

## REFLECTIONS

By Richard & Nancy Sherbondy



We have been retired now (1999) for seven years and living in Bella Vista, Arkansas. We have begun to reflect back on our lives together, and apart before we met. Since we never had something in writing about our parents and grandparents, we thought it beneficial to our three children and the generations to come to capture memories of loving family times. In this way we can pass on to them what it was like in the “olden days.”

### CONTENTS

<b>I.</b>	<b>Richard L. Sherbondy</b>	<b>Page 2</b>
<b>II.</b>	<b>Nancy L. Sherbondy</b>	<b>Page 35</b>
<b>III.</b>	<b>2000-2005, 1st Update</b>	<b>Page 69</b>
<b>IV.</b>	<b>2006-2013, 2nd Update</b>	<b>Page 72</b>
<b>V.</b>	<b>2014-2017, 3<sup>rd</sup> Update</b>	<b>Page 75</b>
<b>VI.</b>	<b>2018-2020, 4<sup>th</sup> Update</b>	<b>Page 77</b>
<b>VII.</b>	<b>2021-2022, 5<sup>th</sup> Update</b>	<b>Page 80</b>

## **Richard L Sherbondy**

### **GRANDPARENTS**

My grandparents, on my Father's side, lived on a farm in Shickley, Nebraska. My Dad, Alden Kline Sherbondy, was the fourth child of five born to Richard A. Sherbondy and Libby Sherbondy. The others were Hazel, the oldest sister, Gale the next in line, and Anna and Florence, the two younger sisters. The family moved to Omaha in the early 1900's and lived on the corner of 62nd and Lake. After Gale and Dorothy got married they bought the house just south of the one that Grandpa and Grandma Sherbondy lived in. Hazel and Bud Merrill lived north of Fontenelle Park before moving to San Jose, California. Florence and Leonard Meyers lived on Florence Blvd. before moving to Council Bluffs, Iowa. Anna married and changed her name to Mellon and moved to Rock Island, Illinois.



Grandpa Sherbondy, Richard A. Sherbondy by name, worked for the City of Omaha for as long as I can remember. He was the night watchman at the sand and gravel distribution center in downtown Omaha during the last part of his employment. I remember Dad would take us boys down to see him at 10th and Farnam when he was at work. I don't remember when they both died, but Grandma died before Grandpa in the house on 62nd, and Grandpa died in an apartment just north of 40th and Cumings. Libby used to always make cherry pies and set them in the window to cool at the house on Lake Street.

**Richard A. & Lizzie Kline Sherbondy in front of their house on 62<sup>nd</sup> St.**

My grandparents on my Mother's side were Ed and Cora Graves, who lived in Rock Island, Illinois, and had five children. Mother was the oldest, the next being Marjorie, Dick, Maxine, and Jeanette. Jeanette died of diabetes at the age of 16. They moved to a house on Bedford in Omaha in the early 1900's.



Grandpa Graves worked for the National Car Loading Co. in Omaha. They moved to Omaha and lived at 67th and Bedford for a while, then moved to 19th and Binney in North Omaha. They eventually moved to 24th and Jones Street in Omaha, and then they moved out to live with us at 63rd and Grant. He broke his hip one day, while standing on the corner in downtown Omaha, and never recovered, being home bound the rest of his life. They lived with us for approximately 20 years or more before both of them passed away in 1970 within a week or two of each other.

**Ed and Cora Graves**

## PARENTS

My Dad, Alden Kline Sherbondy, was born to Richard and Libby Sherbondy in Shickley, Nebraska on April 1, 1902.

My Mother, Dorothy Alice Graves, was born to Ed and Cora Graves in Rock Island, Illinois on the 23rd of January, 1904. Both my parents attended Benson West School, which was the only high school at the time. Somewhere around 1920-1922 they both graduated from school, got married in 1927, and bought a house at 2308 N. 63rd Street, just a block west and a block south of where Dad's folks lived on 62nd and Lake.



**Alden and Alice Sherbondy in 1927 and their home at 2308 No 63<sup>rd</sup> St.**

Dad was the family man, and he would spend weekends with us boys, going on hikes around the city of Omaha, or down to the Union Station train depot. At that time you could go down to the tracks and stand right beside the trains and watch them come in and leave. For two fairly young boys that was a lot of fun, and big time fellowship with our father. Our main task some of the other weekends, when we didn't go hiking, was to clean the basement. We would pick things up, put them back in place, dust and clean the spider webs, and then hose the basement down afterward. We would have family get togethers at the Sherbondy's place.

We were members of the Benson Baptist Church and Dad directed the choir for some time, and Mother and Dad both taught Sunday School for many years.

Mother and Dad got divorced in 1947, and Dad moved out and married Clara and eventually ended up living at 3170 Stone Avenue. At first I didn't want to see Dad after the divorce, but later I finally decided that I didn't know all the information about the reason for the break up and it wouldn't be fair to blame Dad for all the problems. After we started to see him again, whatever time Dad was able to spend with us boys was quality time together, and he never asked us to give him more time than we were able to fit into our schedule.

The first place I remember Dad working was for L. G. Doup Manufacturing Company as a bookkeeper. They made mattresses and furniture. He worked there until after the time Mother and Dad got divorced. I can remember times during the summer, when I would go down to the company to watch the workers making mattresses and spend time with Dad in the office.

Mother worked out of the house selling Watkins Products door to door for awhile. Then she went to work for the Benson Venetian Blind Company, and after that she went to work at the Douglas County Court House typing legal documents and other items that were necessary. She did some house sitting for the owner of the Blind Company in North Omaha while they were on vacation.

Mother never worked while they were together. She was always home for us kids and we had breakfast together and the evening meal together. Mom was pretty active after the divorce with keeping the house clean; and shortly after Bob left on his own; her folks came to stay with us. She then had help with the household tasks from her mother, Cora Graves.

After I returned from the Navy, Mother fixed hotdogs five different ways for supper one week, and to say the least it took a long time before I wanted to eat hotdogs again. Another time Mother came out of church and stepped off the curb and slid slowly down into the sewer well. Claude Hall came over and said we would need a derrick to lift Mother out of the well. She sat there for a while laughing so hard her stomach hurt.

We were a family who didn't have a lot of expensive possessions, but we did have a fine shelter and plenty of food and clothes, and lots of love and fellowship together. Dad and Mother only had enough to send Bob to college after the divorce. Dad always felt bad about that and had said that he would compensate me for it in his will. Dad developed Alzheimer's disease about the last 10 years of his life, the last three of which were in the Florence Nursing

Home and that took care of all his savings and money that he wanted to repay to me for the missed college. I didn't need it at that time anyway.

## HOMESTEAD

My older brother, Robert Earl Sherbondy, was born May 28, 1930, and I, Richard Lee Sherbondy, came along just 18 months later on November 28, 1932. The nurse at the hospital told Mother when she was having Bob that she would be back in 18 months to have another baby, and her prediction was to the day.

Our first and only house at 2308 North 63rd St. was a cozy little five room house with front and back bedrooms separated by the bathroom on the north half of the house and kitchen, dining room, and living room on the south side with a full basement. It had two white birch trees in the front parking early in my childhood, until they were cut down. There was a plum tree way in back, and another thorny tree up by the house. We planted a cherry tree up by the house later and a pear tree down on the south side of the back yard later.

Our bedroom was the front one and both Bob and I slept in a double bed until the middle of grade school. The upstairs was then finished off into a dorm type room for us. There were two twin beds and a full size daybed plus a desk with plenty of room. Bob and I had room for a ping pong table up there after we got into high school.

The basement was unfinished, and at first had a coal furnace with a coal chute and bin in the northeast corner of the basement. I can remember plenty of times watching the coal trucks deliver the coal to the house and watching Dad shovel the coal in the furnace to keep warm in the winter. We later on converted to oil, had the coal bin taken out, and a blower put in the furnace to help heat the upstairs after we moved up there. I lived in this house from the time I was born until I left after our wedding in 1958. All of the activities through grade school, high school, U. S. Navy, and back home again took place at this, my home residence.

I spent a lot of my early years playing with cars on the dirt banks of Grant Street, just to the south of our house and across the street. We carved out roads in the side of the bank, and I had a wooden gasoline transport that I played with most of the time. I wore a pair of knee high laceover boots and suspenders to school some of the time. I had a severe overbite with buck teeth for sometime until I had them straightened while in grade school. I remember I had to use rubber bands that would hook on to the front teeth, anchored to the back teeth to pull the front ones in line. I don't remember how long it took to get them somewhat straight.

Most of the activity during the early years was spent in school, listening to the large Gruno radio after school, and attending the local movie house on Saturday afternoon for 15 cents and 10 cents for popcorn. We would see a double feature plus a 15 week serial, of which I remember The Jungle Girl, The Phantom, and Dick Tracy. One afternoon after the movie, Bob and I had to get home to see our new puppy, that Mom and Dad got us. We called her "Boots",

because she was a miniature collie with a white boot on each foot, otherwise she was mostly brown. She was quite rambunctious when she came to greet us in the morning, always trying to jump from the doorway of our front bedroom onto the bed, and smashing into the side of the bed. Two other times she jumped out of the car window after we returned from vacation, and another time she jumped out of the upstairs back window after a roll of carpet, that was thrown out the window, down off the roof of the back porch and onto the ground.

I attended Rosehill School, about a mile walk from our house, and started kindergarten in January. I took the second half of the sixth grade over because they were to have no more mid term classes (a new grade starting in January). We started the morning off with breakfast, consisting of different items each day, but including three large glasses of milk. The first one I would drink before I started the meal, the second one with the meal and the third one to finish the meal. This was the ritual at dinner time also.

We always had radio shows to listen to while getting ready for school, and during the winter we had information on whether the schools were closed due to weather. It seemed like they were always open no matter how much snow we got. After school I came home and listened to the Green Hornet, The Shadow Knows, or I Love a Mystery. This activity was early in my youth as later on the neighborhood kids got together for either touch football, or softball in the vacant lot two doors to the north of the house. We called our little baseball game "double plays." On Saturday afternoon the whole neighborhood consisting of Bob, myself, Art, Ken, and Leroy Holdorf, Bob Olson, Tom Smith, Eileen Lewis, and Diana McCone played out our own weekly serial out in the vacant lot. We used a lot of imagination and make believe. There was a large oak tree right in the middle of the lot and on it was a swing and so we used this as a big part of each episode of our serial. We also played cowboys and Indians using homemade toy guns made out of wood. Sometimes we ran races around the block. I might have started last but sometimes finished first. We sometimes chased rabbits all through the neighborhood, never catching them but always trying.

I slid down an icy hill by school during one winter and fell and chipped a portion of my front tooth off. We rode our bikes real slow trying to put the front tire on one side of the manhole cover and the back tire on the other side of it. We almost had to stop the bike completely to do it. I suppose we could be called normal kids with normal childhoods.

At night in the neighborhood we played kick the can, a form of hide and seek. Someone kicked a tin can up the street and everyone ran and hid while the person who was it went and fetched the can, brought it back and then started to look for everyone else. The big tree in the parking of the vacant lot was base.

We had vacation time every year from the time I was two years old until 13, going to Cowles Lakes, 25 miles west of Omaha on the Platte river, renting one of seven different cabins and spending time together as a family. There were seven different lakes, two of which were for swimming. One was only 4 ft. deep, but the other one had five diving boards, and a log anchored in the middle, and a 25-30 foot tower with a sand bag swing mounted to a cable strung across the lake and through the tower. We both learned to swim there, and started a

hiking program with Dad. Four of the cabins I remember were Wildwood, Idlewild, Lakeview, and Shadyrest. Whenever Mother had dinner ready she went to the car and gave three toots on the horn and wherever the three of us were, we knew it was time to come to the cabin for mealtimes. Bob caught his first fish, a 6 inch bass, out of lake number seven just behind our cabin. Another time the lights of the car went out and we drove back to the cabin at night with one of us hanging out the window shining a flashlight down the road to see where we were going. The cabins were furnished with corn cob stoves for cooking and heat and bunk beds. The running water pumps were outside, and we had to prime each time to get water.

One Saturday morning we had two men on the roof putting new shingles on the house before we left on our two week vacation. Dad wasn't sure they were going to get done in time, and so he finally told them if they wanted to get paid they would have to be done by midday, as we were leaving for vacation. They ended up with 12 men on the roof in order to finish the job by the time we left.

I was usually calm most of the time, but after being teased for a while, I fought back. I once threw a tractor trailer piece at Bob and hit him in the forehead with the neck of the trailer that hooked to the tractor. I also knocked him down one time when he was teaching me to box, after he kept hitting me all the time. I chased one kid through the house from the kitchen out the front door. He hit the door jam going out and I hit the storm window breaking it and cutting my arm just above the wrist and another long cut under the arm pit, but I almost caught the kid on the porch before he got down in the yard.

I took piano lessons for a few years during the latter years of grade school, but I don't remember how to play the piano anymore. I played on the school basketball team in 7th and 8th grade against Dundee and Monroe Schools and also was on the softball team but never got to play in any games.

Dad, Bob, and I spent Sunday afternoons hiking all over Omaha, or else taking the streetcar to the end of the line and hiking out from there to Hummel Park, or down the railroad tracks to South Omaha, or else to Elmwood Park from the house. These times together with Dad were some of the most enjoyable times we had together. They were nothing expensive, but just getting out in the fresh air and enjoying nature and the fellowship together as a family. I have fond memories of those times.

I remember always getting dressed up for Halloween and going trick or treating around the neighborhood and coming home with a sack full of goodies for weeks to come.

Early in childhood we attended the North Side Christian Church on North 24th street because Grandma and Grandpa Graves lived on 19th and Binney, and we caught the streetcar to go over there to church with them. Later we transferred to Benson Baptist Church, on 64th and Maple since it was within walking distance. I was baptized when I was about six and so most of the time we went to the Baptist Church. Mr and Mrs Erskine were a couple in the Baptist Church who had a very important influence in my life, something along the lines of Jim and Grace Groves in Omaha, and Mary and Wilfred Rutledge in Wichita. Bob and I got involved with the youth group after we got older towards the end of grade school and high school. Bob

ended up marrying one of the girls he met at youth group, Carol Compton. The Church had a sermon contest one time, which Bob and I both entered, and he won it and went on to become a Baptist minister. We stayed in youth group through high school until I joined the Navy. I played on the church basketball team at the local community center and I think we won the championship of the league.

Christmas eve was always spent with family, who consisted of Vern and Marjorie Tietsort and their children, Shirley, Bill, and David; the Graves, Ed and Cora; and the Sherbondys, Mom and Dad, Bob and me. Sometimes before they moved away there were Virginia and Dick Graves, and Maxine and Eldon Homan. Maxine had married Eldon, but they couldn't have children, so they got a divorce and later she married Gene Cramer. We went to the different people's houses no matter what the weather was and Vern took home movies of the get together. We had our own Christmas on Christmas morning when we opened the gifts from Santa and Mom and Dad. We always looked for the presents Mom and Dad bought us before Christmas and knew what we were getting before we opened them. Dad bought us both bicycles after my 12th birthday, and on Christmas eve at midnight pushed them both down the hill to put them in the basement for Christmas morning. I went to the 5 & 10 cent store in Benson with something like \$10.00 and bought all the presents for 12 or more people. My, how nice it was at that time to be able to buy so much for so little.

Bob became student helper for the downtown YMCA while in high school, and I helped out during my senior year. We went to "Y" camp for three years from 1944-1946 at Columbus, Nebr. Either one of us would win all the swimming events each year. I excelled in archery, and canoeing, and other activities of the camp. Bob was cabin leader the last year we attended and we both went for the full session of camp. When we came home we got off the bus at Valley, Nebr. and went to Cowles Lakes for our two weeks vacation. There was something wrong this time as Mom and Dad were not themselves, and I could sense that something was wrong. There just was not the closeness of the family and they would not talk to each other much of the time. They got a divorce in 1947, and Mother, for the longest time, wouldn't tell me what the problem was. I found out later that Bob used to sit on the attic stairs and listen to them argue all night. Mother told me later on that she wanted to do everything together as a family and not just with Dad. She never talked about it with us kids and we were left out of the decision making process of the family.

I joined the table tennis club of the YMCA and played some tournaments out of town with them, and Bob and I swam on the swim team. Bob was instrumental in starting the gymnastics team at Benson High while in school, and now all the schools have them.

One morning I was playing basketball down at the Y and Dad came to pick me up for lunch. When he arrived I showed him my dislocated thumb, which was caused by the basketball coming off the backboard, and hitting the end of my thumb. It had been bent back right at the thumb joint on the left hand, however there was no pain when it happened. We didn't get home until after 6:00 P.M. that night. We went over to the doctor's office, and he worked for over an hour trying to reset the thumb and could not get it set. We then went to Methodist Hospital,

where a bone specialist operated on it and reset it. I went back to school on Monday to sixth grade and had to tell everyone what happened.

## HIGH SCHOOL

After Dad moved out I worked hard in school studying after school and also met Bill Dohe. We spent lots of time together going to football games and basketball games during school and playing our own games after school. We both had baseball games with spinners and individual player pieces that would fit over the spinner to use to indicate individual batters. Both of us made up complete schedules of the National League teams with the St. Louis Cardinals, and he made up one of the American League team with the Cleveland Indians. We spent our summer vacation playing these schedules.

I also got an electric football game for Christmas one year, and so I made up the schedule for the Big Eight teams and the Professional Leagues and played them out myself. I also took a full size mattress carton side and made a track meet to scale. I then took some dice and by using the number rolled on the dice, I converted it to the number of squares each marker (indicating a person) would move. I conducted the Big Eight track meet with corresponding times and records for each event. I had all of the conversion tables in a note book, but somehow that got lost so I don't know the formula for that any more. I also made a small motor boat race track and cut out little boats to race and occupied myself for hours with these games I made.

Early in the 1940's, as a family, we had our Saturday evening card parties, including Grandma and Grandpa Graves, Jim Goddard, Mom and Dad, and later on Bill Dohe joined us. We played wild pinochle, sometimes with seven people using five decks of cards, or six people using four decks of cards. We had snacks after midnight when we got done playing. I enjoyed this activity more than going out in high school. We continued this after Mom and Dad's divorce, and Grandma and Grandpa Graves moved in to live with us around 1950. I remember that my grandparents lived with Mother for 20 years. Some children don't even have the chance to get to know their grandparents.

Bob played cards with us early in the sessions, then he got involved with school, and YMCA and his cars. He had three different cars during his junior and senior years in school. Only the last one ran very good, and he had to sell that one when he went into the service after school. He stayed in the service for 17 days, two weeks of which were spent in the infirmary in San Diego, Calif with asthma problems. After he got out of the service, he went to Omaha University and on to Central Baptist Seminary in Kansas City, Mo. to become a minister.

Bill Dohe and I were the best of friends in high school. We rode our bikes to school and attended the football and basketball games at the various schools in Omaha. At this time there were only the following schools: Benson, North, Central, Technical, Creighton, South in Omaha and Abraham Lincoln and Thomas Jefferson in Council Bluffs. I remember we walked

from our house in Benson to North High in the winter to watch a basketball game one night. We wouldn't want to try that now in Omaha.

Sometime in 1950 I started to play golf and bowl. Bill was a real good bowler, but I was just average. I took a golf lesson at Miller Park and really never learned very much about the game of golf. The instructor only told me how far to hit a five iron and seven iron and so forth with each club. I learned more in the 40 years of playing the game on my own than he taught me in the lessons.

I remember in History class in school, Bill and I had some trouble getting the assignment done on time, so we told the teacher on Friday what we had done. We worked over the weekend and took more in on Monday for a grade change. I remember one day in school, I felt sick and feverish, but waited until after my English test to go home. I got a 92 on the test.

I went out on two dates in high school, with different girls, one roller skating, and the other to a hockey game at Ak-Sar-Ben Coliseum. I ushered at the hockey games for a couple of seasons, when Omaha was a member of the old United States hockey League.

I worked after school and on Saturdays at Rivett Lumber Co. on 62nd and Maple. I stacked lumber and cement bags and helped customers with their orders and all the other things that went along with working in the lumber yard. That lumber yard is now a parking lot for the post office vehicles.

I tried smoking, while working at Rivett Lumber Co.; but after only a half a pack of Lucky Strikes that someone gave me, I decided I didn't need any of the after effects of smoking and quit right then.

Most of my life as a child through high school was fairly normal. I had a beebie gun as a child. I remember target practice in the basement, shooting at small plastic cars and boats. One time I set six or seven wooden matches in the edge of a cardboard box to see if I could light one with the beebie gun. Low and behold, I shot and one match burst into flame to my utter surprise.

I had an old basketball backboard in the back yard that I nailed a large juice can to and used a tennis ball for a basketball. The tennis ball just fit into the can and once I made five shots in a row from the base of the bank in the back yard, a distance of about 40-50 feet. I also played baseball with a dart board and darts on the front porch and against the backboard in the back. I also spent time pitching a tennis ball against the cement steps in the front sidewalk trying to keep the ball from rebounding over my head for a home run.

Mother and I worked during a couple of summers at Cowles Lakes running the concession stand. We lived in the cabin just outside of the main gate. I had time to go swimming in the afternoons if we weren't too busy.

A lot of the time was spent helping Mother and Grandpa and Grandma with the house and yard work and all the other things that go into keeping a house ship shape. I remember one

time Mother spread ashes all over the front lawn to help the grass to grow, and instead it ended up killing all of the grass.

## U. S. NAVY

After graduating from Benson High School in 1951, I continued to work at Rivett Lumber Co. until March 14, 1952, when Bill and I enlisted in the Navy. We left shortly after that for San Diego, California for boot camp for eight weeks. When we left Union Station in Omaha on the train, we got down to the train and on board so fast that Mother didn't have time to see us off before the train left. I was on the left side of the train and she was on the right side on the platform.

