

### **John Payne Murphy**

John Payne Murphy is looking back over a long and eventful life of adventures and remembering individual experiences. He decided to share some of them with those that might be interested.

If you are interested in space and rockets, cave exploring and scuba diving, medical missions to the Amazon, sailing through the Caribbean, touring through Europe, and other adventures, then you should read this book.

JOHN PAYNE MURPHY - A LIFE OF ADVENTURE

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A LIFE OF ADVENTURE

*“Over the course of four years, 2015 through 2018, I dictated these stories to Sharon Leiter, who typed them up on her computer and edited them for this book; and without her help, suggestions, and guidance it could not have been accomplished.*

*I could not have written these stories without the inspiration, help, and encouragement of my family and friends. I want to acknowledge specifically my sister, Mary Jane and her husband Jack Lewis, and my brother Sam and his wife Peggy. Also, I wish to express my gratitude for the help and encouragement of my children and their families: Claire and Michel; Kathy and Jeff, Stephanie, Joshua, and Connor; and Jonny and Jan.”*

*— John Payne Murphy*



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## *Introduction*



John Payne Murphy is looking back over a long and eventful life of adventures and remembering individual experiences. He decided to share some of them with those that might be interested.

If you are interested in space and rockets, cave exploring and scuba diving, medical missions to the Amazon, sailing through the Caribbean, touring through Europe, and other adventures, then you should read this book.

## *Scottsboro Boys: an American Tragedy*

On the day I was born in 1931, there was a tragedy of Greek proportions unfolding in Scottsboro, Alabama, the hometown of many of my mother's family. Of course, being born on that day I was not aware of world events or not even the happenings in a small town in Alabama; however, they were world-shaking and became a major issue involving southern racists, southern blacks, northern blacks, NAACP, the American Communist Party, and many from the New York and Huntsville law profession who participated in these events.

Nine black boys were travelling on a train from Chattanooga to Huntsville and some going on to Memphis in search of jobs. Two white women of dubious character rode in the same box cars, and through circumstances involving bigotry, accused the nine boys of rape in the box car. In Scottsboro, the nine were arrested, jailed, and faced lynching. It was customary in the South in those days to lynch blacks who raped white women. However, there were people in the South who objected to this, but they were in the minority. In Scottsboro, these moderates prevailed and insisted on a trial, even standing guard at night to prevent the lynching mob from taking the boys. However, in spite of their good intentions the trial was a farce and the boys were convicted and sentenced to death.

Now, in Alabama at that time, no blacks were allowed to serve on juries even though the constitution of the state said otherwise. Enter the NAACP and the Communist Party; both took up the cause for their own purposes and not with the benefit of the boys as their primary concern. The boys were convicted again on retrial. Their execution was set aside and they went to prison. On appeal some years later, the younger ones were released. There is a long

story here if one would like to study it, that I will not try to relate; but eventually, all were released and went north to die or be killed in other crimes, except one. This man had actually escaped from the chain gang and went north. He raised a family and became a good citizen in the north and was eventually pardoned by the "racist governor," George Wallace.

And so, all this came from a story in the Chattanooga newspaper on the day I was born, April 24, 1931.

## *Bobbie, Skippy, and Me*

I was born in Chattanooga, as you know, and my main friend and playmate was my cousin Bobbie. Bobbie had a little dog named Skippy. We lived on a hill and Bobbie lived down the hill. Bobbie was the daughter of my mother's sister, Gladys. Bobbie's dad was named John W. Barker but everyone called him Barker; I called him Bark Bark.

Bark Bark had a car with no doors and he was a great salesman. We did not have a car, but it was the Depression and so that was not unusual. A grocery store was down the hill next to a movie theater. My mother would shop there and use my little red wagon to take the groceries home. I would pull the little red wagon down the hill but on the way home I would throw a tantrum, and mother would put me in the wagon with the groceries and pull us all the way home. What a brat!

We would often walk from our house up a trail to Bobbie's house. We lived on streets, but the shortcut was to cut up the hillside in somewhat of a path. Along the way were flowers and, being only two feet tall, I was closer to these small things on the ground than adults are later, when they are taller and more distracted. I loved to stop for violets, little flowers, little, roly bugs in the dirt, and beautiful orange colored leaves that caught my admiration. But these things were no longer of interest to the adults so they would pull me along saying, "Come on, Patty." My dad's name was Sam but they called him Pat; but I have no idea why.



Patty (John) and His Mom, 1935

## *Captain Dave and the Old Cedar Chest*

The story of the old cedar chest goes back a long way and it is more about other things than a cedar chest. I will get to the cedar chest after we talk about Capt. Dave and World War I.

President Wilson was reluctant to become involved in a European war. But, as time went on and the war was in a deadly stalemate, political pressures prevailed and we declared war on Germany. When our doughboys (that is what our troops were called) finally arrived, the Germans were soon defeated and driven to unconditional surrender.

Riley Murphy, my dad's older brother, enlisted and went off to war as part of a company formed in middle East Tennessee and commanded by Capt. Dave Lillard. Two days before the armistice, Riley was killed by German machine guns and Capt. Dave was severely wounded. He remained with his troops commanding the battle for many hours before they defeated those German troops.

Capt. Dave was decorated by the United States and all the Allies and returned home a hero. He then visited the family of each of the boys that had been killed and met young, vivacious Margaret Murphy, my dad's younger sister. They married and he set up a law practice in the little town of Decatur, Tennessee.

Now, move forward to the Depression, and in 1933 my dad was without work. I was two years old and I do not remember much of it, but we went to live with Capt. Dave and his family. There were many cedar trees on their land, and he cut some down and made some furniture in a shop. One of the things he made was a small cedar chest for me and for his son, Dave. The one made for Dave is long lost, although I have asked the family to help me trace it, without success. The second one was given to me and, of course, I still have it.

Moving forward again in time, young Dave Lillard, called Boy by his family, started in engineering at UT and we renewed our friendship, as I was there majoring in electrical engineering. One weekend Boy went home; driving down the country road, he lost control of his car and was killed. Capt. Dave died not long after.

In front of Knoxville High School is a memorial to those of East Tennessee killed in World War I. Riley Oliver Murphy is there among many others from East Tennessee. If you go to <https://etvma.org/veterans/riley-o-murphy-6858/> you can read the whole story. The following is an excerpt from that item on the Internet:

"Riley Oliver Murphy joined the local National Guard unit for Etowah, which was Company G of the 2nd Tennessee Regiment. Riley and Company G served at the Mexican border in 1914. In April of 1917 the United States entered WWI and Company G became Company L assigned to the 117th Infantry Regiment as part of the famous 30th Army Division.

"The unit was shipped to France and saw their first combat during the summer and fall of 1918. They participated in the Flanders Offensive, the Ypres-Lys Operation, and the Somme Offensive. These operations helped turn back the massive German westward advance that came within 50 miles of Paris. Riley was killed on October 7, 1918, as Company L advanced under heavy fire. Captain Dave Lillard of Company L described Riley as a 'great hero and a true friend.' He further stated, 'Riley saved my life more than once.'

"As part of the 30th Army division, Riley's regiment was given credit for breaking the Hindenburg Line that brought WWI to a close. Riley Murphy was born in 1893, the son of John W. and Mary E. Murphy. After the war, Captain Dave Lillard returned to his law practice in Etowah and married Riley's sister, Margaret. They raised a family, descendants of whom still live in East Tennessee today."

"My father, Sam McCarty Murphy, Sr., was a younger brother of Riley. Although Riley died some 20 years before



my siblings and I were born, Daddy made sure that we knew of the sacrifice that Riley made in 1918. Riley originally was buried in a Military Cemetery in France. In 1921 his body was returned to the United States at the request of his sister, Elizabeth Murphy, so that he could be buried next to his father and mother. The flag that covered Riley's coffin when his body was returned to Etowah in 1920 was carefully preserved by our family until it was recently donated to the museum in Etowah, Tenn. Uncle Riley is buried in the Etowah City Cemetery next to his parents, John W. and Mary Elizabeth Murphy." (This last paragraph was submitted by Mary Jane Murphy Lewis.)

## *Little Red Desk*



My first experience with the little red desk was sitting there in soapy water totally naked and screaming, and this is the story of that little red desk.

During the Depression money was scarce, but things were cheap. This desk was purchased for \$1.98. It was intended to be used as a desk until I was born, and then it became a convenient place for my little porcelain bathtub and a changing table. In later years it became a desk again, and in Knoxville and in high school it was moved to my bedroom upstairs. I spent many hours studying at this desk, sometimes late into the night.

The house was not heated except by a coal fireplace in each room. Coal was delivered to our house in the alley and dumped in the back yard. My job was to bring coal in a coal scuttle from the coal pile into the cold house.

This continued through college with many nights studying at this desk with a coal fire in the fireplace in my room, until 2:00 or 3:00 in the morning, at which time I would continue studying with a blanket pulled from my bed over my shoulders.

After college I entered the Air Force and the red desk stayed at my mom and dad's house. I don't remember if it was at this period that it was stained red; but to me it was always the "little red desk." When Mom and Dad passed away, Mary Jane arranged for the things that I had requested to be sent to me in Denver. The desk, the little cedar chest, many books, and other things were shipped on a palette to Denver.

I used the little red desk as a place to put my art supplies. The little red desk today is at the base of the stairs in the basement. Will it receive the respect it deserves at its next home?

## *A Time Without a Name*



Before I started grade school, we lived in an apartment house in Maryville, Tennessee, and later in a little house out from town with a creek running by. Behind that house was the College Wood. It was owned by Maryville College and it was full of winding creeks and I could crawl through the barbed wire fence and wander back there for hours. The creek was full of crawdads and the woods were full of birds. That was a paradise for me and I loved being there because it was so quiet.

In the Depression everyone tried to raise vegetables in their own garden, as did we. Out back between the house and College Woods, Dad had a garden with carrots, lettuce, turnips, and corn. The woods were full of rabbits; rabbits love carrots, lettuce, turnips and corn. Meat eaters love rabbit. We did not have a gun, but Dad borrowed a single shot, 210 gauge pistol from Uncle Dave. And we tried to protect our own. Now we shot rabbits, but we did not like to clean them; so we gave them to the neighbors to clean for us, keeping half and giving back half, so we could make rabbit stew with carrots, turnips, and corn.

The creek under the bridge was full of cottonmouth moccasins. They were not in the forest so I was safe there; but going down to the creek in our yard was dangerous. So Dad took the pistol down and shot moccasins every evening.

Many memories come to mind. Across the bridge and on the other side of the street was an old store; a family lived there with a small child. They heated water for the bath on an old coal stove. The child pulled the boiling water onto itself and was scalded. We attended the funeral. I had a small dog; it ran into the street and was run over. It was laying there with a red ribbon running from it across the street. Dad sent me away and took care of it. This was

not a reality in many ways for a five-year old. One day we moved; Dad was transferred to Cleveland, Tennessee. And that is another story.

That house is still there and I drive by it from time to time when I am in East Tennessee. I would love to buy it, but it is never for sale.



## *Jane Godfrey*

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Around the year 1935 my dad worked for the East Tennessee Power Company, and we lived in Cleveland, TN. The power company had a lodge on a small lake nearby in the foothills of the Smoky Mountains. Employees could go there with their families on weekends or vacations. Occasionally, the company would hold a group event for all the employees and their families. This is about one of those parties.

The kids were all sent to bed on the second floor overlooking a large ballroom. A balcony overlooked it, with bedrooms upstairs. The kids were sent to bed but still came out on the balcony to watch the festivities. The adults were loud, dancing with music, and to me looking down alone on the balcony, it was terrifying. There was a girl standing beside me; I knew her. She lived across the street in Cleveland, and her name was Jane; she was two years older. I was fearful and crying and she was comforting me.

In Knoxville we lived on Broadway and I walked to school and often passed a tall lanky girl who looked familiar. She was two years ahead of me in school and I did not meet her again until at Brown's Restaurant on Gay Street and she was Dave's girlfriend. Somehow we reconnected. She was born at Erlinger Hospital in Chattanooga as I was. She lived across the street in Cleveland from me, and had comforted me on the balcony when I was frightened by the dancing at the Power Company employee party. Here we are now at Brown's restaurant, Jane is Dave's girlfriend, but these connections are there.

Dave played the organ at Brown's cafeteria on Gay St., Knoxville, Tennessee. A group of friends would come to listen, sitting at a special table close to the organ, to listen to his playing, have coffee, get in the cafeteria line for food. The owner loved having all the young people come

in. Jane, Teko, I, and others enjoyed the time together.

At the Christmas holidays, Dave, Teko, and others went to Florida on their motorcycles. Jane and I stayed in Knoxville and spent the holidays together, finding a Christmas tree, cutting it down from a hill, and decorated it at Jane's place. That was the New Year's holiday before I went off to the Air Force in 1955 to San Antonio, Texas, Lieutenant John Murphy, USAF. Jane in her own mind was attached to Dave, but that changed.

All knew that I was going off to the Air Force, but I hadn't told anyone I was going as a Lieutenant. My first letter to Jane, showing the return address as Lieutenant John Murphy, was the first indication that I was an officer and, like most women, she was hooked. "Absence makes the heart grow fonder" and love resulted. I had known Jane since I was a little boy and had loved her since that evening when I had been so terribly frightened and she had comforted me.

The story goes on: flight school, crashing into the control tower, washing out of flight school because Jane came to Dallas. Instead of studying for my final exam, I went to Dallas to spend the weekend together. She left to go back home, I went to take my test, and did not do well.

We were married in 1956 before I departed for my year

Jane and John, A Time Remembered



at the 795 AC&W Squadron at Cape Romanzof Air Force Station, Alaska. Upon my return we met in Nashville in order to have some reunion time alone. From there we returned to Knoxville and things in all seemed good. My next assignment was to be at Francis E. Warren Air Force Base in Macon, GA. After a two week leave in Knoxville with family, we headed south to my new assignment. As an officer we had base housing and all seemed good, but it was not.

Jane had been doing her best, she had been trying but it was not true, not real, and began to come apart. She said she was leaving; she did. I thought she had lost her mind. She left, I carried on with my duties another 4 months and requested an early out, as at that point the Air Force had a surplus of stateside junior officers. I was devastated and demoralized, and my dad came down to help me close out and drive back to Knoxville; a wonderful gesture, and we enjoyed our time together on our drive through the back country in Georgia and Tennessee to home.

I recall that in 1954, I was preparing myself in my mind for leaving Tennessee and going into the Air Force. It was a nostalgic time with thoughts of the future. I was renewing my relationship with Jane and beginning to fully realize that she was my little friend from Cleveland, Tennessee, when I was four. Jane was my friend Dave's girlfriend; but Jane and I were only friends, and yet we seemed to have some special relationship.

In December a winter storm hit East Tennessee and I knew the mountains would be beautiful. I invited Jane for a trip to the mountains and we hiked to a beautiful place, Rainbow Falls. The snow was heavy and accumulating as we walked. First, six inches, then a foot, time to go back, no, we must see the falls. She was not dressed for this weather. The falls were frozen and beautiful, and we hiked back cold and miserable. I helped Jane through the heavy snow, held her hand, showed tender solicitude for her well-being while getting her back to safety and warm comfort. After that she and I were inseparable. What is



Splicing a Line in Key Largo

the point of this story: shared adversity and close physical attachment create a bond, perhaps not justified. The relationship continued to develop after my departure to the Air Force in January. We wrote letters back and forth, I told her I was in love with her and in April Jane got on a bus and met me in Dallas for a long weekend.

I then went to communication school at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois. Separation was difficult and often I would drive to Nashville Saturday morning, Jane would take the bus. We would spend the weekend, visiting Ruby and Oscar, and seeing the sights of Nashville. Occasionally, I would take a three day weekend and drive through to Knoxville. This was before Interstates and Freeways. It was 12 hours of driving back roads, passing trucks at 80 miles an hour, risking life and limb for just a few hours with the woman you loved.

Why did we think we had to get married before I went to Alaska? You had to get married before you could have a physical relationship (sex)! We had a church wedding in Atlanta arranged by Jane's mother with our family and friends in attendance. Then we went to the Florida Keys

for a honeymoon; my friends Ruby and Oscar joined us for the second week, and we scuba dived at Sombrero Key.

What more could a diver ask for on his honeymoon than to dive in the Keys at Sombrero? The girls were put up at the Coast Guard Light House because they were sea sick, and Oscar and I continued to dive on the beautiful reefs.

After the honeymoon, I travelled to my assignment in Alaska for one year of duty. That year was like a thousand years. Many of the boys I was supervising were shipped out because they could not survive the environment in the solitude of Alaska. Those that did not have a relationship with a woman before going to Alaska did better than those who had a wife and possibly children, because the latter were more emotionally involved and worried about the marital relationship. I was somewhere in between because I had a wife and no children. It could have been worse.

When I came back after the year and found out that Jane had found another relationship, I was devastated. How do you come back, longing for the renewal of your relationship in marriage to the one you love, and then having it all destroyed through the process of betrayal. I initiated a divorce at her request.

