felt were more the style than the outfit

mother Ruth insisted, she wear. I don't think I really ever got the full story.

As I recall I was still heavily involved in Boy Scouting with both Kevin and Donavon. Donavon was not real interested in Boy Scouts so I spent extra time with him in Y-Indian Guides as well. We made Indian Brest Plates of small tubes of macaroni which we decorated with bright colors of poster paint.

Ruth was never really content with this place partly because of the rough neighborhood and constant feeling that something was about to explode. Nothing you could really identify, but the feeling was just there.

By August of 1970 we decided we needed to find another place in a quieter and more stable neighborhood. To do this we needed to consolidate our capitol. To do this we decided to sell our house we still had being rented in Arvada CO and while this was being arranged the opportunity to manage a set of apartments popped up which would give us some additional reserve which I jumped on. The owner of these apartments was the same owner of the Northlake Apartment Complex we had left two years earlier. I took care of the maintenance while Ruth took care of the rent and rent collection.

We moved into the manager's apartment at 486 Doyle Rd, San Jose, CA. with three children and a very large police dog. I believe we must have done a pretty good job because seventeen months later the owner of this rental property offered us the job of managing the Northlake Ambassador Apartments, which we accepted in November of 1971.

The children were all in school close at hand and doing well. Each school night we struggled to complete the homework on time as all parents with school age children go through.

Most of the time princess, the police dog proved to be a real asset in our rental responsibilities. She not only provided our house with security but she had a quieting effect on tenants who were having a loud domestic problem and the manager was called upon to quiet things down. On such occasions I would take princess on a short leash and inquire at the renter's front door as to what the problem was. Amazing how quickly problems went away. We learned early on that princess had to know what was going on outside our front door at all times. We once made the mistake of having the curtains on the front window tightly closed thinking we needed to have total privacy. Princess efficiently removed the curtains so she could periodically check what was going on out front. Once we replaced the curtains and always left an observation area we never had another problem.

Between November 1971 and July 1972 we took on the job as managers of the Northlake Ambassador Apartments. Seems kind of ironic that we should end up as manager of the this apartment complex after leaving there because I was so critical.

By July of 1972 we had consolidated our finances and with the closure of

the sale of the house in Colorado, things all came together. We found the house that met all our needs in a great neighborhood, close to schools and a yard large enough to accommodate the trailer.

July of 1972 we moved into our new house at the corner of Blaney and La Mar. 1991 La Mar Drive, Cupertino, CA would be our address until my job at Lockheed required me to move to Florida in 1992. Life was good. I was establishing a good reputation at work and moving from one challenge to the next with great success. The family happy, healthy and growing in wisdom and stature. We proceeded to establish ourselves in this Cupertino community.

The house itself was a three bedroom, two bath unit with double garage and a totally separate in-law apartment on the end with its own front and back entrance. The yard was fully fenced with a below ground, elliptical pool deep enough in one end for diving. The whole yard was well manicured and laid out with flower beds, well placed trees and a large finished patio for outside living. Only a few things would need to be fixed, changed and modified to complete the house that would meet our needs.

This house, being on the corner, gave us easy access to the back yard so one of the first things I did was to create a gate in the Blaney Street fence so I could tuck our sturdy little trailer away when not in use where it stayed until it was replaced with a thirty foot class A motor home and that is a whole new story.

The pool was not in the best shape when we moved in. It was constructed with vertical cement wall sides and a sand bottom which had a water depth of three feet at one end and sloped to nine feet at the deep end. This made it possible to have a spring diving board and it wasn't long before a slide appeared and was put into operation. The walls and bottom had a heavy plastic liner which matched the shape of the pool cavity. The problem I had was that there was a tear in the plastic on one wall about a foot long and someone had been using the wall for pellet gun target practice which added many little holes in the liner.

Somewhere I found a piece of matching plastic so by lowering the water level I was able to glue a patch over the long tear in the liner wall. The next step was to do a lot of snorkeling to find all the remaining pin holes and glue a patch over each of them. This completed we were back in operation which surprisingly lasted for as long as we had the house. Part of the long life of the plastic liner I believe was because I always kept the exposed portion of the plastic liner which was above the water line covered with plastic tile and good coat of latex paint.

The pool was originally heated by a gas fired heater. This worked well but as time went on, solar heating became more popular and the cost of natural gas was never really inexpensive so I started working on my own version of solar heating. My first try was using black plastic pipe laid on the back roof of the house. This worked well but the house roof was sloping in the wrong direction to become

really efficient. My next step was to build a roof in the back yard sloping at the best angle to expose any heating panels to direct sun light. I then built some hot boxes, about four feet by eight feet with a glass front panel and black pipe running back and forth inside. This worked well and was in service until I was able to replace them with commercial heating panels some years later. This roof also provided some additional shaded area by the pool and storage for misc pipe and pool tools.

Even though the children's ages were now twelve to fifteen and could all swim well, the next modification I made was to add a fence with a locked gate which ran between the house and the back fence to isolate the pool from the patio. This allowed children to play in the back yard and not have to worry about them getting to the pool without supervision. I also added a small fence with locked gate at the back door of the in-law apartment.

When we first took possession of the house the boys, Kevin and Donavon, had the great idea of having the in-law section of the house to themselves. It was a great idea but I quickly changed that by making one of the three bedrooms in the house into my study and opening a doorway into what was the kitchen area of the in-law apartment. This gave us full access to all areas of the house and the previous in-law apartment. With a bit of additional internal modification and a wall addition the boys each had their own private room along with a central work or study area in what was the in-law apartment. Renee already had identified her private room just down the hall from the master bedroom.

Over the next twenty years I was still involved in scouting with Kevin and Donavon. Renee branched out into girl's bobby sox and of course there was lots of after school activities to deal with. Ruth went back to school studying art and psychology and ultimately ended up in accounting working also for Lockheed.

I have to talk a bit about Renee and the bobby sox experiences. The team was called the red sox, not an unusual name but the players I believe were exceptional. I became one of the coaches along with a lady, I think Mrs. Hansen, who's daughter was a great pitcher. Renee developed a great throwing arm with great accuracy. For practice we sometimes would throw balls to each other increasing in speed and force to see which would be the first to miss or fumble the catch. It was a great day when the red sox won the league championship.

My involvement with the boy scouts included at least two occasions where I was involved with the scout camp at camp High Sierra, high in the Sierra Nevada mountain range east of Sacramento. One time we made kayaks and made a 50 mile trip down one of the rivers in California. On another occasion I led the troop on a 50 mile hike through Death Valley in California. We were well supported with other fathers from the troop, keeping us supplied with essential water. We traveled mostly at night under a full moon to avoid the scorching daytime sun. My scouting

pretty much ended when Kevin went on into the Sea Scouts in about 1975.

Over the next several years the family matured and expanded as families do. The children were testing their independence and broadening their interests.

With the expanding interests outside the family, there came a need for alternate transportation. A number of different vehicles came and went. There was the pumpkin colored car that had been a San Jose paper delivery vehicle and a Triumph convertible which had a clutch problem which kept us busy on the repair in the back yard. Then there was the smoking diesel Cadillac that would belch out large quantities of black smoke as we climbed the hills between San Jose and Santa Cruz, cause people to hold their nose when we were being passed. One of the more interesting stories goes with the Austin Heley we brought back from Colorado one summer.

The Austin Heley was a little maroon convertible which Glen Kittinger, (brother in law), had sitting in his salvage yard. That summer we had made a visit to our family and old friends in Denver and Pueblo. The temptation was too good to pass up. It had an all aluminum body, wire spoke wheels with knock-off hubs. The motor was in good shape and ran great with dual carburetors. We of course were traveling with our 15 foot teardrop trailer so someone had to drive this little jewel while I drove the car pulling the trailer. All went well as we crossed the continental divide in the mountains east of Durango and started our escape from the Rockies, that is until I applied the brakes to reduce our decent speed. You can imagine the knot in the pit of my stomach and the momentary feeling of panic. I quickly shifted into a lower gear and applied the emergency brake and the electric brakes on the trailer. The emergency maneuvers held and worked well so I was able to move safely off the highway at the next cut-out. We were 50 or more miles from any town and it would be all down-hill until we cleared the mountains. After assessing the options our caravan cautiously proceeded down the mountain to the nearest town using the electric trailer brakes and down shifting to control our decent speed. Here we had the brakes repaired on the car. From there we made it home without further incident.