Bill and I were in the same company during our training. The first thing we got was a crew cut and issue of Navy clothing and quarter's assignment. Then they interviewed us young 19 year olds fresh out of high school, and asked what we wanted to do in the service. How did I know what I wanted to do? I selected Radioman for no apparent reason, but it worked out later for the best as it led me to my job after getting out of the Navy.

We were one of the best companies in the training station that session and it wasn't too bad a time. We did a lot of marching and class work, and learning knots and other Naval history. The third week of training was spent at Camp Elliott, outside of San Diego, where it rained most of the week. We spent time during the night on guard duty with our ponchos on in the rain. I still remember my serial number 3190284 from the service.

On completion of boot camp, I was assigned to Radio School at San Diego, California. In June of 1952, Bill went aboard the cruiser USS Los Angeles. I had 16 weeks of Radio School, learning Morse Code, all about transmitters and receivers and Naval Radio Operators' job. On October 17, 1952, I graduated from school 45th out of 78 with a grade point average of 88.13 and was assigned to the USS Ajax (AR6) in Sasebo, Japan. I took a troop ship out of San Francisco, California for the 22 day crossing to Yokosuka, Japan and a Japanese train ride to Sasebo to the ship.

Just before I arrived, an oil tanker tied up next to the Ajax had a welder working in the forward oil tank when it exploded and peeled the forward deck back up over the superstructure. Mother had heard about it and wondered if I had been on the ship when it happened. I told her I got there after that happened.

I was assigned to the crew of the ship, but there were also members of the flag unit for the Commander Service Squadron 3 for that area of the Pacific assigned to the radio room. On the 1st of April, 1953, I was promoted to RMSN, (Radioman Seaman). Sometime during the summer of 1953, I was transferred to the USS Sharps (AKL10) based out of Guam. If anyone has seen the movie Mr. Roberts, that ship was the same kind that I spent the next 20 months on, going back and forth from Guam to Japan, delivering cargo and supplies to all of the inhabitants of the small islands between Guam and Japan.

I was promoted to Petty Officer 3rd Class (Radiomen RM3). We made stops at some of the notorious island battle sites of World War II, like Saipan, Tainan, Iwo Jima, Okinawa, plus other small volcanic islands named Chi Chi Jima. I was to be the replacement Radioman for Richard Miller, who was the only Radioman on the Sharps when I came on board. We used to send Christmas cards to them back in Maryland; and even one time, while back in Baltimore, I took the opportunity to call him up on the phone and talk about the time we spent in Guam together.

We rode out typhoons and large waves while underway. In port I stood gangway watches and chipped paint on the upper deck. Underway I copied Morse Code at specific times to receive any messages that were needed for the crew of the ship.

I remember times when we were underway in stormy conditions and the cook made spaghetti for supper. He had the pots and pans anchored down on the stove, but the crew went through the inside lower hall to the kitchen to pick up their food at one entrance of the kitchen, passed through the kitchen, and outside to the side of the ship and back to the mess hall. Some sailors stepped into the kitchen, got their food and slid all the way across the kitchen and hit the outside wall, with spaghetti going all over the kitchen. We also sat in the mess hall, which had the tables and benches perpendicular to the bow and stern of the ship, and when the ship rolled from one side to the other, the food moved from one person to the other.

I had my golf clubs sent over to Guam to play golf while I was in port, but never did very well on that course. I took them back home with me when I came home for leave after my time on the Sharps. We had some local Guamanians on board the ship and they drank their local hot sauce like water. It was really hot, but they were used to it.

Early in 1955, I was transferred to the USS Nemasket (AOG10) out of Honolulu and came home for 30 days leave before reporting. Since I hadn't got my driver's license before going into the service, Dad took me to west Blondo to teach me to drive a stick shift car and get my license, so I could rent a car for the time I was home. Dad and Clara had told me about a girl who lived down the street from them on Stone Avenue, and we had been writing letters to each other for some time. We spent the time together while I was home, but after I went back to Honolulu, she didn't want to wait for me to get out of the service and continue our relationship.

The USS Nemasket was a gasoline transport out of Pearl Harbor, hauling aviation gas to the islands of the South Pacific. We made stops at Kwajalain, Eniwetok, Bikini, Johnson, plus the other islands I had been to on the Sharps. I was promoted to Radioman 2nd Class (RM2) July 16, 1955 while on the Nemasket.

We were docked directly across from the Arizona Memorial in Pearl Harbor. At the time I first reported, they only had the gangway to the structure over the sunken Arizona, always raising the flag in the morning and taking it down in the evening. While I was stationed there in Pearl, they built the present memorial and the beautiful structure above the ship. All the names of the sailors who were on the Arizona are carved in stone inside the memorial.

We used to have fun, when underway, watching to see when the waves broke across the left front portion of the ship. Some sailors, on the gangway between the forward part of the ship and the after part, got caught and were soaked with spray and salt water.

I got transferred to the USS Tawasa (ATF94), a fleet tug back out of Japan again, shortly after the middle of July, 1955. The tug needed a Radioman 2nd class and I seemed to be the only one available. So back to Japan I went. I spent the last seven months of my service time going out of Sasebo to rescue various ships or planes that needed to be towed someplace. One time we went to Pusan, Korea to tow a flying boat off the beach. Another time we left Sasebo to go to Okinawa to hook onto a fully loaded MSTS oil transport that had broken loose and was floating free without power.

We towed targets for ship gunnery practice also, and had to get underway around midnight out of Sasebo to be on station at 8:00 in the morning. The best group we towed for was the Cruiser Division 3, consisting of the Manchester, Bremerton, and St Paul. They all had excellent ratings on their guns, and they always showed it by their shooting. Towards the latter part of February, the ship was in Manila for a tow and the Captain had been trying to get us some rest and relaxation as we had been on the go most of the time. There were about four or five of us on the ship who were about to be discharged and he asked us all if we wanted to go to Hong Kong for liberty and all of us opted to go for discharge. We were transferred to the base back at Sasebo and processed for return to Treasure Island at San Francisco for discharge.

We caught a troop ship out of Japan bound for San Diego. There were 286 petty officers on board that ship, some with over 15 years service that were coming back for discharge from all branches of the service. We came into San Diego on the weekend and the processing office had a skeleton crew on hand and was not going to process us through until the next Monday. The Chief Officer walked into the room and saw what was going on. He got us all processed that day and I was on my way to Treasure Island for discharge. While going through the process for discharge, the Navy corpsman could not get a reading of my blood pressure and had to call the doctor to come and take it for him. I got out of the service on the 21st of February, 1956.

## HOME AGAIN

Before getting discharged, I purchased a plane ticket from United Air Lines from San Francisco to Omaha. I surprised Mother on the return home that afternoon. She was talking on the phone when I opened the door and walked in.

I went back to work at Rivett Lumber Co. from Feb. 1956 to Sept. 1956 as a yardman and delivery man. Since I had gotten a driver's license in the service, I was able to drive the lumber truck, filling orders for delivery to construction sites, and hauling supplies from the main yard on Lake Street to our lumber yard in Benson. Both lumber yards have closed now.

. After the service, I bought my first car, a 1953 Chevrolet Impala two tone green, for around \$1100 with money that I had accumulated while in the service. Dad went with me to the car dealer to help me work out the necessary things that go along with buying a car. We traded the car right after we got married and bought a Studebaker Lark.

I enrolled in Radio Engineering Institute in Sept. 1956, on the G. I. Bill to learn about television repair and to get a FCC license. The school lasted about 14 weeks. The course of study was how to make a radio that worked, and all about television and how the television transferred the audio and visual signals into picture and sound. I was able to fix our own television as long as it didn't become too complicated. I went to school during the day for half of the time; then I changed to night for the last half.

I worked for United States Cold Storage company for a month from May, 1957 to June, 1957, loading frozen food from the storage locker to trucks for shipment.

After completing REI school, I went to work for World Radio Labs. in Council Bluffs, Iowa, behind the counter and also delivering radio and television supplies to various dealers and T.V. repairmen throughout the cities of Omaha and Council Bluffs. One time when I was taking a load of trash to the dump, I backed up over some hot ashes in the dump and the tarp of the truck caught on fire, but we were able to move the truck and get it put out before any severe damage happened.

I continued to attend Benson Baptist Church for a short while after returning from the service, but there weren't too many young people left in the church at that time. My cousin, Shirley Tietsort, asked me to attend the youth group at First Christian Church on Sunday evenings. I attended because it was more organized, involved with more activities, and had more people. One evening some of the young folks from First Church were going to go to a Youth For Christ meeting in Omaha and I was taking a car load to the meeting. We stopped at an A & W root beer drive-in for a treat before going; and the car hop, when she brought my root beer float, dumped the whole thing in my lap, which was a cold feeling at the time. I went home, changed clothes and we went on to the meeting.

Most of my time outside of working at World Radio Laboratories, was spent doing things with the college age group at First Christian Church. We had swimming parties at different lakes, or parties at the sponsors' houses or as mentioned before, attended a Youth For Christ meeting someplace in the area.

Around August of 1956, three girls from the youth group, Shirley Tietsort, Corky Groves, and Evie Turner decided that they were going to a drive-in movie and asked me and Nancy Schenck, another girl from the group, if we wanted to go along and would I like to drive. They made sure that Nancy sat next to me in the front seat of the car and from that time on we became more and more interested in each other. We continued to do things together in the youth group, and eventually I joined the church so that I would have the fellowship of both the morning and evening groups including Sunday School and Church.

This activity took place before I finished the school at R.E.I., because when I got home from school in the evening, I called on the phone and talked to Nancy for one or two hours and told her all that took place that day. We fell in love with each other and talked about the future together, and what it would be like. Around May, 1957, Shirley, Corky, and Evie began to wonder when Nancy and I would become engaged. Every Sunday during the morning service and again in the evening youth group, the girls at church tried to see if Nancy had received a ring or not. I bought her a double ring set and asked her to marry me out in front of her house. We were going over to Dad and Clara's for the evening and then out to see Mother. A week passed by before the girls noticed Nancy was wearing an engagement ring. The announcement was made in the paper for a February wedding.

Most of our times together were playing cards at our house on Saturday nights with Mother, the grandparents, Bill Dohe, and Nancy. I also spent time with her at her house in the evening watching television or just visiting. We also had many dinners together at her house either in the evening or on Sunday afternoon. Our church activities were spent in Sunday School and youth group. I remember one summer she went off to vacation with her family at Lake Okoboji, Iowa, and she was so depressed that she wanted to come home early.

As I look back on those times together, I can see how God directed the decisions that we made, but somehow let us feel that we were the ones making the choices.

Saturday, February 22, 1958, we were married in the First Christian Church at 26th and Harney in Omaha. Dr Eulis Hill performed the ceremony, my brother Bob was best man and ushers were Bill Dohe, Bob Olson, and Ken LaFon. Those at the ceremony tried to find where we hid the car, but they couldn't, so they were unable to decorate it. They followed us when we left in the best man's car. We were able to lose them by going the wrong way on a one way street. We then headed south for a weekend honeymoon in Kansas City.

## NEWLYWEDS

We now began our lives together, as a young married couple on the threshold of success or failure. How we responded to the problems of family life had a meaningful effect on our lives together. I wasn't very excited about the future at this point in our early beginning of family life, but God in His infinite wisdom worked through each situation to our advantage.

We took up residence at 4438 Franklin, Omaha, Nebraska, and a three room apartment in the upstairs of a large house. I still worked at World Radio Laboratory, and Nancy continued to work at Northern Natural Gas. We joined a bowling league for recreation and the rest of our time was spent in church activities with the Homebuilders class.

We both ended up bowling in mixed leagues early in our married life. One night I was sick and Ken Schenck, Nancy's father, substituted for me in the league. We played some bridge with members of the Homebuilders class on weekends. We also took some bridge classes at the

Benson Community Center which helped us to some trophy winning times in later marathons played with the group.

I would sometimes give devotions for the Sunday School class; and once I had to do one on the spur of the moment, after I had come into the class that morning. It turned out to be one of my better ones.

Nancy quit work before the birth of Jeff in 1959. I remember that Jeff had colic most of the time he was a baby on Franklin Street. Either Nancy or I would be up most of the night trying to get him to sleep.

In April of 1959, I interviewed for a job with System Sales Co. in Omaha. This position was more money and closer to home. We were able to secure the loan on the house on Evans St. because of the raise I was to receive six months after starting work. The company was a sales and service representative for 3M Company copying machines. My job required me to cover the city of Omaha and surrounding cities in Iowa, repairing and servicing thermo fax copy machines and micro film equipment. I found out sometime after I started that the service manager was only making \$15.00 a month more than I was and he had been with the company 15 or more years. It didn't look like there was much chance for advancement or more money. I filled out an application for Air Traffic Control Specialist based on my experience in the Navy, and was placed on a selection list according to a numerical rating.

We were just newly married and had a baby boy, who was two years old, when in 1960 I received a notice of a job opening with the Federal Aviation Administration. I turned that one down, because we had just bought our house on Evans Street. Then in June of 1962, I received a call from Kansas City Regional office that there was an opening in a class for Air Traffic Controllers the following Monday. This inquiry and the acceptance of the proposal was a major change in our family. From that time on we continued to be blessed by God and provided with all that we needed to become successful in our married life.

## MOTHER'S HOUSE

After we were married and moved back to Omaha from Ottumwa, I had to go over to Mother's house on 63rd street every week to mow the lawn and cut down a lot of trees. Trees in mother's yard grew everywhere all around the house. Numerous small trees started to grow and I had to pull them out or if they got bigger I had to saw them off.

Bill Dohe and I one afternoon, took up the tile in the bathroom and laid new tile down. It was quite a job, but after a lot of scraping to get the old paste up, we got the new stuff down. We had the house painted a couple of times and one time the painter had to put breather holes in the siding so that the paint wouldn't peel. Some of the wood was pretty bad. We helped mother vacuum and dusted or mopped on the house, but some things had been so soiled, that we couldn't get them clean.

Every time we came back to Omaha for a visit we stayed with mother. Mother liked to use the phone and called long distance quite often. One time when we were going to Omaha to visit, she called in the morning just to see if we had left yet. We slept in the front bedroom and the mattress on the bed always sloped to the center. We always felt closer to each other. Mother never had an air conditioner, but used a window fan upstairs to get circulation through the front windows in the summer time, and in the winter time we had trouble keeping warm.

We had to fix her checking account, after a number of years of her doing her own finances. She asked the bank how much money was left in the account halfway through the month. Once they told her, she wrote more checks on that amount. When she overdrew the account, \$50 was charged to her visa account and transferred to the checking. We finally had to consolidate her charge accounts into one payment, and balance her checking account each month. After she received her Social Security and pension checks the first of the month, we finally got her to realize that she didn't have any more money to spend than what she received to start each month.

Towards the latter years of Mother's life, a lot of the care that she received came from the neighbors. Mother called them on the phone and they went over and helped her when she needed it. For most of the year of 1990, we had to make numerous trips to Omaha to help Mother, as she became worse, and couldn't move very much. We eventually put her into a care home in Benson, but all she wanted to do was go home. She kept saying, "I will be mobile when I get home." She was able to go home shortly before the end of 1990, but then by June of 1991 the neighbors found her unable to get out of bed; and so we moved her to Aksarben Manor, a care home in western Omaha. She got along fairly well there and finally accepted the situation that she wouldn't be able to go home again. The doctor indicated that she was developing congestive heart failure. They gave her some medicine to help eliminate the problem of fluids building up in her system. That would only delay the inevitable, so we decided just to make her as comfortable as possible. The Manor continued to keep me advised of her condition and whether it was advisable for us to go to Omaha.

The following is a recap of the activities of the time from July 4, 1991 to July 17, 1991. It is an answer to prayer that God would take charge of the situation and do what needed to be done.

How often do we find ourselves asking God for something, or asking God to solve a problem, and yet not really wanting God to answer according to his will? We so often are only concerned that God answers when we want him to, and how we want him to. God has promised to answer prayer, but we must trust him to answer in his time and as his will directs.

During this year my mother, Alice Sherbondy who was 87 years old, had been having more and more medical problems, and living alone having harder times getting up out of the chair and moving about the house. I prayed that God would take charge of the situation and do what he saw fit with her life and place of living. I was hoping that I was patient enough to allow God to work in his time and place. Mother continued to weaken and develop more complications with fluids in her body and lungs, and on June 2, 1991, she had to go into the hospital for a couple of days. She wanted so much to stay in her home, but God had other plans

for her and had to allow her to reach a point where she turned it all over to God for him to conduct his will.

I can see now that God had a reason for wanting Mother to be wholly dependent on his love and grace, and that reason was so that I and possibly others would truly be able to see how God completely works in people's lives and through people to accomplish his will in any and all situations.

Mother finally became too weak to take care of herself, and had to go into a nursing home on June 16, 1991. She still hung on to the belief that she was going to get better and would be able to return home soon. God continued to let her condition worsen slowly until she finally realized that He wanted her to release all her suffering and pain to him and allow God to bring about a solution that would benefit all concerned and glorify God as Lord of our lives and in control of all that happens. We, as humans, find it hard sometimes to realize how God is working in our lives, and too often we don't see what he is doing and how he will work things out. We only need to trust that God has a reason for what he is doing and good will come out of all the chaos and trauma that we put up with.

I wasn't able to see what God was doing until after all the events of July 4th through July 17th of 1991. We were continually guided by His spirit and His will, until everything came to a successful conclusion to God's glory and honor.

I feel that God told Mother on the 3rd or 4th of July that he was going to call her to heaven to be with Jesus, but not until she was able to know that both her sons and wives were able to see her and talk with her. I have no way of knowing if this was true, but I just feel that from what she said a couple of times to Bob, my brother, that God told her what was going to happen and when.

Bob and Betty went from Elgin, Illinois to see Mother on the 4th of July, and after talking with her for a time, she said she was going to be released and go home. (before she went to the home, a neighbor was with her when she woke up from her sleep and said " Mother, I am coming home, but not just yet." Her Mother died in 1970. ) Bob did not understand that she was talking about heaven, and told her that she was too sick to be able to go to her home on 63rd street, and would have to stay in the care home.

I worked from 4:00 P. M. until midnight in Wichita, Kansas on the 5th of July, and the nursing home called Nancy before I got home, and updated Mother's condition as weaker. Her lungs were partially filled with fluids, and she was running fevers of 101.5 to 103.0 off and on. I called the home the next morning and found no change, but she wasn't gaining any additional strength; so Nancy and I decided to get our things together and leave for Omaha. We went to the home and met Bob and Betty and saw Mother. From the time we left for the drive to Omaha until the time we arrived back in Wichita, God supplied me, and I assume everyone else, with all the strength and peace that was necessary to withstand all that was taking place.

Mother was very weak on Saturday night and could only ask weakly for orange juice and open her eyes for a short period of time. We hadn't had supper yet, so the four of us went

out to eat and returned to the home to tell Mother goodnight around 8:00 Saturday evening. When we returned to the room, we noticed no change, and the nurses said that she could linger this way for two hours, two days, or two weeks, who knows. God knew but wasn't telling us yet, but had told Mother. When Bob went up to her to tell her goodnight, how much he loved her, and all that she had meant to him, he also said that he and Betty were going to be leaving to drive back to Elgin, an eight hour drive. She opened her eyes wide and looked right at Bob and said. "Aren't you going to stay for the funeral?" We all heard it and wondered if we heard it right. Bob, after a few seconds, replied that they would be back, thinking that it could be awhile yet before that would take place. Mother smiled and said okay, and so they left for Elgin. I went up to her and told her how much I loved her, and that she should just allow God to work His will in her life, and to get a good night's sleep. We would be back in the morning, she nodded okay and we left.

We returned in the morning on Sunday the 7th at 9:00, and the head nurse had been in the room 20 minutes earlier to give the lady in the room with Mother some medicine, and as we walked toward the room, he didn't say that anything was different than Saturday night. We walked into the room, and Mother was slumped over to one side and showed no signs of chest or stomach movement, or the usual gasping for breath. We didn't say anything to each other, but Nancy and I felt at peace, and said silently she couldn't be breathing that easily. I felt for a pulse and called in the nurse, and he checked for a pulse and blood pressure, advising us that she was gone. I believe that she was at peace, and knew that God had taken her home, and she was ready and sure of her salvation. God did not stop with his grace, love, peace, and strength as he continued to supply all of our needs for the rest of the week.

We made calls to the church from the home, advising the secretary to tell the minister. We then went back to Nancy's Dad's place, where we got in touch with other people who needed to know, so that we could make the funeral arrangements. We contacted everyone except Mother's sister, Marjorie, in Mountain Home, Arkansas. She had already left for church, and after church, went out to eat with women of the church as usual. We didn't reach her until 2:00 PM Sunday afternoon. Mother talked to Marjorie on the phone daily, and they were very close. Marjorie had no way to get out of Mountain Home by public transportation and she didn't drive. I told her I would be there to pick her up on Sunday and take her back to Omaha on Monday. I didn't know how long the trip would take, and had only been to her house once before some 20 years ago when we camped at Branson, Missouri. I purchased a road map and planned the route, making sure of road numbers and cities I would go through. I left at 3:15 P. M., and usually when I drive anyplace on the road, I have a tendency to doze off or get sleepy; but this time, I was wide awake for ten hours, drove into the city of Mountain Home at 1:15 A. M., stopped at the center of the city, and saw a road to the left. I told myself I had to go up that street, and then turned and drove into her driveway. I am sure that God not only kept me awake all the way, but led me to exactly where I needed to go.