If I had not had to go into the Air Force and been stationed on the Bering Sea in Alaska with 172 guys and no wives allowed, for a year, we would have been able to continue our marriage under normal conditions, including establishing a home, having children, a career, over many years, with bonds being continually strengthened through normal circumstances.

## *Miss Bunny Cate*



My first grade experiences are difficult for me to talk about. They are a mixture of fear, superstition, illusions and imagination. Now, it should be noted that my teacher's name was Miss Bunny Cate and she had been my dad's teacher also when he was in grade school. We lived in Cleveland, Tennessee, on Trunk St. The brick on my fireplace came from that house, and Jane lived across the street.

We had a maid named Bessy and she would walk me to school until I became more confident and could go on my own. Miss Bunny Cate would fly in on her broomstick, at least that was what the kids told each other; I did not actually see it, but I think it was true. I was immature for my age and had difficulty learning my C, D, and Fs. Later I learned they were called the ABCs, and that will show you how unprepared for first grade I was.

Kindergarten was not common at this time, but it would have been a great preparation for an immature kid as I was. I somehow survived that year with Miss Bunny Cate and moved on; and after a wonderful summer, I began the second grade. I suffered much ridicule because after a year with Miss Bunny Cate I didn't know "nuttin" and couldn't even spell it. My Cleveland second grade teacher ridiculed me, but fortunately my dad was transferred to Charleston, South Carolina, a new school and a new teacher.

On reading my story of Miss Bunny Cate, my sister, Mary Jane, provided the following comments:

JOHN,

SORRY YOU HAD A WITCH AS YOUR FIRST GRADE TEACHER, I AM ALSO SORRY THAT YOU NEVER GOT TO SEE HER FLY INTO THE CLASSROOM ON HER BROOM.

IT IS TOO BAD WHEN A KID HAS A TEACHER LIKE THAT. MY FIRST GRADE TEACHER (AND ALSO SAM'S) WAS MRS. FRANCES T. KANNER, A YOUNG, BEAUTIFUL JEWISH LADY. SHE REMINDED ME A LITTLE BIT OF MAMA....(TALL, DARK HEADED AND VERY PRETTY AND VERY SWEET). SAM AND I BOTH LOVED HER AND GAVE HER GIFTS AT CHRISTMAS. I STILL HAVE THE THANK YOU NOTE THAT SHE WROTE TO ME.

I MISSED FIVE WEEKS OF THE FIRST GRADE (AFTER MY BIG BROTHER BROUGHT SCARLET FEVER HOME WITH HIM). MRS. KANNER WOULD SEND BOOKS AND LESSONS HOME WITH YOU OR SAM AND I WAS ABLE TO CATCH UP WITH THE OTHER KIDS.

SHE TOOK OUR CLASS ON A "FIELD TRIP" TO A NEARBY JEWISH SYNAGOGUE AND TO A FIREHALL AROUND THE CORNER FROM THE SCHOOL.

I WAS SORRY WHEN I "GRADUATED" FROM THE FIRST GRADE BECAUSE SHE WOULD NOT BE MY TEACHER ANY MORE, OR SO I THOUGHT. MUCH TO MY DELIGHT WHEN I ENTERED SECOND GRADE I FOUND THAT MRS. KANNER HAD BEEN PROMOTED ALSO.

I WILL NEVER FORGET THOSE TWO YEARS AND I AM THANKFUL FOR A GOOD TEACHER LIKE MRS. KANNER, AS MY THIRD GRADE TEACHER (CAN'T REMEMBER HER NAME) ALSO FLEW INTO THE CLASSROOM ON A BROOM LIKE MISS BUNNY CATE.

LOVE,

MARY JANE

*"Do you have any work I could do?"*



He came up through the back yard to the back door and knocked. Mother answered the door, and he said "Please, Ma'am, I don't want to bother you, but do you have any work I could do and maybe some food." Mother had leftovers which she offered him, but he refused until he had done some work. He did a few things in the back yard, shoveled some coal into the coal scuttles for the fireplace, and then Mother insisted he come and eat.

He sat at the table in the kitchen and she served a plate of leftovers. It was fried corn, fried okra, cornbread, ham gravy, and some cold milk. He finished with a cup of black coffee, thanked her, left by the back door and, unseen to us, put a chalk mark above the door so others would know that this family was helpful.

As a five-year old boy, the sight of desperation, hunger, and the humbling experience of a man asking for help, was frightening. This experience, and the insecurity created by it, was with me all my life.



## *Saturday Afternoon Westerns in Downtown Cleveland*



When I was five or six years old, the big adventure in my life was Saturday afternoon westerns in downtown Cleveland, Tennessee. The cost of a movie was a dime and a big bag of popcorn was five cents. Of course, we would walk to downtown, and the first time, my mother showed me the way. It was only 20 minutes from the house; and so on Saturday morning off I would go with 16 cents in my pocket, 10 for the movie, 5 for the popcorn, and 1 cent for the Tootsie Roll.

## *We lived in Charleston but We Would Never Become Charlestonians*



In Charleston we moved into a two-story apartment house (our home was the upstairs apartment), two blocks from the Citadel and across the street from Hampton Park. As kids we could wander around the Citadel, a military school, or go across the street and wander through acres of ponds, lakes, woods, a paradise for a little boy. However, for reasons I don't know, my folks moved to an old house at 989 Ashley Avenue, a place with three bedrooms and a big back yard; perhaps that was the reason. We lived there until we returned to Tennessee in 1946.

As a matter of record, we took Sam and Mary Jane with us in all these moves. They have their own stories. The family history book, assembled by Sam and Peggy, is full of wonderful stories from their own and others' memories.

And so our adventures in those wonderful years in Charleston will be continued as I can remember them. Any suggestions appreciated.

## *Swamps, Snakes, and Politics*

Going into south country coastal swamps with Dad and his crew to survey the right-of-way for electric power line is a fond memory. Dad was a surveyor and an electrical engineer, and he worked for the South Carolina Power Company after the TVA forced us to leave East Tennessee. Dad was a Republican and when FDR created the TVA, those that had supported private power against TVA, which was considered socialism by many, were fired. Dad was then hired by South Carolina Power Company which was free enterprise, and we moved.

It was summer vacation and Dad had promised to take me on one of his surveying jobs; and he did. He picked me up in the red company car with his crew following in a truck. We headed out to a swamp area through which a power transmission line was to run, and its path must be surveyed in order to acquire the easements for the future line.

Three large black men with brush axes cut through the back country jungle of palmetto bushes, palms, and brambles, and an occasional rattlesnake or water moccasin. Dad would shoot a line according to the survey map and, from time to time, I would go ahead and hold the pole for his survey shot. But mainly his assistant did that. The whole thing was a great thrill for me, for even then as now I am not risk adverse, and enjoy the challenge of staying alive in dangerous situations such as driving in downtown Denver.

We killed eight rattlesnakes that day, or was it seven? I believe the survey crew took them home to eat. A long day, a great memory and a great time was had with my dad.

## *People of the Sea*

The origin of the name Murphy, meaning “people of the sea,” is Irish, even though we are Scots, and somehow I must have been influenced by that in Maryville, Tennessee. My mother enrolled me in a preschool activity that involved some learning and some craft activity. I chose to build a canoe, or was it a kayak? This was the Depression and money was short, but mother bought the materials for me. Wood slats and wood screws were what was required. Later canvas and a water proofing material would be required, but I never made it that far. This was my first boat and it never did float.

We moved to Charleston, South Carolina, after TVA replaced private power, and I bought a boat. It was a small sailboat, upside down in a swampy area, but the mast and sails were sound and in storage. With the help of a friend, John Rogers, I pulled the boat onto a sandy beach in Charleston Yacht Basin at the end of Calhoun St. We repaired the boat, mounted the mast and sails and off we went on a westerly breeze.

This was during WWII and many ships were anchored in the Charleston River. In our little sail boat we would sail among these ships and sometimes we were invited aboard. That was exciting, but we were barefoot urchins and the decks were hot. Finding a shady spot to stand in was our first priority. Many of the sailors were foreigners and spoke a language we had difficulty understanding as Charlestonians. I think they were British and claimed to speak English. We were thirsty and they were good enough to offer us a drink called Grog.

Two wonderful years of sailing this little boat were ended by a sudden squall on an August day that broke the mast and swamped the boat. Someone reported our condition

to the Coast Guard and they came out in a large power boat and lashed our little boat to the side without consideration of what damage it could cause, and raced back into the yacht basin, depositing the wreck of our boat on the beach, never to sail again. That was the end of my little boat. It was made of plywood and planks and was not repairable.

After college and after Alaska, Tricia and I were in California and we bought a boat. Surprise! It was a fiberglass sailboat sloop with a trailer. We bought it in Los Angeles for only a few hundred dollars and brought it to Santa Maria, but we sailed it out of Santa Barbara. Our only child at that time was Claire and she would sail with us when the weather allowed. In time, the need for money and the absence of spare time caused us to sell this boat.

My brother Sam and his wife Peggy and their boys had a houseboat in Tennessee on one of the TVA lakes. In addition, they had a ski boat and all the youngsters were great water skiers. On visits we enjoyed these activities with them and with Mother and Dad.

The next boat was *Tehamana* and that is its own story.

## *Playing on the Parade Ground at the Citadel*



The Citadel is one of the great military schools of the nation along with West Point and Annapolis, and we lived a block from the entrance. The gate was always open and so we little local kids could go there and play. The cadets would march, have graduation ceremonies in which they would throw their hats in the air, and our goal would be to retrieve a hat. I never did. One of my fellow students in grade school was a bully. I was a little kid and he would pick on me constantly. He went to the Citadel, and later, when I was at the University of Tennessee majoring in electrical engineering and helping with my expenses from Senior ROTC pay, I went to Officer Training at Keesler Airforce Base. It was six weeks of training provided between Junior and Senior year in college and was a requirement for Second Lieutenant upon graduation. Well, who should be there but my nemesis from grade school in Charleston, this big red-headed bully?

I had hitchhiked from Knoxville to Keesler in order to save my six cents per mile of my travel allowance, and the same on the return. The Citadel boys had money to burn. On my hitchhiking back after our training at Keesler I hitchhiked through New Orleans, north to Memphis and east to Knoxville. Most nights I spent at YMCAs along the way, but one night going out of Memphis I could not get a ride and slept under a tree beside the road. I saved my travel allowance of about \$72 and applied it to school expenses.

We only lived near the Citadel and across from Hampton Park for a few months. The apartment was too small and we needed more space. Our next home was at 989 Ashley Avenue, an old home that had once been the cen-

ter of a large estate, perhaps a plantation. Out back was a small house, servants quarters or perhaps, slave quarters, a large barnlike structure for carriages and horses and an attachment on the second floor for a bathroom. Clearly, the original facilities had been an outhouse.

## *The Old Peanut Mill*



Down by Skull Creek was an old four-story brick building full of bats, pigeons, and ghosts. It was only about twenty minutes from my house, so we were there many an afternoon searching for adventure. Nearby was a creek that drained a large swamp into the Ashley River. We called it Skull Creek because on the map it was called Skull Creek.

In South Carolina the tides are quite severe; high tide would bring in acres of water from the Ashley River, filling the surrounding swamp land. When the tide went out, it rushed in torrents through Skull Creek to reach Ashley River. There was a small footbridge that crossed Skull Creek just adjacent to the old peanut mill. From here there are many stories: one is of Sam on a raft going out into the river, and another of catching crabs for James Bennett's family to cook. We East Tennessee people did not know how to cook crabs or oysters, or anything other than fish, which of course we fried in lard or bacon grease.

Now let me say that a short cut by foot to Hampton Park and the Citadel was by way of this footbridge. Now I am sure you remember Hampton Park and the Citadel from other stories, and this was a shorter way to go there, perhaps only a thirty minute walk. This walk was partly swamp; crossing Skull Creek on the bridge was the easy part, but still I remember going there with Mother, Sam, and Mary Jane, having to wade through swampy water somewhere between Skull Creek and the park, but still we did it.

We are getting away from the peanut mill a little bit, so let's go back to that story. The peanut mill was full of pigeons and bats and mystery. It dated from before the



Civil War when I think peanuts were a big crop, along with cotton, sugar, and cheap slave labor. There are many adventures on the way to the peanut mill around and about that area, including what the area looked like when I went there a few years ago. As I recall, it was a housing development. But all that is for another time.

## *The Old Cotton Mill*



The old cotton mill was a couple of miles from our house in the other direction from the peanut mill and Skull Creek. It was near the Ashley River on several acres of vacant land, and was totally abandoned and had been for at least 50 years. Between the old mill and the river were a series of trenches from either the Civil or Revolutionary War, still there but with trees growing out from them, some a foot or two in diameter indicating, I suppose, they were more likely from the Civil War.

We kids often explored there looking for artifacts; none found. The old cotton mill was more interesting as it was three or four stories high and a block long. The floors were rotten and the lower floor was underground, and full of water, dark murky water, and we imagined full of snakes and skeletons. The floors above were rotten with many boards missing so the opportunity to fall through was great. A ladder led up to the next floor, and again to a small 4th floor overlooking the area from the river to the city.

One day a year later, the cotton mill caught fire and we could see the blaze in the sky from our house. We took off across the country side to see it close up, and found that we were wading through water ankle deep to approach the mill. The fire was spectacular as the wood was dry and old. I think the fire department was there, but they did not waste effort to extinguish it, as I recall.

After about three hours we headed back home. Our feet were burning from standing in the water, which we began to realize was acid. Our shoes were coming apart as we walked home. We took them off and looked for water to put our feet in, rushed home to put water in the bathtub to wash our feet; our shoes were like card-

board. The lower floor of the mill which we knew was full of liquid was actually sulfuric acid from the cotton processing. Our feet were blistered and our shoes were destroyed. In those days, shoes were rationed and expensive. Somehow Mother had them replaced. We never went back; couldn't afford another pair of shoes.

## *Sammy and the Flying Box Car*



In those days in Charleston there was no television or other distractions to having a life with family. However, sometimes there was a need for a little adventure, and making boxcars out of orange crates with old skate wheels was the thing to do. It was similar to skateboards, but more like a car with skate wheels that you could pull.

In time, I lost interest in pulling those things around and looked for something more. How about if we could make them fly? Wood slats and cardboard became the wings. The sloping roof top of the carriage house and horse stall out back, became the obvious launching point. I was too large; Ruthie, Rainie, and Mary Jane were candidates to pilot this, but they were too smart to accept. Sammy was the right size and he tended to look up to his big brother and trust him. Not a good idea.

So, picture Sammy in the box car at the peak of the carriage house, box car held in place by a rope fastened to a lever on the ground, which I controlled. I pulled the lever; down comes the boxcar and Sammy, off the roof; drops like a rock. Sadly, the boxcar was destroyed. Sammy only had bruises. He took it like a man and quit crying in about ten minutes.

## *Four-leaf Clover Island*



There is a sand bar, an island if you will, in the Ashley River not far from my house. To go there you must walk across a big two feet in diameter pipe, about 300 yards long, from land and across the swamp to reach this island. Most of us made it, Ruthie fell off. In my mind, Ruthie was my girlfriend. When she grew up she became Miss Charleston.

We moved away, returning to Tennessee and from time to time I heard of my Charleston friends through Mary Jane Fisher, our little friend from across the street. Rainie remained in Charleston, becoming a television star with a daily morning program for kids. I understand that Rainie married a Citadel graduate, moved to Washington, D.C., worked for the government, maybe the CIA, divorced, and died of Alzheimer's.

## *Four Dog Night*



A fourteen mile hike was a requirement for Boy Scout advancement, I am not sure which one anymore, and I am not sure that the one I am about to tell about is the one that counted, but it was an adventure. Stuart Warden and I started hiking with a pack with the intent to spend the night at Legree Island. It was a mysterious place that we had heard much about. We arrived, crossed a small swamp with waist deep water and we were there; a beautiful place, the trees and birds and four dogs.

Why were there dogs on this island? A mystery. We set up camp, a small fire, laid out our sleeping bags, and prepared for a comfortable night. The winds increased and the clouds boiled over, and the night looked ominous. Someone had strapped ropes between four trees about four feet above ground level. We could see the water rising and I think we knew why the ropes were there. We threw our canvas tent and sleeping bags over the ropes as the water began to rise. The winds howled and the lightning struck, thunder all around, a major storm. We were alone on Legree Island with four dogs. We climbed up on our makeshift bed after throwing the four puppies up with us. We covered ourselves as well as we could; the puppies were frightened, but we were not of course, being brave Boy Scouts. The wind howled, the water rose, the lightning struck, the dogs whimpered.

Morning came with an overwhelming calm that belied the events of the night before. The water receded, we packed up, waded across the receding water to the mainland, wet and cold. Some three miles down the road, we saw a red power company car approaching. It was Dad. In those days storms were not predicted as they are now. The technology was not there. Dad knew we might be in

trouble and he borrowed the company car to search for us. What a wonderful sight — we were cold, hungry, and had a ride home.