In about 1975 there were three managers at Lockheed, one of whom was my boss, who were contemplating buying a getaway trailer retreat for short vacations in Capitola CA. I heard they were looking for a fourth to invest in this venture so I proposed that they let me be the fourth investor. The investment was a large trailer, which expanded its full length, which today we would call a double wide. It was fully furnished, had two bedrooms, bath, kitchen and front living room. It sat on the end lot of a well established trailer park at the top of the hill from downtown Capitola. To add to this it had a full unobstructed view of the Capitola harbor which could never be blocked because the RR tracks ran right past the yard and beyond that was the main road. The project was finalized and I

became the project scheduler. Each year I published a yearly calendar which showed who got what week each month. Exchanges and combinations of weeks were made at the designee's discretion. We had only a few ground rules which worked out well. The main rule was, always leave the place in the condition you want to find it in when you arrive. The system worked out well and I have many fond memories of events that took place at this little get-away.

When we first acquired this property all the families gathered to build a large patio deck off the living room. I drew up the plans and got them approved by the trailer park, city and co-owners and together we built a deck which has lasted for many years. Two of the partners were electronically oriented while my manager and I were mechanically oriented. It was interesting to observe how inapt the two non-mechanical partners were at building something and even pounding a nail.

Every year the town had a Begonia festival several of which we attended. There were many great local restaurants. One year we had a railroad derailment and for a few days we had several box cars leisurely occupying part of our yard. This place was within commuting distance of work so on a few occasions we would stay there and carpool to work in Sunnyvale. Capitola was a great little beach community not overrun by tourists right next to Santa Cruz

This little investment proved to be a wonderful relief from the hum drum of every day work and family life. It was a way for the family to have a change of pace and a special time at the beach. We kept our share of this investment and used it well until we made the move to Florida. The partnership gradually changed over the years. One week was combined into two or purchased by another partner. My manager was killed in a commuter plane crash returning from Vandenberg Air Force Base, CA, which I missed because he got the last available seat on the flight. A dentist from Merced CA finally ended up with full ownership of this place by 1992.

Time races on and events quickly happen as the family matures and the family tree expands its branches further..

Renee went to work at our dentist's office which develops into a lifetime profession for her as a dental assistant and later expanding to become a dental hygienist. She marries her high school boy friend, Jerry Mahan, and together they start their own family with a set of twins, Danielle and Charise, born while Ruth and I were on a Caribbean cruise. Jerry had a going gardening and lawn maintenance business but unfortunately he became involved with drugs and paid the ultimate price, being killed in a drug deal gone bad, sometime after Renee had divorced him. Renee's struggle soon took on a much brighter note after she meet and marries one, Dan McAllister, a Christian God fearing man who was a parts manager for one of the local auto dealers. Dan later branches out on his own to develop his own successful business. This union soon produces two more fine

girls, Christina and Chelsie McAllister. With the adoption of Danielle and Charise by Dan, the family was complete and secure in the McAllister clan. I have to commend Renee for taking on the challenge of home schooling all these girls during their grade school years. Renee has done well. I am exceedingly proud of this family.

To make spending money during their teen years both Kevin and Donavon, in their turn, went to work at the local Kentucky Fried Chicken. As far as I can tell this institution is no longer one of their favorite eating places.

Kevin, now being at that independent age, decides to marry a young lady named Barbara Stone, to whom he had taken a fancy while in the sea scouts. Since fire fighting was his long time interest he decided he could get the required training and still be able to support his new little family by joining the navy. To quickly it was off to Lakehurst NJ for training and then active assignment to the carrier Enterprise. This union produced two fine girls Jennifer and Carrie. As time would have it, separation does not always make the heart grow fonder and by the time Kevin's tour of duty was complete a break-up of this union was inevitable. After some stressful single time Ruth and I were overjoyed to hear that Kevin had finally found the ideal match. With great approval we welcomed Melissa Douglas into the Park family. We had every confidence that this union was solid.

Donavon was the last to leave the nest and before long he was seriously entertaining a young lady named Gail, of Canadian extraction. Her last name I am sorry to say I don't remember but it suffices to say this union did not last long and fortunately there were no offspring to complicate things when the break-up finally occurred. Donavon's studies at first involved real-estate and then expanded into radiation treatment of cancer patients working with doctors that specialize in cancer treatment. Before long Donavon became involved with another young lady by the name of Shellie. She, being also involved in the cancer treatment field, seemed like a good match. This union has produced two fine young boys, Christopher and Jonathan so this line of the Park family is assured.

Ruth and I could not be prouder of our mature and responsible offspring contributing to society each in their own special way. Each will have their own life story to tell in due time.

With the house empty of children Ruth and I pressed on in our next phase of life, work, travel and grandchildren.

Over the next several years Ruth and I made a number of trips to Hawaii and the Caribbean along with frequent visits with the grand children and our vacation trips to Europe that I combined with my work responsibilities. It is strange how as you get older, you like to travel in more comfort so this brings me to my next story of how we moved into the class A motor homes.

One of the things a government contractor must always be guarding against

is any indication of dealing with a private sub-contractor and accepting anything that might look like a gratuity. As it turned out, one of our subcontractors had a 28 foot class A Revcon motor home which he loaned to one of our systems engineers to use on his vacation. When the word got around of this event the engineer was severely reprimanded and almost lost his job.

Revcon was considered a top of the line unit. It had all the latest conveniences, looked great with its smooth, aerodynamic contour. It had a front wheel drive with the largest Oldsmobile motor available. It was not the newest model but it was running well and providing good service.

Shortly after this loaning incident the contractor decided to sell this unit and move on to something newer and bigger and this is where I indirectly came into the picture. One of my engineers, named George, decided he would buy this Revcon for his use which he did in all innocence. Needless to say, Lockheed management went up in arms, suspecting some sort of payoff or bribe and my engineer was suspended pending being fired. Good engineers are hard to come by so I had George pull together all the sales papers and documents to show that he paid what was the fair market value and I went to the president of Lockheed and pleaded his case. I was successful and George stayed with me and followed me into retirement years later.

A year or so after this incident George decided he wanted to move on into a larger rig and offered me the opportunity to move from our old fifteen foot Terry trailer into this notorious 28 foot rolling home. Needless to say, I accepted even though this rig was an older model and had a questionable past

For the next several years we rolled around the western part of the country in comfort. We stayed at many interesting campgrounds and parks in California such as Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks and on into southern California. Highway 1 up the California coast exploring historical missions and a stop at Hearst Castle is always a good trip. We attended a number of Good Sam RV Rallies and observed how the rest of the RV world played which stimulated our interests even further.

The strange thing about this coach was that it had developed its own personality and preference as to who was using it. When Ruth and I were on the road all went well, but when Kevin would borrow it, the coach would object by starting an electrical fire. It was good to have a fireman on board. The coach apparently had had several attempts at fixing some electrical problem in the past and all was not as it should be. There were a number of wires under the bonnet that wandered off into space, not connected to anything.

Because we now had an RV with its own holding tanks and it was not always possible to empty the tanks before returning home from an excursion, it became obvious some changes had to be made. I located the drain line under the

house and added a drain line that extended out to the RV parking area. To get the proper drainage slope I had to add about a foot of dirt to the parking area.

As with most RV's it was not long before this coach was replaced with a new and bigger unit. This new unit was a 30 foot Flair, powered with a large eight cylinder gas engine. With this new unit we ventured much farther afield. We crossed the US a couple of times visiting many tourist and historical parts, even went down to the Florida Keys. We usually crossed the US by the southern route stopping to visit friends and relatives in Los Angeles, Denver and Pueblo areas.

With most gas powered motor homes the engine is in the front which makes for a lot of heat and noise while driving. We never got the hand signing method of communication perfected. After a number of trips to vacation spots rallies and campgrounds around the US and Canada we started looking for our next unit. Strange how each change gets bigger and more spacious.