I then rested or relaxed for 15 minutes and went to bed, asking God for a good night's sleep, since when I am wrapped up in things that need to get done, I usually lay in bed and think about everything. I knew I couldn't do that this time. God answered my prayers with 5-1/2 hours of sound sleep, and the same guidance on the trip back to Omaha on Monday.

While I was gone, Nancy made appointments about the funeral with the mortuary and the minister, along with arrangements for later in the week in regards to the house. Bob's children and wives arrived on Tuesday and began to sort through the house, picking out articles of furniture that they wanted and starting to throw out junk. They rented a truck to take everything back to Elgin that they wanted. Nancy got an estate sale set up for Thursday, Friday and Saturday, with Goodwill coming on Saturday to pick up what was left.

The funeral was scheduled for Wednesday afternoon at the church, with all six grandchildren as pallbearers. The minister did a beautiful job; and Nancy and Linda sang two duets, which had to be supplied with the strength from God to be able to do so. All of the arrangements went without a problem, and we were able to conclude our estate sale by Friday evening instead of Saturday. Goodwill was able to come and take all the leftovers on Friday evening. We listed the house with a realtor on Friday, for advertising starting Saturday, the 14th. We left for Mountain Home on Saturday to take Marjorie back home, and again we had strength and guidance to keep from getting tired and returned on Sunday to Kansas City for Kristen's second birthday party at Jeff's house.

The July 4th weekend we left Wichita for Omaha, Terry announced that he wanted to sell the car he had bought from Nancy's Mother about one and a half years previously, when she wasn't able to drive any more. We didn't want to let it go, since it still had low mileage, we told him we would buy it from him. By the time we got to Kansas City on Sunday, the 14th, Terry had bought a different car, and we were able to take the other one back to Wichita with us, arriving Sunday evening about 9:00, after about 2900 miles for the week.

While cleaning out the entire house, selling what we could, and throughout the whole week, we had an inner feeling of peace and joy that God accomplished so much in His way and through His Spirit, that I never once experienced sorrow that Mother had passed away, but always felt that God was taking care of everything. He was not finished, as on Tuesday the 16th, after our return home, we received an offer on Mother's house for more than we thought we would get for it. The arrangements to close the sale were completed by the end of the month. After buying Terry's car, we advertised our older Olds Firenza for sale in the newspaper. On Tuesday, we had two calls showing interest; and the first lady who called said she had been looking at nothing but junk, and if her boy liked it, she would take it. He thought it was okay, so we sold both the house and the car in the same day.

God continued to work toward completing all the final bills and expenses in association with the estate, utilities, and filing of the medical bills. I didn't fully realize how thorough God was in providing all of the needs we were experiencing, without us ever having to ask for extra help. I finally fully realized that if we but only trust in God with all our heart and lean not on our own understanding, and if we acknowledge God in every way, he will direct our paths. He will also supply us with that perfect peace, because we keep our minds turned to God and trust him unconditionally. The joy that comes from realizing that putting our total faith in God and trusting completely in God takes away all the sorrow, worry, and anxiety and replaces it with peace, joy and confidence in God to carry out everything that needs to be completed.

## POTPOURRI

Our house was at the end of a cul-de-sac in Ottumwa. On the weekends we had breakfast cookouts among the five families and then after lunch the five guys would take off for the golf course for our weekend outing if I wasn't working. That neighborhood was the life saver for Nancy, as she hated small towns and didn't have anything to do. Three of the families had small children to play with Jeff and Linda, during the day. While the salesman were gone on their routes and I was working, the wives spent time together. Nancy's folks, Ken and Vivian, came over to see us while we were there, and Ken and I were able to head for the golf course, while Vivian stayed with Nancy and the two kids. One time we played, I had to remove my woods from the golf bag to get them in the trunk, and I forgot to put them in the bag before we started to play. Ken loaned me his 2-wood and I calmly hit the first drive about 250 yards down the center of the fairway. Ken said he wouldn't loan me his clubs anymore.

I remember shoveling snow, at least six inches every other day, on Evans Street and piling it up on the outside of the driveway. It got to where the snow was over my head. I think that was the same year the temperature never got above 7 degrees in January and February.

While I was still working for System Sales in Omaha, I got off work at 5:00 PM and went to the Post Office in the Christmas season to sort mail till midnight. One night I came home and started to climb into bed from the foot of the bed, and as I reached my right hand up my side of the bed, in the dark, I missed the bed and did a half-twist and fell on my back down between the bed and the wall. I was laughing so hard that I couldn't tell Nancy that I was all right.

We had to replace our wedding pictures because they were stored under the stairs in the basement. The sewer drain backed up and the pictures were all damaged by water. Luckily, it was within the time period that the photographer still had the negatives.

One morning I got up to be at work at 6:00 A.M., went through the normal routine of getting ready, and started up the street to work and looked at my watch and it was already 10 minutes after six. I don't know what happened to the time, but obviously I was late.

A number of Christmas eves were spent putting together different toys and presents for the kids so that they would see what Santa brought them. I hated to see the words "assembly required" on the toy boxes..

I spent three years of our early married life finishing the basement of the house on Spencer. Nancy always wondered if I was ever going to do any actual work, as I spent one day just measuring to make sure that everything fit together. I used a power gun to put the 1X2 firing studs for the paneling on the cement blocks, and finished off a room for Jeff and enclosed the washer and dryer in a room. It came out really good and only one wall plug was a half inch off, but never showed after I put the plate over it.

When I painted the house on Spencer, I painted everything but the eaves of the roof from the ladder. I had to lay on the roof and lean over the edge to paint the side of the overhang on the roof.

As we moved from place to place, the yards we acquired became smaller and smaller so that I didn't have to mow so much grass.

After we moved to Des Moines in 1973, Omaha experienced some tornados and one of them just passed by the house on Evans Street. It took out the big tree that we had in front and damaged some of the siding on the house.

I remember coming home from church one Sunday morning during a snow storm and having to go to work at 4:00 P.M. I ate dinner, and by the time I had shoveled the driveway, I found the street covered with two feet of snow. I was snowbound for four days. The fellow up the street from us worked for the Nebraska Department of Roads as the coordinator for snow removal. Monday morning a big two bladed state snow plow came down Spencer Street to his house but not as far as ours, and off to work he went. There I was still stuck at home.

I backed out of the drive in Des Moines one morning to go to work, and ran right into a foot and a half snow drift across the drive. I had to get out and shovel the little Volkswagen out so I could get to work.

I started keeping track of golf statistics in 1980. I recorded total scores, the number of putts, drives landing in the fairway, on greens in regulation figures, birds, and chip-ins for each nine holes. I did this for each course I played and when we bought a computer, I transferred the information to that and added to it yearly.

We had metal clothes poles in Des Moines and one year wasps built a nest in the open end of them. I had to soak rags with gasoline and stuff them into each end of the pipe to get rid of them.

Jeff played one year of little league baseball in Omaha, and went all year without a hit until the last game. He got his only hit and drove in a run the last time up to bat. I umpired some of the games in the league during that time.

Terry played three years of little league and went to the district playoffs one year which they won and then went on to the Regionals. In one game of the league playoffs, he tripled and then a few pitches later he stole home.

Dad and Clara were members of the Omaha Walking Club, and when we visited in Omaha, we went with them for hikes down to the shack the club had in Fontenelle Forest. Sometimes we took our picnic basket of food for the pot luck dinner with other members of the walking club. I remember one time Bob's family was along too and he was carrying a pot of baked beans on his head down to the club, and he stumbled and bounced them off his head, but they didn't spill.



**Al, Clara with Richard's and Robert's families at the shack/cabin.**

In 1966 we bought a new Plymouth Fury and took a trip to Disneyland in California with Jeff and Linda, Nancy was pregnant with Terry at that time. We stopped in San Jose, Calif to see Nancy's grandmother, got off the interstate at the wrong exit and got caught in the race traffic for Santa Anita Racetrack. We made it through all right and went to see Grandmother Rockne and to Disneyland. One of us found an unused book of coupons for admission to the various rides at Disney land. I think the cost of entrance books at that time was around \$20.00 dollars. To say the least, we were able to enjoy the rides even more. When we parked our car to go into the park, a gentleman asked us if we could help him find his car, as he couldn't remember where he parked it. That is really hard in a parking lot that big.

In 1967, we bought a Viking fold down camper, and took camping trips for the next fifteen years with the kids. Our first few trips were with the Hunts to Ponca State Park in South Dakota and Niobrara State Park in Nebraska for a week or two at a time.

We moved to Des Moines in 1973, and took a camping vacation with Bob and Carol to Gatlinburg, Tennessee and the Smoky Mountains and on to Nashville and the Grand Old Opry. We had a good time with the kids and with Bob and Carol, and the time spent together. We took a camping trip to Florida to Disney World and Cypress Gardens, Busch Gardens, and Sea World. We went to the Kennedy Space Center, and on the way to it, a medium size dog was running down the center line of the highway between the cars. I was watching him all the time, but when he darted in front of the car I couldn't stop because of traffic. I hit the dog he rolled under the car and then, got up off the side of the road and ran off. The kids were glad to see him run away, as they thought their dad had killed a dog.

We stopped to see some friends of Nancy's in Tampa, Florida on the way home and they took us to the Kapok Tree Restaurant, a eating place with seven large dining rooms on two floors, and a garden patio. We bought tickets at a booth like a ticket booth of a movie theater,

and ordered the food and the dining room where we wanted to eat. It was quite an operation and the food was excellent.

One summer we went to Buena Vista, Colorado camping with the church youth group. Another trip we took to Colorado was to see the Royal Gorge, Durango, Estes Park, Mesa Verda National Park Pikes Peak, and Garden of the Gods. We also enjoyed trips to Six Flags over St Louis, Missouri Worlds of Fun and Oceans of Fun in Kansas City. We scheduled a ride on the narrow gauge railroad train from Durango to Silverton, up the mountain side. About half way up the grade of the mountain, the drive shaft on the left side of the engine hit a rock and broke, and the train was unable to continue to Silverton. They returned to Durango and when we got back into the station, the agents who were in charge of the ride had all of the passengers' refunds ready in whatever form you wanted it, or scheduled you for another ride. We sold the camper in 1982 and started to find other means of vacations. The kids had reached high school and so we didn't do much camping after that.

February of 1983, we took a trip to Hawaii for our 25th anniversary. We flew out of Wichita to Los Angeles and boarded a 747 jumbo jet for the flight to Honolulu. We were hosted by Pleasant Hawaiian Holidays, a tour group, that had seven different tours for any number days and covering two to four islands. A couple of years earlier, for Christmas, Jeff bought me a new camera and zoom lens and wide angle lens plus a carrying case. We were able to take a lot of pictures of the two weeks we had on the various islands. I ruined one roll of film getting it out of the camera, but all the rest of the pictures came out fine and we have fond memories of our trip. We were able to see most of the beautiful things on the islands and some time we want to go back and cruise the islands instead of going by plane from island to island.

In 1989, Terry was part of the Governor's reception for scholars at Cedarcrest in Topeka, Kansas during his senior year in high school. He also attended Boys' State that year.

I started to read books from the library in Wichita. I checked out two or three books for about three weeks and then returned them and checked out more of the same author until I had read all of them the library had by that author. I entered them in our computer so as not to read the same book twice. Since we moved to Bella Vista, I have recorded 630 books read both by myself and Nancy.

In 1972 we bought a Plymouth Fury with load leveling shock on the rear end to help level the trailer hitch and trailer when towing it. One time when going south on the Interstate in Kansas City by the Sports Complex, the bearing on the trailer locked up and the wheel came off, ran across the road and the north bound lane of the Interstate and ran up against the guard rail and stopped. The trailer dropped down on the rim and followed the car to a stop in the inside median of the Interstate. We were relieved that there was not an accident.

We kept the Plymouth until we moved to Wichita, when we bought a 1978 Delta 88 Oldsmobile. Later we bought a new 1988 Oldsmobile Ciera, which we put 175,000 miles on before buying a 1995 Mercury Sable in 1996.

We always were able to get back home for Christmas even when we lived in Urbandale, Kansas City, and Wichita. We usually had good weather as snow and ice happened either

before or after the holidays and the day we had to travel. One time when we returned to Omaha from Urbandale, we were heading west on I-80, the wind was out of the north, and light snow was blowing across the road. A Corvette ahead of us all of a sudden spun out and shot right into the center of the median. Another time going from Wichita to Omaha on Highway 81 towards Salina, Kansas, Interstate 35 was all icy, and especially in the passing lane. We had to really go slow, but we made it.

Shortly after we moved to Wichita, we were in Omaha and picked up a car for Linda, a Datsun, and drove it back to Wichita. An unforecasted snow storm hit central Nebraska between Lincoln and York, and so I had to drive the Datsun, while Linda and Nancy drove our car. We ran out of the snow by the time we got to Concordia, Kansas.

## HORIZONS

After I had received the call in 1962 about the position in Kansas City with the Federal Aviation Agency, I came home for lunch that day and called the Agency in Kansas City. They advised me that I needed to be in K. C. Saturday morning to be sworn in, and be in Oklahoma City Monday to start school for eight weeks. It was a very scary situation, going back to school again, when I had been away from any real hard studying since 1957.

This school consisted of seven different phases of subjects relating to aviation and the FAA. After the eight weeks of study, there were tests given on each subject. It was also pass/fail criteria. All of the prospective specialists had to pass the classroom studies, and also the laboratory positions where the lessons learned in class were put to use in practice. The subjects were Communications, Aviation Weather, Teletype, Navigation Aids, Flight Assistance Service, Air Traffic Rules, Air Route Traffic Control, and Terminal Air Route Traffic Control.

I went back to work, to System Sales, that afternoon and told the boss of the Company that I would be leaving by Friday to take the job with the FAA. I had been filling out different forms from the Government for two or three months before this getting ready for the call, but they only gave me two and a half days to make the transition. There were only two other classes reporting after ours, so there might not have been another opportunity to change jobs.

I left for school, not knowing what to expect, got sworn in at Kansas City in 38 minutes, and with a couple of other fellows left for the Academy at Oklahoma City. We needed to arrive with enough time to get settled in the motel and find out how much time to allow to get from the motel to the Academy for class.

By the time four weeks of the school had passed, I had become confident that I would make it through the school and become an Air Traffic Controller. I selected the Flight Service Station option from the beginning and after school, I was assigned to the Teletype Relay and Control Facility (NKA) at Kansas City. I found myself a one bedroom apartment in Kansas City after school, and commuted back and forth from Kansas City to Omaha after my five day

shift work was over. I would get off the mid watch at 8:00 A.M. in the morning and drive to St Joseph, Mo, get a couple of cups of coffee and a doughnut, and continue on to home in time to go to bed for a short nap. I would then leave Omaha after two days at home in time to get back to work by 4:00 P. M., work for five days and do the same thing over again.

I commuted for quite a while before the family was able to move to Kansas City. We decided to move ourselves since the Government would move us again if we chose to, but we were responsible for getting ourselves to our first duty station. Nancy went to Kansas City for a house hunting trip and we found a small little two bedroom house for rent in Rolland Park, Kansas. We had most of the members of the Homebuilders class from church help us load the truck on the moving day. I drove the truck down and Nancy drove the Studebaker Lark with the two kids. We both collapsed after we unloaded all of the furniture except the washer and dryer. I had to return the truck to the Ryder rental place in K. C. the next morning.

This appointment was what the Government called a Career-Conditional appointment. For a period of three years, I was subjected to performance reviews to see if I met certain requirements of the job. I always met the requirements, and after three years I was given a Career appointment.

The main job of the Communication Center at K. C. was to relay collected weather data and flight information to various Flight Service Stations on both east and west circuits. Kansas City being the center of the two circuits, it became the relay station for both circuits. We would relay weather, every hour, from the east circuit to the west and visa-versa. We also relayed flight plans and aircraft information from one station to another station in different parts of the country. We also handled the reservation for military flights across the country, and had to type the flight plans from the Central Altitude Reservation Facility to the various Air Route Traffic Centers. We had to be able to read tape at 10 words per minute, and type on the teletype machines at 50 words per minute. Five letters, numbers, or characters in both the tape reading or teletype constituted of one word.

I started working rotation shifts daily when I first started and continued to work them for the rest of my 34 years with the Agency. My shift at the Communication Center started with a 4:00 P. M. to midnight the first and second days, then 8:00 A. M. to 4:00 P. M. on the third and fourth days, and then ending up on the fifth day with a midnight to 8:00 A. M. I always had 2 full days off between work weeks, and our work weeks weren't always from Sunday to Saturday. It could start on Monday and go till Friday, always working 40 hours in a little over four days of actual time. We might stay on one schedule for three or four weeks then change days off and work a different schedule like Tuesday through Saturday with Sunday and Monday off. After a while I got used to it and was able to get caught up on my sleep during the days off.

In late 1962 I transferred to the Flight Service Station at Ottumwa, Iowa. This was a station that supplied weather and aeronautical information to pilots, either in person or by radio or by telephone. When I indicated that I would transfer to Ottumwa, Iowa, I was shifted from the Communication Center at (NKA) to the Flight Service Station at the municipal airport in downtown Kansas City, Mo. for some training on the positions that they had in Ottumwa,

These included In-flight, Pilot Weather Briefing, Teletype, Flight Data and Weather Observing. I had to become a weather observer in Ottumwa, taking daily weather observations, estimating the height and types of clouds, how much of the total sky was covered, what the wind direction was and temperature and dew point. We were responsible for supplying the local pilots with up to date weather information for their planned flight, and filing their flight plans with the Air Route Traffic Control at Kansas City. We also sent them to the destination Flight Service Station, if they were going to be flying under Visual Flight Rules.

After we moved to Ottumwa, the local paper had an article and picture of me, telling about our moving to the city, and that I would be working at the Flight Service Station at the airport.

Our stay in Ottumwa wasn't too bad; I continued to learn the requirements of the job, and how to become a better specialist. Our financial situation continued to get better with annual raises and step in-grade increases after a few years.

We still had the house in Omaha at 6769 Evans, and along about October, the renters advised us that they were going to move, and we needed to do something with the house, either sell it, move back to Omaha and live in it, or leave it vacant. We didn't know what we were going to do, but shortly after we were advised that the renters were moving, a specialist from Omaha Flight Service Station, stopped in at Ottumwa while I was on duty. He was on his way to Burlington, Iowa to spend time with his family. He was in the same situation I was, as he was commuting back and forth across Iowa every five days. We talked about trying to get a mutual swap between stations. While we were in the process of filling out the paper work to be submitted to the Regional Office, a person from the Kansas City Regional Office stopped by the station and proceeded to advise me that the office would in no way approve the proposed swap. In November of 1963, we got the swap approved, and I reported to work at the Omaha Flight Service Station. We moved back into our little two bedroom house on 6769 Evans. We stayed until the spring of 1964, and then looked at a model house in a development west of 90th and north of Maple, called Maple Village. The house was a split entry with three bedrooms upstairs, kitchen and eating space. The garage was under the bedrooms, the unfinished basement was a half sunken one. We went ahead and bought it and had it built at 9458 Spencer, and we were able to sell the one on Evans also.

The Flight Service Station at Omaha was located on the 2nd floor of the old terminal building right in the center of the flight line. The City of Omaha had built a new tower to the south of the present terminal and included a new terminal. Through the time we were in the old terminal, it became known as the number one worst facility as far as interior building space was concerned. We even had our own little pets, a couple of little mice, one white, that would roam around the facility perched on top of the waste baskets at times.

At Ottumwa all the specialists were the same grade level (GS-7), and when I transferred to Omaha, they had two different grades of specialists. We were classified as Assistant Air Traffic Control Specialist GS-7, and the more experienced specialists were regular Air Traffic Control GS-9. I was only able to work the teletype, flight data and broadcast positions and was trained on in-flight and preflight positions. We continued to get annual pay raises and step

increases within the same grade for the first four years. Then we had to wait two years for a monetary increase to the next step for steps 5-6-7 and three years for steps 8-9-10. If during the year I got upgraded to a higher GS grade, the Government raised the pay equal to or more than a two step increase. Midway through our stay in Omaha the Government decided to do away with the Assistant Air Traffic Control Specialist and promote all specialists grade GS-7 to full Specialists grade GS-9. This action made a large sum of money increase in our salary.

After becoming full controllers, we were able to operate all the positions, including in-flight and pilot weather briefing. It didn't take us long before we were proficient in both positions.

The military flight data position dealt with the Strategic Air Command (SAC) flights from Offutt Air Force Base. When we worked the midnight shift, the base operations would give us the military flight plans for the next day's operations. These would mostly be for overseas or up across Alaska. They would mostly be three to four pages long with each page to include 20 lines of routes and check points, plus usually 20 or more addressees including Air Traffic Control Centers and Military Base Operations and Oceanic check points. It took about three hours of work on the teletype machines to cut a tape of the flight plan and proof read them and then transmit them to Kansas City Center for activation the following morning.

One time while working at the Station, some of the specialists had the opportunity to tour the SAC Command Center in the underground of Offutt AFB. The military personnel on duty that day explained the operation of the center and showed us how the "red alert" phone worked on a test basis. The officer in charge communicated to all SAC bases throughout the world that a test was going to be conducted and that those stations needed to respond to the test and acknowledge it. When the officer picked up the phone and gave the test, within three minutes all stations had acknowledged.

Each day at the close of the day, at 6:00 P. M. Greenwich Mean Time, which compared to midnight Greenwich, England, we had to count and record the day's traffic, including pilot briefs, flight plans and radio contacts. We recorded the totals, wrapped them up in teletype paper and stored them in the back room of the station for 15 days. One day I had finished the traffic count and took the wrapped bundles back to the file and took the two bundles that were 16 days old back up to the operation room to be trashed. I walked into the front entrance and took a look at the large trash can all the way across the station to see if I could make a hook shot with one bundle. When it slam dunked into the can, the watch supervisor laid a nickel on the counter and said "I bet you can't do it again." I calmly swished the second hook shot from across the room and picked up the nickel.