What happened to the puppy dogs? That morning they were gone. No sign that they had been there. Had they been? Or were they, as had been spoken of, — ghost dogs of Legree Island?

## *Porgy and Bess*



Debois Hayward, the author of the simple old story of Porgy, a small cripple on the streets of Charleston, came to my elementary school when I was in third grade, to talk to the class about the history of Charleston. Charlestonians are so enthralled with their history and perhaps they should be. But that is a different story.

In Charleston the blacks lived on one side of the street (was it Calhoun Street?) and the whites on the other. The story of Porgy and Bess took place in the black section of town, Porgy got around on a cart pulled by a goat. Sporting Life, peddling drugs, was getting Bess hooked on them. Bess was pursued by a big, mean, black man who wanted her for his woman. Porgy loved Bess and wanted to save her from Sporting Life.

The amazing thing about the story was that two Jewish men in New York City, adapted Hayward's story and it became the first truly American opera, and later a successful motion picture.

My mother and father moved the family from Charleston to Knoxville, in the upper northern Appalachian Mountains, so that their children would have a better future, because Charleston in South Carolina was Deep South, plantations, carrying the tradition of slavery. The mountain people in Tennessee were known for their independence, fortitude, and hard work.

We were homesick for Tennessee. Mother knew we could go to the University of Tennessee, and we had roots in Tennessee, family and friends.

## *Back to Tennessee*



In 1946 the war was over, Dad's alcoholism was more of a problem and Mother faced a family decision. She loved her job as a nurse, but the educational opportunities for her kids were limited in Charleston. The Tennessee relatives were supportive and Knoxville and the University of Tennessee would provide family support and educational opportunities. It was a difficult decision for her, but she chose Knoxville. We had little to leave behind in Charleston other than friends and, for me, also Wolfie.

Our departure from Charleston causes me to remember the trip from Tennessee to South Carolina on our original move, and it was during the war and the train was full of GIs reporting for duty or going on leave. There were no seats and people were standing in the aisles which was rare for train travel, but it was war time. The young soldiers would of course give up their seats for women and children. Sammy was standing in the aisle and fell and hit his head. The conductor declared an emergency and at some station between Knoxville and Charleston, we stopped and a doctor came aboard. I got off the train and a lady told me to get back on because there was a boy that was hurt. I said I knew that because the boy was my brother. The doctor said we could go on to Charleston and have a doctor examine him there.

Moving back to Tennessee, we were taking a bus this time and the trip was easier and less eventful. When we got to Knoxville the Montgomerys were there to pick us up at the bus station.

Charles and Elizabeth Montgomery and their son, Jim, had agreed for us to stay at their place on Valley View Road, about five miles from downtown Knoxville, until we could find a place to stay. Elizabeth was Dad's older sister. Charles was a school teacher at Knoxville High and had

written a key textbook used in high school classes.

Jim was in Boy Scouts and arranged for me to join his troop. I had been a senior patrol leader in Charleston and Troop #14 at the First Presbyterian Church downtown set up a new patrol of a half dozen new scouts and asked me to be the patrol leader. It was a wonderful opportunity with great adult leadership and the benefit of my cousin, Jim, as a great friend.

Uncle Charles, as did other teachers, found opportunities for additional income. In his case, he had the concessions at the high school football games and at the University of Tennessee stadium. This meant that I had jobs selling drinks, bagging peanuts, at the high school games, and later a middle stall at the UT stadium. In time, I was able to obtain a corner stall. In a corner stall you made at least twice the income as in a middle stall at the Saturday afternoon games.

The routine went like this: On early Saturday morning you would go in, load the drinks in a large metal tub in your stall, order the ice and have it delivered in 50 pound blocks, chip the ice with an ice pick to ensure the drinks were cold by game time, put in an order for candies, peanuts, and hot dogs, insure that the hot dogs would arrive at the last minute, wrapped so they would remain hot, make sure that you have change in your change box. You must be able to reach behind you and get the proper drinks and make change at the same time. If you are not fast and accurate your sales will be adversely affected. Errors in making change could cost you your profit. The buyers will always correct you if you short them, but seldom if you made an error in their favor. If you are not quick and accurate you don't make money. You could lose it all if you made change for a \$5 bill instead of a \$1.

At a big game with a corner stall you could make the equivalent of three times what you could make at a grocery store job for a week at 75 cents an hour. In a corner stall you had customers coming in from two sides. You had to be fair in serving them in the proper order of who came first.

This was after the end of national prohibition, but Knoxville County stayed dry. Bootleggers would bring in alcohol in their cars from adjoining states that sold alcohol legally. On several occasions a customer would order a Coke and then ask me to pour out half of it and fill the bottle up with bourbon that he handed me in a bottle covered up by a sack. I would make the switch down behind the counter and hand the Coke bottle back to him with half Coke and half bourbon. He would put the bourbon bottle in the sack back in his pocket and go away holding his Coke bottle so everyone would think he was only drinking Coke. I usually got a pretty big tip for doing this.

## *The Montgomery's Hospitality*



I should say more about the Montgomerys and their great hospitality when we relocated to Knoxville. They lived on a 100 acre or so farm on Valley View Road with a frontage on the road, and their land stretched to the top of the ridge behind them. They had about 10 acres planted with corn, and other vegetables, and they had a horse. Charles had grown up on a farm and knew how to plow with a hand plow pulled by horses. The horses were not real fond of this work.

One day Charles was hitching up the horse for a day of plowing when the horse kicked and caught Uncle Charles on his leg. He was bleeding and bruised and the horse ran off through the woods. I saw it happen and ran to help Uncle Charles back to the house and provided some first aid. When he was okay I headed out to retrieve the horse as we were both concerned as to its well-being. I found him on another farm a half mile away stuck in some trees, and brought him back and put him in the barn.

On Saturdays we all went to town for the day. We would catch the Valley View Road bus into town in the morning, spend the day and catch the evening bus back after shopping, sometimes a movie and a visit to the Knoxville Public Library. The bus was an old school bus and parked a block away from Gay St. and a half a block from the library. Those that returned early or did not have much to do in town would meet at the library and select books, or listen to classical music on the portable record players with head phones which they provided in the reading room.

The Montgomery's house had two bedrooms, a screened in front porch, a coal fired stove in the kitchen, and a small bed next to the piano in the living room. Jim slept on the front porch even in the winter time. I slept on the cot next

to the piano, Mom and Dad had a bedroom and Charles and Elizabeth had their bedroom. Sammy and Mary Jane slept somewhere.

Because construction of new homes had stopped during the war years, there was a shortage of places to live and it was the reason for our being with the Montgomerys. Mother and Dad were always on the lookout for a place for us to rent, and after six months they found an old house down near town on Broadway Avenue about two miles from downtown. The house had a living room, kitchen, dining, and three bedrooms and one bath which was an add-on. The original house had been heated by coal fireplaces in each room, a coal stove in the kitchen, along with a monkey stove for hot water, which did not work. We all took baths once a week whether we needed it or not. The water was heated on the kitchen stove in large buckets and carried to the bathroom. The bathtub was an old enameled cast-iron tub with lions' feet. The bathroom did have a cold water faucet and a toilet. Out back was an old dilapidated shed which was used to store coal and tools. The house rented for \$25 a month and, as dilapidated as it was, we were happy to find it and move to our own place.

It was a convenient place to live as the bus stop for the city bus was across the street, I could walk to high school and Sam and Mary Jane could walk to their grade schools. Central Methodist Church which we attended was five blocks away. The grocery store was next door, Sears and Roebuck was five blocks away. We could ride the bus to town or walk, and I would take the bus to the University of Tennessee after graduation from Knoxville High School.

The First Presbyterian Church had sponsored Boy Scout troupe #14 for many years and it was one of the best organized and most respected Scout troops in Knoxville. The Scout Master was an ex-army officer and the manager of the local radio station, and with the assistance of several assistant scout masters and senior scouts ran an excellent and well-disciplined troop. Troop #14 had its own log cabin lodge at Camp Pellissippi. Most troop members

would spend at least one week at camp each summer. The first year I was able to afford a week and use the time to work toward my Eagle Scout rank which I received the following year.

The Troop #14 cabin had a paid counselor who ran the program activities each summer, and eventually, I filled that position and got paid for it. In addition, because of my reputation in first aid because of the ballpark injury that I had handled, I was given the position as First Aid Counselor, a paid position.

I continued to work at the high school football games, UT games, and in the summer, working with Mr. Turley, my math teacher, at Winona Baseball and Softball Park. Mr. Turley had the concession and received \$5 a night and I received \$3 as his assistant. This was regardless of the sales, so we could count on it on slow nights, and also hot dogs which had been cooked and not sold and buns could be taken home at the end of the night.



## *Coke Bottles and a Sad Story*



Can't believe I haven't told you this story already. In high school, I worked at many jobs to earn money for expenses and to save for college. One of these was helping Mr. Turley, my trigonometry teacher, in the concession stand at Winona Park.

At Winona Park in the summer there were baseball, softball, and pumpkin ball teams all playing evenings and weekends. The concession stand had cokes, hot dogs, peanuts, all for sale. Mr. Turley was paid \$5.00 a night and I received \$3.00, regardless of sales and profits. Cokes were served in bottles, and little boys would hang around to collect the bottles that were thrown out around the grounds to return them to us for one penny a piece.

One of these young kids carrying several bottles fell, broke two, and cut an artery in his wrist. He was bleeding profusely and came running to me. I grabbed the hot dog bun knife and a dishcloth and immediately made a tourniquet, and stopped the bleeding. An off duty policeman loaded us into his van and rushed to the hospital, red lights flashing. At Emergency, the boy was treated and moved to the operating room. The policeman took me back to Wynona Park. I was greeted as somewhat of a hero for my actions. Later, I found out the boy died in the operating room. Why?

## *Another View of the Beet Generation*



Oscar, Dave, Sam, Teko, and I spent the night exploring in the Tuckaleechee Caverns. There is no difference in exploring caves in daytime or night; it is always dark. When we came out in the morning, we passed by an old garden that had been abandoned. Various vegetables were still growing in it, including beets. We pulled up a few and washed them off in the spring. They were delicious.



## *Hiking the Appalachian Trail*



The Appalachian Trail runs from Maine to Georgia, some 2,000 miles along the back of the Appalachian Mts. The most beautiful and rugged parts of the trail are within the Smoky Mt. National Park and runs from Deals Gap in the north and Davenport Gap in the south. I've hiked this trail, in total or in part, at least two dozen times, sometimes alone or with a hiking partner or other times with Boy Scouts when I served as an assistant Scout Master.

In those days the trail was seldom hiked and shelter cabin lean-tos were available every 10-20 miles along the trail. These cabins were located next to a spring with good water, and were open fronted with a rock fire pit in front. Today the trail is still maintained mostly by volunteers, but because of its popularity, a permit is required.

In those days wild black bears were common along the trail. When we stopped for the night we had two choices, hang your food on a rope from a tree limb far from the ground or place it like a pillow under the head of your sleeping bag. This was the easiest solution, but it came with some complications. On a number of occasions I would awaken with a bear standing over me sniffing around my pack of food. I would shout "Get out of here, bear," and always with two jumps they would get out of the way and stand there looking at me, unless it was a mother bear with cubs.

Only on two occasions was I threatened by a mother bear with cubs, because I moved too close and she felt threatened. In both cases safety was to retreat and climb a tree. In one case the tree leaned out over a creek and the bear came up the leaning tree after me. I was pre-

pared to jump, but she saw the humor of the situation and left me alone, returning to her cubs.

There was one humorous case in which a young bear, fully grown, charged me for some reason, and I turned toward it, stood on tip toes, raised my arms high and shouted "Get out of here, bear!" and the bear literally skidded to a stop at my feet and turned and ran. It is important to note that the Appalachian bears are not the same as all bears. Some western and Alaskan bears and certainly Brown bears and Grizzlies can be deadly in similar situations.

A great hiking story on the Appalachian Trail is the story of the disappearing boots. My friend and hiking buddy, Eldon Barnes, and I were on the AT at a shelter and Eldon had placed his boots by the fire to dry. That night a bear took Eldon's boots and we found pieces nearby, the next morning. A treat for the bear but a problem for Eldon. I carried a set of camp moccasins in my back pack and I gave them to Eldon. We shortened our trip to stop at Newfound Gap, take a bus to Gatlinburg, so that Eldon could buy a new pair of boots, and we continued our hike to Fontana Village.

While telling this story to Sharon, she remembered going to Fontana Village with her family when she was about 12. Her dad wanted to see the fall colors in the Smokies, so he planned a week's vacation for the family. They drove from Michigan to Tennessee in the fall; much of the trip is remembered as driving up the mountain on a road with many switchbacks, and reaching a lovely village with individual cabins for the family of six to stay in. From the day after their arrival until they left, it rained every day, all day, so they never got to see the colors. They spent their time indoors making craft items, like weaving a large place mat and tooling a leather belt. Her dad was sorely disappointed.

## *Eldon Barnes*

He called me late one night, I can't remember exactly when, but he seemed desperate, perhaps drinking or on drugs. Eldon had been a friend in Knoxville and my hiking buddy on many hikes in the Smokies and on the Appalachian Trail. Now he was in Miami using his flying skills for who knows what purposes as it was a time of flying drugs in from South America and the Bahamas.

Eldon had grown up in an affluent section of Knoxville, and joined the Air Force and became a pilot. He overshot the runway and went onto the freeway. This was not well received by his commander and he was discharged.

That call from Eldon that night was clearly a cry for help, and I tried to advise him, probably with just platitudes. But what I should have done was to get on a plane to Miami, rescued him, and brought him back to California, or whatever; but I did not. After that to the best of my memory, I did not hear from him again.



Dave Murian and John, Diving in the Smoky Mountains

## *Heroes in Simpler Times*



In high school a number of us explored caves. We hiked and camped and canoed as well. Tuckaleechee Caverns was one of our favorites, and we spent many a weekend there, during the winters when hiking and boating were more difficult.

Later in college, Dave Murrian and I became interested in scuba diving. The term had not been invented and at that time it was called an Aqua-Lung. We ordered ours from a catalog. We studied US Navy diving manuals and taught ourselves to use the equipment. We were all good swimmers, and it was a natural extension of our free diving with mask and fins. In addition to lakes and rivers, we returned to the caves from our prior adventures and dived in the waters there.

We were the only two scuba divers in Tennessee, and our activities created a great deal of interest. Dave was an excellent photographer, and a reporter from the local Knoxville newspaper became interested in our activities. Scuba diving was new and became of great interest to the newspaper and its readers. Our exploits each weekend were photographed and written up, sometimes with full page spreads of pictures and stories. We became local heroes (at least in our own minds).

People would often approach me on the street or at school and ask about our activities. One was a liberal arts major named Helen, but that is another story.

## *A Long Run to Correct One Mistake*



As a senior Boy Scout in Knoxville Tennessee, I was experienced in the mountains and the wilderness in general, much more than most. I hiked in the back country; and in Tennessee I would often go out alone, taking the bus out of town and hiking down various mountain ridges for the weekend, returning Sunday night to take the bus back home. Therefore, I was more experienced than some scout masters; and consequently, they often depended on me on our mountain trips. As it turned out, their confidence on this one occasion was misplaced.

We took cars to the trail to Clingmans Dome, picked up our packs with the intent of hiking to Silers Bald for the night and returning the next day. However, a group led by myself, took the trail north toward Indian Gap. Some of the boys took the proper trail south toward our intended destination, Silers Bald. After two hours on the trail I realized my mistake. It was too late to turn back, so I took them on to the Indian Gap shelter and set them up for the night. Then I was concerned for the boys who had correctly turned to the south, so I set out about 3:00 pm in the afternoon, jogging south, as I felt I must make sure they were safe for the night.

I arrived at Silers Bald around dark, and they were there and doing fine. I made sure they had supper and were settled in for the night with instructions to proceed back north and meet up with us at Clingmans Dome tower in the early afternoon of the next day. Knowing that the adults at Indian Gap would be concerned, and wishing to avoid the embarrassment of them contacting the park rangers and further exposing my mistake, I proceeded back with the intent to arrive at their bedtime. When I arrived they were happy to hear that all was well and offered me food which

I could not eat. I was sick at my stomach, extreme exhaustion, I could not eat or sleep, but was greatly relieved that all my scouts were safe.

The next day we met as planned at Clingmans Dome and returned to our cars and drove home. To my scouts and their dads it all seemed routine; to me it was a disaster avoided.

## *The Dive Suit*



A long time ago in a land far away, I was a noted aqua-lung diver in Tennessee where there was only one other, and his name was Dave Murrian. Later there were more, but now there were only the two. We dived in caves, we looked for bodies, repaired dams, explored underwater caves, and generally enjoyed the benefits of being local heroes.