Our next unit became a 30 foot diesel powered Safari. Safari coaches are noted for having a hand painted scene on the back. It could be an animal such as a lion or leopard. Ours was an African scene with many animals parading across the Serengeti. This unit was made in Oregon so after we took position of this unit it was not long before we ventured through the northern parts of California by way of highway one, the coastal road through the massive red woods, then on into Oregon and Washington state. Ruth's brother had been transferred to the Hanford nuclear plant so we visited them before their return to Thousand Oaks CA in retirement. Our return trip took us through central Oregon along the Cascade mountain range where we spent some time in Crater Lake National Park.

By the 1980's Renee and Dan had moved their family to the Grand Rapids Michigan area where Dan was successfully expanding his new business. Kevin and Donavon have both successfully maintained their families in the northern California area. Dad and Evelyn have been retired for many years and were living in Arizona, winters in Sun City and summers in Prescott. Brothers James and Warren are well established in Minneapolis Minnesota. Brother Robert had settled in Madison Wisconsin and sister Betty who chose to remain a staunch Canadian maintained her family in Fredericton, New Brunswick. As you can see my side of the family was well spread out across the country. Ruth's family had spread from Pueblo Colorado to Denver and then to the Thousand Oaks, California area. As a result any motor-home we had was destined to accumulate many miles of travel.

In the mid 1980's Ruth had started to have more serious breathing problems but was determined that we should not slow down. As time passed she found it necessary to frequently use inhalers to help her breathing and by the time we had the Safari RV, about 1989, she needed to have oxygen assistance from time to time. Since this RV was more spacious and always had AC power accessible, either from the battery or generator through the inverter, I was able to maintain a

portable oxygen generator on board. In addition to that I modified the lower storage area, (a bottom basement compartment) to hold a half dozen oxygen bottles that could be exchanged when the oxygen in them was consumed. Small portable oxygen generators and small portable oxygen bottles were not available at that time. We continued our travels and take vacation trips as often as work and other commitments would allow.

The year 1992 was a big change year. I was assigned the job of relocating our operation and personnel in Florida. This meant Ruth had to give up her job at Lockheed in the accounting department. Fortunately she was able to take an early retirement. We arranged to have the La Mar house rented under the control of a good friend who was in the rental-leasing business. All our furniture and household goods were packed and shipped by one of the cross country movers, to be held in storage until we arrived and located our new residence. We carefully packed our RV, said our goodbyes to family and friends and headed east to our new adventure.

We had enough time to pass through Colorado for a quick visit with Ruth's family before pressing on through the plains of Kansas and Missouri and into the foothills of Tennessee and Georgia. Our destination was The Great Outdoors RV Resort just outside Titusville Florida. We took all of two and a half weeks to travel the three thousand plus miles to our destination. The next day after we got settled in Ruth was off to deal with a real estate agent and I was off to the base to check in and start preparing for the new arrivals.

It took only a few days for Ruth to visit a dozen or so prospective houses with a very efficient real estate agent in Titusville. The place that we selected as our next domicile was 2100 Kings Cross, Titusville FL.

This place was a two bedroom, two bathroom townhouse in a housing development called Sherwood Forest. These were three and four unit homes joined together in a single long building. The house that was available was an end unit close to the second hole of the Bent Oak Golf Course. It had a single car garage, well manicured enclosed front court yard and screened patio. Lots of shade trees and a small pond right out the front door. As an added incentive there was a parking spot within sight of the front door where I could park the motor home.

This being a townhouse complex the exterior of the buildings, including the roofs, and grounds were held in common by all the home owners in the Sherwood Forest complex. There was the home owners association that functioned as the governing body to see that the condominium rules and regulations were maintained and applied fairly. They met regularly to resolve any community problems and maintain the common grounds. After the second or third meeting I was elected president of the association probably because I was new and was not afraid of making decisions when they were needed. I learned very quickly you can't please everyone all the time but with some good diplomacy it is possible to apply the

rules and regulations fairly and honestly. When I took over the association I found the bylaws strongly favored the original developer so before long with the help of our lawyer and the approval of the majority of the home owners I was able to rewrite certain portions of the bylaws to make them more fair and workable.

While I was preparing to receive the transferring personal at work, Ruth prepared to help the other part of the families as they made their moves. She alerted real estate agents in Cocoa, Cocoa Beach and Melbourne as well as Titusville. Most of all she provided the moral support to each of the families as they made the adjustments into our new Florida environment. We had a little red Fiat convertible as a second car and almost every day she would be scooting down to the Cocoa area to meet and help the latest arrivals at a lunch and help in any way possible. This went on as long as the transition lasted. After everyone had arrived we made it a practice to try to have the families get together each month to maintain the comradery we all had in Sunnyvale.

Since we were now residing on the east coast rather than the west coast it was obvious we would be able to spend more time with Renee and family who were now in Michigan. They had found a summer camp ground called Sandy Pines, just south of Grand Rapids that catered to families and has many summer activities available. Some of the available activities included boating on a large lake, fishing, swimming, hiking, tennis and many others. The most popular place was the ice cream stand with oversize servings, which we would visit regularly. They had regular community activities such as the annual Christmas in August party and the July 4 parade. There was also a nondenominational church which periodically brought in great entertainment such as Willie Nelson and other Christian singers. Almost everyone would travel around the campground in a golf cart. The camp had sites that were purchased by interested families. On these sites the owner would then install a park model trailer or set it up to be use as a parking spot for an RV trailer or motor home. Each site had water and electricity but no sewage disposal. The gray and black water was handled by a periodic visit by a pumping truck. The alternative was to take your RV or your own portable holding tank to the dump station on site. There was an annual membership fee to cover the water, security and maintenance of the camp grounds. Electricity, TV and telephone were available for those who wanted the added conveniences. We purchased a lot next to the one held by Dan and Renee and set it up so we could pull the motor home in and hook up our needed conveniences. We too used our golf cart while in the park. After I retired we were able to spend some extended and wonderful memorable time with the McAllister family at Sandy Pines.

The first major trip we made after I retired in 1995 was back through my old stamping ground in Canada. We arrived in Deep river that summer just as the town site was celebrating its 50th anniversary. That was also the year the first strip

mall ever built in Canada, the one at Deep River, burned to the ground and was in the process of being rebuilt. This was my second visit to the Deep River area since departing Canada in December of 1949. The town site had changed considerably, it was now a lively growing community. Our old house, number 9, still looked the same. The flagstone front walk was still there unchanged. Number 1 Beach was now owned by Patricia Laurence who was married and living in the US. Her family would come to Deep River for the summer every year. She happened to be there when we went through and we had a great visit and reminiscing old times. It was surprising to learn that several of the original families were still there. That year there was a picture published of all the children who were living in the town site at the time of the original construction. I was in the picture but Betty was not for some unknown reason.

With the family spread out across the US, for the next year and half we traveled the country in the RV visiting family and friends. This was another transition time since we now had the houses in California, Florida and the summer camp at Sandy Pines in Michigan. In early 1997 we decided it was best to sell the Florida house and reestablish ourselves in California since the lease of the La Mar house was due to be renewed. The Titusville house was sold in March of 1997.

After the sale of the Florida house in March we had all our household goods and our Cadillac car loaded in to a moving van and sent on to California where we would meet it whenever we got there. We felt no urgency to race back across the US so we dawdled. We paused at many of the historical spots and museums across the south. Some of these were the Battleship Park in Mobile and in particular there was New Orleans with its Dixieland music, old town, riverboat ride and historic street car. On west there is Huston, Corpus Christi where they have taken repeated beatings from hurricanes and yet survived. A stop in San Antonio at the Alamo is always a must where so many volunteers under Col William Travis held out against the Mexican General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna. After San Antonio there is the long day's run to El Paso for a day of rest and a quick trip over the border to Mexico. From El Paso it was always a stop at Phoenix and then Los Angeles and Thousand Oaks in California before heading north to the Bay area.

Once we had settled back in to the house in Cupertino, we made another trip to Hawaii, this time to the big island to see the volcano in action. For the next 33 months we traveled extensively in the US stopping at many of the interesting spots on our way from California to Maine. Some of these were the Grand Canyon, Carlsbad Caverns and Mammoth Cave. We also got in the Kentucky Derby at Churchill Downs and the Rose Bowl Parade in Pasadena. We made it a point to be in Michigan during the summer to be with the grand children when they were out of school, mostly at the Sandy Pines camp ground. As soon as the cooler weather started to set in we were off to wormer locations. There are to many to try to name

them all. It was almost a case of been there and done that in the south and central US states.