We had to wear white shirts and ties when I first became a controller, but as time progressed we did away with the ties and went to mostly dress shirts and slacks. While at Omaha, the chief bought all of the specialists brown blazers to wear with the shirts and ties to hopefully make us look more professional. They weren't the best looking, a sort of mud color. We didn't wear them for very long.

We did weather briefing and flight planning for large corporation jets, such as Northern Natural Gas Company, Union Pacific Railroad, and Mutual of Omaha Insurance, and Hennison, Durham and Richardson; Architects. They called the station for a weather brief and filed a flight plan, and we then knew all the information needed on the flight plan and the navigational route they were going to use. If they were going to Chicago O'Hare Airport, we were able to file the flight plan automatically after briefing the pilot. Sometimes we were able to ride along with them to cities like Chicago, Pittsburgh, or western cities, or cities in Georgia. We flew in lear jets and saberliners from Omaha.

In either 1968 or 1969, the City of Omaha, and the FAA constructed a new Flight Service Station, in a cargo warehouse on the north end of Omaha Municipal Airport. We had all updated positions with slanted table tops to position all the weather reports and data forecast and severe weather "Sigmets" and "Flight Advisories" for briefing purposes. We had a transparent plastic board, five feet or six feet high and 24 feet across. We had four different maps of the United States on those boards. The specialists who went to work at 6:00 in the morning were responsible for posting on each map the current area of low ceilings and visibilities, radar reports of precipitations, area of severe weather advisories and current and forecasted positions of high pressure and low pressure systems and weather fronts. The specialist who worked the briefing position used these plotted maps for briefing information. This system worked a little better than having to sort through all the paper to find the necessary weather information needed for briefing.

In 1973, I submitted a bid to the FAA for a supervisor position at Des Moines, Iowa. I made a special trip over there to visit with the chief, Paul Bailey, after I found out I was on the selection list submitted to him for consideration. We talked for two or three hours about situations at Des Moines and I came back home. I got selected for the job and had to go to Supervisor School at Lawton, Oklahoma for two weeks. We did some problem solving and learned how to deal with people and situations. When I came home Nancy had to have all the furniture in the house packed and ready to move to Urbandale, Iowa, a suburb of Des Moines. Supervision deals with people and not so much theory or methods of operation. I was good at doing the practical job of interpreting and supplying weather to pilots, but not too good motivating and getting the best out of the employees at Des Moines. The Regional Office and I decided I would return to a specialist operator again. I was able to select the station I wanted, so I chose Wichita, Kansas; we moved there in November of 1975. The chief at Wichita had been a supervisor with me at Omaha, so he knew what I was capable of doing as an operator.

I went to Wichita before Thanksgiving, and one of the supervisors, Pat Conant, had me over for Thanksgiving dinner. I drove the Volkswagen beetle down to Wichita, and Nancy and the kids were able to move down after semester break in January. We found out that a friend of Nancy's brother from high school days was a specialist in Wichita, Chuck Caster, and his wife Jan. We met them at a station party they had after we got there.

I started working on a crew of seven specialists and made some lasting friendships with Gary Winters, Clint Miller, and John Joyce. Gary and I worked and car pooled with each other all the time. One time we got our schedules mixed up and I thought I was supposed to come in at 6:00 in the morning and Gary was to work the midnight. Well it was the other way around

and Gary and Leo Moan made up a fake log, to make me think I was the only one who forgot, and each hour from 12 to 6 indicated still no Richard showed up. Just before six, Gary got in his car and left the station and followed me into work, to make me think he was just arriving, to help the effect of the fiasco. Everything worked out all right, as the watches were covered.

We had a close contact with the pilots, being right on the flight line, but somewhere around 1985, the FAA decided to consolidate and cut down the number of stations from 261 to 61, one per state except for the larger states and Alaska. The FAA decided to have cities within the states submit bids to the FAA on how much it would cost to build the new facility, and how much they would lease it to the FAA. Before this took place, the FAA built a proto-type Flight Service Station model in Wichita, with computers at every position. Our station was the first of its kind. It had all the computer generated radar maps and weather information available. We were able to file flight plans by entering the necessary information on a blank flight plan screen and hit transmit and it was processed to the Center or to another destination station.

When the FAA came up with other cities to bid on the station locations for Kansas, Senator Kassenbaum's office found out about the possibility of moving the Station out of Wichita and used her influence on the FAA to see that it was left in Wichita. Some of the places that were selected in other states were Princeton; Minn., De Ridder, Louisiana; Columbus, Nebraska; Fort Dodge, Iowa; and Columbia, Missouri. After they finished building these buildings, they gave the specialists at each facility the choice of where they wanted to move to work. Consequently they didn't have enough people to fully man some of those facilities. We were in Wichita 17 years, and I had some wonderful memories of the people I worked with everyday. One instance, I remember I was operating teletype on an 8-4 shift and I became clammy and had chills and had to get up from the position and go into the main operating room to get help. Chuck Caster was acting supervisor that morning, and he called 911 and the airport rescue unit responded immediately, and an ambulance also arrived shortly. I had dry heaves and laid my head down on the counter while the paramedics kept asking me if I had chest pains. I said no, but they still did all their checks, and we took a trip to the hospital to get checked out. They thought it was vertigo, but I was okay by evening and ended up going to work the next day feeling fine. I fully enjoyed my time with the FAA, and the yearly increases in salary made it possible to put three children through college and provide some investments for later years. I submitted my retirement papers in 1992. The station had a nice retirement dinner and I had a number of friends there plus the family and kids. The specialists that I have worked with through the years are special people, who I could always count on to help out whenever I needed it.

## RETIRED

Toward the end of 1991, I submitted my retirement papers to the Regional Office in Kansas City. Later I decided to make them effective on the 28th of November, my 60th birthday. One of the fellows I worked with decided to retire a year or two earlier. He said that it wasn't any fun to work anymore. We waited until after the first of the year to put the house up for sale, and listed it with the same real estate agent that sold it to us. She began with open

houses about every three weeks, and we had a number of people come through, something like 150 people. We talked about updating the decor of the house, like the kitchen and carpet and other things that needed to be more modern. The real estate agent thought it was too early to make the changes, and we continued to have open houses to see what developed.

We stayed with the real estate agent for about six months until we decided to change. We went with a fellow from Westlink Christian Church, who was in our Sunday School Class. We ended up remodeling the kitchen and replacing the carpet in both the smaller bedrooms and the carpet downstairs in the basement. We had some cracks in the foundation repaired and built up the dirt around the foundation to keep them from having to get flood insurance. We had a thunderstorm one day and got hail damage on the roof, back and sides of the house. So we got a new roof and I painted the house again. With all the updates we finally got an offer from someone but it was based on them selling their house. We eventually got another offer with a contingency based on the selling of their house in south Wichita. We were able to get the first offer rescinded and the second offer finally came to pass as the couple got their house sold and we were able to close on ours.

Nancy's work found someone to take over her job, but the training didn't go very well. I decided to retire on the 28th of November and we moved to Bella Vista on the 17th of December. The FAA Station made plans to have a retirement dinner on the 21st of November and I asked the members of the Share Group at Broadway Christian Church to come and also the children and their wives plus a number of specialists I worked with through the 17 years I was at Wichita.

We had been making trips to Omaha to see Nancy's mother and father and to visit with Clara and Dad. Dad was in the Florence Home with Alzheimers and we visited with him often. I think at this stage the only person Dad recognized was Clara. We received a phone call from Mary Ann, Clara's daughter, on Friday the 20th of November 1992, that Dad had passed away that morning. When Clara went to see him he was looking out the east window of his room, and when Clara went over to say she was there and spoke to him, he didn't respond to her at all.

Dale, Linda, Michelle and Eric, flew into Wichita Friday evening for the retirement dinner on Saturday the 21st and knew right away when they got off the plane and came into the terminal that something was wrong. We had to tell them that Dad had passed away.

We had a good retirement dinner and Dale took camcorder pictures of the dinner. The kids also made a tape of memories of their time together with the family, quite a nice tape to look back on when we have time.

The next day Sunday, we had three different groups of people getting ready to go in different directions. Terry and Jeff rented a U-Haul trailer and took some of our furniture to Kansas City, before going to Omaha for the funeral. Dale along with the kids went to Enid, Oklahoma to spend time with his folks, and Linda and us left to go to Omaha. When we got to Omaha, we found out that the minister who spent time at the Florence Home was going to do the service. The kids thought it would be good for all the grandchildren, including Lisa, Mary Ann's daughter, to take some time and speak about what they remember about Pa and the times

of fellowship together. It made a lot nicer service as Pa had two different lives, the one with us and Mother, and the second one with Clara and her friends.

## BELLA VISTA

Before we moved to Bella Vista, we made numerous trips to the Village to look at model homes and check with the banker to find out about how to finance the construction. We were able to get all of the preliminary information filed and the loan application was ready for us when we moved down here. We had been working with Cris Casey, a realtor with Cooper for a long time. We finally found a model called the Westmire. We made some changes to the plans, and the bank and Cooper set up four specific stages of construction with loans being financed for each one. After each phase was complete, the inspector from Cooper and one from the bank came out to check the work to see if all was done according to the plans. We were able to rent a house just a block and a half away from the lot, so we were able to observe most of the construction. They started the house in March, and we were able to move into the house the end of June. The brick mason tried to over charge us for more bricks than he really used to finish the front of the house. We had the bank and inspector from Cooper check the total number used as compared to what was charged, and the excess amount was enough to place a cement brick wall in the unfurnished room in the basement.

When we left Wichita, people at Westlink Christian Church told us about a couple, who attended Bella Vista Christian Church; so our first Sunday there, we walked in the front door and asked to be introduced to them. They were very nice to us and even took us out to eat with them after church was over.

We found the church to be very friendly and we enjoyed all the services they had. The associate minister, Robert Maxwell, was the choir director, but they only sang one or two Sundays a month and we didn't want to join the choir just yet. We got involved with Fellowship Ministry, and I taught some Sunday school adult classes. The church continued to grow and we soon hired a music director, Don Wright, who later became the Minister of Music for the Church. He built the choir up from 35 to 50 which sang anthems every Sunday. Don kept asking us to join the choir, but we were playing bridge on Wednesdays and hated to give it up. Finally we made the move and joined the choir. We have enjoyed it immensely and the choir now has over 60 members and usually puts on two special programs a year, one in the spring and one in the fall.

We made plans to go to Baltimore for Christmas in 1993, going first to Omaha, and then on to Baltimore. After Christmas we were going to Fort Lauderdale, Florida for a mini cruise to Freeport, Grand Bahamas. We had signed up for that in Wichita before we moved.

We were in Omaha a couple of days and got ready to leave on Sunday morning from Nancy's Dad's place for the drive to Baltimore. We came out of the apartment to leave and the car had been stolen from the parking lot. We got in touch with the insurance agent and started the paper work. We called the police and got them started on a report. We had all the Christmas

presents in the car plus summer clothes for the Florida vacation part of the trip and other things like cameras and golf clubs and a "Club" for protection against theft gift wrapped in the trunk. I was depressed and wanted to go home, but Nancy said we would go on to Baltimore, since the insurance company allowed for a rental car. We arrived the afternoon of Christmas Eve, and had to go buy all the presents for Linda, and Dale and the kids.

When we got back to Bella Vista, we started to make claims to the insurance company for all the things that we could remember being in the car. It helped that we had a lot of charge tickets for the presents and were able to research them and cover most of the missing items. We were scheduled for a time share in Brownsville, Texas, so we replaced our golf clubs with new ones including bags, balls, and gloves so we would have them to use in Texas. We started to look for a different car to replace the one we lost, and we found one, but discovered the front seal was leaking which they said they would fix if we left it at that time. We left the car lot and went home and received a phone call from the Omaha police that they had found the stolen car in the parking lot of Bergan Mercy Hospital, about a mile or two from Ken's apartment. Since we never took the used car off the lot, we got our money back and Phil Schenck knew a mechanic and body shop that fixed the stolen car and checked it all over for any other electrical problems or alignment problems. We went to Omaha to pick up the car and bring it home. We then worked with the insurance company to cancel the claims we had filed except for the golf clubs which we kept.

We started to look at all of the activities that were available in Bella Vista, such as Men's Golf Association, that I joined, and the bridge groups that we enjoyed. I wanted to do something else, different from what I had done while working. I visited a class in painting, both oil and water colors, and decided to give oil painting a try. I finished three paintings in 1993, five more in 1994, and the largest total of nine in 1995. Five more were completed in 1996 and 1997, four in 1998, and one more in 1999, a portrait of Dad and Clara, for Clara, which she had for seven weeks before she died in May of 1999.

The only trips we took in 1993 and 1994 were to Florida and Texas, besides getting to Baltimore a couple of times a year. In 1995 we attended a Elderhostel in St George, Utah for a week. We had three different programs with the stay, including golf instruction, photography, the history of the area, and the tour to Bryce Canyon, and Zion National Parks. We stayed in the dorm at Dixie College, and of the three we have taken so far, it was the best one we attended. We spent a week afterwards touring the National Parks of Southern Utah before coming home.

We took an Alaskan cruise in 1996, driving to Seattle. We left our car, the same one that was stolen, inadvertently unlocked in the parking lot at the Hilton in Seattle, but nothing was taken out of it.

We covered Anchorage to Fairbanks by way of Denali, McKinley National Park, on a dome train, and had two beautiful clear days to see the mountain. We continued by bus from Fairbanks to Skagway and on to the Yukon Territory and Whitehorse. We took a narrow gauge railroad ride along the route where the gold rush people hauled their supplies up the mountain to the claims that were filed. We went by bus, train, paddle wheel boat, yacht, and then cruise ship from Juneau to Vancouver. On the ship we stopped at Sitka and Glacier Bay and sailed

right up to the Glaciers and saw some of the ice dropping off the front of them. We went on down the inland sea to Vancouver, Canada and back to the hotel. We then drove to Hope, Canada and on to Banff, where we played some golf and then through Calgary and on to Glacier National Park. While hiking up a trail, we ran into Shirley (my cousin) and Herschel Dugan who were attending a Christian convention. We came back home by way of Custer State Park in South Dakota, and on to Onawa, Iowa to visit Bill Dohe before going back to Omaha and some rest before driving home.

Another Elderhostel in 1997 was to Niagara Falls, New York. We had never been there before and the three different sessions were the Falls, Mark Twain, and the architecture of the area. We didn't think that Mark Twain would be very interesting, but it turned out to be very informative. After we finished the week at Niagara Falls, we drove to Baltimore to spend some time with Linda, Dale, Michelle and Eric.

In 1998 we signed up for a tour out of Newark, New Jersey to the northeast during the fall foliage season. We drove back to Baltimore to spend three days with the kids and then took the Am-Track to Newark and joined the tour. We ran into two people from our bridge group in Bella Vista, who we didn't know were going to be on the trip. We had an eight day bus tour and a seven day cruise. The itinerary was from Newark to Atlantic City, Baltimore, Washington, and D.C. We then went to Hershey, Penn. and Plymouth, Mass. and up through Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont, and New Hampshire to Montreal, Canada. We took the cruise from Montreal to Quebec, Sidney, Nova Scotia, Newport, R. I., Boston, Mass., and into New York Harbor. We had a tour of the city of New York before we were dropped off at the Newark airport for the Am-Track trip back to Baltimore. We stayed with the kids for three days and then drove home by way of the Blue Ridge Parkway, with all the fall colors in full bloom.

Our trip in 1999 was to an Elderhostel in Huntsville, Alabama, to the National Space Rocket Center. Other classes were golf instruction and humor and sayings of all the presidents.

My story was filled with love, home fellowship, security, and a caring concern by my parents for a solid foundation. After high school, many frightening and unknowing adventures in life took place, such as joining the Navy, traveling half way around the world, and being on my own for the first time. Marriage, a new baby and a new career followed in short order. In this entire story, there is an underlying characteristic that is prevalent throughout the whole story. Most of the time there were "two sets of footprints in the sand," but other times only one. God through His Holy Spirit was either walking with me all the way, or else he carried me through the stressful times when I wasn't sure of what the future held in store for me.

## NANCY'S GRANDPARENTS

Nancy's mother, Vivian, was born on August 13, 1911 to Floyd and Vera Grant in Des Moines, Iowa. She was only 1 lb. 12 oz. at birth and was kept in a cigar box on top of the stove, since there were no incubators in those days. She developed okay through the years, although she stayed quite short, just over 5'. She was their only child.



Vivian's parents divorced after Vivian married. Vera Grant moved to California and much later married Pete Rockne. She worked at a department store and it was always a fun time at Christmas and birthdays to see what was in the boxes she sent. Every year in May she came back to the Midwest by bus to visit, and at that time we went with her and Mother to Des Moines to see Great Grandma Amanda Ellen Holden who was in a nursing home there. Before Great Grandma died and after the birth of Jeff and Linda (1962-64), five generation pictures were taken. This was and is very unusual, but possible, because Great Grandma Holden lived to her 90's, and Grandma Grant/Rockne was married and had her child shortly after the age of 16. Grandma Grant/Rockne died of liver/pancreas cancer at age 78.

**Amanda Holden and Vera Grant Rockne**

Grandpa Grant lived in Des Moines and was a fireman. I remember visiting the fire station a number of times, climbing on the fire engines and pulling the cord for the siren. He remarried a number of times, but was last and longest with Elsie, the only one I ever remembered. He had a small cozy home with a beautiful yard and flower gardens. He took care of all the outside work himself until he had a stroke and died shortly after at the age of 92. One of his hobbies, especially after retirement was woodworking. He made sewing cabinets for Mother and me, which I still have today. We visited his parents, my great grandparents, Ed & Charlotte Grant, in Newton, Iowa, a few times before they died. I also remember Floyd's brother, Vern, and Vern's son, Willis.

Nancy's father, Kenneth, was born June 22, 1912 to Arthur and Myrtle Schenck in Des Moines, Iowa. He was the second of five boys, with a total age span of 16 years. The oldest of the boys, Vernon, was killed in a car accident at age 16. The other boys, were named Frank Montelle (Monty), Charles Darwin (Darwin), and Hugh Garrett (Hughie). Both Frank and Charles were named after Myrtle's brothers and Hugh's middle name was also his father's middle name. Hughie had a bike accident in 1975 and punctured his aorta and broke four ribs. He was under doctor's care and held up pretty good until he collapsed and died in 1978 at 56 years of age. Ken did not know where his full name of Kenneth Ford originated. Their father,

Arthur, was a streetcar operator and died of a blood clot at the base of his brain when he was 53 years old. This was after Dad was married but before I was born. Arthur had one brother, Robert, who lived in the Atlantic, Iowa area.

Myrtle Traister Schenck had four sisters, Madge Fairgraves, Leone Ferdig, Margaret, Allie (who was blind), and two brothers, Frank (who was killed when young in a train accident) and Charlie, (a cement finisher, who was never married and roamed as jobs came up).

Dad shared memories of both of his parents with me. He said his father worked from 4:00 until midnight, and he was a quiet mild mannered man. Grandma was the boss lady and had no problems with discipline with the five boys. Dad said his father was President of the Streetcar Men's Union for many years. He did the yard work and maintained a large garden for Grandma to do all the canning. I remember enjoying her many kinds of canned jellies/jams and green beans, peaches and tomatoes.

Grandma Schenck had a five room house with two bedrooms and one bathroom. Dad said in addition to his parents and the five boys, Grandma's mother lived with them, occupying one of the bedrooms for a part of many years. She was paralyzed from a stroke that followed the sudden accidental death of one of her sons, Frank, in a train wreck when he was an employee of a railway line.

Grandma Schenck was a lot of fun, and we visited her often. When we did, we experienced her chopping the heads off of the dinner chickens, watching them run around in circles briefly afterwards, plucking out the feathers, and then enjoying her wonderful chicken and homemade noodles. She usually baked cherry pies, and there was always a cherry pit planted in each pie. Whoever had it in his/her piece of pie had to do the dishes for that meal. I remember always seeing Grandma in bib type aprons, which she made, that were trimmed with colored bias tapes.

Dad brought Grandma back to Omaha to visit our family periodically, especially at Christmas. She played the game of hanging up one of her nylon stockings with our stockings for Santa to fill. When Christmas day arrived, she was right there with us to see what Santa had delivered. However, her stocking was filled with tissue paper, so we were left with the notion that she had not been good during the year.

We liked to go to Grandma's house in Des Moines. There weren't many things to play with, but she had interesting things in her house that we didn't have at ours. She had a big console Atwater Kent radio, the size of a modern day console television, and an icebox which stored a 50 lb. block of ice, delivered regularly by the ice truck. She also had a wringer type washing machine and all clothes were hung up to dry, either inside or outside, depending on the weather. Another interesting feature of her kitchen was a black iron gas stove on legs, as well as a bathtub with claw like legs in the bathroom. I remember the truck delivering coal to the house when we were there, dumping it through a window into the basement room beside the coal furnace. Grandma shoveled the coal into the furnace for heat.

One of Grandma Schenck's expressions was Moomayakapaskadaya, which might have been some German swear word for all we knew. But when she said it and shook her finger, we were left with the feeling that it meant we had better behave.

She died of a stroke at age 80 and we missed her greatly.

## GROWING UP

I, Nancy Lynette Schenck, was born on December 20, 1935 to Kenneth Ford Schenck and Vivian Marian Lynette Grant Schenck, in Omaha, Nebraska. Mom and Dad were married on June 25, 1933 in Des Moines, Iowa. Dad went to work for USF&F Insurance Co. in 1929 and transferred to Omaha in 1933 at the time Mom and Dad got married. Clark and Ruth Berry stood up for them at a simple wedding at the Highland Christian Church in Des Moines. Clark was also transferred to USF&G in Omaha, and they were in charge of the Casualty and Bonding Departments. While working for USF&G, Dad attended four years of law school at night, two years in Des Moines and two years in Omaha. He passed the bar exam in June, 1935. This education was to help him deal with the legal parts of the insurance business. I was the first child born to this union, as they were coming out of the big depression of the early 30's.