Now this story is not about that, but is about my dive suit. My dive suit was ordered from a catalog, and it was a dry suit. Now you must know, and perhaps you do, that there are dry suits and wet suits. Wet suits are neoprene and allow a little water inside which is warmed up, but generally it prevents the loss of heat. Dry suits exclude water, are totally sealed, and depend on warm under garments to maintain the heat. They are a total disaster if they ever develop a leak. I had both types of dive suits.

The wet suit was homemade with the help of my mother, and that is a different story. The dry suit was the more successful of the two. We dived in many circumstances in cold water and only occasionally suffered the shock of a leak.

The dive suit was neoprene rubber and was entered through the neck. When you had wiggled into it, you pulled on the head piece; then you took a rubber grommet, connected the two parts of the suit over the grommet, which sealed it.

At this point you could dive in the Arctic, or in a really cold lake. The only limitation was the amount of insulating garments you wore under the suit. As you could imagine, this suit was useful in many of our dives, but it was time consuming to use.

As the years went by this old suit resided in my dive bag with other infrequently used equipment. When I moved

to Key Largo, I pulled it out and said, "I need to display this, it is a piece of dive history." I stuffed it with newspaper, made it look like it was inhabited, and displayed it hanging from the rafters in my tiki hut at my shack in Key Largo, Florida. Ultraviolet light and neoprene rubber were not friends. What could have been a museum piece soon deteriorated. When I realized what was happening, I took it down and tried to save it, but it was coming apart in my hands. I laid it out with my spear gun, other equipment, took a photograph, and then put the suit in a recycle bin; a sad ending.

## *Crabbing into the Wind*



Crabbing into the wind is an easy concept to understand but requires finesse to execute, and the lack of finesse can have adverse consequences. I was a 2nd Lieutenant in primary training at Hondo Air Force Station in Hondo, Texas. I had soloed and was flying out on a training flight. Now, there is one thing the Air Force did not know which I will share with you. I did not have 20/20 vision, but at my induction physical the doctor said, "I will put it down as 20/20 and you can work it out."

I enjoyed my flying and compensated for my vision defect by memorizing the ground features on the way out, and following them on the way back. Within five to ten miles I could usually pick out the airfield. This day I was a little late getting back and one of the last to enter the landing pattern for the field. The wind direction had changed, but the flight commander sitting in his control tower said he could get in one more airplane without changing the runways. I entered the pattern, made a perfect approach, rounded up to touch down, and the cross wind caught my right wing, and off I went to the left toward the control tower, somewhat, but not totally, in control of my aircraft,

Realizing this, I followed procedure; at full throttle I got up airspeed to go around and come back. However, as I approached the control tower the commander, fearing for his life, jumped out and started running across the field, and I, still at full throttle, still drifting to the left, as he ran to the left. I am sure he expected to be run over by my prop. It was close but it did not happen. I regained control of my airplane, went around and came back. They immediately changed the runway and I



made a perfect landing this time, directly into the wind. Of course, if the runway had been changed earlier as it could have been, then landing into the wind would not have been a problem.

I graduated to the next level which involved a larger aircraft called the T6. It was a wonderful, powerful airplane with only one flaw, it was called a “ground loop special.” It meant that with all the power it had and the wheels close together, at the wrong time if you gave it full throttle, it would go into a loop and skid across the airfield, damaging the plane, and generally not helping your progress as an aviation cadet. However, the instructor did not wash me out and I continued to make progress, but I’m sure I was being observed closely by the flight commander.

Mother had her cancer operation, but she did not tell me because she did not want me to worry while I was flying. If she had told me, I would have requested emergency leave and would have gone home, and when I returned I would have had a new instructor and done well.

As a jet pilot I would have been assigned to Korea where many young pilots were killed, and with my marginal abilities I would probably have been one of them, so maybe it turned out for the best.

## *I Love My Alaskan Dogs but Some Were Barbecued and Eaten*



I can’t think of anybody that wouldn’t want to read this story after that title. When I was in Alaska as a young lieutenant, I often wandered about the area and realized that, in addition to the dogs up around our facility wagging their tails, there were many wild dogs hidden in the rocks that feared my approach. Most of us did not realize that our dogs, our friends, are descendants of wolf-like creatures that feared man; and their pups had instincts of survival that involved hiding from humans.

Now on the tundra there are very few places for a pup to hide, other than squeezing down among the rocks. I would walk down through the area between the site and the Bering Sea, and they would quickly hide among the rocks and flatten themselves, even if I had a couple of tame malamutes following me.

My dogs were tame dogs; but those dogs were truly wild, something that mankind has little seen for thousands of years. Dogs have been our partners for so many years, we seldom have the opportunity, as I did there, to see them in this way. Today only the wolves have those instincts.

The friendship of so many camp dogs suggested to me dog sleds. I contacted friends back in Anchorage and asked them to buy me one at the Army Surplus Store. They did and it cost \$20; it was beautiful, made of wood tied with leather. It was army surplus. Before I could notify my friends, others had sent one out, so now I had two dog sleds. I chose ten of the most promising sled dogs, and brought them into the motor pool, a large area where our fire engines and other vehicles were stored. We were short a fire engine so I had plenty of room.

I made harnesses from rope for my dogs. I decided to try it first with four dogs. I told them I was their master and they must pull my sled. They were not impressed. I told

them I was an officer, they were not impressed. All I could get from them was “Ruff, wuff!” Harnessing up the four, we opened the motor pool doors; and with a firm command, I stepped aboard the sled and the dogs took off. Out of the motor pool they went; I could hardly hold on. Down they went toward the Bering Sea. “Stop! Stop!” I shouted. They didn’t know what I wanted them to do. They had never seen a dog sled before, and they were certain that I had gone berserk.

About 100 yards down the road, we hit a bump; I fell off and hit my head. While I was lying there, they realized I was no longer with them, so they came back pulling the sled. In addition, the other dogs that I had not used came out of the motor pool expressing concern, “Ruff, ruff,” licking my face. They had no idea about sled dogs and sleds. I tried a few other times with even less success each time, suffering the humiliation of my fellow airmen and, of course, the dogs. Shame, shame, shame!

Our commander, a Lt. Colonel, who had been a navigator, but with little command experience, was assigned here because he needed two more years of active duty for his retirement. He decided that there were too many dogs and contacted the Eskimo village chief at Hooper Bay, twelve miles away. Hooper Bay today is a thriving village with wonderful people that I have been in contact with on the Internet, and hope to visit; but at that time, Hooper Bay was a straggly village of Eskimos with TB and other diseases.

The commander invited them to come up and collect all the dogs they wanted. We were not allowed to make any contact with them because of their illnesses. They came, took dogs; I hid mine in the motor pool, probably my twelve. I do not know how many Hooper Bay took, but I would guess 40-60. In those days, the good ones would become sled dogs, the others would become barbecue or dog food.

Our commander didn’t care that we saved a few; he just felt that with all those dogs around, and maybe out

of concern for those at Hooper Bay, he felt he should do something about it. I have contacted the people at Hooper Bay in recent years with the intent of going there some day and asking about my dogs. The current generation there has no memory of this event, but they have emailed me a number of good recipes for cooking dog.



Lt. Murphy and His “Subordinates,” the Alaskan Dogs



Lt. Murphy Going Native  
in Alaska

## *Sir Hubert Wilkins as I Knew Him in Alaska*

One day in Alaska we were told that a VIP was to visit our site, and his name was Sir Hubert Wilkins, a famous Arctic explorer who was at this time a consultant for the US Army and needed overnight accommodations for a day or two, and would we accommodate him. Of course, he was a VIP and our Commander did.

We dispatched a vehicle to our landing strip near the Bering Sea and brought him to the site and provided accommodations in the infirmary which was all we had available for VIPs. We hardly ever used the infirmary; if the guys got sick, we gave them a few aspirin, or if it was serious and they died, we shipped them out.

At the evening meal that day in the Officer's Mess, Sir Hubert spoke of his many adventures and why he was in our area and his appreciation of our accommodations for him. He promised to breakfast with us and tell us more about his plans in the morning. I went to bed enthralled by his stories, and dreamed that he had invited me to go with him, and the Commander had agreed because the Commander knew that I would provide the capabilities to help Sir Hubert succeed. The dream was so good that I overslept, missed breakfast and by the time I arrived, the mess hall had closed and Sir Hubert had gone.

It was only a few years later that Sir Hubert died, and at his request his ashes were dropped at the North Pole by a U.S. Airforce plane.



## *Out for a Walk in an Alaskan Whiteout*

In the winter in the Arctic when the temperature is so low that snow becomes like powder and blows in the slightest wind, it creates what is called an Arctic Whiteout. At ground level and perhaps up to 100 feet it is like a fog, but it can be blue sky above. It was on such a day that I hiked down toward the Bering Sea, when suddenly to my left four wolves came loping out of the Whiteout, each turned and looked at me, and without breaking stride disappeared from view.

## *The Day I Shot at the Commander*

He was leaving; I was miles away on top of a hill. I had my rifle and I aimed it right at him and pulled the trigger. It was about my ninth or tenth month of isolation and loneliness. By then I was not insane by any means, a better word would be unbalanced. The shot was a little high as it should be for the distance; I carefully squeezed the trigger, and then he boarded the airplane and flew away forever.



Lt. Murphy with His Gun at the Bering Sea

## *Firewater and Apaches Don't Mix*

We always had two "Tech Reps," one from RCA and from Bendix, at Romanzof Air Force Station in Alaska. The 795th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron was part of the 10th Air Division located at Elmendorf Air Force Base in Anchorage. Cape Romanzof was the geographic location.

In November a new Rep, a full-blooded Apache, arrived, and that Friday attended our party at the Officer's Club. As the evening bore on our Apache started to chant. The more he chanted, the more he drank. The Commander suggested he had had enough. The Apache chanted more and began to dance around the room. From behind the bar he grabbed a large knife and began to dance around the Commander chanting. His intent was to kill and scalp the Commander which was against regulations. The First Sergeant and two others grabbed the Apache, took his knife, tied him up and locked him in his room. He was out on the next plane. Apaches and firewater don't mix.

## *Sometimes Women Are Just a Lot of Trouble*

When I moved to Nashville to work on the Gallatin Steam Power Plant for the TVA, my friends, Ruby and Oscar, had previously moved to Nashville because Oscar had accepted a position, after his army service, with the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers. Ruby and Oscar were my only friends in Nashville, so I chose an apartment in town rather than in Gallatin 30 miles away. Ruby was a natural matchmaker so began introducing me to girls. The first was a gal who worked at the Methodist Sunday School Board. I dated her for a while, but one night she said she did not want to continue our relationship, but she had a great friend at the Baptist Sunday School Board, and she thought we would be perfect together. So, as I was an Air Force officer, young, and you don't let catches like that get away; you hand them off to someone else.

She arranged a blind date with a girl named Patricia, that involved dinner at a local playhouse in a barn just outside Nashville. It was a good evening, enjoyed the play, and found that Tricia planned to be with a group in Knoxville the following weekend, and I said I would meet her there. We did, and I rode back with her group so we could get better acquainted.

I was waiting at Mother and Dad's house on Broadway, and Mother later said that she knew that something was serious because all I did was pace nervously about the house waiting for their arrival. They did arrive and we drove to Nashville.

Christmas a couple of months later, I was at a department store under the clock, waiting for Tricia, in a red sweater Tricia had given me, to join me for dinner and a date. She couldn't get away, she was running late, and there is nothing worse than a guy in a red sweater waiting

for a girl that doesn't show up. Just before I was ready to leave, she called the store and they transferred her to the department next to the clock. The store clerk saw me in my red sweater of course, and called me over to take the call. She explained she was running late and would be there in 30 minutes, and that saved the relationship.

## *Frog Legs, Friends, and the Beginnings of Love*



After my service in the Air Force and some of the depressing events at the time and the marriage to Jane, I returned to Knoxville. I had accepted a position with the Tennessee Valley Authority at a construction site in Gallatin, Tennessee, on a coal powered steam plant, at that time one of the biggest in the world. During my four months in Knoxville, before reporting to Gallatin in January of 1958, there were many adventures involving caving, diving, girls, and those all can be related at another time.

When I arrived at Gallatin, I chose a place downtown close to Ruby and Oscar, and that story has been told separately. Later, I rented a house near Gallatin and shared it with Dave Murrian and Dale Draffen. Dale was an engineer working with me at the Steam Plant and Dave was my long term friend and diving buddy from Knoxville. He had accepted a position with the State Game and Fish Commission as a wildlife photographer. They were also interested in his diving skills, and asked him to train some of the wildlife biologists in aqualung diving.

We all shared this house on a creek just outside Gallatin with fields and forest behind it. Nearby was a lake and we had canoes, so we could walk across the road and go canoeing. The creek was full of fish, the fields behind were full of corn. It was for three young bachelors a paradise. That was exactly what we needed in this time of our lives. We were bachelors so we missed women, but we enjoyed our freedom because we had all been a little burned by relations that did not work out.

Dale was an outdoorsman who enjoyed hunting, fishing, and frogging. Most Saturday mornings (actually Friday nights) Dave and Dale would go out at 2:00 a.m. with a three prong frog gig and a flashlight, and bring home two or three dozen frogs. I did not go because I did not believe

in killing, but on the other hand, I did not mind eating what other people had killed. This is called hypocrisy. We had frog legs, scrambled eggs, strong coffee, and white bread toast. At some point during this time, I met Patricia and from time to time, we would invite her out for one of these breakfasts. In order to be in time for that experience she had to come out on Friday night; that means she spent the night at the Gallatin house and we were not married. Now, children, that means something different to you than in my time; spending a night with a guy meant sleeping in a separate room with no fear of encroachment. (Today if I was writing this, there would be an issue of credibility, but not then.)

Now you might ask, what is the connection between my time in Knoxville after the Air Force and these stories about frog legs in Gallatin and Patricia? It should be clear to you if you think about it. Without my move to Gallatin, I would never have had fried frog legs and would not have married Patricia.

## *A Ride to the Sky in a Bucket and the Climb Down*



While living in Gallatin, Tennessee, one early morning, eating frog legs and scrambled eggs with friends, I reminisced about my thrill ride at the Gallatin Steam Plant where I worked.

The Gallatin Steam Plant was, I think I remember, the largest in the world at that time for each unit. The original intent was to build ten units but funding stopped at four.

At the end of unit #4 we built a sheet metal wall to protect from the elements and it was called the Eisenhower wall. When I arrived from Knoxville after my military service, as an electrical engineer in construction I reported to my supervisor, Jesse Shields, who was the project engineer. There are many stories I could tell about my time in Gallatin, but here is a short one that was a thrill for me.

A 500 ft. smokestack is important in the design of a large steam-powered, coal-fired steam plant because the higher the stack the greater the draw, sometimes called the draft, created by the height of the stack. At that time, I believe, a 500 ft. stack was a record. The stack is poured in 10 ft. sections with concrete. The concrete was mixed on the ground and carried up for each section in a large steel bucket lifted by cables from an engine-driven winch on the ground. When it was topped out, my assignment was to go up to the top and check all the electrical which consisted of aircraft warning lights, lightning rods, and the cables to connect them to the ground. Then I was to climb down the outside ladder, checking the installation of the ladder and, perhaps more importantly, the lightning rod grounding cables which were important for the survival of the structure during thunderstorms. This was a great thrill for me because I had no fear of heights, had a stereo camera and could take some pictures, which I did; and overall, it was just a day of adventure for me and not work.

I rode up in a bucket, climbed out on the top; 500 ft. is 50 stories, and I was higher than the tallest building in hundreds of miles around. I took half the afternoon to climb down. I was just enjoying it.

## *The Cannadas of Kentucky*



The Cannadas ran the country store in West Point, Kentucky, on the Ohio River with mansions along the waterfront. The railroad passed to the south about three miles away. The town had been a battleground in the Civil War, and they took pride in the musket bullet holes in the wall of some of the older buildings. Young Abraham Lincoln had stopped there on his way down the river with lumber to sell in New Orleans.

The Jenkins ran the country store which included the post office. The Cannadas were a prominent family in the community, and Tricia's ancestry includes both Cannadas and Jenkins. Some are buried there right off the railroad track in an overgrown cemetery which has not been maintained in a hundred years.

The river often flooded, and sometime around the Civil War, Front Street with all the mansions washed away. The main street today is First Street with streets continuing to be numbered until they reach the railroad tracks. Many old houses remain but mostly vacant lots and a few house trailers. On the north side of the Ohio River is Ft. Knox where the nation's gold hoard is supposedly stored.

Tricia's mother's grandparents were from West Point. Rev. Cannada and his wife were missionaries to Brazil, where Tricia's mother, Edith, was born in 1903. In 1906 the Cannada's young son became ill, and they travelled to NY by steamship to seek a cure. In NY the child died, but they did not return to the mission in Pernambuco, Brazil. Rev. Cannada accepted a position in a church in S. Carolina where he served for many years until his retirement.