As the cooler weather set in on our return trip to California from our summer travels it became obvious that Ruth was having some major breathing problems. The use of her inhalers was becoming more frequent and the need for oxygen was almost full time. As soon as we were home we checked with her doctor and she ordered her to report into the El Camino Hospital in Mountain View, CA.

After almost a week of intensive care it was determined that her breathing problem could only be controlled with intensive medical treatment and extremely limited physical activity. Her lungs could no longer absorb the needed oxygen for her system. We had had these “what if “ discussions several times in the past and she has made up her mind that she wanted no part of living such a debilitated life. Ruth, myself and the doctor had an extensive review of her present condition and what her life would be like in the future. Here we considered all the possible options. I remember Donavon re-assuring her that she would not be letting him down, no matter what her decision might be. Ruth made her final decision that she would rather go and rest in the arms of Jesus and move on to her future life with God. It hurts me to write this even after all these years. At the last Renee was with me as she left us on November 1, 1999, 39 days from her 65th birthday. Her passing was due to Acute Respiratory Failure and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

We had a memorial service for Ruth at the Methodist Church in Cupertino where we were members. Cremation was what we had decided many years before and after many months of hesitation I had her ashes placed with a marker at the Catholic Cemetery in Benicia CA. near where Donavon owned his house. I also had a small Urn Figurine of two dolphins jumping together in which I placed Ruth's and my wedding rings. It seemed like an appropriate place to leave them since this part of my life had to end and I had to move on. I gave this figurine to Renee since she now had a solid relationship while mine was in turmoil. And so it ends, 45 years, a promise I made, “till death do us part. It is hard. It is real. It is life. The close of a chapter in my life.

THE FUTURE 1999 ON

By March of 2000 I had sold the house in Cupertino and purchased a little three bedroom Condominium at 350 Marina Village Way in Benicia CA. I was downsizing everything now that I would be traveling on my own and Donavon could check on this property easily from time to time. Anything of real value that Kevin, Renee and Donavon could use was turned over to them. The problem was that they each had houses well established and I was never into antiques or placed

a high value on worldly toys. After the children had taken what they could use and I had identified what I needed to furnish the small condo in Benicia, the rest was given to friends and donated to various charitable institutions. It became obvious very quickly that I needed to reestablish my primary residence in a state that had no state taxes such as Florida, Texas or Alaska. California was eager to get a substantial piece of any income I might happen to have.

The summer of 2000 found me traveling again. I spent a week at a timeshare in Malaga, Spain and a week with Michael Winters at his Caribbean Condominium retreat on St Lucia Island. After that I traveled through Thousand Oaks, CA, and on down through San Diego before heading again East to Florida and Michigan for the summer. I stopped to visit with old friends and relatives as I wandered east, stopping at various points of interest along the way. Wandered is probably the right word for me at this time. There was no real direction or destination or time schedule. After San Diego I stopped in Montclair to visit Bob Roser, my U of M class mate, then on to Los Vegas to spend time with Carl Johnson, a fellow retiree, and again to check out the Los Vegas strip. I stopped again in Colorado to see Glen and Betty, the last of the senior Kittinger clan. All the boys were busily involved in their very successful junk yard and used car business.

On my travels I met interesting women along the way in Sun City AZ, New Orleans, Grand Rapids MI and many other places. Getting together with old friends from work in Florida seemed to be the most rewarding. Yet nothing seemed to be quite right as I wound my way back and forth across the US visiting all these friends and relatives. I seemed to need someone to share my experiences with. Someone who enjoyed seeing and doing.

I purchased a lot at the Deer Creek RV Resort in FL in early 2000 so now I could claim my primary residence in Florida. This was a place designed specifically for people with motor homes, 5th wheel campers or travel trailers. Similar to what you find at The Great Outdoors in Titusville. Each lot had a large cement pad for parking your vehicle with all the needed utilities, water, electricity and sewer. The pad was large enough to add a park model trailer beside the RV parking area, which I added in 2001 for more living space when I was in the Florida area. This resort had an 18 hole golf course, swimming pools, shuffle boards and club houses for various community activities. There was a reasonable monthly fee for the maintenance of the common community grounds so the whole resort was well maintained at all times. With the addition of the park model trailer I now had the ability to have visitors and provide them with their own private sleeping quarters.

Through mutual retired friends from work I was introduced to an interesting lady named Betty Jo, a southern bell from South Carolina. Here

seemed to be an interesting match. She had previously owned a motor home and enjoyed traveling. She had a college education, three children all grown and well established in their own field of endeavor. She was a Christian, raised in the Pentecostal environment. On top of all this she was obviously well kept and would insist on keeping me well groomed which seemed to be against my second nature but rightly needed.

I introduced Betty to the family at the reunion in Minneapolis in 2001 and we were married before a Baptist minister in Scottsboro, AL, Jackson County on the 6th of August that same year. This was the start of a new life which I recognized as being totally different and would be headed in a whole new direction. I again made a “till-death-do-us-part commitment”.

Betty was a charter member of an organization called “Friendship Force International” in Atlanta GA. The motto of this organization states “A World of Friends is a World of Peace” and was started by President Jimmy Carter in 1977. The organization has generated Friendship Clubs all over the world and the listing can be found on the internet. These clubs hold meetings like any other well organized club but their primary goal is to plan a group (Club) trip to visit some other club, somewhere in the world or how to host a visiting club coming to your area. The unique thing about this club exchange (visit) operation is that the participants stay in the club members home and get to know them personally and get to see and understand the people and culture first hand rather than a tourist's over view.

Since we were not living in the Atlanta GA area we would traveled to the Atlanta area in the motor home and function as day hosts to a visiting club member while the local host had to go to work. In one such case we hosted a couple from South Korea.

Over the next several years we made trips with this club to Australia, New Zealand, twice to Japan, China and India which I will write about elsewhere. On each of these adventures we were able to mingle with the local citizens and absorb some if their culture and participate in their daily activities. We tasted exotic foods and observed different cultures. It obviously is impossible for me to write in detail of all the interesting events that have transpired so I must limit my writing to the most interesting highlights as they come to mind. In addition we traveled to England, Canada, Alaska, Hawaii and some portion of each state within the US Continental mainland. Our third coach had close to one hundred and fifty thousand miles on it before I had to stop driving the coach due to deteriorating eyesight. Since we are so close to the Caribbean we have made use of the friendly cruise ships to visit most if not all the Caribbean Islands at one time or another. Not to be left out we have been to Panama and South & Central America, each of which need some bit of expanded explanation,

Motor Home Life

Retired life for some is an endless vacation. Some become couch potatoes and wither away. Some never retire and work on until they expire. For me it was ordained a curiosity to see a lot more of this world than the local community. I had found this type of activity rewarding quite early in my married and working life. I must add that this life is not for everyone. I have known some people who have a motor home and drive it from point A to point B and there it sits for the balance of the year. Not so in my case.

When Betty Jo and I met I was driving a thirty four foot Safari, class A motor home which was functioning well and we enjoyed thoroughly. We traveled through the lower states and mid-west enjoying our new life. It was about this time that new motor coaches were being built with slide-out sections. This provided additional living space without increasing the coach size and weight. Here is where we made that fatal mistake. We stopped in at the Lazy Days RV dealer near Tampa, FL just take a look at what these new coaches were like. We were sure it was just to look and not to buy. Well needless to say we were hooked. For just a few dollars and a trade in of the thirty four foot coach we could have a new thirty eight foot Safari with a bath tub and two slide-out sections. This is coach number two in my new life and it is a new story worth telling.