When I was born, we lived on the second floor of a house on Florence Blvd., and Mom and Dad became very close friends with the owners, Ed & Cora Jorgenson. Naturally, I can't remember anything about those times, but pictures taken show parents that were very proud of their "cute" little girl.

In 1940, when I was about five years old, we moved to Oak Park, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago. Dad worked for Zurich Insurance Co. there, traveling and teaching agents how to handle the bond business. We lived two blocks from an entrance to the elevated train (the L), and Dad would ride it to downtown Chicago to work when he wasn't traveling. He was gone a week and sometimes two weeks at a time, with a company car at his disposal. Mother did not drive at that time, so we walked to a grocery store not too far away. I remember riding the "L" for special trips.

In July of 1941, I received a new baby brother, Phillip Allen, and fourteen and half months later in September, 1942, another brother, David Arthur, was born. Mother said that with Dad traveling, she sat with a bawling boy on each knee while she cried with them. When World War II started and men were recruited, fathers over 30 years old were exempted from serving; so Dad was considered 4F and did not have to serve.

Only a few things are recalled from those days, but I do remember living in an apartment at 56 Superior St., in Oak Park, and it had a courtyard in back. I received and learned how to ride a bicycle while living there, probably at about nine or ten years old. I also remember the day in 1945 when I was in the courtyard, hearing everyone rejoicing because of the announcement that World War II was over.

We lived in Oak Park for five to six years, and right before moving back to Omaha, I accepted Jesus Christ as my savior and was baptized at the Austin Blvd. Christian Church, along with other fifth graders at the church. At the time, I'm not sure that it meant that much to me. I think it was more the situation of doing what everyone else my age was doing. As years went by, I realized it would have been better to have been my decision at whatever age than to

be baptized with a class of children that the church thought was ready. Dad became an elder of the Christian Church in Oak Park when he was about age 30.

Art Westergard of the Westergard Insurance Agency in Omaha, Nebraska was one of the agents Dad worked with in his travels. Westergard took a shine to Dad, and when Westergard was about to die of leukemia at age 51, he asked Dad to take over the agency. This was a very good move for Dad, going back to Omaha in 1946. It gave him an opportunity to have his own established agency, sharing the equity in the beginning with Elizabeth Kane, who had worked for Westergard for many years.

When we moved back to Omaha, Mom and Dad bought an older house at 2567 Fowler Ave. In Oak Park, I was enrolled in the first part of fifth grade (5A). But for some reason in Omaha, 5A was the second half of fifth grade; so I was enrolled in 5A, not knowing that I had skipped the first semester. I do know that I was lost working with fractions, since they were introduced in the first semester. From then on, I was a mid-year student, with a new grade always starting in January. When I got to eighth grade, it was decided that there would no longer be mid-year students going on to high school in January. They pushed everyone up a semester. If they did okay they went on to high school; if not, they went back a full year. I passed, but later in telling people that I skipped a full year in grade school, I had to tell them it was not because I was smart. I started kindergarten when I was four, and graduated from high school at an early age of 16.

In September, 1947, about one year after moving back to Omaha, another baby brother, Richard Edward, was added to our family, when I was 12 years old. Before going to the hospital to give birth, Mother gave me a book to read about the facts of life, just in case something happened to her while going through childbirth. I remember getting to help name the new baby Dickie, and for years even after he was grown, I had a hard time dropping the name to Dick. I loved having new babies in the family as they came along, but at this point I took on a new role as baby sitter whenever Mom and Dad wanted to go somewhere. I'm sure my brothers considered me their bossy sister, but that is what happens when you have a sibling so much older - almost like an alternate mother.

Mom and Dad did not show much affection around us or to us, but we knew we were loved. They were very concerned for our well being, which of course we considered "strict." I recall some joyous times of Dad wrestling with the boys on the floor. I was Mother's helper since I was the only girl, my main jobs being the ironing and salad maker for dinners. Mother always ironed everything, even socks, underwear, sheets and towels; so there was lots of ironing to be done for a family of six. Needless to say, when I married, my idea of ironing was certainly different.

I'm sure there was not a lot of money in those days, but we had everything we needed in the way of food and clothes. We didn't have many toys, although I do recall a doll with a cloth body and a wicker doll buggy that I found in the attic many years past doll playing days. These were the years before television, so besides board games such as Monopoly and Sorry, we played hide and seek, hide the button, jacks, jump rope, hopscotch, Red Rover come over, and kick the can with all the neighborhood children. Two activities were my favorites - one was

playing house in the fall leaves, dividing them into rooms, and the other was school, played on the stairs. The one who was teacher held a stone in one of her fists, and if we guessed which hand, we moved up a stair to the next grade, with the first one to the top graduating and being the winner. Memories come back of the school game being played with all the cousins a few times on Grandma Schenck's long front steps in front of her Des Moines home. This was before we scattered to different parts of the country and no longer got together.

My mother was very much a person of routine with no variance from her routine. She washed on Mondays, ironed on Tuesday, shopped for groceries on Thursday, and cleaned house on Fridays. She always had breakfast at 7:00, lunch at 11:30, and supper at 5:00, whether everybody was there or not. Dad usually got home from work at 5:30, but supper was at 5:00, his being kept warm until he got home. Sunday dinner after church was always roast beef, potatoes and carrots without fail. Eggs were prepared for breakfast on Tuesdays and Fridays.

Mother never did any canning, plant a garden, bake cookies, sew, knit or crochet. Any of these things I learned on my own after I was married. Mother experimented once with a borrowed pressure cooker that blew up and knocked her across the room. She was not injured, but she never tried anything like that again.

Dad was a good father, but looking back on it all now, I wonder about him as a husband. He was very secretive about his money affairs; mother knew nothing about his income each month, or what he was putting away into savings, if anything. She told him what she needed to pay the bills and that amount was put into the checking account each month. She bought things for herself and charged them, and they became part of the bills for the next month. Many times she bought something for herself and put it away in the closet, so that when she was asked if her outfit was new, she said she had had it for awhile. Needless to say, communication was very poor, but they stayed together for the sake of us children. They finally divorced after 54 years of marriage, but probably should have done so 10 to 20 years earlier, or at least gone to a marriage counselor.

We were very respectful of our parents, knowing we could not talk back or act up without discipline, or spankings (sometimes with a stick to the legs) when young. When Dad was downstairs, and heard fighting and commotion from the boys upstairs, they knew they were in trouble when they heard Dad's knees cracking as he went up the stairs to discipline them. Mother and I fought a lot in my teen years and up to the time I was married and left home; but we became much closer after I left and began having children.

We also had some fun times together. The most remembered family outings were our annual week long vacations to Lake Okoboji in northern Iowa, where we stayed in a cabin, and spent a lot of time swimming at the beach area. There was an amusement part in the area, which we always attended once in the week we were there. For me, the most fun was going down the inside steep slide, riding on a rug.

Mother didn't like to travel very much, so other than the Lake Okoboji trips, I don't recall any other trips except one. That was a big one to California to see Grandma Rockne, stopping at many areas along the way - Colorado, Yellowstone Park, the Grand Tetons, Reno,

and especially Knotts Berry Farm in California. While on the West Coast, we took a boat trip to Catalina Island, and David got sea sick. If anyone was to get sick or faint over the sight of blood, it was David. On the way back to Omaha, we stopped at the Grand Canyon. It was a hard trip for Mother, because she did not like high places and winding, mountain roads. This trip was in the early 50's, before four-lane roads were built through the mountains. The suspension bridge at Royal Gorge in Colorado was the hardest for Mother. If it had been up to her, she would have stayed on the first side and been picked up later.

Other fun family times were spent at the Christmas holidays, although family noises made Mother nervous. She was very often seen at family gatherings with ear plugs or cotton in her ears. It was always a joy to help decorate the house, and like all families, there were many Christmas items that were traditional to set out each year. We had a candy house that was always put on a table for the holidays, with little evergreen trees all around it. I could hardly wait for that house to be brought out, because when no one was looking, I took pieces off of it and ate them. Nothing was ever said about the house getting smaller each year, and I never saw anyone else eating the candy, but I may have had help. After sitting out for a number of years, with dust on it and packed away in newspapers or whatever the rest of the year, it must have been quite dirty, but I survived. Other times of the year, Mother had candy stashed in various places around the house; and when I had that sweet tooth urge, I searched for the latest locations, at least one of them being for chocolates.

Mother was sick and took medicines quite often. Her idea of doctors though was going to a chiropractor once or twice a week for an adjustment just to keep her body in good shape. If we got a cold or a hangnail (as we kidded), we ended up at the chiropractor for our treatment as well. To this day, it is hard for me to go to a chiropractor, although I'm sure there were times I could have used one.

No parties or outings were planned in advance, because Mother did not like to commit to anything until the last minute, depending on how she felt. However, one evening after a meeting at church, I went home to find a surprise celebration for my 16th birthday, and all the youth from church were there. I remember being kissed under the mistletoe by Duane Eckels that night, which embarrassed me in front of all those people.

In talking to Dad to recall times of our family life that were hard, he said the year 1960 was busy and stressful for him. I was married by then, but he said in addition to his normal insurance duties and family life at home, he was Chairman of the Board at the First Christian Church in Omaha, Chairman of the Board of Child Savings Institute (a church sponsored orphanage and adoption agency), and President of the State Assn. of Insurance Agents, which required his traveling to St. Louis for numerous meetings.

As an update regarding my parents - After Mom and Dad were divorced in 1986, Mom lived in the apartment they had for awhile and then moved to an assisted living type place. She moved to Montclair Nursing Center for rehab early in March of 1990 when we was unable to walk with a blood clot and infection in her leg. While there, she had a stroke on 4-1-90 and was in a coma for about a week, and almost died. As a result, the stroke left her with very limited use of her right side and very limited speech, and she was confined to a bed and had to be fed. Then she finally was able to feed herself with her left hand, and was wheel chair bound.

She could not walk or talk, but she recognized everybody and understood what they said to her. She could not write, but she read the short letters I sent her every week. Since she got so excited when we went to Omaha to visit her, we tried to go about every four to six weeks. Shortly before her disability, she had announced that she would not live any longer than age 78, because that was the age when her mother died. Mother was 78 when she had her stroke, but evidently God had different plans for her. She died on January 12, 2000, almost ten years after her stroke. We were fortunate to have ten more years with her than we expected, and to experience the smiles and happiness she had during those years, even if they were spent in a nursing home.

As for Dad, he lived in a one bedroom apartment and did quite well on his own for the past ten years or so, with the help of his microwave to prepare the frozen TV dinners that he was perfectly content to eat. However, the last few years began to tell on him; he developed diabetes and his eye sight deteriorated. He made a move at the end of 1998 to an assisted living type place, and began using their van service for doctor appointments, etc. By the middle of 1999, he became more confused, had memory lapses, and forgot his medications at times. He was finally willing to give up his car; and then shortly after that, he had a bad fall, which put him into a Rehab Center for a couple of months and then into Montclair, the same nursing home that Mom was in. He was diagnosed with Lewy Body Disease, the second most common form of dementia, second only to Alzheimers.

## HIGH SCHOOL, COLLEGE AND DATING

When I was about to be a junior in high school, Mom and Dad had a house built at 5116 Pacific, which was in the southwestern part of Omaha. It was a two story house, with the boys' bedrooms on the attic type second floor, and my bedroom and Mom & Dad's bedroom on the first floor. It was a real excitement for our family to move into that house. Since I did not want to change high schools after two years, I took a city bus every school day that took me across the city to North High School, so that I could graduate with my class. I also took the bus to piano lessons, which I took for seven years, and to roller skating. At that time, Mother did not drive, so every place I went was on the bus, unless Dad was home. He took me to church youth group meetings on Sundays.

When I was 16 years old, after graduating from high school, I got a learner's permit for driving. I thought I was doing good at my driver's education with Dad, until one night as I was driving to youth group with him. I must have put my foot on the gas instead of the brake as I went around a corner near home, and I grazed the guide wire coming down off a telephone pole. It scared me and certainly scared Dad. This was before there were any drivers' education classes in school, so it was a number of years before I got to drive again.

While we were in the Fowler and Pacific houses, we had a dog named Sandy, a cocker spaniel. I don't know how long we had him, but he died of distemper, which is unheard of these days because of shots. We had a cat once, but not for very long. Dad discovered he was allergic to them when he was home. When he traveled for work and was gone for a week or two, he came home with no allergic symptoms.

In my high school days, I was in the choir, taking part in the annual Aurora talent show. It was also a fun experience to be included as a chorus member in their big productions, such as Carousel and Brigadoon. My elective subjects were typing, shorthand, and business classes, and I took two years of French. So some time after school hours was spent in business clubs and the French club.

A close friend, Jean Barber, from the Fowler St. area, where we had gone to grade school together, and I used to dress alike in the current fads. In our high school days, it was fushia color angora sweaters with matching bobby socks or a lime green iridescent combination. Other fads at that time were rolled down white bobby socks, black and white saddle shoes, big circular felt skirts (some with appliqued poodle dogs), white cotton button down front blouses, and short close knit cardigan sweaters. Jean moved to Holdrege, Nebr. with her parents at the end of our junior year.

I had a crush on the star football quarterback, Bill Engelhardt, as did lots of other girls, I'm sure. I enjoyed the North High School football games, especially when I could root for Bill; and I participated in the Pep Club at the games.

I had decided I didn't want to go on to college, but since I graduated from high school so young at 16, I made up my mind to go to Omaha University for two years, and received an

associate degree in Secretarial Training. It was a good move because my first job was working for Northern Natural Gas Co., hired to work in the mail room. The first day on the job I was “promoted” to Secretary of the Internal Audit Dept. at \$200 a month. It was a good position, typing audit reports for ten auditors, taking shorthand and typing letters for the department head, and reconciling all the bank accounts for the large company.

It was during the period of time after college and while working at Northern Natural Gas (December, 1955), that my best friend Carolyn Nevins was murdered. She and I were both in Eastern Star, along with her parents who were the matron and patron that year. Carolyn and I were both points of the star that year, which were speaking parts in the ritual. On the night of one of the Star meetings, she had to stay at Omaha University to work in the library, instead of attending the meeting. After the meeting was over, her father took me home, then went to the University to pick her up, only to find her not there. It was the next morning I heard on the news that she had been found dead in the newly fallen snow. Her killer was never found. It was a terrible experience to go through, and especially hard to go back to more Eastern Star meetings. I dropped out a couple years after that happened.

During my college-age years at church, I became very good friends with three other girls - Shirley Tietsort, who moved to Omaha in her senior year of high school and went to North High, also, Cora Lee (Corky) Groves, and Evelyn Turner. We had many good times together, one of which was to put together some quartet numbers for church variety shows. This was our first attempt at singing, other than school choruses, so it was difficult and bad. The only number I can remember was Kentucky Babe. I did not date much during high school and very little even during college. It was after my school days, but while still attending the college-age youth group at church that I met Dick Sherbondy. He had been in the Navy, but when discharged, he was invited to attend the Sunday evening meetings and summer swimming parties by his cousin, Shirley Tietsort. In August of 1956, Shirley and Corky decided to go to a drive-in movie one night and asked Dick and me to go too. They made sure that I was put in the seat beside Dick, and from that day our friendship developed into love.

We enjoyed many movies, church activities, and other outings together as our love grew. We talked about marriage, and in May of 1957, Dick surprised me with a diamond ring while sitting in the car outside my house as we were getting ready to go see his Dad and Clara (stepmother). We had fun sitting at their house waiting for them to notice it.

We were engaged for nine months and were married on February 22, 1958 at the First Christian Church in Omaha, Nebraska by Dr. Eulis Hill. My attendants were Shirley Tietsort, Corky Groves Erickson and Jean Barber, and they wore satin dresses in different shades of blue. My dress and veil were made by a seamstress. My brother, Dick, was the ring bearer and flower girl was Christy Norton, the daughter of a friend of Clara's. We had another flower girl scheduled, but at the last minute she got sick. My other brothers, Phil and Dave, were candle lighters. The wedding went off without any problems.

Now after the wedding was a different matter. I changed into my going away outfit and got everything together to leave on our honeymoon. The photographer and I waited for Dick, and we waited, and we waited. Soon we got word that Dick's attendants had taken his pants

that he was to change into. I don't know how long we waited, but he finally appeared ready to leave. His attendants may have done this because we had hidden our car at a parking lot and no one knew where it was to decorate it. Our honeymoon trip was to Kansas City for less than a week, and we returned to Mom & Dad's house to open our wedding gifts.

## NEWLYWEDS (1958 - 1962)

When we returned from our honeymoon, we set up housekeeping on the second floor of a house at 4438 Franklin. It was a one bedroom apartment with the use of a detached garage (\$90 per month). Two elderly ladies lived downstairs and were our landlords.

Since I had very little cooking training or experience while living at home, I had to do quite a bit of experimenting, and Dick became a good guinea pig. We had laughs and cries over the meals that were put together, and it was a stressful time until I learned how to get everything done at the same time. We had family members and friends over to eat occasionally, but I never knew whether to expect good or bad results.

After three months, I became pregnant with our first child. Northern Natural Gas had a policy then, as did many other companies, that anyone who was pregnant had to quit by no later than four and a half months and had to produce a letter from a doctor as to the due date of the baby. So I left Northern Natural Gas and collected unemployment for a couple of months before working for Manpower the last few months at whatever office work was available.

It was during this pregnancy that we took bridge lessons at the Benson Community Center. It was a good investment, because we put those lessons to good use over the years. Bridge has been a wonderful source of cheap entertainment, and we met many fine people in that endeavor.

Jeffrey Dean, our first redhead, was born on February 11, 1959, at 6 lbs., 6 oz., and I recall being in the hospital 5-7 days, as was everyone in those days. Upon release from the hospital, we stayed at Mom and Dad's house so I could have some help with Jeff during the day while Dick was working. Jeff was very colicky and seemed to cry constantly. If we held him he cried; if we laid him down he cried. So many times we laid him down and let him cry, or we walked the floor endlessly it seemed. We used the same old pediatrician that had taken care of me from birth. He had no remedies for the colic, except to say that it would go away eventually, and at about three months it did. That was a long three months, but by then we had a sweet little boy. Since we were not supposed to have children in our apartment (or the old ladies got tired of listening to Jeff cry), we spent time looking for a little house we could afford. We found a two bedroom house at 6769 Evans, and it took awhile for the papers to be processed and know that we were approved. Jeff was probably six months old before we were able to move, with the ladies downstairs asking quite often if we had heard anything on our loan yet.

We were very pleased to own the small house on Evans St. It had oil heat, a fenced-in back yard, a basement, and a big wallpaper mural on one wall of the living room that was in the shape of a big shade tree. One event that we will never forget was when we kept Sandy, my parents' cocker spaniel, while they were gone for a short time. He sniffed the tree when he came to our house, then raised his leg and peed right under the tree as if he knew what it was. I sure watched him close after that.

We became very upset with Dr. Robertson, the old pediatrician, who insisted that each child be treated the same. At a certain age, he was to get cereal, at a certain age he was to start baby food, and by a year old, the doctor was already pushing for potty training. I remember him saying "Give away the diapers to your worst enemy." Those were the days of cloth diapers that were washed and used again. I went home in tears after the doctor appointments, but since this was our first child, I wasn't sure what other options were available - I only knew that I was unhappy. At about Jeff's first birthday, our good friend from church, David Weeks, graduated from medical school and set up his own general practice. We were some of his first patients, and what a good move.

During the next three years after Jeff's birth, I was a full time wife and mother, enjoying the many phases of his young life. My outings during those years included a weekly bowling league and women's activities at church, with baby sitting available at both functions.

I became good friends with a neighbor, Martha Harmon, who had a little boy, Richard, about the same age as Jeff. However, when the boys were about one year old, it was discovered that Richard was deaf and shortly thereafter he was outfitted with a special hearing aid device.

I have many fond memories of my days with Martha, because I learned things from her that I never learned at home, since her young life was from a farm family. I learned the art of making cookies, planting a garden, and canning/freezing the results.

Martha and I became pregnant with our second child at about the same time, both of us having girls. Tragically, by the time the girls were a year old, Martha's girl, Carolyn, was also found to be deaf. This was unusual for two children in the same family, according to doctors, and so it was thought to maybe have something to do with the genes between Martha and her husband. Therefore, they knew there would be no more children for them.

The night my labor pains started with our second child, we had planned to be at Dave & Ellen Weeks' house for a bridge party. Since the pains were not bad yet, I called the Weeks and explained the situation and said we would still go; but I didn't want anyone else to know and be watching me all evening. Since Dave Weeks was a GP doctor, I decided I couldn't be in better hands if my time did come to deliver. I got through the evening, but upon returning to our house after midnight, we decided to call my OB doctor. We asked Dick's mother to stay on with Jeff and we went to the hospital. As my pains progressed, the doctor told Dick early in the morning that he had time to go home and have breakfast with his mother and Jeff. However, while he was home, I called him to say that we had a new little daughter. He thought I was delusionary and his comment was "you wish." Because both of our family histories were overrun with boys, we were convinced we would have a boy, even though we wanted a girl. So I had a hard time convincing Dick we now had a girl, Linda Susan, born on March 31, 1962 at 5 lbs., 6 oz. Dave Weeks also was disbelieving when he went to the hospital for rounds that morning and was told the new red headed baby for his care belonged to the Sherbondys. I must have carried it off very good the night before, because his comment was "We were just playing cards a few hours ago."