It is interesting to note that John met a cousin of Tricia from S. Caroline who was a PhD in physics and was consulting for Martin Marietta, and John Murphy took him on a tour of the Denver facilities in about late 1980s. This cousin was a Cannada from S. Carolina.

## *The Miller Family of Tennessee*

The Millers were originally from upstate New York and were probably Muellers (German). One of the Millers was a young woman who served as a missionary to Colombia, South America. When she retired the church required her to leave Colombia, and therefore she moved back to East Tennessee.

Many years later, John and Tricia visited the cemetery and the old house in or near Clinton, Tennessee, and took pictures of where J. Oscar's parents and sister lived. J. Oscar Miller was born around 1880 and died in approximately 1965.

J. Oscar was a talented young man who could play the violin, fiddle, and could sing. In the early 1900s he had travelled to Colorado, stopping in Denver at a small hotel near the railroad station. Why would J. Oscar come to Colorado? Was it to visit a relative that had gone West, was it conflict at home, a need for adventure?

J. Oscar studied music and sang in New York, financed his time there singing in large church choirs, teaching music, and musical performances. In time he returned to the South, teaching at a small college in Florida, meeting and marrying a beautiful young girl, then met one of his students, divorced his wife, and married Edith Cannada, accepted a position teaching music at the Cadek Conservatory in Chattanooga. In time the Cadek Conservatory became part of the University of Chattanooga Music Dept. J. Oscar was the noted professor and taught many talented students who went on to teach or perform in New York and throughout the South. Nelson Eddy, Jeanette MacDonald, Haskell Bordour, are names that come to mind.

J. Oscar and Edith became prominent in the Chattanooga music community, forming the Chattanooga Civic Choir, the

Chattanooga Symphony, and eventually, concerts combining the Choir and the Symphony into a great ensemble of 1,000 musicians. He continued teaching the rest of his life, as did Edith. She taught in grade school, and she was J. Oscar's accompanist in his music teaching. They had one child, Patricia Ann, who was born in 1935. A note of interest is that Claire Murphy, J. Oscar and Edith's granddaughter, majored in music and during that time studied with one of J. Oscar's former students in New York City.

Patricia was usually present after school in the studio while J. Oscar and Edith were teaching. Later, she attended the University of Chattanooga, majoring in art and music. After graduation, Tricia accepted a job in Nashville with the Baptist Sunday School Board as an artist and writer for their monthly publication.



## *The Murphy Connection*

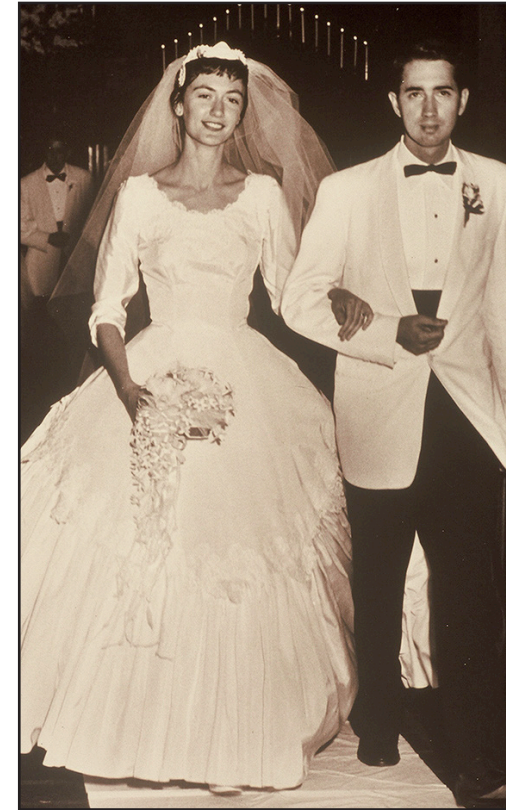
When I, John Murphy, moved to Nashville to work on the Gallatin Steam Power Plant for the TVA, my friends, Ruby and Oscar, had previously moved to Nashville because Oscar had accepted a position after his army service with the US Army Corp of Engineers. Ruby and Oscar were my only friends in Nashville, so I chose an apartment in town rather than in Gallatin 30 miles away. Ruby was a natural matchmaker so she began introducing me to girls. The first was a gal who worked at the Methodist Sunday School Board. I dated her for a while, but one night she said she did not want to continue our relationship, but she had a great friend at the Baptist Sunday School Board, and she thought we would be perfect together.

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the department next to the clock. The store clerk saw me in my red sweater of course, and called me over to take the call. She explained she was running late and would be there in 30 minutes and that saved the relationship.



Patricia and John, August 10, 1959

## *Buying Land in the Path of Progress*

Tricia and I were married in 1959 in Chattanooga with a reception at the Cadek Conservatory where J. Oscar and Edith Miller taught. Our intent was to depart for California that afternoon and we had reservations on the way to Nashville. However, J. Oscar developed a major nose bleed and we were concerned for his blood pressure. This was a traumatic thing with their only daughter marrying and leaving to go to California, perhaps never to return.

We were late leaving Chattanooga and arrived at our hotel on the way to Nashville and they had rented the last room on the belief that we were not going to show up. When we arrived, they said that we could stay in the Bishop's quarters which were located in the college President's mansion, located about a mile from the university and town. When we arrived, unbeknownst to me, Tricia deliberately showed her wedding bouquet and she made it clear that this was our honeymoon. As it was, we were undisturbed that night and into the next afternoon. The Bishop's quarters were beautiful with high ceilings and a large picture window which overlooked a beautiful valley. In the afternoon we drove on arriving in Memphis. Our drive west through Texas, Arizona and on to California is its own story.

In the San Fernando Valley, we found a rental in Woodland Hills which we selected because all the trees reminded us of Tennessee. I reported to work at RCA working on the Atlas Rocket checkout and launch systems. The San Fernando Valley had rapidly developed after World War II from farms and ranches into subdivisions and apartments. The stories abounded of fortunes made overnight as the valley developed. In the Murphy family there was a wealthy member, Hoyt Murphy and his family, who had

gone to Florida in the 1930s and become millionaires buying and selling real estate. Tricia and I were inspired by these stories and resolved to seek such opportunities in the future.

In time it became clear the job with RCA was not as had been presented and had little future. My objective was to launch rockets and that was being done at Vandenberg and Cape Canaveral, not Los Angeles or the San Fernando Valley. I found advertisements for Convair and the Atlas launch program at Vandenberg, I interviewed and was accepted. We drove to Santa Maria but before I had reported, I saw an advertisement for The Martin Company and I interviewed with them. They offered more money and so I went to work on the Titan program, something called Silo Launch Test Facility (SLTF). I reported and met my new bosses, Ed Kurtzhals, and John Adamoli. We found a rental home in Santa Maria for \$110 a month. It was three bedrooms and one bath.

The Santa Maria Valley was farming and ranching with old families established in the valley. The aerospace people moving in around Vandenberg Air Force Base were considered outsiders with foreign ways. Once again there was a land and building boom in support of the activities at the base. Tract homes were being built on what was once farmland, and fortunes were being made by the locals and by building contractors. We were interested in buying a house but could not afford a down payment. One day a realtor, named Tex, saw us looking and made us an offer to buy the last house in her tract for no down payment, except that we would live rent free for ten months and the rent we were currently paying would go to our down payment until it was met. Then we would close escrow and be the owners of our own house with monthly payments the same as our rent had been.

Our big new beautiful house had three bedrooms, two baths, high cathedral ceilings, built in oven and stove top, and no furniture. We did still have the bed that we bought when we were in the San Fernando Valley and one or two other pieces of used furniture from our house that we

rented upon first arriving in Santa Maria. As we began to save some money, we bought additional items.

My new job at Vandenberg was exciting, fulfilling and full of opportunities, and I discussed much of that in a story entitled “How Reagan and I Saved the World.” Now let’s talk some more about land in the path of progress. In the *Santa Maria Times* was an ad for land in the Antelope Valley, northwest of Los Angeles, in which a new intercontinental airport was to be built. The concept being presented was that there would be four or five intercontinental airports around the world with satellites out from each of them, super jumbo airplanes would connect these international airports and regional airlines would carry passengers out in their respective continents. Our stories of fortunes made in Florida and the San Fernando Valley in past decades came to mind when we heard of the plans for the Antelope Valley.

We met with a realtor selling Palmdale real estate and he presented some properties which we did not buy. However, we did visit the Antelope Valley one weekend and made contact with a realtor who showed us some 2½ acre parcels which he indicated would be next to a planned freeway through the valley. The following week Tricia and I drove to LA to the county planning offices with baby Claire in the back seat of our Volkswagon convertible. While I stayed with Claire in the car, Tricia went in and bypassed the information desk in the lobby and went up to the freeway design offices and talked directly to the designers. From that we found they were changing the freeway access adjacent to our property of interest and the frontage on that 2½ acres would now be on M Street and not blocked by the cloverleaf. It was now 2½ acres, a block from the entrance to a freeway, which made it prime commercial potential. We immediately called up the realtor and bought the land. We paid 10% down and so much per month at 6% interest. Several years went by and the plans for the freeway became public and we had an offer from a doctor in Santa Barbara to buy our 2½ acres for \$49,900. We accepted

his offer and used part of the money to buy the ten acres in Santa Maria on a hillside southeast of town.

Meanwhile, we were still interested in the world airport plans and again visited LA, and Tricia talked to the LA County Airport Commission and determined that there would be a major access in and out of the proposed airport with commercial zoning on both sides of this access. We researched land and bought twenty acres on this proposed access, once again land in the path of progress. Two years or so later the airport plans were cancelled and, apparently, were primarily a real estate scam perpetrated by the chairman of the LA Airport District who had made a fortune off real estate there. We broke even on our twenty acres. Buying land in the path of progress had been an adventure and was profitable, but it was time to move on to more substantial investments, and our dream house on Cambridge Way was to be that.

In July 2017, Jonny came to Denver with plans to drive with me out to California and then to Tahoe for a family reunion. On the way, we drove through the Antelope Valley to M Street to see what development might have occurred on that past investment property. There was none; it was desolate. Prairie Dogs and cactus were what we saw. So much for the land in the path of progress.



John and His VW, the First Family Car

## *The Old Trunk*



In the late 1880s or early 1900s, the Cannadas were missionaries in Brazil. When they returned to the United States they shipped several trunks on the steamship to New York. One of those trunks used to sit in the living room of my house. It has been stored in many places, most recently in my garage. I have reviewed, read, and enjoyed the history of its contents. I write this to indicate the importance of some of its contents to anyone who may at a later time open this trunk. It's good stuff, don't discard it. Learn from it and pass it on.

John Payne Murphy

## *John Walker Murphy and Lucy Lee*



John and Lee lived in Los Angeles in later years, and when we were living in Santa Maria they would visit. They were wonderful friendly people who knew no strangers and had travelled all over the west on construction jobs, as John was a warehouse man and a member of the Teamsters Union. John was the younger of the Murphy brothers, and Lucy Lee was from Corbin, Kentucky, which incidentally was the origin of Colonel Sanders and his Kentucky Fried Chicken enterprise. They had married during the Depression and headed West to find work.

The Roosevelt administration sponsored many projects in the west including dams with power generators as part of the great electrification of America. John and Lee were part of this and moved from job to job and were known as “boomers,” that is, going from one economic boom location to another. As part of this economic recovery of the Great Depression, President Roosevelt chartered the Tennessee Valley Authority. TVA was intended to provide multi-faceted development of the resources of the great Tennessee River which included Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, and Kentucky, a regional project intended to bring millions of destitute southerners out of poverty. Dad worked for the East Tennessee Power Company, and like many of his fellow workers, opposed TVA. TVA hired many of these power company workers, but not those that had been in opposition to TVA. Tennessee mountain people have always been independent and suspicious of big government. That is why we left Tennessee to go to South Carolina which was still private power.

John and Lee retired to Los Angeles, CA, in the early 1960s, and about the same time we moved to Santa Maria, and they often visited us driving north in their Fliver (two-door Ford Coupe).

John died of cancer. Then Lee returned to Tennessee. Lee's inheritance was squandered. She lived with family, and then died destitute. She gave my folks a collection of silverware from many decades in the past. Mother did not want it and gave it to Mary Jane. She did not want it and offered it to Claire. Claire did not want it and I rescued it with the intent that somebody would want it and value it, and so today (Jan. 31, 2017) it sits in my living room blessed by many years of family dinners. After looking it over and being fascinated by the history it represented, Sharon agreed to take it and share it with family members with the condition that she would tell the story of its past to the best of her ability.



## *The Seaman's Chest*

We lived in Santa Maria, California; and when we could, we travelled north to San Luis Obispo and Pismo Beach. But our favorite times were to go south to Santa Barbara, and to Gaviota.

In Santa Barbara we enjoyed the beaches and lower State Street with its many inexpensive restaurants, antique shops, and book stores. We would start in the upper end of lower State St. and walk down toward the beach. Tricia, with the kids, with her interest and capacity for more detail in what we saw in these shops, tended to fall behind, and I would walk faster and be several shops ahead. In one shop at 623 State St. on the 1st of Nov, 1984, I saw a wooden chest and I asked about it. The store owner said it was an old seaman's chest in the 1700s, made of camphor wood which she said was common for seamen's chests that went to the orient in those days. This one was old, damaged, and she would make me a special price. I said, "Save it for me and I will bring my wife here in a few minutes to look at it, but I cannot afford your price."

I went back up State St. to find Tricia and bring her to see the chest. I said, "I'm going to offer \$225 and you must say immediately, we cannot afford that price." The details I don't recall, but with my negotiating skills, we ended up buying it for \$280, plus tax.

We brought the car down to the alley behind, loaded it in, and today it sits at the foot of my bed in need of some camphor oil, which is no longer illegal, so I have ordered some through the Internet. I have been trying to protect it at this time with products like Ingram's Camphor Cream and similar products.



Sunday with the Family at Gaviota, CA



## The Spectacular “Super Satellite”

The Super Satellite was not my first boat, nor was it my last; but it was the first boat that Tricia and the kids and I sailed together. It was a very light boat, fiberglass, large sail area, fit well on a trailer, and we sailed it out of Santa Barbara.

My first boat was when I was five years old living in Maryville, as part of a summer program for slow children, I built a kayak out of wood slats and canvas. Before I could get it in the water, we moved to Cleveland, Tennessee, and it was left behind.

After Cleveland we moved to Charleston, South Carolina, where Stewart Turner and I bought an abandoned sailboat for \$20 which we earned by mowing lawns. We salvaged the boat, found sails and mast stored on shore, and we had one good sailboat. We moved it to the yacht basin on the beach near Mother’s hospital where she was a nurse. The story of our sailing in this little boat I will save for another time; but I include it in the sequence of boats.

Tricia would drive to Santa Barbara and take sailing lessons. We went on a vacation to Florida, and took a week’s cruising lessons with an instructor, and sailed from Miami to Key West with courses in coastal navigation. Eventually, we bought *Tehamana* and cruised the Bahamas and south. *Tehamana* brings many stories and adventures.

## The 1965 Denver Flood

In 1965 Tricia and I loaded up the kids and drove to Denver, renting our new house in Santa Maria to a young couple, and moving into an apartment in Littleton near the intersection of Littleton Blvd and Broadway. In the summer, it was time for the kids to visit the grandparents again, and so we arranged a train from Denver to Chicago with a train change in Chicago on to Chattanooga for the family. On the day of their departure I took them to the train station and they departed. I returned to Littleton to witness a major flood on the Platte River resulting from storms in the mountains to the south and west. This flood destroyed all the bridges across the Platte throughout Denver except the one at Mississippi Avenue.

I was standing on the ridge in Littleton in somebody’s back yard with others waiting for the flood to reach Denver. The flood was from the south and was being reported on by a helicopter pilot as the flood took out bridges, automobiles and people’s homes which had been adjacent to the river, in the flood plain. For years this area had been considered safe, and no one thought of the consequences of building there. The wave of water 10-20 feet high came down the river, and where one minute there had been no water, now there was a raging river as it passed our observation from the hillside, and flowed on through Denver and into eastern Colorado where it dissipated in the flat lands.

The family was safe and ahead of the flood and headed for Chicago. On Monday I drove down and crossed the river at Mississippi Ave. to the plant at Waterton to find nobody there. I called Vandenberg to discuss our situation and they were surprised to hear from me. I spent the day going through everybody’s “in baskets” and desks to determine what information I might find useful. It was a skill

that I had found helpful in the past when spending time in office areas when others were home.

When Tricia and the kids came back to Denver and the apartment, we would often take short trips into the Ken Caryl Ranch which was a large, open, undeveloped area at the time, with miles of rolling hills, old ranch structures, and interesting places for the kids to play. All the wild-life of Colorado was there, deer, elk, raccoons, coyotes, and reportedly though not seen, wolves. This area is now developed with homes, apartments, and shopping centers.