It was just at this time that the Safari Coach Co. was bought out by the Monaco Coach Co. so we got a good price on this new Serengeti Safari coach. This coach had the latest torsion bar suspension system, two slides, a bath tub and guaranteed to be top of the line. We lined the old and new coaches side by side and transferred all our coach traveling cloths and other items and the next day rolled out with the new wheels. Over the next several weeks as we travel on, stopping at various camp grounds, parks, resorts and tourist sights, things did not seem as normal as they should be. Many things needed adjustment, some things did not function as advertised. For example the coach wanted to drift to the right while driving. The awning needed adjustment the brakes over heated. Strange noises and vibrations became evident. For the next year we were constantly in a shop for adjustments or repairs and the Monaco Coach Co insisted all would be well once all the minor bugs could be worked out. Betty's voice became very familiar to the vice president of operations at the Monaco Coach home office in Oregon and the Monaco service manager at the Monaco Wakarusa IN plant. Monaco was truly diligent in trying to make all the problems go away however the final straw evolved with the failure of the drive system. As we were returning south that fall we got an excessive vibration and noise in the back by the diesel motor. We pulled

into the Wakarusa plant where we spent the next couple of weeks to get the problem resolved. I understand they replaced the universal joint on the drive shaft along with other things that needed adjustment. At any rate we were assured that the problem was fixed and we headed on south to our FL home base. Before we got half way home the vibration and noise started again. Upon our arrival in FL and home we were directed to take the coach to the authorized Monaco service center at Leesburg FL. The next Sunday I headed to Leesburg with the coach and tow car up the FL turnpike while Betty waited my return. About half way there I hear a big bang and I found myself with no forward power. I quickly coasted to the side off the pavement as far as possible off the pavement and positioned the coach so it would not roll backward. Quick examination reveals I no longer had a drive shaft or universal joint. Betty was contacted of my location and condition and a tow truck was located to deliver the coach to the Leesburg shop. By the time Betty was on the phone to the VP of operations at Monaco in Oregon Monday morning, they had been fully appraised of our latest problem and they were ready to place us in a new coach. Betty had a green light and she made full use of it. She selected all the niceties that were available, many more than I thought Monaco would accept, but they did to get us off their backs. Betty insisted on having a tub as was in the Safari and they could only provide that in a forty foot coach so, a forty footer is what we got. This coach would be built at Wakarusa, so to Indiana we went at Monaco's expense. We watched our coach being built. This was our coach number three, which provided us with many miles months and years of trouble free travel.

Our motor home travels have taken us to many of the National Parks such as Yellow Stone, Grand Tetons, Acadia, Rea Rocks, Grand Canyon, Cliff Dwellings and so many more. We have stopped at most of the Presidents residences and libraries. We have been to many of the historical battlefields. Battles for independence and freedom from the British and the Civil Wars between the north and the south including Gettysburg and also the battles for the expansion of the land to the west which would include Little Bighorn. There is an endless list of interesting and historical places to explore. One can spend a lifetime on the move and not see them all.

Other Trips and Places

One year we decided to explore farther afield so with the Barnhill family we spent a week in Cancun to see the Mayan Ruins. There is a striking similarity to the pyramids of Egypt and the Mayan Temples and Ceremonial Ruins. The most famous temple is Chichen-Itza which I climbed. Easy to climb but a little nerve racking to descend. We tasted many exotic Mexican foods, some very spicy. Most of the hotels are eager to provide tours of the area and recommended great areas to

snorkel.

Great Britain

The question asked of every one, -- where were you on 9/11/2001 when the twin towers were destroyed in New York. My answer is that I was trying to make a trip to the UK. If you recall all the air flights were grounded and total confusion reigned for several weeks.

Betty is deep into genealogy, has been for many years and has even published her own book. As a result I have been to, and seen more cemeteries than I ever thought existed. For those who are seriously into family history, (genealogy), authentication is all important. This includes tracing the names through national census, marriage records, birth and death records, obituaries, and sometimes church records. In the process of gleaning information about her early ancestry from England in the Manchester area she found a Walter Portman, a fellow genealogy researcher who was a retired supervisor from the British coal mines and willing to help dig up some old bones. As a result Walter and his wife Christine became close friends and we made a special trip to the UK to explore further.

A short note here about the Park side of the family and our poking around in the UK. It took us to a small town north of London where we found nothing but a very old run down church. Nothing to stimulate further investigation or perhaps we were in the wrong location. Now on the Marshman side, we discovered that several small communities just south of Melksham are inhabited by many of the Marshman Clan. How many, if any are direct relatives would require a great deal of investigation and research. The interesting thing here is that while I was working for Lockheed Missile and Space Co., our field office was in Melksham and I was totally oblivious to the possibility of there being historical relatives in the immediate area.

Our travels on this trip took me on a revisit to many interesting and historical spots in the south and central England such as Stonehenge, the Roman Baths at Bath and Windsor. I have always enjoyed exploring the old castles and cathedrals which I did at every opportunity when I had to travel to the UK while working for Lockheed. Our trip to Windsor is an extra little story of its own.

We were staying at some little hotel in the Windsor area and had explored the town of Windsor and toured Windsor Castle. Somewhere we had picked up information that the Queen was allowing tours of Buckingham Palace in London on certain days and tomorrow would be the last available day for a balance of the year. Arrangements were made for us to stay an extra night at the hotel in Windsor so early the next morning we took the first available train into London and got off

at the Green Park Station which put us just across Green Park from Buckingham Palace. Like our Presidential White House there are only specific areas that the public peasants are allowed to view. At any rate it was inspiring to see how royalty live. It is hard to imagine how one would live in these immense rooms with historical pictures, crafted furniture and priceless artifact, all of which are hundreds of years old, far older than our country. After completing the palace tour we wandered through the stables where all those various beautiful historical carriages are kept along with the highly polished harness for the horses. It was now mid-afternoon and there were no other tourists in the area and the guard was nowhere in sight so Betty took a seat in the open golden carriage while I took a quick picture. Needless to say, had we had been discovered we would probably have been deported or invited to spend some time in the Tower of London. After that we quietly slipped back across Green Park to the train and on back to the city of Windsor.

Australia and New Zealand

By November of 2001 it seemed appropriate to make our first out of the country trip to Australia and New Zealand, down under, while they were having their summer, (our winter). The Atlanta Friendship Force Club had a visitation planed with an Australian Club just outside Sydney so we signed up to participate. Betty had some old friends who lived near Melbourne so she set about arranging for us to fly out early to Melbourne and meet the Friendship Group in Sydney later. This is where I first learned of Betty's special talent as a booking agent.

As I found out this couple had traveled extensively in the US and UK area and had been involved with the aircraft industry while working and had retired to a small gentry farm consisting of a few acres and were raising a small herd of cows. While we were there I participated bulldogging and emasculating a couple of very unhappy young bulls.

As I recall the country around Melbourne is relatively flat with gently rolling hills and has limited forested areas. While touring the local Melbourne area I got to see my first live hedgehog busy trying to scurry out of sight. This animal looks similar to our groundhog. At this time I got to see my first small kangaroo, many people like to refer to them as joeys. They are about the size of a large dog and could be considered a pet. The much larger kangaroo roam the open farmland freely outside the city and are a frequent danger to travelers at night similar to our problems with deer on our US roads. An interesting thing that was pointed out to me was the special reinforced front guard added to most trucks and many cars, called a rooguard. People put them on vehicles that do extensive driving at night. Apparently kangaroos like to jump out in front of moving vehicles and being quite

large, can do extensive damage when run down.

From Melbourne we flew to Sydney to join up with the Friendship Force and meet our club hosts who would be escorting us for the next week.

In Sydney we got to take a short tour of the unique Sydney Opera House. The pictures you often see do not do full credit to this unique structure. It is truly spacious and one of a kind. After seeing it first hand, I can understand the troubles they had sealing all the joints and seams during its construction. Another point of interest in Sydney is the large steel structural bridge in the harbor. For those who don't mind heights and have steady nerves, on good days, you can take a walking guided tour over the long curving top arch. I declined the opportunity and I am sure the view is breathtaking.

While in Australia we made it a point to find a young man named Alastair Black who has become the renowned maker and player of the Didgeridoo. This is an Aboriginal instrument which originated in northern Australia. The Didgeridoo is a hollow wooden tube of various lengths and diameters depending on the desired tone. To play it is necessary to hum and blow at the same time. The experts somehow are able to keep the tone going while inhaling as well as exhaling. Needless to say I now have a Didgeridoo standing in the corner waiting to be played.

From Sydney we flew on to south eastern Australia to Mt. Gambier and the Adelaide area. Mt Gambier has a strange lake that changes to a colorful blue at a certain time of the year with no explanation why. In this area they have a large thermal basin similar to our Yellowstone Park, which they have put to use. They have built a large geothermal plant to heat the local area. This area is also widely known for its vineyards and wine production. With its rolling hills and hundreds of acres of grape vines it would be easy to imagine yourself in the California wine country.