Not wanting to go through the colic time we had with Jeff, I breast fed Linda and there was a definite improvement. Her weight dipped below 5 lbs. in the hospital; and because she was so small, Dr. Weeks even called a few days after we were home to make sure she was getting along okay.

When Linda was only three months old, Dick got his second offer for employment with the Federal Aviation Agency. The first had come shortly after we bought our house, and we didn't feel we could sell again that fast. Timing was not good the second time either, because of Linda's birth, but we knew we could not turn them down again or there might not be another offer. So Dick left for eight weeks of school in Oklahoma City, OK. The stress of coping with a new baby and three year old Jeff on my own reduced my milk flow for nursing; so after about another month, I changed to bottle feeding for Linda and she got along fine.

We were all glad when Dick joined us again, but our next concern was packing and preparing to move to Kansas City, Kansas for Dick's training on the job at the airport in Kansas City, MO. Since this was to be a temporary six month relocation, and we were not sure where we would locate after that, we rented our home out to someone else in Omaha, and rented a small house ourselves while in Kansas City.

Those days in Kansas City were spent with small children and visiting with the neighbors in the little cul-de-sac. I especially remember Mary Sue across the street from us who had a full size poodle. Jeff and Linda loved it when they could see that dog. We had one car and when we had to go to a doctor or run some errands during the day that could not wait until Dick got home, we bundled the kids up and took Dick to work and picked him up later. At that time the airport was close to downtown K.C., and it took us a long time to get there. I did not care much for K.C., because it was so big and took so long to get anywhere. But we really didn't get much of a chance in the six months we were there to get out and enjoy it.

After six months of training in Kansas City, we were transferred to Ottumwa, Iowa. We rented a small house, again at the end of a cul-de-sac. We had gone from one extreme to another, and I didn't care too much for small town living either. Both Dick and I thought we wanted to leave the town we had lived in from birth for something different, only to find ourselves homesick for Omaha, our families, and close friends. We had some great neighbors in Ottumwa, having block party dinners with them every so often. My first taste of frog legs was at one of those cookouts. The only episode that stands out during this time was when Jeff went in the car with the Sharps who lived across the street from us. Evidently when he got in their car, he closed his hand in the door. He was a quiet, shy boy and didn't want to make too much of this, until he finally couldn't take it and started crying. I don't know how far they got before they realized something was wrong with him. Then they really felt bad. He had some ugly looking finger nails for awhile after that.

After we had lived in Ottumwa for about six months, we learned that our renters in Omaha were planning to move out. We weren't too happy about trying to find new renters from long distance. About that time, Dick learned of someone at the Omaha Flight Service Station who was interested in moving to Iowa, to be closer to doctors for medical problems. He worked out a swap with this person so we could go back to Omaha and they could go to Ottumwa. It meant we had to pay to move ourselves, but we didn't have to worry about obtaining more renters.

## YOUNG CHILDREN YEARS (1963 - 1973)

After moving back to Omaha and to our house on Evans St., we began to adjust to Dick's work schedule. I tried very hard to keep the kids quiet at times when Dick had to get his sleep. There were many times on the one day a week he got off at 8:00 a.m. that I took the children and went to someone's home to visit just to make sure he got two to three hours of good sleep.

We stayed at the Evans St. house about one year before we began to feel cramped and wanted a three-bedroom house so both Jeff and Linda could have their own bedrooms. Jeff was about to start kindergarten, and it was a good time for a move. We put our house up for sale and before too long we had a buyer. We then signed a contract to have a house built in Maple Village at 9458 Spencer. It was a split-entry style, with a large kitchen and a large basement. We had to vacate our old house before our new one was done; so we ended up storing our furniture in the new house basement and living with Dick's mother for about three to four months. This was a trying time for everyone, but we knew there were better days to come.

When the Spencer St. house was completed, we moved in and began to enjoy our new neighborhood. Hansons, down the street, had moved in about the same time; and they had three girls, the youngest being Tammy who was Linda's age. I also became good friends with Donna Hunt and Shirley Kurlmel. Along with Ruth Hanson, the four of us got together for coffee or bridge whenever we could. Two of us knew how to play bridge, and we taught the other two, while all our children played or took naps (?) around us.

As Linda became four and closer to school days, I found I wasn't quite ready for child bearing years to be over yet. So we decided to try for another baby, and if I got pregnant, that was okay, and if I didn't, that was okay too. Voila! We were happy with our new red-headed boy, Terry Scott, born on December 7, 1966 at 5 lbs. 10 oz. He was content and happy from the very beginning; but I had some post natal depression for awhile, watching the neighbors leave to go places while I knew I was confined. That did not last long though. Actually, I probably enjoyed Terry more than the others, because I had the experience and could spend more time with him when the other two were in school during the day.

We seemed to be fortunate not to have accidents and broken bones, until Terry came along. He fell out of his crib, trying to get out, and broke his collarbone. He cried a lot, but we didn't discover until the next morning what his problem was. Once he was in a big bed, he fell out one night when he was supposed to be getting to sleep, and hit the back of his head on the corner of the cedar chest. It was off to the hospital for stitches.

Terry had many episodes of tonsillitis after he was a year old. He was on antibiotics and/or long acting penicillin shots, and as soon as the medicine was gone, he got it again. This happened over and over to the point when we rounded the corner to the doctor's office, he began crying, not wanting that shot. One day the fever from his tonsillitis was up high enough that he went into a convulsion. I called a neighbor who was a nurse; but I was a little shook, and she had to keep asking who it was that was calling. When she came to help, she wanted to

put him in a cool tub of water, and all I could think about was getting his shoes and stockings off. She finally told me to go call the doctor. Shortly after this I convinced the doctor to take Terry's tonsils out at two years of age, and he had no problems after that.

As Terry grew older, he didn't have any other children in the neighborhood to play with, as all the other neighbors had completed their families years before he was born. But he learned how to occupy his time when we could not entertain him. When Terry was about two years old, we took him and Linda with us when we went to watch Jeff's Little League baseball games. He picked up more at those games than playing in the dirt and sand. One day we looked out the back window and there he was with an old plastic army helmet and a big plastic bat, hitting the ball on the ground, then running the bases until he got back home. Ray and Donna Hunt, who lived behind us said they sat at their window laughing every time he was in the yard playing baseball. They also enjoyed the times when Terry went to their door, asking if Sally, their beagle dog, could come out and play with him.

In addition to baseball, Jeff also was involved in some Biddy Basketball leagues, since he was tall for his age. But he soon lost interest in participating in sports. He was also in cub and boy scouts. He was real excited the year that he won the Pinewood Derby race for his troup.

For most of the years when we lived on Spencer St. in Maple Village, the corner lot next to us was empty. This was a fun place for our children to play, especially for Jeff to make roads for his cars and trucks. At least we knew where our kids were most of the time, just looking out the window at the lot. In the early 70's, a house was finally built on the lot, and then I really had to watch where everybody was. As the house went up, it was a real attraction for them to play in or around it, so we had to keep after them about that. Once it was done, the children all lost a playground area, but it was certainly a much nicer corner to look at.

We bought membership at the Maple Village Swimming Pool every summer and spent a lot of time at the pool with the kids, helping them overcome any fear of water; and they were also enrolled in swimming lessons there until they learned all they could.

We decided to try camping with our neighbors the Hunts, so we borrowed a tent and off we went to Branson. Terry was about six months old and crawling, and it rained almost the whole time we were gone. What a mess! We had a dirty baby most of the time, and Linda's barbies got wet. Everyone was in a bad mood, and we decided tent camping was not for us. We then borrowed a pop up camper to try, and after that we bought our own. We spent many happy family vacations together in that camper, including to the Black Hills, to Florida and with Bob's family to Tennessee. Mostly we spent Dick's days off at a location fairly close to home. Since his days off were mostly other than Saturdays and Sundays, we were able to go camping at a less congested time.

One of our camping experiences, that I will never forget, was at a time of heavy winds. I remember waking up to hear the wind, and ended up pacing back and forth in the little space of that camper and holding my arms out like I could keep the camper from blowing over, while everyone else slept through it all. Linda told me later that she woke up and saw me with my

arms out, so she went back to sleep knowing that Mom had everything under control. Jeff always looked forward to our camping times, because it was a good time to add to his butterfly and insect collection. Many times he would get help from one or more of us, chasing down a special butterfly with nets. Jeff also had a camping encounter with bees that left him with a few stings. Another time the older kids told me that Terry threw one of his shoes out the window while on a trip, but I didn't believe them until I asked Terry where his shoe was. He pointed out the window. We spent a long time looking back along the road. Finally we left, throwing the matching shoe out too, knowing one shoe wouldn't do us any good, and hoping someone else could have the pair. With three children, there were many fights over who got the window seats. Lessons in taking turns helped, but not always.

The kids graduated from "that's mine" comments to "I'm telling." Then we remember them doing dishes together, sometimes singing, but usually fighting. Sometimes one disappeared to the bathroom, taking long enough in returning that he/she hoped the dishes were done. Dick usually didn't say much when they were doing what they were suppose to do, but once he raised his voice beyond his normal tone, they knew it was time to put all foolishness aside.

Dick and I did have one great vacation. We had a chance to go on an FAA tour to Majorca, Spain in the 60's for a week at a real reasonable rate. We couldn't afford it, but decided we deserved it and wanted to take advantage of it while we could. Dick's mother stayed with the kids so we could go. The trip also took us to Madrid and to Algiers, Africa.

Working around Dick's hours, I was able to work some part-time jobs during these years; and at the beginning of this time, I asked for a second car that I could help pay for. I knew this would give me more freedom to get around when Dick was working, without having to take him to work. We got a used red Volkswagen Bug, with shift gears, which was hard for me to get used to. Once I conquered that, I really enjoyed it. For a short period of time, I had a research job where I interviewed people at their homes (usually friends and relatives) about what they recalled about certain ads in magazines they read. Then for a number of years, I coded information from grocery ads on to IBM cards, and I was paid by the card. The important feature about this job was being able to do this when the children were in school, napping, or in bed at night, or at any time at my convenience. Every week newspapers were delivered to me by the research company for certain out of town grocery stores with instructions to look for and code information about certain products.

In the early 70's, Dick began to feel he had the experience and knowledge to apply for a supervisor job. There were a couple of openings in Omaha that he did not get. Then in 1973 he applied for one in Des Moines, Iowa and had a couple of interviews with the Chief there; and they seemed to hit it off good. Dick got the position, and our house was put on the market, selling in one week at full price. We went to Des Moines and found a house in just a few days. Dick was then sent to supervisors' school in Lawton, OK; and while he was gone, I was left with the task of packing. We moved the next day after he returned, this time with the Government paying for the move.

It was while moving the furniture out of the rec room in the basement that we discovered a big hole in the paneling. When confronting the children, we were told that when we were gone, Jeff and Linda had put Terry in a barrel used for packing dishes. They moved the sofa to have more room and then pushed him back and forth across the room right into the wall. We just moved out and put it behind us.

Our parents and friends were sad to see us leave again, but this time we were ready, and Dick was very happy with his promotion.

## INTERIM AT DES MOINES (1973-1975)

In June, 1973, we moved to a split level house at 7212 Ridgemont Dr. in Urbandale, a suburb of Des Moines. The house had four levels, with an entry at the front door into the living room and kitchen areas. From there, stairs went up to three bedrooms and a bath, and stairs went down to a family room, fourth bedroom and bath. From the family room, stairs went down to the basement. The garage was detached and to the back of the house.

It didn't take us very long to meet the next door neighbors, Joe & Elizabeth Brown, since they had four children, three girls and a boy. Their oldest girl was Linda's age, about 11 at that time, and Terry played with Kirk, their son. Jeff was 14 at the time of this move, and even though this was a hard time for him to be moving, he seemed to adjust okay and continued to receive good grades. Linda got a taste of girls' basketball competition while at this location. I even got a taste of it at a practice once, but I dislocated my little finger. I decided I was too old for that activity, so that was the last time for me.

Halloween was very different in Des Moines. When the children rang doorbells for "trick or treat," they were expected to tell a joke before they received their candy. Terry was about seven years old, and unbeknownst to us, he went to the doors and told a joke, leaving the people laughing while we stood out on the sidewalk. Finally I asked him what he was telling everybody. He then said his joke was "How do you get out of an elephant's stomach?" And the answer he gave was "You run around in circles until you get pooped out." I was mortified when I realized he had been telling this to all our new neighbors, but I hoped they would just think he was really cute like we did.

We had Terry tested for allergies when he was about eight years old. It was then discovered that he was allergic to house dust, grass, feathers, and cats, as the major items. Most things we had to keep him away from, but he got weekly shots for dust and grass for almost two years to build up his immunity.

When I was out of town to a women's church conference, Linda's leg was cut open when she attempted to climb over a fence. So instead of eating the casserole that was ready in the oven, Dick had to take Linda to the hospital for stitches.

One of Terry's major feats happened when he was about eight years old. We were visiting the Hunts in Omaha after we had moved to Des Moines, and Terry was playing in their basement with Donald Hunt. He had decided that picking up barbells was cool, but they overpowered him; and when they went down in back of him, the end of his middle finger on his right hand was underneath them. We rushed him to the hospital to discover that the end or fleshy part of his finger had been cut off. He was bandaged up and in some pain for awhile, but he did heal. It was bad enough as it was, but we were thankful because it could have been worse.

Grandpa Grant and Elsie were still alive at the time we lived in Des Moines, so we were able to see them more often, and the children to know them better. We only lived in the Des

Moines area for two years, but during that time, we met some very close, dear friends - Bill & JoAnn Hotovec (through Newcomers) and the Browns, next door. It has been fun staying in touch with them over the years. It was JoAnn who convinced us to join the Urbandale Country Club, which had a nine hole golf course. It was there that I learned to play golf, and especially enjoyed the Friday Night Twilight Golf with the Hotovecs.

We attended the First Christian Church (formerly University Christian) and were active in their activities. I started playing a lot of bridge while in Des Moines, especially through Newcomers and with JoAnn Hotovec in clubs. After living there over a year, I started working part time at an auto dealer as receptionist and bookkeeper; but I was still able to play bridge and go to luncheons when possible. I did not work very long, though, before we were making plans to move on to a different location.

After giving the supervisor's job at the Des Moines Flight Service a good trial period, Dick began to feel frustration working in management, not really able to use his style because of the rules and regulations attached to it. At the end of two years, he finally decided that supervision was not for him. It was at that time that the opportunity came for him to be transferred to Wichita, Kansas, which was a larger facility; therefore, he could change back to an operator, without a change in salary.

Again we sold our house in a short period of time, and located another one in Wichita. After our furniture was loaded and the van drove off, we had to wait the rest of the day for Iowa Realty Co. to give us the closing papers and the money for our house; so we left late for Wichita.

Linda and I had the hardest time leaving our friends in Des Moines. I remember both of us crying as we pulled away and headed South. I knew there would be new people to meet and more activities to become involved in; so we turned our eyes and minds to the next phase in our lives, because we knew that each experience helped us grow a little more.

## TEENAGERS IN WICHITA (1975 - 1984)

Dick went to work in Wichita in November, 1974, but we didn't move until the middle of January when the semester ended for the children. We felt that the house we bought at 1343 Westlink was a bit over our heads financially, but we liked it so much that the realtor did everything she could to help make it available to us. It was a ranch style house, attached garage, living room, family room, kitchen and three bedrooms upstairs. The 3/4 basement was finished with a fourth bedroom for Jeff, a recreation room for the pool table and ping pong table, and an unfinished part for the washer and dryer and for storage.

Everyone adjusted to the new location better than I did. There was a drainage ditch that ran down the center of the street we lived on, so I couldn't get to know the people across the street. The neighbors on both sides of us worked and had no children, and the houses in back of us were separated from us with a 6' high fence. It was hard to meet anyone or have close friends, so I began to feel sorry for myself. For two years I hated Wichita, until I decided we were probably going to be living there for a long time. At that point, I decided to get involved in more activities, such as Newcomers and church, that would help me meet more people and keep my life busy.

From the beginning, we started looking for a church home. We went to one closest to home, and from there further and further away from home. We were looking for a Christian church, where the kids would be happy; and it was finally Broadway Christian Church, close to downtown, that attracted them, with its very active youth group. Jeff was in high school and Linda was in junior high, and we wanted them to remain interested in church activities through a church where they wanted to be. Linda especially liked this church because it had a youth choir that traveled and gave concerts in other cities.

From our Sunday School class at Broadway Christian Church came a great nucleus of friends that came to be known as The Share Group. It was made up of couples named Bill & Eileen Clements, Dale & Lois McKee, Bob & Doris Willis, Harry & Harriett McGuire, Walt & Kathryn Kailer, Les & Connie Oehlert, and us. We met usually every other Friday night, and discussed everything in the world, the church, the city, and kids. If anyone had a concern about themselves or their family, we were all great soundboards or we had shoulders to cry on. Over the years, Harry, Walt, and Bob died, but of course, the widows continued to be part of everything. Even after we moved to another church and then away to Bella Vista., it has been great to be included, especially for gift exchange at Christmas time. What a wonderful fellowship we have had with them!

It was our choir director, Keith Johnson, at Broadway Christian Church who convinced me that I could sing solos and that Linda and I could sing duets as well. He was also Linda's choir teacher in junior high, and he gave Linda some private voice lessons. From this exposure, I then became involved in singing in a mixed quartet with Harriett McGuire, Bob Willis, and Dale McKee. We mostly sang for church services, but there were a few times when we did folk and gospel songs for other places too.

Terry liked the drainage ditch in front of our house. Before very long, he started bringing snakes home from the ditch. Even though they were black and non-threatening, I hated snakes; so it was very hard for me to let him do his thing. I did say they were to go no further than the garage, and hoped and prayed that would really be true. I sure did appreciate Jeff's butterfly and insect collecting a lot better after this time in our life.

As we advanced into the teenager years at our house, I began to understand why and when grey hairs became more prominent. Jeff was not too bad as a teenager, because he stayed pretty much his quiet self, spending a lot of his time in his basement bedroom, studying or working on his hobbies. Jeff got a martin house for the back yard, and it was usually well occupied. We had to be careful when we went in back though, because they liked to dive bomb, especially when the lawn was mowed. By the time we moved to Wichita, he was a senior in high school and then attended Wichita State University, still living at home.

Linda was a more difficult child to get along with in her teens. She and I locked horns many a times, which in talking to others, was typical of girls at this age. I had a hard time trying to keep from shouting in our discussions (? - I guess I mean arguments). Dick had to step in on many occasions to take over with his quiet, easy talking and take Linda aside to smooth over the rough edges. I can remember saying two things many times, and they were - "change your attitude," (which Linda grew so tired of hearing). and "How would you feel in the other person's shoes."

Linda didn't do much dating in high school, but she sure wanted to do what everybody else was doing. I'm sure she thought we were too strict, and we did have a hard time letting her go her way. She did grow out of this terrible teenager age (comparable to the terrible twos) into a wonderful young lady. She and I got along much better once she moved out.

Jeff went to Wichita State University for four years and graduated with a degree in Finance, Accounting major, and accepted his first major job with Arthur Andersen, an auditing firm in Kansas City. After Linda graduated from high school, she accepted a scholarship at Phillips University in Enid, Oklahoma. She had problems for awhile with some of the happenings involved with college life; but once she met Dale Bachman, she was much happier. She went to Phillips for two years and then finished at Missouri University in Columbia, Missouri, where Dale went to work on his Masters and Doctors Degrees in Math. Linda finished with a Math Degree and an MBA in Finance.

When Jeff and Linda both were gone from home, Terry started to blossom in his own style. I guess he could never get a word in edgewise with Linda around, so it was amazing how much we began to hear from him. He took over Jeff's bedroom in the basement, and had a place for his drums. From the drum set he received as a little boy, he went on to take drum lessons, and played in the band and orchestra in junior high and on to playing in the marching band in high school for football games, etc.

When Terry graduated from high school, he went on to college at Wichita State University living at home for the first year. After I had nagged Jeff and Linda through school

to get their studies done, it was a real habit of mine to continue the same with Terry. However, for some reason, he was able to get through school with far less reading and studying than the others required. He was enrolled in a five-year Accounting program at Wichita State, that resulted in a Masters Degree when he finished. He moved from home after the first year and stayed at the fraternity house on campus for the next three years. At the fifth year, he moved back home to save money. It was hard, but I learned to back off and let him live - I was a mother who wanted to mother. When he graduated, he also took his first job with Arthur Andersen Co. in Kansas City. I then shed some tears as my baby moved out for the last time, and I knew my job at mothering was over. Terry did leave his mark behind when he left - there was an indentation in the ceiling of his bedroom in the basement, where he had jumped up to see if his head could touch the ceiling. Sure enough!

We always tried to get back to Omaha for Christmas every year, especially in Dick's Mother's later years, when she was unable to travel, and when we didn't want to leave her alone for Christmas. But there was one year when we brought her back with us to Wichita, because there was to be a surprise gift for Linda. She had been taking piano lessons for many years and practiced at home on the same piano I had used as a child. It began to have sound board trouble that was hard and expensive to repair. So we bought her a new piano which was delivered the day before Christmas when she was about 14 years old. We kidded her about it being for Christmas, birthday, and whatever else for the next ten years. When she moved out, she moved the piano with her as well.

In 1984 we received an offer in the mail to visit Bella Vista, Arkansas for a free 3 day/2 night promotional tour. Since we hadn't taken many trips other than camping, it sounded good. We took our golf clubs, and golfing and the tour was all we had in mind. However, we fell in love with the place, and before we knew what we were doing, we bought a lot. As the years went by and we returned periodically to enjoy a couple days of golfing, we knew we had made the right decision. It was/is a beautiful retirement area and each season has its own special color. Even winter in this place has its own beauty without being terribly cold.