## *Beginning of the Titan Rocket Project in Denver, CO*

### Martin Marietta Facility at Waterton

In the 1950s, the cold war moved from a threat by inter-continental bombers to a race to establish intercontinental missile systems to deliver atomic weapons. No nation wanted or intended to use these weapons, but all the major nations felt that they must have them to ensure deterring a nuclear war.

At that time, the primary developers of these systems were located on the east and west coasts and, therefore, were vulnerable to attack from the sea. Strategically, it was important to have a development facility located in the middle of the country such as Colorado. A number of companies developed proposals for this capability; and the winner was the Glen L. Martin Co. of Baltimore, Maryland. Their proposal was for a site in the foothills outside of Denver, CO. It includes most of the major buildings and the test stands where the engines were fired prior to the shipment of the system to the silos located around the country.

These facilities at Waterton were later used for developing Martin Marietta's space launch capability and a number of satellites. The facility, as well as others in the Denver area, are part of what is now Lockheed Martin Corporation's extensive aerospace capabilities.

## *Artifacts from California*

In December of 2016 while reviewing interesting old things sitting on John's kitchen counter, we found so much to talk about. One item which we will deal with now, is 200 years old, has been in salt water off the coast of California, and found on a walk down the beach south of Gaviota (Sea Gull in Spanish) and north of Santa Barbara. Tricia and John were taking a walk in the 1970s. It is a label from a shipment of a Coastal Trader that delivered goods up and down the coast of California. Also, John has another piece found on the sandy coast at the same time. The pieces seem to be made of an alloy. The larger one has the words "CALIFORNIA" across the top and "REAL BUTTER" across the middle and "LOS," meaning Los Angeles, across the bottom. It was a placard for a large case or wooden box used to ship butter from dairies in LA to more remote coastal regions less supportive of cattle. We think we can make out "786" in the center with the number "3" above it.

## *Building Our Dream House*



Cambridge Way, Dream Home on the Hill in Santa Maria

The first night in our new home on Cambridge Way was a sleepless one as we could not overcome our amazement at the view across the valley. Around one o'clock in the morning after an hour of seeing flames in the far distance, our curiosity overwhelmed us. We got in our car and drove to find the source which turned out to be an oil refinery burning off gasses. We drove back home and that was the beginning of our Cambridge Way adventures.

The story had started with our purchase of the 10 acres as a compromise for a new home. My first choice had been 20 acres in the San Inez Valley on a hillside outside the small town of Solvang. The kids did not want to leave their friends, and so with much discussion, we made a family decision to stay in Santa Maria and selected the 10 acres off Telephone Road on Cambridge Way as a compromise.

Tricia accepted the responsibility to design a house suitable for the property and the view. The drawings of her concept are still in storage here someplace. In time she located two men who were builders and could handle unique designs other than the conventional stick built homes. On their recommendation Tricia visited a house in San Inez Valley and we incorporated much of that house into our design.

Tricia each day would work with the builders as they started to clear the site, establish a foundation, pour the slab and begin to bring in large beams and trusses, and finally the rental of a large crane, and in one day the posts and the beams became the outline of a beautiful home overlooking the valley. Each day Tricia would drive out to monitor the builders' progress, frequently making suggestions and changes in the details as the structure evolved into a home. In the master bedroom suite, our bathroom contained a three by four foot sunken, tiled tub beside a picture window looking out onto what was to become an enclosed patio with a hot tub.

We planted a type of eucalyptus tree out front that appeared to have all the beauty of a tall weeping willow. Six or eight of these were planted across the front of the house. They were fast growing and did not take a lot of water, a consideration because of the cost of pumping well water. On the west side of the house we created an orchard with 20 avocado trees and several fruit trees with the intent of supplying our avocado and fruit needs forever. The avocados were Zutanos from which the Hass avocados were descended. They were hardy but not as commercial because they developed black spots. Hass could be shipped to the stores and were much more commercial.

On the north side was the Santa Maria Valley and to the west the Pismo Sand Dunes and the Pacific Ocean. To the east were the foothills of a mountain chain.

Tricia had wished for a kitchen that overlooked it all. She could look over the kitchen counter and through the living room to see a view of the valley through the large picture windows in the front of the house. As you entered the house from Cambridge Way, you would drive up a U shaped driveway, then you went through a large carport that could contain four cars, cross a patio and enter the kitchen, or the formal entry way through two large double doors into a tiled foyer, the kitchen to the left or a step down into the living room. To the right was a dining alcove on the same level as the kitchen.

John Faro was part of a Portuguese family that lived 30 miles away toward Pismo Beach. Mr. Faro worked for one of the wealthy land owners in the Santa Maria Valley and John, for reasons I don't recall, had to move his sheep. He located them on a lot to the west of us but was told he had to move them. He came to me with a request to move them to our 10 acres which would involve leaning down the fence for the sheep to go across. I bought the sheep so all of a sudden I owned 17 sheep or was it 34, I don't remember. John became a friend and spent a lot of time at our house. John's family was from the Azores and his family had emigrated.

The house was built on the flat at the top of the land, but the land dropped away steeply to the three flat acres at the bottom. The property was totally fenced with post and corral boards at the top and wire fencing around the sides and bottom suitable to contain sheep and cattle. We had steers and Kathy had horses. The land was grassy but we still had to buy hay to supplement the animal feed. We would buy calves at the auction at Paso Robles with the intent of feeding them up and reselling them at the auction for a profit. We made no profit from these activities except for the tax advantages. A farm and some of its activities with losses are tax deductible up to four years and then you must change to another form of farm activity that will generate a loss for four years. Making a profit from farming requires great knowledge and skills but making a loss can be done by anybody.

At this time Tricia was teaching the mentally gifted in Guadalupe in the western Santa Maria Valley and I was in aerospace at Vandenberg. The kids were in high school and college and that presented a transportation problem. We bought used cars for transportation that were always cheap, low mileage old cars for our Cambridge Way fleet.

This was our life, from a small rental house in 1960, until our move to Denver in 1985. This opened many new opportunities that are related in future stories.



Raising Sheep, Baaa!

## *Bummer the Lamb and Lima Beans*

It seems to be a characteristic of ewes that they breed and give birth in unison. They all breed in about 10 days and give birth in a day and a night, mainly at night which is inconvenient for those who are trying to manage the situation.

On our 10 acres in Santa Maria I had bought all of John Faro's ewes, about 40 I think, when the farmer where he was grazing them said they had to go. I bought them all one afternoon and had them on our place when Tricia came home from her teaching substitute job. She was overcome with some emotion which I found confusing at the time. They were all registered with pedigrees, better than my own, so how could I go wrong.

One of the ewes had twins and abandoned one of them, not an uncommon thing for them to do. I first saw or noticed Bummer standing far from rest of the flock at the bottom of the pasture having been driven out by his mother and rest of the ewes. We brought him to the garage and fed him with a baby bottle of milk. Kathy even had him in her room at night to feed him his midnight bottle.

To feed the ewes we bought lima beans by the 50# sack as a cheap protein and kept them in the garage. One day Bummer discovered the beans and ate his fill and more. Then Bummer drank water, beans expanded and so did Bummer and he died. That is the story of Bummer and the lima beans.





A Great Friendship

## *Ralph*

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The day we met Ralph was a day to be remembered. We had recently purchased a ten-acre piece of land on a hillside outside Santa Maria, California, where we lived while I worked at Vandenberg Air Force Base. Hardy Ensign was a craftsman who had been helping us install water systems prior to starting on the house construction. He had a dog named Ralph which he said was causing problems in his neighborhood downtown, and he wanted to find him a home. We were reluctant, but Hardy asked if he could bring him out with him while we worked on the water system.

Hardy drove up with Ralph in the back of the pickup truck; and when Ralph jumped down, my instinct was to run and climb a tree or fence. He was as big as a pony. Hardy assured us he was friendly and we would love him, and we did. Ralph had come to stay.



## *Kathy and Her Good Deed*



We lived on Cambridge Way and Kathy had horses, some there but mostly at a horse park over by the Santa Maria River. One day a neighbor's horses ran loose and Kathy corralled them until she could contact the owners and help with their return. The horses' owners were grateful and gave Kathy a gift of a copper farm scene and barn which she valued greatly. Somehow that metal sculpture ended up at my house in Denver, and I am dedicated to returning it to Kathy, but I would also like to document the story that goes with it.

## *How Reagan and I Saved the World*



In 1959 I came out of the Air Force as a Captain and married Patricia Miller. I was trained as an electrical engineer. I answered an ad in the Chattanooga newspaper that Tricia's mother had pointed out for work at RCA, and they moved me to California. I worked for them for six months doing nothing in my field. I felt that six months satisfied my obligation to RCA and started looking for a proper career move. I received an offer from General Dynamics on the Atlas program at Vandenberg launch site. About the same time, I saw The Martin Company on a different program. I interviewed with them and they offered me a higher starting salary, and with a baby on the way, I thought I should accept that. We drove to Santa Maria and reported to my new boss, Ed Kurtzhals, in the Test Operations Department. I was assigned responsibility for the launch control systems, with the opportunity to go to Baltimore for the development and check-out of that system before delivery to Vandenberg. That was in 1961. That's how I started in rocket launching.

Tricia was pregnant with Claire and our decision was that she would go to Chattanooga and stay with her parents, and the baby would be born there. At the completion of the work in Baltimore, I flew to Chattanooga, picked up Tricia and Claire, and flew back to Santa Maria.

My assignment was to an R&D program to prove the feasibility of launching a Titan II rocket from a silo. The SLTF (Silo Launch Test Facility) was to demonstrate the capability of launching a Titan II from within the silo. The issue was acoustics and vibration suppression sufficient to not destroy the vehicle during launch. The intent was for three test launches, but because the design progress on the Titan II was moving faster than the time table for supplying the test data, our program was reduced to one launch. In addi-

tion, there had been a safety audit of the facility, and it was deemed unsafe to launch the vehicle from the Control Center because of its proximity to the silo.

Ed Kurtzhals telephoned me on Sunday morning and explained the situation. "We have to find a way to launch from a remote location which would be safe, or the program would be cancelled." I knew how to do that; and we met that Sunday afternoon. We worked out a plan to remote control the system. We would count the rocket down to T-5 minutes from the original Control Center, move to a safe location, and complete the countdown and launch remotely. The final five minutes of the countdown was automated except for seven functions. Therefore, our design was a small box with seven switches and seven lights and cables that were connected at the SLTF facility, and run across the countryside to an unused launch control facility a quarter of a mile away. On launch day at T-5, we would hold thirty minutes in the countdown, get in station wagons parked outside, and transfer to the remote control center. A crew was there sitting at a desk on which was mounted our remote control box. John Adamoli and others were ready to conduct the last five minutes and the launch. The rest of us were sitting in a glass observation room. The countdown was resumed with coordination of range readiness, the launch was successful, all the required acoustic and developmental data was collected for evaluation by the Titan II design team in Denver, and the SLTF program was over.

Editor's Note: John received the following employee commendation for his work on the SLTF program: "Mr. Murphy is exceptionally gifted in on-the-spot troubleshooting when any electrical system malfunction occurred; he is able to study a blueprint for a few minutes, stating the problem and provide a solution to allow the test to continue. He should be given a great deal of credit toward the making of SLTF Captive Firing and Launch successful."

Most of the team left for other companies or returned to Denver. I was assigned to an advance group to be part of the Titan II startup program at Vandenberg. As

preparation for this, I was sent to various contractors and suppliers as part of a learning program in preparation for the activation of the Titan II silos. From there we moved into early tests of the Vandenberg facilities in preparation for a static firing. That is, the firing of a live Titan II within the facility to validate the facility design and the ground support equipment. It was a static-in-silo firing of seven seconds. That data was evaluated, and the silo was refurbished in preparation for the actual first launch of a Titan II from its silo.

For this launch I was again the launch control console operator on the launch team. The countdown went well, the Titan II exited the silo, went straight up for 57 seconds, exploded with debris over the area including back down on our facility, a partial success.

Examination of the facility and the rocket's debris determined that the cause was a design flaw in the facility. The umbilical disconnect lanyard cables had been hard connected to the concrete walls of the silo, by design. The umbilical disconnect mechanism operating time was greater than the breaking time of the hard attached lanyards at liftoff. This resulted in the ripping out of the umbilicals and some of the internal wiring of the rocket. The rocket exited the silo without any guidance or command destruct capability. In other words, the rocket could not be guided or the range safety could not destruct it should it be off course. It was a runaway rocket! The only thing that saved the situation was that the rocket went straight up for 57 seconds and self-destructed.

The Titan II rocket was designed to be silo stored and on standby as a deterrent. Both propellants, the fuel and the oxidizer, were liquid and toxic. Upon the destruction of the rocket above Vandenberg Airforce Base, it created a very large and foreboding cloud which floated with the air currents across the base toward Lompoc and Santa Barbara. The launch crew, including myself at the launch console, was isolated within the launch control center securely below ground, because of all the surrounding debris and toxic chemicals above ground, for about an

hour. Meanwhile, above ground the observers from the remote observation area were all in their vehicles racing at top speed to the main base. People on the main base perceiving the cloud moving in their direction were all in their vehicles racing at high speed to the remote observation area. Large numbers of vehicles passed each other at high speed, fortunately without any collisions. It took hours for the cloud to dissipate and for order to be restored.

And so back to the drawing boards at Denver Design for a solution to the problem. It turned out to be a simple J-bar to attach the lanyards to the silo wall, which resulted in a slowdown necessary to allow the disconnect of the mechanism of the umbilical connectors on the rocket, without tearing apart the internal wiring.

After the Titan II test program, the Titan II weapons system was deployed in hardened silos in various locations in the United States, and remained one of our most effective deterrents. A few words about the reason for deterrence of which the Titan II, the Minute Man, the B-52 program, the Polaris submarine and its rockets, were a part. It was President Reagan's belief, and I agreed, that our economy and the Russian economy resilience was far from equal, and that this competition in an area of aggression initiated by them, the Russians, could not be won by them with their highly regulated Communist government and its resulting economic institutions. As a program manager, I visited suppliers, subcontractors, and test locations around the country with this message, as many did not understand the importance of their contribution as suppliers and participants in various components that supported this capability.

In 1965, I was leaving the Titan II ICBM program and transitioning to the Titan III space launch program. Tricia and the family and I were temporarily in Denver working advanced design of the Titan III space launch system, which had originally involved launches from Cape Canaveral. Cape Canaveral supported eastward launches and equatorial orbits. When the benefits of geosynchronous orbits became required, launches from Vandenberg were implemented as we could launch south without overflying

any land mass. On return to Santa Maria we converted an Atlas space launch facility to the Titan III space launch program, with the objective of polar orbit satellite missions. A polar orbit allows total scanning of the globe at least once every 24 hours, unlike east coast equatorial orbits which were limited with regard to north and south latitudes.

The first Titan III rockets that were launched were core only rockets with no solid fuels strapped on. Next we converted the other pad at Space Launch Complex 4 from Atlas to Titan III with solid rocket strap-ons. Now SLC4 is fully Titan, one with core only and one with solid rocket strap-ons. We added solids; as missions grew, we increased the size of the solids, increased the size of the liquid propellant tanks in order to orbit larger and larger satellites, still all at Vandenberg. Similar activities were taking place at Cape Canaveral for equatorial orbits including the use of a third stage, called trans stage for orbital satellites adjustments.

At one point a manned polar orbit program was initiated, called Manned Orbiting Laboratory (MOL). Technology overran the need for the satellite to be manned, since a similar system was developed for unmanned orbiting and was launched on an upgraded Titan launch vehicle. So the MOL program was cancelled, however, a ground support system being developed for that program was used to upgrade the ground support equipment for Titan III and later Titan IV. During this time I was promoted to electrical group leader for the test operation department. Subsequently, I was assigned as a Test Conductor. A Test Conductor is responsible for organizing the vehicle processing from receipt to launch, including conducting the formal test and launch countdown. This was my favorite job of all the jobs I had, but I only got to launch three rockets in this position.

Editor's Note: The following employee commendation, dated March 14, 1973, came during John's work on the Titan III Program and gives the reader a quick view of the technical precision required by John and his crew: "During the final phase of the countdown on Titan III Vehicle D-6, an emergency 'hold' was called at T-18 seconds

by the Lockheed Missiles and Space Company Computer Data Engineer. At the time the 'hold' was called, there was approximately twenty minutes remaining of the launch window. Because of the time the 'hold' was called, the SRM 1 and 2, Ignitor 1 and 2 SVD Reset Indicators on the Tracking and Flight Safety Rack did not light, indicating a fault in the stray voltage detection.

"Mr. Murphy's technical competence, presence of logic and leadership resulted in the outstanding performance of his launch crew in recycling through Task A-1 (Terminal Count Hold Prior to T-0) and launching the vehicle successfully within the launch window."