Next stop was New Zealand. We flew into Hamilton on the north Island for a bus tour. This is a beautiful island country, Volcanic in nature and very mountainous like our Colorado. Unfortunately the day we traveled along the Southern Alps on the south island, it was cloudy so we did not get the full benefit of the majestic mountain range. We did however get some majestic views of Wellington and Christchurch as they majestically lay in valleys between the mountain peaks and the deep blue ocean. Here on these islands we observed the nesting grounds of penguins and the soaring Albatross with their ten foot wing span.

Panama Canal

In 2002 we joined with our English friends, Walter and Christine to travel the full length of the Panama Canal.

In March we flew to Long Beach CA to catch a cruise ship bound for southern waters. I had always wanted to travel the Panama Canal from end to end and this seemed to be the right time. This trip took us leisurely down the coast of Mexico and Central America where the Incas once thrived. There were brief stops at places like Acapulco, Cabo San Lucas and Costa Rica before holding in pattern at Panama City. At each stop on our way south to Panama City we were entertained by the local talent in full regalia. This is undoubtedly one of the money makers for the local people. After spending the night in a ship holding pattern, our ship moved into line to start its transit of the canal, aligning itself with the first set of locks. Most, if not all, the passengers, ourselves included, staked out an ideal observation position, for the next eight hours or so, as the ship began to thread itself through the needle. After the ship has entered the lock the ship is be tied off to a mechanical mule to pull the ship to its proper position. The water level is adjusted to float the ship to the desired next level. There is only a few inches between the cement walls of the lock and the painted hull of the ship. It is not uncommon to see missing paint on passing ships as we traverse the inland waterway which lay between the Pacific and Atlantic set of locks. The inland passag is calm and picturesque. After our decent through the Eastern locks and a brief stop at Colon our ship made its way across the Caribbean Sea and Gulf of Mexico to Fort Lauderdale FL. I understand that Panama is now building a new and much needed larger waterway to handle even larger ships.

Another Trans-continent Trip

Later this same year (2002), we made a trip to California to spend some time with Kevin and Donavon's families and at the same time dispose of the Benicia condo. It was obvious we would be spending little or no time in residence there so it needed to go regardless of how much I enjoyed the area. For us the motor home was proving to be the ideal way for us to travel around the US and Canada.

Our friends from the UK, Walt and Christen, had been wishing to see some of the USA so it was arranged for them to fly into Los Vegas where we met them for a trip back to FL.

Canada and NE USA

Another of our adventurous motor home trips took us from Florida north to Canada and the US North Eastern states. We ambled through Georgia, the Carolinas and other southern states lingering at points of historical interest along the way. Our primary destination at this point was north Ontario. We spent some

time with family and friends in the Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota area. I was intent on visiting old stomping grounds for Betty's knowledge and my nostalgic boost.

Minneapolis MN was basically the same. The big stately house, where I was a late teen ager attending the U of M stood as stately as ever. Here I resided until the US army felt it needed my services. Here I had a motorcycle which I usually started in the driveway until I was requested to move this activity to the street and stop waking the neighbor. Here Betty and Murry resided on the third floor while Murry attended the U of M. Betty was required to function as house keeper for Dad and Evelyn. Here is where I was required to turn in my front door key by Dad at the direction of Evelyn. At that time I had returned from the army and was working for Champion Motors. When I went back to the U of M I found that the school had grown so much it was hard to find the Engineering buildings I attended. New big broad highways now existed almost smothering the big Methodist church we attended.

From Minneapolis it was on to Canada by way of the Michigan UP to Sault Ste. Marie. This was the port of entry where I entered the USA with the family in December of 1949. The US government recorded me as a family member born in 1833. Interesting how records can get fouled-up.

Now back into Canada we head east to North Bay with a brief pause at Sudbury where my high school team played football and I played a bugle with the Royal Canadian Army Cadets. North Bay had not changed a great deal from the days when I haunted the downtown stores and pool hall. The house where I had been boarded with Harrold Morin stood unchanged. We occupied the space on the third floor. The Vocational High School I attended had been absorbed into some other business. Without further investigation we moved on. We followed the main highway along the west side of the Ottawa River to the Deep River town site.

Deep River has really changed and grown from the time I had last seen it in 1949. The house at 9 Beach still looked the same but with a small addition to one side. The Lawrence family house has remained in the Laurence family with extensive modifications. Patricia Laurence happened to be there when we visited the town. The grade school was gone. Part of the community center was gone but the duck-pin bowling alley had been saved. The strip mall-shopping center has been rebuilt and greatly expanded. The large open play field is extensively and greatly improved. The old swimming beach looked about the same. While standing on the bluff behind our old house I could recall the frozen river in the winter and hear the ice crack as the river complained of its stresses and remember the ice pitching up on edge in great masses in the spring along with a fond picture of our sail boat and motor boat waiting at their weighted moorings for we adventurous children. What a HI for me to see and visit all these familiar sites again at this time.

From Deep River we moved on south to Pembroke where I spent my first year of high school. Here again the school was gone. Time rushes on.

With my nostalgia satisfied we now continued our sightseeing and wandering, destination, New Brunswick.

We poked along stopping to see the more important places like Ottawa, Canadas capitol, and Montreal. In Montreal we had to consider the historical events and major battles such as between Wolf as Montcalm. Next we wandered north east following the St. Lawrence River (on the Quebec side). I must add that at this time the highway in Quebec was the worst I had ever traveled on.

Roads improved dramatically once we got to New Brunswick. All this part of the continent is densely covered with timber for hundreds of miles. It would be easy to become lost were one to wander off unprepared for survival in the wild. We now spent some time with sister Betty and Charlie Ponder, reviewing history and family in the New Brunswick and Nova Scotia area. Betty still has her place at the eastern end of the Bay of Fundy where the world's highest tides quietly move in and out twice a day. Rolling on from NB we traversed the length of Nova Scotia to Yarmouth where we loaded on to an overnight ferry bound for Bar Harbor, Maine, and Acadia National Park, back in the USA.

It is believed the Park line landed in this Maine area so with a little poking around we found the little community of Mystic, Maine. In the old cemetery we found a large marker for Robert Parks dedicated by the Daughters of the American Revolution. The Acadia National Park is beautiful rugged place to explore. Preferably in the summer, winters can be cold with lots of snow wind and ice.

Here is where we picked up I95, the highway south to Florida and home. The southern trip now included many historical and evolutionary stopes such as Boston, New York, Washington, Richmond, and others.

Netherlands

Cindy, Betty's daughter, had been working with an international adoption agency, unsuccessfully, to adopt a baby girl from Russia. It was decided that this had gone on long enough and so Betty in her, make something happen way, got involved and in a matter of weeks it was agreed to bring this little bundle of joy out of Russia, from Kazakhstan, by way of the Netherlands. Betty, Cindy and I flew into Amsterdam and while Betty and I waited in the city at our hotel, Cindy went on into Russia to consummate the adoption. After some negotiating with the Netherland's customs we were allowed to retrieve Cindy and the little year old baby girl to be known as Anna Tetyana Stewart. Now that we had things under control and with a little time before our return flight, it was time to take in a few of the sights of the city.

We climbed aboard a city tour boat ride which took us not only thru the harbor, but also up and down a number of the many canals that wind their way thru the city. Many of the multi-story houses are built on the edge of the canals with minimal road and sidewalk space in the front. No space is wasted. The Ann Frank house, which is now a museum, was pointed out. We saw the exterior of The Hague, the international court house. The windmills that are strategically located around the city were busy pumping water out of the city back into the bay.

We made it a point to visit the Ann Frank museum to see how the Frank family were hidden from the Gestapo for many many years while young Ann documented their hiding existence.

It is interesting to note that Amsterdam has their normal lovely little tourist shops along with their many friendly shoppers but the atmosphere is quite different. One gets the feeling there is no time to waste. Get on with it. There are relatively few automobiles. The major transportation here is by bicycle.