A couple years after buying the lot, we had an opportunity to buy a time share at The Greens, located within Bella Vista. We were told we would be able to trade it in when we built a house on our lot. Since that appealed to us, we made another investment. In the six to seven years we owned it, not only did we stay at The Greens a few times, but we traded it for places such as San Diego (with Jeff & Karen), Beaver Creek in Colorado, Williamsburg in Virginia and the Poconos in Pennsylvania (with Linda's family), Las Vegas (with Bob & Mary Ann) and Orlando in Florida (with the Clements). We knew we had received a lot of good use from the time share, but we were ready to trade it in when we built our house. Linda and Dale bought a lot in Bella Vista at the same time we bought our time share, and then they wished later they had not done so. We were able to trade their lot in on our house as well, thus getting their money back.

## MARRIAGES AND GRANDCHILDREN (1984 - 1992)

Linda was engaged to Dale Bachman for three and a half years. Their wedding was scheduled for the day after she graduated from college, June 9, 1984. They were married in Wichita, and she and I did a lot of long distance planning from her school in Columbia, Missouri. Linda and I both made peach, lavender and white silk flowers until I thought they would begin to grow out of our ears.

We finally got to the wedding day, and Terry was driving back from a week at Boys State with three other young men. Their sleep during the week had been limited, and Terry had a little problem staying awake. Luckily, he did no more than veer off the road slightly and hit a mile marker, but it was enough to wake up the other boys and keep them all awake until they got home.



**Linda and Dale Bachman wedding with the Schenck family members, 1984**

The rest of the day went off without any problems, and at the end of the wedding ceremony when the minister pronounced them man and wife, Linda said “Ya-Hoo” just loud enough for the minister and Dale to hear, causing some big smiles. She had waited through three long years of engagement, and she was elated that it was finally over. They continued to live in Columbia, while Linda worked on her Masters and Dale worked on his Ph.D. Degrees. They both taught as Teacher’s Aides to help financially while they were in school.

A couple of years after they were married, I received a flower arrangement at work with a note attached that said "Congratulations, Grandma." I got so excited that I jumped up and went shouting down the hall through Personnel (which was next door to where I worked) saying "I'm going to be a Grandma." I have no idea if there were people in Personnel who were not employees, but I sure made a disturbance.

Michelle Renee was born on December 11, 1987, and we drove to Columbia to be there just a few hours after they got home from the hospital. We stayed about a week and had such a good time making over the baby.

Jeff didn't do much dating through high school and college, putting all his time and effort in on his studies. After he graduated from college and moved to Kansas City, he and a friend from work rented an apartment together. He dated a few girls in K.C., and the one he decided was his love was Karen Christie. They became engaged, found a house they liked in Overland Park, and were married on May 23, 1987 in St. Joseph, Missouri.

We drove to St. Joe from Wichita for the rehearsal dinner. Terry had to be in a friend's wedding in Wichita on Jeff's rehearsal night, so he couldn't go to St. Joe until the day of the wedding. He called at 8:00 a.m. and said he was on the way and had to stop in K.C. to pick up his tux. He wasn't in K.C. by 2:00, for a trip that should not take more than four hours. By 3:00, I became a basket case and insisted that Dick call the highway patrol. He found out that Terry had been stopped for speeding, and since he evidently was lost, he had been steered in the right direction. He did not show up at the church until 5:00 and the wedding was at 7:00. He said he took a wrong turn out of Wichita, but was I ever glad to see him.

Jeff and Karen's wedding was lovely, and Karen was a pretty bride. A couple of years later, they called to say they had a baby on the way. Karen had a sonogram so she knew ahead of delivery that the baby was a girl. On July 15, 1989, Kristin Elizabeth was born and was a real bright red head, just as all ours had been. We were able to be there with them a couple weeks after birth, after Karen's mother had helped in the beginning. What a sweet little girl they had.

Terry was married at about 28 years old to Sandy Hoffman, and they had a big wedding and reception. However, after three years, their marriage just did not work out, and they were divorced. Thank goodness, there were no children to that union.

About a year after Michelle was born, Dale finished his thesis for his Doctor's Degree. He then received an offer for a research job at National Security Agency in Ft. Meade, MD. It broke my heart to see them go so far away, but I soon learned to accept their decision, and that planes took us to them quickly.

A few years later Eric Michael was born to Linda and Dale on October 6, 1991 (another red head) and David Grant was born to Jeff and Karen on December 30, 1993 (the first blonde baby). David was very little when born, and has remained so ever since, but he has really developed well in all other aspects.

When Eric was about two years old, Dale was sent to England to present a paper of his, and Linda joined him for two weeks on a tour. We went to Baltimore to stay with Michelle and Eric. It was a long two weeks, especially with a two year old, but Eric did have some funny sayings while we were there. Among those were "I have a headache in my tummy," "My tummy says I need a donut," and "Grandma, is your skin cracked" (veins). Even after two weeks of reprimands and discipline, he still said "I like you guys."

When David was learning to talk, he had a tendency to get syllables in the wrong place. I loved to hear him say calipitters instead of catapillers and skapetti instead of spaghetti. Kristin differentiated between her two sets of grandparents as the ones with Mindy (our dog) and the ones with Trouble (their cat).

Neither Jeff nor Terry stayed at Arthur Andersen more than two years. Jeff went to work for Rival Manufacturing and Terry went to Sprint. Karen's education was for a registered dietician, first working for hospitals and doctors, and then later setting up her own business. After Linda and Dale moved to Baltimore, Linda went to work for Bell Atlantic, then TDI (a service for the deaf), and when the children were school age, she quit work to home school Michelle in third grade, and again in sixth grade, before discovering she had Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD). After receiving the right medicine, she returned to public school without any problems.

It was after we had been at Broadway Christian Church for many years and Dick was the leader of the elders, that we had a run in with the minister. He did not really allow the lay people to do their jobs without complete takeover. He also was a minister who did his work for the glory of himself, rather than the glory of God. After Jeff and Linda left home and we had enough with the minister at Broadway, Dick, Terry and I moved our membership to Westlink Christian Church, which was much closer to home. There was no longer an older youth group at Broadway, so Terry had nothing there to hold him. Westlink was an independent Christian Church rather than a Disciples Christian Church. It was more upbeat, with lively music, accompanied by drums and other instruments, and we all liked that. Terry was also given a chance to play drums in church a number of times.

After our house sold in Wichita, Dick put in for his retirement effective November 28, 1992. FAA planned a dinner in his honor and our children and their spouses were all invited. There were speeches and gifts given for Dick, and our children gave him a big snow scene painting with a stream running through it, that ended up above our fireplace, and fitting in very good with our decor.

The day before the retirement dinner, Dick received word that his Dad died. Al had been in a nursing home for about five years with Alzheimers' Disease. We went ahead with the dinner on the 21st of November, and then left early the next day for Omaha for his funeral.

## WORKING YEARS

When Terry started to school all day, I started a part-time job doing payroll for the Pancake Houses in the Wichita area. Pat Wilson was bookkeeper for the chain, doing the work in her home. It was just a few blocks from us, so very handy to work Mondays and Tuesdays of each week. I stayed with Pat for two years, and when I needed more hours, I moved on to Learjet Flight Training Center for about a year, doing secretarial work 25-30 hours a week. While working there, I was taken on a Learjet ride, while they were training a pilot. I was real excited, but it wasn't as much fun as I thought. They did touch and gos, steep turns, and whatever else I wasn't sure. All I was sure of was that it made me sick. When I got back to the office, I was pale, unsteady, and had a problem putting a smile on my face. The boss was upset that they had taken me up when they were having such extensive training maneuvers.

Then as college for Jeff came closer, I decided it was time to begin working full time. I worked for over a year for BFI Waste Management, doing their accounts receivable; but I had a problem working for the head accountant, as others before me had also. I told the owner if the lady in charge ever left, I would consider going back to work for them. He did call me six months or so later, but I then had a job that I liked.

After BFI, I went to work for the City of Wichita, hired by the Airport Authority, Engineering Division. At interview time, I emphasized that I needed a job that would keep me busy, and they assured me that I would be busy. However, I sat most of every day for two to three months looking at the walls or reading a book. Finally I went to the Personnel Dept. and said I wanted to work, and I wanted a position that would allow me to do that. With the City, it was difficult in most cases to move on to another job before the six month probation period was over; but when Personnel realized I was going to look elsewhere if they did not have something available, they set up an interview for me with Rita Goodwin in the Retirement & Insurance Division of the Finance Dept. We understood each other from the very beginning, and she wanted a hard working person in her office. For the first few years I did the secretarial work for Rita, and the other person in the division was Sheila Dodds, the Administrative Assistant who was in charge of retiree payroll. When Sheila got a promotion to another department, I was moved into her position.

The contact that I had with retirees and employees made working in the Retirement & Insurance Office something I had been looking for. I felt needed and of service to those who called, and I was busy! I worked for the City for twelve years, and my principal duties in the latter years were monthly payroll for 1500 retirees, figuring retirement amounts for new retirees, processing insurance death benefits for employees and spouses, answering questions of all kinds regarding health insurance, life insurance, and retirement, preparing agendas for retirement board meetings. and taking and typing the minutes from the meetings. Rita was a wonderful person to work with, and it was a sad day for me when she retired a couple of years before I did. For almost a year, I handled her job as well as mine until someone was found to fill her job. Carla Palmer already worked for the City and was a very knowledgeable person in the area of finances and was able to be the director of Retirement & Insurance, with a wealth of

new ideas. Carla and I had already been friends, as part of the Lunch Bunch, and we worked together well besides.

It was at this time that we put the house up for sale, looking ahead to Dick's retirement. We didn't have an actual date in mind, but decided to let the sale of our house govern the date for retirement. I told Carla and the Personnel Dept. that they should be allowing me to show someone else how to do my job, since I had no backup. I told them that once our house sold, I was planning to retire and move to Bella Vista, Ark. No move was made to get any backup person for me.

For the first six months we had our house on the market, we had many, many people go through it, but no one was interested in buying. In the beginning, we knew there were some things that should be done to update the decor, but we thought the buyers would want to do those things to suit their tastes. Wrong! We ended up putting in new carpet in the basement, new floor and counters in the kitchen, new wallpaper in the family room, dining area and kitchen, and white bathroom fixtures to replace the outdated colored ones. We also replaced the counter top in the master bath and the carpet in both small bedrooms. We had the kitchen appliances sprayed white instead of the outdated gold color. We used help from the City's Fire Dept., since many of the firefighters had side jobs that they specialized in. Before all the work was entirely done, we had an offer on our house, eleven months from when we first put it on the market. Our efforts paid off, and we learned that it is best to update as you go along, rather than waiting for someone else to do it.

During all this time, I continued to work alone in my job, reminding them every so often that I would be gone before long, to no avail. When the house sold, I told the City that I was leaving in six weeks. Then they began to scramble. After posting the job opening and interviewing candidates, someone from Personnel was offered the job, someone I didn't think was the best candidate. But I was not the one who was allowed any input into the decision. My job was very detailed, and I needed a lot of time for training. However, the candidate had to do her secretarial job in Personnel and come to me for training when she could. I was still working with Kim on the day the moving van was loading us to move, and I was not comfortable with what she knew when we moved.

Two months after we moved to Bella Vista, I was called and told that they had to let Kim go to a different job, because she was not doing everything she should or was not doing it right. They asked if I could go back and sort out and correct what was wrong. I agreed to commute and stay for four days each week, but I had no idea until I went back how bad it really was. It took me five weeks to go over everything and redo or correct all the mistakes. Pensions had been figured wrong and not sent to the actuary for certification, plus cost of living raises and insurance premiums were not changed at their annual times. I was glad when that was all caught up and I could be retired again.

## LOOKING BACK

Looking back now at the way we raised our family and the style and manner in which we lived, I would not have changed a single thing. We raised three, well-behaved, college educated children, and with no troubles or problems such as smoking, drinking or drugs. We are thankful to God for helping us through those times, as there were certainly times of stress and lack of patience, on my part anyway. We worked together as best we could to strive for a harmonious and fun family life.

Each of the children had a special place in the family. Jeff as our first or oldest was the one we practiced on with no experience. We may have been stricter on him until we learned he would survive if we just let him go. He has always been quiet and easy going like his Dad. He always kept everything to himself, so it was hard to know what he was feeling or thinking. There was a time when we wondered if we should take him to a counselor, because he wanted to be by himself so much; but we decided that was just his personality - and Voila! He turned out great.

Linda was not just our middle child, but our only girl. Because of the family history of boys on both sides, we thought it a miracle to have even one girl. By the time she arrived, we were more relaxed and comfortable with being parents. I made a lot of Linda's clothes, as well as my own, to save money, but also because I took such delight in making frilly dresses that made her look so cute. She and I clashed many times through her teen years, I think because we were both so alike in temperament, but it all became worthwhile when in her adult years she told us she was very happy with the way she was raised.

Terry was the youngest, or the "baby" of the family. He was the most adventuresome and outgoing in nature, many times clowning around or keeping us laughing with his humor. Because of his curious and rambunctious personality, he experienced more falls or accidents, resulting in stitches, bruises or broken bones than the others. He was ready to be on his own sooner, and found college life to be more fun than work.

We helped all three through college with expenses. We paid their tuition, which was the major part. They in turn bought their own books and supplied their own spending money through part time jobs along the way. Terry, on his graduation day, told us how much he had appreciated having the help from us so he didn't have to work full time. Yes, it was worth it for us too, to hear those words.

They all had to wait for their own car until they had saved enough to buy it themselves and pay for their own insurance and buy their own gas etc. Jeff's first car was a Camero, bought from an individual; and it turned out to be a bad one. After that he bought through a dealer and had better luck. Linda's first car was a Datsun bought from her Uncle Phil. It had a lot of rust spots on it and she spent time stripping the rust and paint off and redoing the entire exterior. There was a sign in the window of the car most of the time that said "Under Construction." Terry borrowed money from the City of Wichita Credit Union for his first car,

which we had to sign as co-signature with him. He was good about making the payments regularly.

Their place in the family is always there no matter where they go, who they go with, or how long they are gone. Through times of bonding, mending verbal fences, and patching harsh exchanges, we are all still family, always dispensing a potion of love and having the loyalty to each other. The most important commodity grown today is a crop of children seeded by two people, nourished by love, watered by tears, and in 18-20 years harvested into worthwhile human beings, only to go through the process again.

Children are conceived in passion, carried with heartburn, and raised with love. We share the same chromosomes, genes, and last name, but not once have our bodies been on the same time cycle. When I was on wash, iron, shop, cook and run, they were on permasleep and off. When I was on sleep and exhaustion, they were on spin around the crib, damp dry, and fill. Even when they got older, I went to bed when they were going out; and when I got up for breakfast, they were coming in.

Our house has always and will always be open to the children. We love it when they come to visit; but as we get older, we also like it when they leave. Friends are like annuals that need seasonal nurturing to bear blossoms. Family is a perennial that comes up year after year, enduring the droughts of absence and neglect. There is a place in the garden for both of them.

Somehow, it is hard for me to tell people, including my children, exactly how I feel about something or about them. I find it is easier to write about it, thus this has blossomed into much more than I ever dreamed when it was started. Sometimes we wonder if the children ever paid any attention to us as they grew up. Did they hear our tears the days they were born - such joy. Did they hear our prayers the nights they were sick? Did they hear what was in our hearts the day they graduated? Some emotions don't make noise, and it is hard to hear pride, and caring is faint like a heartbeat. And to hear love, some days it is so quiet, you don't know it is there. Even though I may not have always shown it, it was there.

It is hard to tell our children some of these thoughts so that they can understand how we feel. All we can hope is that when they have their own children, they will then understand how fulfilled they made us feel. Having the family around sometimes makes me feel old, but I'm proud of my age - I've earned every wrinkle. It may be because I see the past in my children. Are they a reminder of what I was? Maybe age holds us together.

No, we were never rich, but we were certainly not poor. Yes, we had an abundance of blessings, most of importance were the three very healthy children who gave us much happiness in our family life. I also have had a very loving, caring husband who has been my best friend, lover, companion, good provider, and traveling buddy. For these things I am most thankful.

## LIFE AFTER WORK

Ah Retirement! This is the life! This is what we worked for all those years. Dick retired on November 28th and I retired on December 17th of 1992, and on that same day we moved to Bella Vista, Arkansas. There have been many people who could not understand why we wanted to move to Bella Vista. As more and more of them have visited us, they have begun to understand our desires.

Bella Vista is a very beautiful area, with lots of woods, around the houses and in isolated areas. In the Spring, the red bud, dogwood, and bradford pear trees are in full bloom before the leaves appear. The Summer is aglow with wildflowers, many green trees, and the annual and perennial flowers planted for marvelous color. Fall is my favorite, with the immense amount of trees and the many shades of colors as their leaves change before they fall for the winter's coming. Winters are very mild, compared to what we were used to in Kansas, Iowa, and Nebraska. There are only one or two times it might snow every winter, although ice storms have been more prevalent; however, it was not unusual to have ice or snow gone in about 24 hours.

Bella Vista is presently an unincorporated community of about 15,000 residents, growing from 9,000 when we first moved here six years ago. It has seven beautiful lakes, eight golf courses, tennis courts, parks, four club houses with restaurants, two outside pools, one inside pool, two exercise areas, and a social hall where we can hold meetings and play cards, games, pool, etc.

We rented a house for the first six months in Bella Vista, just down the street where our house was being built on the lot we bought in 1984. The new house at 16 Hartlepool Dr. consisted of a large living room, a dining area, kitchen, two bedrooms, a den (where we have trundle beds, sewing machine, computer, and bookcases), a covered deck, and a room I call my storm and storage room in the basement, accessed only from the back outside. Since we wanted limited maintenance, we had the yard landscaped in rock rather than grass. We have never been disappointed with that, while many of our neighbors fought the armadillos who ruined lawns, looking for grubs. We sold some of our furniture when we left Wichita and were able to buy new when we moved into the new house. This year we converted our covered deck into a completely enclosed sunroom, with heating and air for all year use.

When we first moved to Bella Vista, we became active in Welcome Wagon activities. Through this club we met others who moved about the same time we did, who came from Kansas and Nebraska, and who shared the same interests we had such as bridge and golf. Then about two years later, we decided Welcome Wagon had served its purpose, and we no longer needed it. We had become involved in other activities with many of the friends we had met through Welcome Wagon.

The clubs and organizations I or we became involved in were Nebraska Club, Kansas Club, Village Art Club, a couples bowling league, a number of bridge clubs, choir at church, Village Handbells, Ladies 9-Hole Golf League, and Mens 18-Hole Golf League.

Since I was 57 years of age when I retired, I wasn't completely ready to give up working; so I took on a job at H&R Block from January to April, working part-time as receptionist the first two years, and then doing computer work and payroll for the last two years. When I became age 62 and was eligible for Social Security and my City of Wichita pension, I then ceased any earned income job.

I joined the Village Art Club, whose members exhibit arts and crafts items at The Gallery. This is an old barn that was turned into a three story building for selling of paintings and arts and crafts. Soon after Dick's Dad died and we retired, Al's wife Clara started making doorstops that look like sofas; and I decided I could do that too, and they would be different for this area. I wasn't sure how they would go over, but over a period of four years, I sold about 250 of them either on my own or on commission at The Gallery.

After taking golf lessons in Des Moines, I didn't play much golf in Wichita, because of working full time most of that time. But when we moved to Bella Vista, I decided it was time to get back in it again by joining the Ladies 9-Hole Assn. There were approximately 300 members, and the first year I was able to accomplish Most Improved member. Even though I improved more than anyone else, I still remained in the D or the worst group. My goal was to advance to the C group, and it finally happened at the end of the 1998 season. I am not the serious golfer that Dick is, but I enjoy the fellowship with others, and the exercise and being outside in the beauty and fresh air that we have here.

As I got busier in all the fun activities, my priorities changed. I didn't spend a lot of time cleaning house; I would give it a lick and a promise (old saying from Grandma's days) and call it done. As I got out of the money making activities, I became more active as a volunteer in church events and at the Alzheimers' Assn., answering the telephone and other office work. My life became more rounded and fulfilled, and I loved every part of it.

We began to feel that we had paradise right here at home, and didn't really want to leave for trips when we had to give up what we had scheduled here. But travel we did, attending a number of Elderhostels at St. George, Utah, Buffalo, NY (Niagara Falls), the Rocket Center in Huntsville, Alabama, and to Door County, Wisconsin. We took our first cruise to Alaska in 1996 and then another trip to the Northeast and cruise from Montreal around Nova Scotia and into New York Harbor in 1998. In 1997 we took my Dad and drove to California to Sequoia and Yosemite National Parks and visited relatives along the way, including Dad's brother Darwin, his niece Marci, his granddaughter Melanie, and his son (my brother) Dave. We were on the road for three weeks and have some wonderful memories to cherish of that trip, and a bad memory too when the fuel pump went out in our car going through Colorado Springs.

Some times we find it difficult or stressful to be with each other almost constantly, but as a whole, I think we have done quite well surviving retirement together. We have learned to handle our time, respect one another, and live in reasonable harmony in a give and take way. Dick relates to my ways of standing in front of an open refrigerator wondering what or why, and I relate to his ways of going to the bedroom closet, wondering what he went after. Of course there are comments all the time from others here about the Bella Vista Disease or Old

Timers Disease, referring to forgetfulness being prevalent; but it is all in fun, and it is great to know there are others who share in that fun. The people here try to stay young as long as possible with positive attitudes. It is always a good sign when you hear about their golf games rather than their gall stones.