When my friend and boss, Chuck Smith, died of a heart attack one night, I was chosen as his replacement and promoted to Chief of Operations at the launch complex at SLC4 at Vandenberg. In time I became the Director of Operations for Titan at Vandenberg. One day I received a call from Pete Teets, the President of Denver Aerospace, requesting me to take over the Peacekeeper (MX) test program at Vandenberg. I declined because I said I preferred the job I was in. A week later my friend, Warren Beerys, called me and said I should take the job or risk being fired. So I took it. And later when the program manager position in Denver became available, which was a Vice President level job, I was selected. Over the last year or so, Tricia and I had reached the conclusion that it was time to take a promotion involving moving to Denver if offered; therefore, when the opportunity presented itself in 1985 we were ready.

The Peacekeeper program included the development of deployment modes and extensive transportation and handling systems, in addition to the system development activities at Vandenberg.

My next assignment was to go back to space launch systems as Vice President of Engineering. At this time, Fred Hudoff, my friend from Vandenberg, where he had been Director of the west coast space shuttle program which had been cancelled, returned from an assignment at Corporate in Bethesda, DC, as President of Space Launch Systems. I

was assigned to his staff as Vice President of Engineering.

When Al Schaeffle was promoted as Vice President of Engineering for the Denver division, in 1989, I was assigned the Titan IV program manager position. This was the job I had dreamed of from that first launch at Vandenberg, and all that had taken place in the preceding years had prepared me for this. The job involved launches from both coasts, major sub-contractors producing various components of the rocket in different locations around the country, and relations with an Air Force customer that I had grown to know and respect.

Tricia was now free to travel with me to the launch sites, to Washington, DC, or wherever the job took me. These four years were the best of all, but we were looking forward to retirement and the new adventures it could bring. A major program called Milstar was to be my last launch. It was successful, and the next day I handed in my resignation to be effective March 3, 1993.





The President and John, A Great Scolari Card



Titan II as a Space Booster



Titan IIIB



Titan III Centaur, Launched from Cape Canaveral



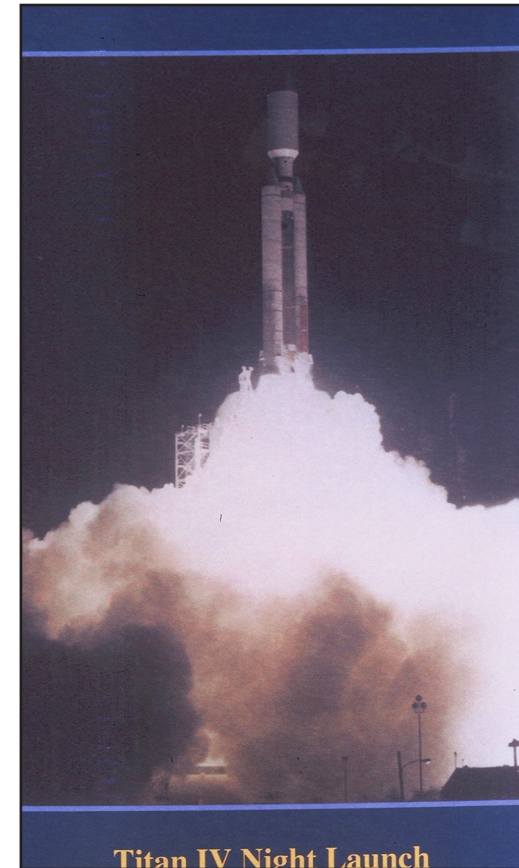
Titan 34D at Cape Canaveral

## *Transitioning from MX to Titan IV Program*

There was something going on that I didn't understand when Pete Teets gave me ten million dollars to develop new initiatives and took me away from the MX Program, where I had been successful with great customer relations, and moved me to his staff. I had just left a 2.3 billion dollar program to join Pete's staff, with 10 million dollars budgeted for some sort of flakey developmental initiatives program. I found other people's program initiatives requiring funding and gave away the money within the first 60 days. I went to Pete and said, "I have given away the money. Do you have a meaningful assignment for me, or do I accept other offers from other corporations that are trying to recruit me?"

As a result of all this, I was then assigned to Space Launch Systems as Vice President of Technical Operations. I had been given the choice of Tech Operations or Production Operations, which is basically manufacturing. Often launch operations and field operations are related in Corporate's mind to production, even though there is much more to launch operations. To have chosen Production Operations would have reinforced that my launch operations was simply the same, and so I chose Technical Operations to offset that perception.

Fred Hudoff was reassigned from Corporate to head up Space Launch Systems and therefore, I would be reporting to him in this position. Meanwhile, an Air Force general, who had been in charge of Ballistic Missile Division when I was in charge of MX, had moved to Space Systems which controlled among other things the Titan IV Program. When Colonel Frank Sterling was assigned to take the Titan IV Program, I was asked to replace Al Schaeffle as the prime contractor Titan IV Program Director. Colonel Sterling and I developed a great relationship which benefited the program.



Titan IV Night Launch



## *Old Age Is All in Your Mind*



Every year the Air Force held a gala event in Los Angeles called the Air Force Ball. Senior politicians, Air Force and industrial leaders were invited. I was one of the biggest contractors for the Air Force at that time. It was formal. I wore my tux and Patricia in her gown was beautiful!

An interesting part of this story is that my friend from Vandenberg, Gordy Williams, who had been the Assistant Program Manager of the Titan Program at Vandenberg, had now become the president of a large corporation, the name of which I cannot remember. It is interesting that we met there each year at this occasion. Gordy had been charged by his board of directors to break up and sell off each portion of the corporation, some more profitable than others and going for more money. I don't know the details, but I understand Gordy made a fortune with this process and eventually retired to North Carolina.

After the banquet and several renditions of the Air Force song and other patriotic and dance music by the Air Force orchestra, we had the pleasure of listening to a number of speakers. The last and the best was Bob Hope. At this point Bob was very old, and he was helped up the stairs to the podium which he gripped with both hands. He was stooped and old until he began to speak. He stood up straight, and became the Bob Hope we all know. He told jokes, stories, and spoke as if he were a young man; when finished, after much standing applause, he became an old man again, and was helped down the stairs by his assistants.

Old age must be a matter of your thoughts. Can we all become like Bob Hope when he is at the podium or when he is on stage, except all the time?

The following is an example of this phenomenon:

“Under the strong impulse of a desire to perform his part, a noted actor was accustomed night after night to go upon the stage and sustain his appointed task, walking about as actively as the youngest member of the company. This old man was so lame that he hobbled every day to the theatre, and sat aching in his chair till his cue was spoken, -- a signal which made him as oblivious of physical infirmity as if he had inhaled chloroform, though he was in the full possession of his so-called senses.” (Science and Health, by Mary Baker Eddy, p. 261)

## *Risky Business: Friends Making Money*

When I retired I was invited to join a group of fellow retirees and their wives who had formed a social club around investing, but not necessarily making a profit. Tricia and I joined and attended a monthly social rotated among members' homes, and in most cases, going out for dinner after the meeting. As time went on and with the induction of new members from Conair, San Diego, after the acquisition of that business by Martin Marietta, the culture of the Risky group began to change. Suddenly you would be criticized by some of the new members if you had not researched your recommendation before presenting it. It takes away all of the fun.

At one meeting, I made a recommendation, not well researched but consistent with what we had been doing, and one of these people criticized me for it. At that point I had seen the change and was trying to be tolerant of it but that was the last straw. I said thank you for your hospitality, I got up and went to my car and that was the end of it. I never attended again. However, I remained a member, they still have my money, they are still investing it and making money on my money, and I still receive notices of the meetings and reports of their activities.

Early in our association with Risky, they organized a trip to Turkey. Why Turkey as opposed to other trips I have no idea, but someone suggested it and it caught on. In Turkey we chartered a bus and a driver who spoke English and Turkish and proceeded to tour the country. Turkish people do not drink alcohol, but Risky Business members do. The trip was basically a drunken brawl with bottles rolling in the aisles of the bus, and the Turkish driver holding his nose and cursing the infidels. The driver was knowledgeable, and the trip well planned, and the opportunity

to meet the Turkish people and learn of their culture and history was provided for those who were interested, and Tricia and I were very much interested.

Recently, August of 2018, Jim Miles, the current President of Risky Business, called and advised me that they were shutting Risky and that I had money remaining, and he wanted to come over and give me a check to close out my share of the club. It was good to see Jim and his wife again. We had a nice visit and talked of old times.

## *The Reason Men and Women Differ in Ways They communicate*

(John Murphy's ideas summarized by Sharon Leiter, March 10, 2015)

Women stayed in the caves and cared for the children, the cooking, cleaning, clothing, and health of the family. The women shared the family related tasks and talked to each other about what they were doing, how to do it, the reason for doing it. They had to anticipate the return of the men and how to help them, as well as please them.

Men went out to hunt and bring home the meat. The wild game they were stalking would run away if they made any noise, so they soon excelled at being quiet, speaking only when absolutely necessary, and then only about how they were going to accomplish the task of killing their prey and getting it home to the family cave.

In more modern times, the women continued their role of bearing and raising the children, cooking the meals, clothing the family, ever mindful of the comfort of the children and their husbands. They were less likely to live together with other families, so there were fewer adult females in the home to talk with concerning themselves, but they found ways to be creative in their homes and to meet socially with other women to discuss mutual problems and how to solve them.

Men went to work in factories or offices where they were with, primarily, other men devoted to the same goal of the company. Their conversations would be about how to successfully operate their business so they could get paid and bring home the money to buy the meat for the family.

John's conclusion is that men and women today are not much different from the cave person era of the far distant past. The men are still quiet and don't discuss personal matters with other men, and the women still discuss everything concerning the family, children, personal relationships, etc, with each other.

## *Tehamana*

Tricia and I left the *Tehamana* for Houston because she had been diagnosed with cancer. The day we were accepted at the Cancer Center in Houston we moved from the boat into an adjacent hotel room, loaded up a few things in our luggage, and closed up the boat. Neither of us ever went back. The next morning a taxi arrived, and we were off to the airport and on to Houston. Later, Tony and Michel prepped the *Tehamana*, handled the sale; and we sold her to a couple who were going cruising.

Many years before, we were standing on a dock in sunny Florida when white sails appeared on the horizon. It was to be our first view of the boat that brought us so many adventures. The owner of the soon-to-be-our-boat docked it; we went aboard, inspected, out for a sail, then to the boat yard for a hull inspection, and finally it was ours. We debated over the name; the prior owner had named it an uncomplimentary name. A boat must have a good name to be a good boat; and we chose "The Spirit of the Sea," *Tehamana*, a Polynesian name, which meant "Patricia" in Polynesian.

This boat was a Morgan 461, serial #2, designed by a noted naval designer named Henry A. Scheel. Scheel was famous for his studies of hydro-dynamics and hull shape, and this boat had a Scheel Keel, which significantly increased the performance of the boat under sail. I will say more about this boat later; but let me get on with buying and outfitting the boat for sailing, which is where the adventure really lies.

At this time, I was working on both coasts, living in Denver. Patricia stayed with the boat when we put it up in a nearby yard for some improvements and repairs identified when we bought the boat. She actually lived on the boat in the yard, climbing up and down a ladder as the boat was

on “the hard.” She supervised the work to be done, and kept in touch with me by way of a pay phone in the marina office. Perhaps some of you need to be reminded, there was a time when there was no cell phone, no Internet, no cloud except those that brought rain; and let me reassure you, we survived.

A boat yard at night is not the safest place in the world, but it did have a high fence around it and a security guard, who watched over Tricia and made sure she was safe. She was fearless and loved the sense of adventure.

At last it was done, the boat was splashed, and we sailed it to Ft. Lauderdale where we docked in a slip behind apartments just off Las Olas Blvd. If you know anything about South Florida, you know Las Olas Blvd.

The boat was secure, I went back to work at Canaveral and then to Denver, out to Vandenberg, and finally, I had a break and went back to the boat. There was still work to be done on the boat; and Tricia contacted the painter, an engine guy, a sail repairman, and so on. Sometimes they would show up and sometimes not.

It was frustrating for Tricia, and one day our neighbor on the next boat over stopped and said, “I heard you are having trouble with all these craftsmen. Is that true?” She said, “Yes!” He said, “My name is Tony Wynne-Roberts.” I can do all the work you need, at a fair price.” He was a South African Brit, and he had sailed single-handed from South Africa to Miami, except he missed Miami and ended up in Ft. Lauderdale. He was our neighbor in the next slip.

Tricia cancelled all the craftsmen and said, “Tony, you are in charge.” He was truly what he said. He could do everything and do it well, and at very little cost compared with the bandits in the boat maintenance business in South Florida.

Our first cruise to the Bahamas ended under the Las Olas bridge in the early morning hours of our departure. The engine failed. As we drifted toward the bridge, about to be de-masted, we threw out the anchor; the anchor broke. We threw out another anchor; it held. With Tony’s help, we got the boat going and limped back to our slip. We

worked, repaired, and upgraded again, and set out once more. There is a lot of adventure here; but first, we must get out to sea.

There was a time way down island, when we found an anchorage, and we had not seen another boat for two days. I don’t remember the name of the place, but it was south of the Exumas. The water was clear and the beach was white sand. We anchored off the beach, swam in, and wandered the island collecting shells. In the bay, on the other side of our anchorage, there were hundreds of coral trees full of fish. We crossed fifty yards of sandy atoll, and swam and snorkeled in the beautiful coral forest.

When we outfitted the boat, we had debated the need for a compressor on board for filling our scuba tanks, but elected instead to carry four fully pressurized tanks. This was a good decision because, as time went by, we found we preferred to snorkel as the water was shallow and clear, and no real need for scuba. Over time we only used scuba for boat repair and maintenance when in the water. Snorkeling around the reefs was like swimming in paradise; little fish, big fish, manta rays, occasional shark, a barracuda or two, would be part of any snorkeling adventure.

After a few days we headed back north, stopping each night in a beautiful anchorage. We rarely sailed through the night; we preferred sailing in the day and anchoring each night. Our destination was Georgetown in the Exumas. We arrived, anchored in the bay off the beach, and took the dinghy in for supplies and a meal ashore. Georgetown had a history from the Revolutionary War or before. Many Loyalists from the Colonies left after the War to live in the Bahamas.

We loved our time in Georgetown and stayed there on many occasions; but this time for three weeks, making friends, exploring the adjacent islands, and enjoying the night life. Night life was native music outside a local restaurant or two, eating local seafood prepared by native cooks. Drugs were not prevalent at that time, at least that we knew of, and the worst problem was a little rum, and sometimes a bad oyster or two.

The cruising community was a big support to the local economy. The island economy consisted of sugar cane, taro root, fishing, and Voodoo. We visited Georgetown many times and people came to visit us there. Some cruised down with us, some flying down to join us.

One wonderful visit that comes to mind is that of Father John Faro. He flew into Nassau and stayed with a local group of fellow Franciscan priests at the local monastery there, while we were making our way back to Nassau to pick him up. After a few days in Nassau with Father John, we sailed south snorkeling along the way, and on one occasion going overnight with his help to Georgetown. Father John was a certified scuba diver as were we, but once again we chose snorkeling on the beautiful reefs because of its simplicity. Finally, after a wonderful visit, we put Father John on a plane back to Nassau, and he went on to Miami and then to California.

Before John was Father John, he had been a high school kid looking for a place for his flock of sheep. Someone had suggested our ten acres in California, and we agreed. He brought the sheep out and paid for his use of the pasture by doing \$17 worth of farm chores a month. John became a great friend of the family and spent many hours at our house before going off to Cal. Poly, majoring in agriculture. After his degree in agriculture he decided on priesthood, went off to a Catholic college, and became an ordained priest.

On most occasions we would return the boat to Ft. Lauderdale for the hurricane season, and we would spend some time in Denver and visiting family. On only one time we left the boat in Nassau; but to feel that the boat was safe, we moved it to the end of a long pier where it could be taken care of by the dock master for a fee. All other times, we sailed the boat back to Ft. Lauderdale to a slip on one of the Las Olas islands. This time we flew back to Ft. Lauderdale and on to Peru on one of our trips up river with Sadie. The trips with Sadie are another chapter.

During the hurricane season, the boat was mainly in Ft. Lauderdale, sometimes in the slip and sometimes in the

yard on “the hard.” When we were there, when the boat was in the yard on “the hard,” we lived there and it was not easy; it was hard! We had to use the yard’s ladder that was sometimes taken away when we were on board, by someone else that needed it and did not realize that we were aboard. We would go on deck and realize the ladder was gone, and we would shout, “Bring us a ladder!” and someone would bring it.

This yard had a group of Vietnamese who had been evacuated because of their support of the US in the War. The leader of this group was a Vietnamese general and his crew was from his Vietnamese army brigade. They were experts at boat maintenance, and if they did not know how to do it, they would hire a South Florida black man to do the work.

To repair a boat with blisters required sanding the bottom. If an ordinary person would do it, he would have a small sander and do a little space at a time. The people that did our boat had arms the size of tree limbs and could wield an 80 lb. sander for an hour or more at a time. They were expensive but they got the job done, and so I learned not to try to do that type of work myself. Tony, Tricia and I would then mix epoxy, fill the low spots that had been sanded out, leave it on “the hard,” and leave it for the summer to allow it to dry.