Japan

We have made two trips to Japan with the Friendship Force International (FFI). On the first visit we were hosted by a couple from the Osaka FFI Club. They spoke a little English and of course we spoke no Japanese yet it was amazing how we were able to communicate. They lived in a small high rise condominium apartment; I would estimate a total of about 1800 square feet, cozy, comfortable and well kept. The wife was a stay-at-home wife while her husband was an editor at the large newspaper in the city. Our sleeping accommodations were a single bed for Betty and a soft mat for me on the floor in a room about ten feet wide by about twenty five feet long. Small but adequate. We visited their city sites, temples, kimono show and an excursion to Kyoto. Because space is so limited, automated car stack parking is a common practice in Japan. One evening our host invited all the neighbors in to this small apartment to meet these strange Americans. Some spoke limited English but all went well as we sat on the carpet in one big circle to find we all had similar interests, concerns and lives.

Our second trip to Japan took us to Fukuoka and Miyagi (Sendai). Our first FFI host from Fukuoka owned and operated his ballpoint pen business while his wife created stained glass works of art. They owned a multi-story office building, about five floors, and an automated car parking building next door. This couple made their home on the fourth floor while their in-laws occupied the fifth floor. This area of Japan is ideal for farming spread out in the valley picturesquely between the mountains. Unfortunately this area was hit by a tsunami after a major earthquake a few years after we were there. Their nuclear power plant suffered catastrophic damage.



DOUG AND BETTY IN JAPAN

After our home stay in Fukuoka our US FFI ambassadors moved on to meet the Miyagi (Sendai) hosts. Our assigned ambassador was a retired Japan Airline pilot however he did not reside in Sendai so we stayed with a niece in the city for a couple of days. It is my understanding that this niece's father was a kamikaze pilot who survived because the war ended before his mission. This niece's house was a beautiful authentic Japanese house, small, compact, sliding rice-paper panel doors and beautiful living center garden. We even slept on roll-out mats. As soon as our assigned host and his wife were available they took us on a sightseeing tour, south through the mountains to their regular city home. As it turned out right across the bay was an active volcano pushing its smoke into the air along with a small red river of lava down its flank. Here is where I got my foot stuck in my mouth. We had been complaining about the high cost of coffee drinks like you find at Starbucks. Our host proceeded to escort us to his small coffee shop on the third floor in his local shopping mall and provide us with a normal thimble size cup of imported coffee. Our host had a small coffee business where he imported many exotic coffees.

Upon completing our FFI activities at Sendai we all scrambled on to the bullet train to Tokyo. While in Tokyo we toured the Meiji Jingu Shrine, Tokyo Tower, Asakusa Kannon Temple, and Nakamise Shopping Arcade before catching the flight back to the USA

On our free time separate from the FFI events we visited Hiroshima and attended a Sumo wrestling match. I have to add that of all the places I have had the privilege to visit Japan is the cleanest and most environmentally conscious.

China

In 2006 we made a trip to China with Friendship Force International (FFI). This was a rather unusual club exchange in that this was into a communist dominated country and the government was obviously in full control. We were escorted and shown what they wanted us to see in most places. We flew into Shanghai, one of the larger industrial cities, to join this FFI club who were from Nanjing. The family we stayed with was a doctor who seemed to own or at least operated a hospital which we were privileged visited. The doctor's home was a medium size, well-kept high-rise condominium. We met their daughter, Dr. Ding, who visited us in the US while she was making a professional trip to Florida and Minnesota, some time later. We stayed only two nights with the doctor's family before being escorted via bus, train and boat to see the touristy sites of China. Before leaving we had a gracious tour of the Nanjing parks and gardens. Without question the Chinese are master gardeners. Nanjing is indeed a modern city.

A ferry trip up the mighty Yangtze river was the next order of business. This

river is the largest in China and winds for hundreds of miles through the mountains. Sometimes it is quite wide through lush green rolling farm country. In other sections it is relatively narrow with steep high spectacular rock walls. This river is a major commercial highway for the interior industries of China. There is constant large and small boat traffic struggling to transport their wares up and down this waterway. Each year this river was known to flood so in order to help control Mother Nature, China set about building the largest hydroelectric power dam in the world, known as "the Three Gorge Dam". This dam with its massive locks was well under construction the year we made our trip up the river so we were privileged to see much of the country that was about to be drowned in the next few years as the dam filled.

The Great Wall of China is a Historical wonder. It is well worth the experience to stand on, and take a few paces with history. The wall is very uneven and irregular as it winds its way over shrub and small tree covered hills and valleys, disappearing in the distance. It is really quite difficult to walk on so one can only imagine how hard it would have been to be a defender on this massive pile of rocks.

The Terracotta Soldiers is another magnificent piece of historical art. Here we saw several hundred standing troops along with support wagons and horses, all in a massive parade formation. Each soldier is uniquely different. A few stand broken but recognizable. The colors are faded but still well preserved. The Chinese government is making every effort to cover and preserve all this for the future in a massive air conditioned building.

We moved on to Beijing, the capitol, and Tiananmen Square. Tiananmen Square is a very large open paved area, bordered by a large grassy area and on one side a very large red brick, multi floor, observation office building. On this same building hanging from roofline to ground a full color picture of China's president for all to see. There is a striking similarity of this square to Red Square in Moscow, Russia. An interesting point here was that when we queried our guide about the student uprising and massacre that took place here some years ago, the guide pleaded total ignorance. The government has obviously been trying to eliminate this bit of their history. On one side of the square there was a small group of souvenir open air shops for the tourist.

One day while being transported by bus between cities, through the lush rolling country side, someone in our group spotted an interesting looking farm. She asked our escort if it would be possible to stop and visit this farm. To our surprise the escort immediately stopped the bus and approached the unsuspecting farmer to see if he would mind being invaded by a bunch of nosey Americans. To our greater surprise the farmer and his wife welcome our invasion. With the farmer's invitation, we all unloaded and eagerly advanced up his driveway and into his

house. The house was a single story, probably one bedroom. The living room and kitchen were one open room with front and back doors. The only noticeable furniture was a simple table and chairs. Cloths were hanging from the ceiling in one corner, some farm products hanging from another. An open fireplace for cooking along with minimal cooking utensils hanging from various hangers on the wall, ample for their needs. Right outside the back door was his pig in its pen and chickens with free access to the house. This was the simplest of simple farming. Amazingly they seemed happy and content and amenable to our intrusion.

At this point the main body of the Friendship Force prepared to make their return flight to the US while Betty and I traveled on to Singapore and Thailand. Before leaving on this Friendship Force trip Betty had made arrangements to extend our time in Asia. My final note on China is that it strikes me as an old mysterious country, with many growing problems. It is heavily populated by a few very rich and many very poor people. The air is heavily contaminated with smoke. Even so, China is well worth the trip.

Singapore and Thailand

Hong Kong and the city of Singapore, during colonial times, was part of the British Empire. When China reclaimed this area, China agreed that it could maintain its democratic free enterprise system for 50 years. As a result Singapore has essentially become a Super City. This is the New York of the orient. The city is very modern, heavily populated, modern with unique sky scrapers. The sea port is massive and extremely busy. City traffic is heavy and jammed up like Los Angeles. There are thousands of small gift shops along with large shopping malls. Independent small businesses seems to be the name of the game. We were led to understand that casinos were not allowed within the city and the Chinese people like to gambol. The casinos are located on Macao, the next island. A quick trip over the bridge gave us a picture of where the big spenders go. Out in front of the big casino is a gigantic impressive metal lotus flower

Prior to our leaving on this China trip Betty had made arrangements with one of her friends for us to visit Thailand. Thailand was of particular interest because Betty's father served in WW2 in this area and because of the many stories of POW mistreatment by the Japanese.

From Singapore we flew on into Bangkok and met Betty's friend. With her friend's gracious help we toured this beautiful exotic and mysterious city. Here again we tasted the exotic foods of the orient and visited some of the unique temples for their strange gods. Many open air markets draw your attention to how these open friendly people prepare their foods ready for sale and consumption. They set up shop wherever there happens to be space even on the railroad tracks.

When a train comes by they pull back their tables and shades while the train passes only to reclaim the space as quickly as possible.

In this part of the country, much of the goods are transported by boat both large and small. The most popular small boat is rather unique. It is usually about 40 feet long and about 3,1/2 foot wide. On the back is mounted a big gimbaled v-eight automobile engine, with a driveshaft and propeller extending aft about 10 feet. No muffler so everyone knows they are on the move.