## 2000-2005, 1st UPDATE

Retirement in Bella Vista, Arkansas continued to be a very worth while and enjoyable experience. Besides our usual activities of golf and bridge playing, my enjoyment of painting continued to take up most of my Wednesdays. In the year 2000, I completed four more paintings; three more in 2001; four in 2002; three in 2003; four in 2004; two in 2005, and so far one in 2006. I have a total of 53 paintings done and almost have the 54<sup>th</sup> one finished. I sure do enjoy it and I think I am getting better the longer I continue to paint. I started to sing with the Bella Vista Men's Chorus in 2000 and have enjoyed it very much. We do four or five performances in the spring for various grade schools and lately have included grades 1<sup>st</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> at the concerts. There are three additional concerts, one in the spring, one in the fall, and one at Christmas.

The Year 2000 didn't start off too well for us. Just after we had finished with the Christmas Holidays, Nancy received word that her mother wasn't doing very well. This was on a Tuesday and she died before Nancy got there on Wednesday.

In January we started to look for a different car and ended up buying a four year old 1996 Mercury Grand Marquis with 19000 plus miles on it. It is still running like a dream and has 169000 plus miles on it. We take it everywhere when we go on any trips.



In the year 2000, we took a trip with the Elderhostel organization to New Orleans, a week before Mardi Gras. We have been to quite a number of these Elderhostels and this was the best one of all. New Orleans is a very beautiful city and rich in tradition and excellent food.

Then in June, we took a family vacation with all of the family to Disney World in Orlando, Florida (left pic). We split up at the various theme parks and met back at the entrance when we had seen everything each family wanted to see.

We took small trips to Branson, Mo; and to Mountain View, AR. We went through Blanchard Caverns there in Mountain View, and it is as nice as Carlsbad Caverns.

Year 2001 saw us travel to an Elderhostel in Sedona, Arizona. We had a really good time and went on down to Phoenix to visit Nancy's brother before returning home. Then in July we took Michelle to Santa Fe and Taos, New Mexico. When each of our grandchildren becomes 13, we

take them some place in the United States where they would like to go. We had a really good time with her and surely enjoyed her for the week.

Terry and I continued to play in local family golf tournaments and seem to win some money most of the time.

We continued to make trips to Omaha to see Nancy's dad about every two or three months.

Year 2002 was quite exciting for me. We had some wonderful trips, the first one was to San Antonio, Texas with Kristin, our granddaughter; we had a very wonderful time and she had grown up to be very nice young lady. We got to know her a lot better during that week and certainly enjoyed her company. September and October were busy months; we spent a week in Branson shopping, golfing, and eating; and in October we took a three day bus trip to Branson with the Men's Chorus; four days to Hot Springs AR. We went golfing and sightseeing. I went back to Omaha for my class 50<sup>th</sup> reunion in September. The best trip of the year was over Thanksgiving, when we went to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina for four days of golf. We won third place in our flight and I had one of the best rounds of golf ever on my 70<sup>th</sup> birthday.

I had the privilege of being appointed an Elder of the church for three years from 2003-2005. It was a new experience since the last time I served in that capacity was in Wichita.

Year 2003 found Nancy taking a trip in March to Las Vegas with the group she worked with in Wichita. In June we went to Yellowstone Park with Jeff, Karen and the kids. We took our scheduled trip half way through the Panama Canal on December 9 thru the 19. We went to Ocho Rios, Jamaica; Colon, Panama; Limon, Costa Rica; Grand Cayman; and Cozumel.

2004 saw us take a 17 day trip to the east coast, driving all the way. We first stopped in Branson, Missouri to see Tim Conway/ Harvey Corman show. Then on to Kansas City overnight to see Kristin play soccer, to Omaha to see Nancy's dad the next day and then began the trip back east. We made stops in Des Moines, Iowa; Elgin, Illinois; Wadsworth, Ohio. We then headed for New York, planning to stay in New Jersey overnight only to have the car break down in Pennsylvania. Our friends from Elgin were going with us to New York, so they picked us up in Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, and we went on into New York. We spent two days in New York seeing a Broadway Show and most of the sights of New York. The trip back included stops at Stroudsburg to pick up our car, to Arlington, Virginia to see Terry, to Williamsburg, Virginia, to Tellico Village, Tennessee, and then a two day trip back home. We really enjoyed the trip and Nancy got to see some family members who she had never met before. September found us off to visit Hannibal, Missouri with friends, and in October I went to North Platte, Nebraska to play some golf with a friend who lived in Omaha when we did.

2005 found us taking Eric, in the year he turned 13, to any place he would like to go in the United States. We ended up going to Colorado in and around Colorado Springs for a wonderful week. Then at the end of June through the first week of July, we flew to Switzerland for a wonderful trip with friends who have been there seven times and we saw very beautiful parts of God's wonderful creation.

Medical problems were encountered during the last 6 years. In 2001 Nancy encountered breast cancer and had a lumpectomy operation in March. I had cataract surgery in October/November.

In 2003 we developed plantar fasciitis in our right heels and it took about a year and half to get it cured. Most of the other physical problems have been routine and continue to see various doctors for annual check-ups.

We continue to participate in Bella Vista Men's Chorus yearly and the Bella Vista Celebration Church Choir yearly. Other activities include bridge, bowling, and painting. Terry and I continue to play in the annual All Family Relatives Tournament winning some money every time but one.

## 2006 – 2013, 2nd UPDATE

Year 2006, we have our usual activities of bowling, golf, men's chorus, bridge, painting, doctors, and church activities. We did take three trips during the year, one to Florida, Tennessee; Lake of the Ozarks; and to Omaha, Minnesota, and North Dakota. Nancy's dad passed away in March.

Year 2007, local activities are in full swing through out the year and the trips were to Mission/McAllen Texas, Nancy went to North Carolina, and I went to Elgin Illinois. Small side trips to Warrensburg Missouri and Branson.

Year 2008, celebrated our 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary with a trip to Hawaii and a celebration dinner. The annual golf tournaments in Omaha and back here in Bella Vista. We are always keeping busy with our daily activities.



**Immediate family at the 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding anniversary celebration 2008**

Year 2009, trip to Vancouver and Victoria Island, Butchart Gardens. Linda and Terry played with Nancy and me in the local Bella Vista Golf tournament. We acquired another grandchild as Terry and Dayline got married and she has an 8 yr old son. They are from Venezuela.

Year 2010, trip to Vail Colorado, and to Robert Trent Jones Alabama golf trail, all of our local activities, including volunteering one day a week. We had minor medical problems that were taken care of.

Year 2011, major trip to Australia, and New Zealand, to New York City, and to Elgin and Rockford Illinois. Nancy had some eye problems and that was taken care of with a trip to Springfield Missouri. Class reunion to Omaha.

Year 2012, spent the month of January in Mission Texas, took a trip to Florida Keys. Nancy's class reunion in Omaha. The major trip was a cruise around England, Scotland, and Ireland. The activities of the grandchildren are moving forward and they continue to on their own doing their own thing.

We have read and recorded 1650 novels and I have completed 71 paintings.

Year 2013, spent the first two months in Mesa, Arizona at a park model trailer. Spent some time with Nancy's brother and his family played some golf and visited with friends from Omaha. We were scheduled to take a river cruise from Amsterdam to Budapest on April 26<sup>th</sup> but had to postpone it due to an emergency appendectomy that Dick had. I was in and out of the hospital for 11 days but after a slow recovery time I got back to normal. We were able to take a trip to Cape Cod in September instead.

We are always involved with golf, bridge, painting, bowling and short trips to visit the children in Kansas City and Warrensburg Missouri. Terry and family came back for our Christmas celebration during Thanksgiving season. Kristin and Justin (Jeff and Karen daughter and son-in-law) bought a house and are in the process of remodeling it. Linda, our daughter got a new job six blocks away from her house in Warrensburg. We continue to be involved with our church and enjoy the choir very much and have been adding more singers regularly.

We didn't do much for each other this Christmas as we both decided to get Kindle readers to use to read books. I got the Kindle paper-white and Nancy got the Kindle fire HD now all we have to do is learn how to use them. We both had falls on the ice during the last week on December, but are recovering slowly.

We have the river cruise re-scheduled for May of this year and is already booked. And have an additional bus trip to New Orleans the last of February We will enjoy the holiday seasons here in Bella Vista.

## 2014 – 2017, 3<sup>rd</sup> UPDATE

Year 2014, we stayed home this winter, instead of going south to Texas or west to Arizona. The weather here was worst of any of the two years before, but we survived and moved forward with our lives for the year.

We did take a seven day bus trip to New Orleans the end of February, and it has been a long time since we were last there and there were some very nice paintings on the square the first time we were there, but this last time they were all what you would call “wild way out” nothing that I would like at all.

We took Gabriel to Branson Mo. for his birthday and we had a good time with him and Terry came down and he and I played some golf. We were able to take out delayed river cruise the first of May from Amsterdam to Budapest visiting the countries of Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Slovakia, and Hungary. We were able to spend some time at the locations where the “Sound of Music” was filmed. During the trip we passed through 62 locks on the three rivers we navigated and that was very interesting.

Our last trip of the year was a trip to the Rose Bowl Parade, where we were able to see where they start to make the floats for the next year’s parade. The weather was sunny but the temperature was in the mid to low forties and so we had to bundle up and try to keep warm. As we were walking to our seats in the bleachers, I ran into a fellow golfer from my group in Bella Vista, not knowing that he was going to be there.

I am still involved with bowling, golfing, playing bridge, and have started to play double deck pinochle. ’

Year 2015. Health wise we are doing well for two older people it just takes us longer to get ready to go someplace, and get up in the morning. We drove to Pensacola Florida for a week in February and spent a couple of days in Golf Shores Alabama which maybe some January or February we may decide to spend a week down there. The main trip of this year was a cruise around Italy stopping in Venice, Istanbul, Athens, Naples, Rome, Pisa, and ending up in Barcelona Spain. We saw a lot of the historical sites of Rome that they were rebuilding the coliseum and the Eruption and destruction of Pompeii.

We are still bowling and golfing, and I took over the treasurer job for the Tuesday league and so that makes a little more work for me every bowling day to collect the money and get it put in the bank. I was asked to be an Elder at Highland Christian Church, for a three year term and that added some more responsibilities that I wasn’t doing to good of a job the last time I was an Elder at a different church. You would think that activities would get easier the older you get, but it doesn’t look like that is the case. I guess as long as you are able to move around the more involved you get the better off you feel so we just keep plugging along. The year 2015 was pretty routine for us just watching our children and their children grow up and the changes that took place in their lives, and the moves that each of them had to make.

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Year 2016. The big event of 2016 was the big major family reunion with our family and the family of Chuck and Carol White. We rented two big houses on the beach at Oak Island, North Carolina, and had forty or more people in both houses for a week. We had a full schedule of activities each day and were able to watch new baby turtles escape from the place they were buried in the sand and make their way to the ocean. During the time we were at Oak Island, Kristin gave us a card and told us we were going to be Great-grandparents early next year.



**All of the family with children and grandchildren in Oak Island 2016**

We took a nine-day bus trip to the Smoky Mountains in Tennessee, which included three different train rides back into the hills of Tennessee and looking at the early settlements of people of Tennessee. The country was very beautiful and the trip was very enjoyable. I still am doing some painting when I get the time outside of bowling, golfing, and playing bridge. The golf scores and bowling scores are getting closer together and that is not a very good sign. I was asked to be chairman of the Elders, so that requires that I keep track of the rest of the Elders and find out if that have any problems that need to be resolved.

Year 2017. In February, Kristin gave birth to a baby girl, Audrey Grace, and we became Great-grandparents. The first chance we had available we had to go to Kansas City to see the new baby.

I was able to go on the Oklahoma-Arkansas Honor Flight to Washington D.C. in April 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. We had 65 veterans and guardians on the flight plus 6 medical specialists and got to see every one of the military memorials, Arlington Cemetery, and Lincoln Memorial. The crowds at both the going and arriving airports were outstanding and made each veteran feel very much appreciated.

Our main trip this year was a river cruise from southern France, through Paris, to Normandy Beaches and back to Paris. We left on May 18<sup>th</sup>, flew to Nice for an overnight stay in a fancy Hotel on the Riviera. We left the next day on the cruise to Paris, changed boats in Paris and on to the beaches of Normandy. A wonderful trip seeing lots of history and making good friends on each of the two ships we were on.

The day after the cruise ended, I had a change of plans for our last day in Paris. I fell and broke my hip under the Eiffel Tower and had to spend nine days in the Hospital in France, four additional days in the Hospital in Chicago, and three months at home under the care of "home care." After the stay in Chicago, I had a five hundred ninety mile ambulance ride back to Bella Vista. The end result of all of this is that I have to wait for a while before I start to bowl and play golf and I am not able to do the things that I was able to do before. Once you have a serious injury of this nature, it takes forever for you to get your energy back.

I spent three months from June 16<sup>th</sup> to almost September under "Home Care Therapy" to get all of my energy, leg movements and other necessary activities back to normal and have just about reached that level of life that I was before the accident. We were able to get all of the money spent in France because of travel insurance and with it were able to buy a 2015 rav4 Toyota SUV, our first newer car in ten years, and traded off the Grand-Marquis. I have also bought a new bowling ball and am looking forward to using it as a substituted in both of the leagues that I bowl in. I still am involved with activities at church, painting, bridge, and double deck pinochle, but am not able to do as much as I used to around the house as I run out of energy pretty fast and have to rest for 15 minutes or longer before I can get back to the joy at hand. We will spend Thanksgiving with Linda and Dale in New Jersey and Christmas with Jeff and Karen in Kansas City.

## 2018 – 2020, 4<sup>TH</sup> UPDATE TO HISTORY

We were hopeful that the year 2018 would be better than 2017, but as things moved on through the year the energy level never increased very much and I got worn out quickly in every activity that I wanted to do. I continued to bowl, but the average continued to go down along with the golf score and it began to look like age was going to take its toll on my number of recreational activities that I would be able to participate in from now on.

We were able to take a number of trips yet with “Making Memories Bus Tours,” the first one was to the "Creation Museum and the Ark Encounter in Kentucky, the second one was to the "Albuquerque Balloon Festival.” We had taken another trip to Balloon Festival earlier but I can't remember the year, but we never saw any balloons launched due to severe winds aloft. In August we were able to go to Omaha accompanied by Jeff and Linda for a mini reunion with Nancy's three brothers and wives

We celebrated our 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary at the “Big Cedars Lodge” in Branson, Missouri and also bought some matching watches with the anniversary date engraved on the back and they don't need replacement batteries. Medical activities took most of our time during the year and it seemed like there was a different doctor or dentist every other month.

Jeff retired in August and then had more time to spend in his hobby of genealogy, and Karen cut her work days to three days a week. Terry is still working for computer consulting company for 18 years. Linda is working at Rutgers University in New Jersey, Dale is supervising 14 people in his IT Director position. We were happy to have 16 members of our family here the week before Christmas to celebrate the Season and the fellowship of family.

## 2019

My energy was still low and I got worn out very quickly trying to do anything at all, so when bowling season ended in March I told the secretary of the league that I would not be coming back the next fall. I also decided to quit golf as I wasn't doing very good at it either. I also had five different medical procedures during the first six months of the year and that took up a lot of my time. One was a stress test on the heart and a small blockage was discovered, but when the doctors went in to do a heart cath, they didn't find anything bad enough to fix.

On our anniversary in February, we were on a Southern Gospel Cruise with two quartets, the “Diplomats and the "4Calvary Quartet. The 4Calvary Quartet was on bus with us during the whole time. We sailed out of New Orleans with stops in Cozumel, Costa Maya, and Grand Cayman Island.

Our biggest trip for the year, was to New Mexico ( Palo Duro Canyon, UFO Museum, and White Sands National Monument.) Arizona (Saguaro National Monument, Sonora Canyon and Petrified Forest. Then back to New Mexico to Albuquerque to ride the aerial tram.

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, Reagan, our second great-grand child was born to Kristin and Justin in KC. Linda and Jeff try to come visit us about every three to four months and we usually put them to work

on our “to do” lists. It sure helps out with what we need to do around the house as we are unable to do any of the outside work and very little of the inside work that has to be done.

In September, Linda and Jeff were here and we went to Omaha to see Nancy’s brothers. We took our last plane trip in November back to New Jersey for Christmas celebration with Linda, Dale, Eric, Terry, Dayline, Michelle and her boyfriend Jae from Texas. We spent Christmas in KC with Jeff, Karen, Kristin and Justin.

## 2020

This last year was the worst of all, as COVID 19 cancelled everything we had scheduled, and anything else that we were interested in doing. All we did was read on our kindles, and we got the Democratic Gazette newspaper on an “Ipad” so we were able to read it that way, which was different for us. We were able to record and watch TV programs and spent a lot of time together hoping that it would get better and we would be able to get back to close to normal activities in the near future. Nancy’s brother Phil passed away in October, and Linda was here to drive us up to Omaha for the family only service and that was a very difficult period for everybody. We spend almost every Sunday on a ZOOM call get together with the kids and are able to keep in touch with everyone to find out what is going on in their lives.

All of my activities at church are over and so now I am just a member attending regularly and do not have the job of financial secretary anymore and do not sing in the choir anymore. After being closed down for a year, the church opened on Easter Sunday for the first time, with the precautions of using masks and social distancing for seating.

## 2021 – 2022, 5<sup>TH</sup> HISTORY UPDATE

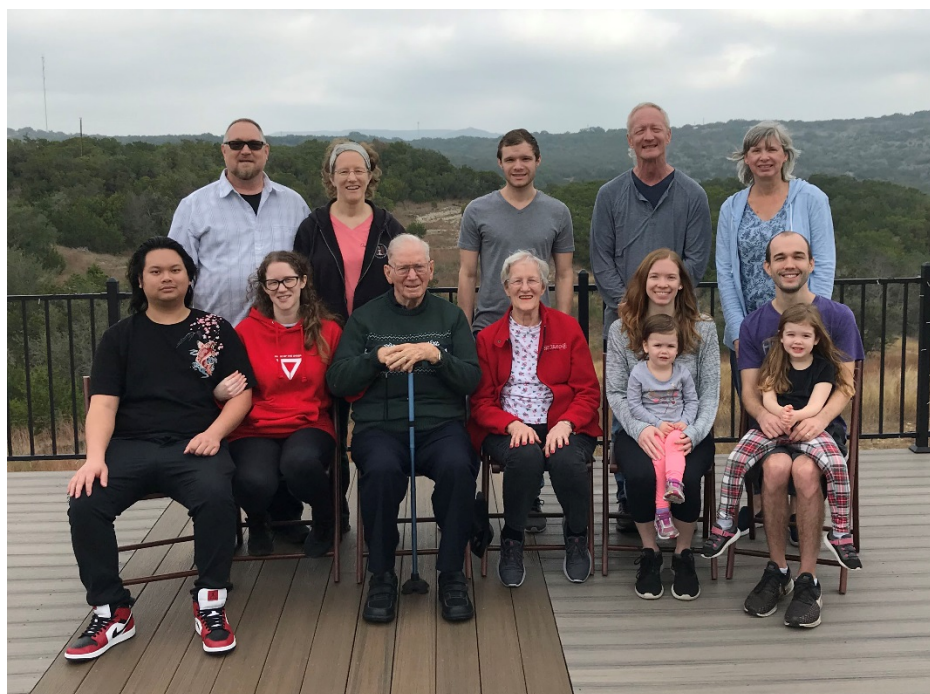
Things started to get better at the beginning of 2021 even though COVID 19 was still active during the first three months of the year, but we were able to get our shots including booster shots and eventually the fourth booster shot. We wore masks whenever we went out and in places that required you to do so.

In April, Linda came and drove us down to Texas to see Michelle and Jae. We got to see her first home and help decorate it with some of my paintings. By the first of May, bridge and pinochle cards had begun again with covid precautions.

We were able to begin to take trips again with “Making Memories” bus tours and the one we took in June was to the National Parks in Utah for eleven days. I used a wheelchair and Linda was the chief wheelchair pusher for most of the trip. Sometimes members of the tour helped to push and took some of the necessity of Linda doing it all the time. We visited the following parks: Royal Gorge, Dead Horse Point, Canyonlands, Zion, Bryce Canyon, Grand Canyon, Petrified Forest, and Painted Desert. The trip was wonderful, but I found out that it was very tiring for me being up in the higher altitude and we decided that the longer trips were not such a good idea, so we decided to just go on short trips in the future. I was able to get 17 post cards of various scenes in the parks for future paintings.

I went to physical therapy from August until March in 2022 with vertigo and balance problems and it took quite a while for me to improve.

I have retired from all activities outside of painting and bridge, which includes golf, bowling, and church activities. It appears that as I get older what I would like to do, I can no longer do, so I had to change my priorities to do only the things that I still am able to do.



We spent Christmas week in Lake Travis, Austin, Texas with everyone but Terry and his family. Jeff came down and drove us to Texas and back home. We had hot tub facilities and everything else we needed, except the water heater went out the first day we got there and we didn't have any hot water until Monday when they had to replace the old one.

We were able to enjoy the Broadway Show Productions that were cancelled in 2020 due to covid19, and we have purchased the scheduled ones for this year as we are still able to go them and enjoy them without too much difficulty.

2022 began with reduced activities due to lack of energy and the knowledge that certain activities needed to be changed. After much thought, we decided to go on only two or three day bus trips with "Making Memories." We had scheduled one to Pella, Iowa for the tulip festival, but had to cancel because I came down with a UTI and Sepsis infections and spent two days in the hospital in order to get over them. We were able to schedule a trip to St. Louis for two cardinals ball games which we enjoyed very much. We figured out after that trip that it was time to quit traveling anymore and just stick to the activities that we are able do within short distances of Bella Vista, and the fact that we are too old to do much of anything else.