During WW2 the Japanese Empire invaded China, Korea and all this part of Asia. In order to expedite their invasion of India, the Japanese war machine perceived a railroad between Siam and Burma. To build this railroad they used thousands of forced labor and thousands of prisoners of war soldiers. This railroad became known as "The Death Railway". Hollywood writers picked up this history and documented a particular British POW camp that was forced to build a bridge across the River Kawi. (the present name is "The Khwae Noi River"). This railroad is still in operation so we took a short ride to where a large cave was preserved. It was pointed out that this was the hospital facility during the war years.

On our final day in Bangkok Betty's friend took us to largest fresh flower store we had ever seen. My guess is that they ship fresh flowers from here to places around the world. It is the custom here to decorate their home with fresh flowers each day.

India 2009

In 2009 we made a trip to India with Friendship Force International (FFI). As soon as the FFI itinerary was firm Betty went to work and schedule our arrival in Mumbai India a few days ahead of the US FFI Ambassadors. Once we were settled in the hotel we arranged for a car and driver to tour the city and some of the local country.

Mumbai is a massively large city with thousands and thousands of people trying to get from here to there as rapidly as possible. That is where any similarity to our US big city ends. Cars, trucks, large and small, motorcycles, wagons, rickshaws, bicycles, people and cows try to occupy the same space at the same time. There is special consideration for the cows that freely wander the city because they may be a reincarnated relative as specified in one of the Indian religions. India has many religions including Christianity. Here you can see the extremes, the very rich and the very poor. The cast system is quite evident in Indian society. We paused while crossing a bridge over the river and below were walled off yards, about forty foot squares, where workers were feverishly washing some rich families laundry. A little further and we observed hundreds of people

ceremoniously washing themselves in the brownish colored river. A few blocks on is a large well-kept public park. After we had completed our day of site seeing and returned to the hotel, we informed our driver we would call the next day for future service. He emphatically let it be known that he wanted to wait for us at the hotel and no need to call. He had this job and there might not be one available for him tomorrow. When we tipped the driver upon completion of our driving tour, the driver seemed overwhelmed. We felt we were being conservative but he stated that this was more than he saw in a month. Jobs in India were scarce.

We met up with the US FFI Ambassadors at the prescribed time and place. We all loaded into an old school type bus for our transport to meet our Indian Hosts at Nasik about forty miles away. This was a trip of a lifetime. Imagine an old rickety bus full of rowdy fun loving people with bags tied on the roof, raining gently, buss windows stuck down, umbrellas out the windows to keep passengers dry, careening down rutty highway barely wide enough for two cars. Oncoming traffic included trucks piled so high they looked top heavy and of course you had to watch out for cows. This is where I learned that to drive in India you must have three essential things, good nerves, good brakes and good horn. This forty odd miles to Nasik took us about four hours through mass congestion and bumpy road.

Our Nasik host was an English-speaking Skin Doctor and his wife. Their house is of modest size but marble is used extensively to keep the house cooler.

We were in India at just the right time to witness their elephant boy celebration. Here the participants obtain a Plaster-of-Paris figure of a cross-leg sitting boy with an elephant head. After a boisterous party with lots of food, singing and dancing the whole crowd march out into the river about waist deep and set the boy adrift.

One afternoon the lady of the house along with a couple of the neighbors dressed Betty in full Indian costume and painted her hand as would be the custom of a new bride. That evening we participated in a community block party with typical Indian food served on quickly rinsed metal plates, no utensils and low lighting so I never saw for sure what I was eating. The food was spicy and good.

Another afternoon we took a tour of the medical school, from which our US doctor had once attended. We were stuck by the lack of medical books. I was later informed that the medical students got most of their book studying done in the library along with many hours of practiced memory work.

After our FFI stay in Nasik the US Ambassadors returned to Mumbai this time by train. The group was scheduled to meet a bus tour to see more of the country and travel by bus back was to unpredictable.

Our extended travel proved to include an elephant ride and an excursion to one of the historic castles which was much larger than the English castles I had seen years ago. When asked why it was so large, the answer was because they had

so many wives. To top this trip off we spent several hours at the Taj Mahal. As a final note, as observed from the bus, in the fields tending their crops were the Indian women in their full colorful attire.

Alaska

After motor-homing thru most of the US continental states and Hawaii it became obvious a trip to Alaska had to be on the books. During Betty's working years she was in Alaska providing psychological evaluations of the workers building the Trans-Alaska Pipeline so Betty was an ideal tour guide. We teamed up with the Barnhill family and scheduled a memorable trip starting with an inland water-way cruise from Seattle WA.

We flew into Seattle and met one of Betty's old friends and spent the day absorbing some of the hospitality of the city before meeting our north bound cruise ship. This area is noted for its intricate totem carvings passed along by the local Indian tribes. During my working years I was required to participate in some of the meetings at the US Navy submarine base at Bremerton. Float planes are a common site in this area and a preferred mode of transport in remote parts of this country. I always felt this Seattle area would be interesting to explore yet most of the time it is overcast, cold and depressing. On the other hand there stands Mount Rainier and Mount Olympus inspiring and inviting for the young and adventurous.

We departed Port Angeles and for the next several days dodged the coastal islands as we slid north along the picturesque British Columbia and Alaska barrier islands to spend an afternoon at Glacier Bay. Before moving on to Anchorage, Alaska, the captain eased the ship close enough to the face of the glacier for us to hear the groans of the massive ice sheet caved off large pieces which ultimately became spectacular ice burls.

Betty had laid out a full travel schedule for us, once we got to Anchorage. The salmon were not running at this time but never the less an afternoon was spent fishing for what was available for dinner. A helicopter ride to the top of the local glacier to examine and walk atop a massive block of ice was a must. A rental car and a short trip into part of Denali National Park exposed the grandeur of Mt McKinley. We were welcomed by a large bull moose ambling along the highway. A stop to oversee the oil pipe line and see some of the major construction problems was a must. We took an exhilarating jet boat ride up one of the many rivers to an authentic pioneer log cabin. Jet boats are popular here so the operator can maneuver around rocks and debris in the fast running water. After a night at the hotel we took a train ride to Fairbanks which roughly followed the old gold rush trail into the mountains and the foothills of Denali National Park.

We visited the notorious Red Dog Saloon. The main fish processing plants

were not running at full steam because the salmon run had not started. An afternoon visit with Casey Steinau, Robert's daughter, residing in Alaska, topped of the day.

One of the Alaska trip highlights was an overnight stay at a bear camp. Keep in mind there is nine in our party in transit to this bear camp. We all loaded into a small single engine plane rigged with large soft rubber tires, not one of the float planes. We flew off to an isolated area where the bears roam freely looking for berries and fish. There is no air strip to land on so the plane sits down on the gravelly beach about fifty feet wide and we unload to be met by a trailer with seats pulled by a tractor. We are transported down the beach about a quarter mile to a group of tents nestled in the trees and scrub growth. The little encampment is surrounded by an electric fence to discourage any inquisitive visitors and a guard is patrolling the area with a high powered rifle to ensure every ones safety. The next morning we hiked down a worn trail to a well elevated lookout platform and sure enough, there were the big brown bears ambling along checking the berry patches and checking the waterways for fish.

What Next

Over the past eighty six plus years I have experienced many noteworthy events, seen many places and things, interfaced with many good people, much of which has been lost in the cosmos of time. What I have recorded here is only a snippet of what could be written if time, space and memory were available.

From my experiences two things stand out.

1st We all have the same problems and faults, love, hate, greed, ambition, likes and dislikes to mention a few. What would it be like if we could work with people as though there was no color or religious difference?

2nd Our citizens, old and young, have forgotten that the freedoms we have in this country are not free. There are many who have sacrificed everything for this freedom. Unfortunately only selective history is being taught in our schools so we are not building on our prior mistakes.

Now I must contemplate my future. Many of my friends, loved ones and co-workers have already departed to enjoy our next life into which I will step in the unknown distant future. I will meet my savior Jesus Christ and my God at His appointed time. So far I have had a great life. I have played my part and contributed to an evolving society. Do I have any regrets? – Yes a few, I would like to have kept my family closer but we must play the part we are given. Until such time as I am called I am content to help with the “Wreaths Across America” program to honor our fallen veterans, help in my Church, work with my friends and read a good historical book. May God bless you all in each of your personal endeavors.