*Tehamana*, "Spirit of the Sea"

## *Michel de la Sabliere (of the sandpits)*

Tricia and I had purchased *Tehamana*, a 46 foot sailboat, and possibly requiring more skill than Tricia and I had to sail it. Therefore, on our first voyage into the Bahamas from Ft. Lauderdale, we invited several experienced sailors. First, Tony Wynne-Roberts, and he invited a friend, Michel de la Sabliere. They were both great sailors with much experience on the ocean, in difficult sailing conditions, and they were great advisors to Tricia and me who had some experience, but without the depth of knowledge of these friends.

Michel had sailed in the Caribbean, and his boat had hit a container floating in the Gulf, and his boat had sunk. He survived. This is a great story and we will tell it later, hopefully with Michel's help.

Tony Wynne-Roberts had sailed in his boat from South Africa to Florida, single handed, with a couple of stops along the way, intending to stop in Miami, but with great navigational skills, ended in Ft. Lauderdale in a slip on Las Olas Blvd. When we purchased *Tehamana* and brought it down to Ft. Lauderdale, we had rented a slip coincidentally next to Tony. I was still working and Tricia remained on the boat because it needed many upgrades and repairs. Through the years Tony would be a great help and friend.

And so now it was time to make arrangements for the kids, Claire, Kathy and her husband Jeff, and Stephanie, and Jeff's brother, and our new boat for a new adventure, sailing to the Bahamas, with all the family aboard, a lifelong dream for Tricia and me, on *Tehamana*. Tony Wynne-Roberts and Michel were on board and we sailed to the Bahamas.

It is interesting to note that to make your way from our slip in Ft. Lauderdale, to the open ocean was an interesting



experience. From our slip to the ICW was easy, but once on the Intercoastal we had boat traffic and bridges which required an opening because of our mast height of 60 feet. We exited the harbor at Ft. Lauderdale heading east to the Bahamas, and many adventures yet to be told.

## *Upset Dinner*



One day Tricia and I were looking forward to having dinner with friends who were following in their boat, accompanying *Tehamana*, as we sailed to the Bahamas with a stop in Nassau. The food was cooking in their galley, when an imposing boat passed and its wake rolled our boats from side to side so forcefully that supper was dumped. The captain of our friend's boat was furious! He immediately called the offending boat on channel 16 and complained energetically to the voice on the other end that because of their failure to follow reasonable wake generation in Nassau Harbor, our dinner was ruined.

The response was, "Pip, pip, old man, we are so sorry. We British do not mean to offend, otherwise the Americans will take what is left of the British Isles and the Queen will be unhappy! We will send over our dinner this evening." The dinner that evening was Irish potatoes, mutton, onions, and Shepherd's Pie.

## *Sadie Was Upriver, but We Went to Peru Anyway*

Tricia had read an article about Sadie and the Rainforest Health Project (RHP), and so we were interested in supporting her work and the adventure that it would perhaps provide. She attempted to contact Sadie, but found she was upriver, so we decided to go to Peru anyway. We booked a cruise on a riverboat that went upriver to a number of villages, as our introduction to the Amazon rainforest. We flew into Quito which is a village on the Amazon only accessible by boat or airplane.

The cruise upriver in a riverboat was interesting, perhaps worthy of another story; but the point of this story is, while in line to depart at the airport, we were standing behind Sadie waiting to board the plane home. Tricia recognized her from the article that had originally caused our interest in this trip. They talked and Tricia explained the reasons behind our being here. Once we boarded, Sadie was in First Class because her previous flight had crashed in the jungle, another story, and the airline had given her a First Class ticket. It was only her cell phone that made contact for the rescue party, because the airplane's radios were disabled. From this experience came our commitment to supporting Sadie and her projects, and it resulted in a number of adventures in Peru.

The story of how Sadie was in the rainforest is even more interesting. Sadie and another nurse felt the need for adventure and signed up for a trip to Peru. Part of this was a nature walk into the rainforest led by a local guide. Somewhere deep in the forest this guide, perhaps chewing a local psychedelic plant, attacked them with a machete. They ran into the rainforest totally lost, and he departed. These two nurses wandered for three days and came upon a village. The villagers took them in, and when



Rain Forest Health Project in Peru

they explained they were nurses, they said, “God has sent you; we have sick people.” Many of their illnesses could be cured by simple medicine, which the nurses provided, but some could not. Sadie promised to return with doctors and better medicine, and that became her life goal. And she did.

As a nurse, Sadie obtained free medications from drug companies and doctors and others, and had them all shipped to Quito; thousands of dollars of free medications sent to the rainforest, to keep her promise. In Peru, they were all confiscated by the government. The powers that be used them to enhance their powers by giving some of them to their constituents. The rest were locked away in a warehouse. Sadie for a year or so visited politicians in that country attempting to free these medications and her mission.

At last she did, and she made her initial visits upriver from Quito. She had selected nine villages, in the area of her rescue, to be the focus of her work. She felt to do more would have diluted her efforts. This was the beginnings of RHP and our participation.

We returned to our boat in Ft. Lauderdale and sailed into the Bahamas with many adventures. We haven't written about those yet, but we will. Meanwhile, our focus was on Sadie and her mission. We planned to return, talked to Sadie about what she needed, collected medications and other medical materials from doctors and hospitals that were willing to give them for delivery to the rainforest.

On one of our trips, perhaps not this one, Tricia had met some tribal people who had been converted to Christianity by a Baptist missionary. These people wanted Bibles, and yet it was Sadie's charter not to interfere with politics or religion, but only to supply medical help. So later when we returned home, Tricia arranged for boxes of Bibles to be sent specifically to the Baptist people, without any mention of RHP to avoid creating problems for Sadie.

Over a number of trips we and Sadie's group visited these villages, sometimes by hiking through the rainforest and other times by canoe. There are many stories that I will tell about Shamans, witch doctors, tribal initiations that occurred on these trips with Sadie; but these are for other stories.

## *“My Gang”*



On a trip to Costa Rica I stayed in the big city of San Jose. I was warned away from the market, but went anyway since I wanted to see the real city. After wandering the market and buying a couple of items, the shop keeper warned me against walking home. She even offered to hail a cab for me. I said no thanks and headed up the street. Along the way I saw a tiny bar that opened onto the street. The bar was L shaped with three seats on the street and 5 along the narrow interior of the bar. The first three seats on the street were occupied so I took the seat near them on the corner of the bar. We struck up a conversation. They spoke little English and I little Spanish, but we made do and the bar tender helped as well.

Turns out I was talking to the block captain for the local gang, and the two other guys worked for him. They were surprised to see a gringo on their block and thought it remarkable. I was careful to say that my wife was waiting for me back at the hotel, so that they would not think I was travelling alone (I was). We had an hour's conversation.

I bought the leader a drink, but he would not allow me to buy for his men, and only if he bought me a drink as well.

Written down during my visit to Dad in Denver.

Jonny 28-Dec-2016

## *Thoughts and Reminiscence Before Travel, One Afternoon in June 2017*



Floyd Kohuts, a good friend of mine, and also my business manager on Titan IV, had never been on a trip to Europe. I said, "Let me be your guide."

It so happened that I was in Europe on one of my trips, bumming around, which one I don't remember, and we arranged for Floyd to meet me in Vienna, Austria, I think. We rented a car to drive to his ancestral home, a little village in Slovakia. Floyd had researched and been in contact with some of his Slovakian relatives, and so he had contacts for when we arrived. Floyd drove on the Autobahn. He drove, I prayed. He was going as fast as he could go, there is no speed limit. If we went below 100 miles per hour I would be surprised, but I cannot be sure because I was lying on the floor behind the seats praying.

The local folks had arranged a dinner for the night of our arrival with all of Floyd's relatives, about 50 people, in a local restaurant. If you can imagine a small room full of Slovaks all speaking Slovakian, not understanding English, all drinking Vodka out of water glasses if they could not reach the bottle. My assignment was to record this event on my video camera, and therefore, I sat a little to one side at one end of the table where I could quietly record the events, and somewhere I have these tapes and I should find them.

It was a wonderful experience for Floyd and myself. Somewhere in this was Floyd's cousin, an American lady who was going to meet us. We travelled to Vienna and stayed in a hotel waiting for her to fly in and join us. I have lost the details of who, why, and what that was all about, but this was part of this trip.

I should comment that at this time, after Tricia's passing, I was still adventurous and energetic, and to pack a bag and travel with what I called "serendipitous adventure" was reminiscent of the travels with Tricia to South America with the Rain Forest Health Project and on *Tehamana*, sailing to the Bahamas and south.

The Ark of the Covenant is lost and so what greater adventure could I think of than to find it? And so, off to Jerusalem where I think it is hidden. I wandered through Jerusalem starting at the upper gate, because it was downhill from there. My first stop was at a Muslim tea counter where I imbibed a delicious tea while discussing his opinion of what I should see on my walk through Old Jerusalem. During that day, I visited every section of the old town except the Temple Mount, where the Muslims believe that Muhammad on his horse, was transfigured off the Rock. The location is called the Dome of the Rock, a holy place for all Muslims. There is a big wall around this site, and I went to enter but there were two guards at the doorway that led into a plaza around the Dome. I looked through the doorway, but they would not let me in. The Jews, Christians, and the Muslims all claim this rock as a holy place. The Muslims, who came later, will not allow the Jews or Christians to enter.

## *See Ya Later, Alligator*



In the middle Keys many years ago large sea turtles were plentiful and there was a sea turtle canning facility about half way to Key West. A few miles from there was our favorite Keys restaurant, the name of which I cannot recall. The restaurant was a beat up old shack with cards and photographs thumb tacked to all the walls and ceilings. The menu was varied sea food, as well as, alligator, turtle, and snake. We never went to the Keys without eating there at least once, so we made a special effort to bring the boat nearby and dine there. We would sail the boat to a nearby marina, and then call a cab to go the rest of the way. There were only a couple dozen cabs for the entire length of the Keys, so you might have to wait half an hour or so.

I only ate one thing in all of my visits and that was alligator steak, with a baked potato and sour cream, and a Caesar salad. The cut of the meat was from the alligator's tail, and it was sautéed with a little butter and garlic.

I had discovered this restaurant in 1955 when I was on my first honeymoon with Jane and Ruby and Oscar Kro-snes. I ate there every time I was in the area for years, until one time in the 1990s I drove there and it was closed.

## *Tricia's Commitment to Teaching Kids*



In the Santa Maria Valley of California, there are many cultures and nationalities that located there in the 1800s and 1900s, and had formed a diverse society. The Philipinos and people of Spanish origin located near the coast on the original Camino Royale of the 1700s. Later the Anglos had moved in and settled in what was to become Central City, later renamed to Santa Maria.

Tricia, coming from a family of missionaries and teachers, wished to contribute to the community in which we had settled because of my work at Vandenberg Air Force Base. At first she tried substitute teaching, but the teachers' union imposed such requirements that it was difficult. In Guadalupe these requirements were not important in their school system as it was difficult to find any teachers that wished to work there. Tricia applied for a job there and they hired her as a classroom teacher and to set up a program for mentally gifted students, as many of their children were not being provided that opportunity.

Tricia drove every morning through the back roads of the Santa Maria Valley to Guadalupe, and became a member of that community known by all as Patty. Her program was successful, allowing many of her students to excel and obtain scholarships toward further education.

When we moved to Denver, Tricia tried to volunteer at the Denver Art Museum, but they had excessive training requirements. So she went to the Denver Natural History Museum and they welcomed her. She acted as a "docent," a combination of teacher and guide. She was then working with noted anthropologists, who would often bring findings from their archaeological digs to add to the Museum's collection.

Meanwhile, Tricia and I were travelling in Europe and,



more importantly from the point of her museum work, in Peru. Therefore, as part of our support of Sadie's work, we collected many Peruvian art works and antiquities. Some of these which we purchased from the locals we contributed to the Natural History Museum. Many of these are on display today.

## *Serendipity in Europe*



Several trips through Europe over the years with Tricia and alone have provided many interesting experiences. Today, I will write about one of my trips to Baden-Baden. I arrived at the train station two miles from town and took a taxi to a hotel recommended by the taxi driver. It was in the very center of the old town, across the street from the baths, and in an old building probably built in the 1880s. The baths were built over hot springs utilized by the ancients including the occupying Romans of two thousand years ago. Ruins of the many ancient baths still remain under the new baths of Baden-Baden. I checked in and immediately went to the spa for a swim.

The spa has an old section and a new section, the new section beautifully enclosed by glass with an indoor pool extending to the outdoors. It had a child's pool, and bathing suits were required. I enjoyed that for the day, but based on the recommendations of the inn keeper, the next morning I tried the old baths. In the old baths bathing suits are not only not required, they are not allowed. I will describe this experience now in some detail.

After entering and depositing your clothing in a locker, a large German woman hoses you down with a high pressure hose before you are allowed to enter the first pool, which is men only. On the other side of the facility was a similar entrance for women, I understand. After enjoying an hour in the hot water, I migrated over to the larger central pool which was connected to the women's pool, and found it was occupied with naked men and women. I spent five wonderful days in Baden-Baden enjoying the spa and the food.

After this enjoyable time at this enchanting place called Baden-Baden, I travelled once again to Paris, with the

intent of travelling to the World War II battleground at Normandy. I stood on the cliffs overlooking the beaches, where we had landed, and the fortifications overlooking the invasion, occupied by Germans and their machine guns. I visited the cemeteries with graves of those of many nations which had not been repatriated.

After returning to Paris I took the train to the World War I battleground where my Uncle Riley Murphy had been killed, and where Captain Dave Lillard had commanded his troops, while severely wounded. These family stories are told in other parts of our writings. In addition, I am reminded of many other stories that we must tell, such as Stonehenge, Rome, the Colosseum, the Vatican, the Parthenon, and travels to many of these with Jonny on his trip to join me in Europe.

Solo Travel In Europe



## *John and Jonny DOING Italy*

I was in Rome advising the Pope on some unimportant issue that he was worrying about, and Jonny flew into Rome to meet me. As I recall he was short of time, I don't know why, so I rented a taxi for the day. We went first to the Colosseum, the taxi waited, we went inside and walked around, and we went down to the underside where the lions were kept and the gladiators. The Romans used this building to put on big shows to keep the masses satisfied.

Then we visited the Vatican but the line to get in was so long I said forget it. Then we went to St. Peter's Cathedral, and the square in front was full of people, so we edged our way around the crowd and forced our way inside. I remember the beautiful frescos that covered the wall and the ceiling. Then we went to the Acropolis, to the Parthenon, and we were impressed with how huge it was; the columns were enormous. There were pigeons everywhere and they were so impolite.

For dinner we went to a little Italian restaurant where we were greeted cordially by a little Italian guy (LTG) who seated us, and wine was brought to us in a carafe. They charge you by how much you use from the carafe. The food was good. By now it's late in the day and Jonny's flight back to the United States was that evening. I was concerned about the flight time, and so I took him to the local train to the airport and said good-by, after a wonderful, memorable experience.

Jonny, I would love to have your memories of that day.

## Thinking and Writing About the Past

Today I am looking at a document from the state of Alabama, Jackson Co., where Mr. S. M. Murphy and Miss Clarice Payne are given the right to celebrate the Rites of Matrimony signed by J. M. Money, Judge of Probate, 10th of October, 1929.

This afternoon we are reading Bobbie's book called *Rise and Shine*. It recalls her mother, Gladys, my mother's sister, and her fear of water when she was a child, and it reminds me that all the Payne sisters had that problem. Mother told the story of how she acquired that fear and I will repeat it here. When she was four years old she was told to take the horse to the lake for water. At the lake the horse kneeled down to reach the water and mother started sliding over his head into the water. I don't know if she actually went in or not, but the experience caused her to fear water for the rest of her life.

As told earlier, John Faro and his family had come from Portugal. John was a high school student looking for a place for his flock of sheep. Someone had suggested our ten acres in California. As you recall, he brought the sheep out and paid for his use of the pasture by doing \$17 worth of farm chores a month. After John's degree in agriculture, he decided on the priesthood and became an ordained priest.

## My Cousin Jim

As I have written about in these stories, we lived with the Montgomerys on Valley View Road when we first returned from Charleston. Jim was my cousin, two years older, and with his help I transferred from Charleston to Troop #14 in Knoxville and was made a patrol leader with eight new scouts just joining our troop. Jim at that time was a senior patrol leader and he and I hiked the Appalachian Trail with a number of younger boys on several occasions. Jim entered the Univ. of Tennessee majoring in history and eventually achieved his PhD. and joined the University of Virginia as Administrator.

Jim had served in the Army after graduation from University of Tennessee as a Second Lieutenant. Jim continued in the Army Reserves becoming a Major General. In November of 2016 Jim was inducted into the ROTC Hall of Fame. The notice of his induction was published in the Knoxville newspaper of November 3, 2016.

It read: "Maj. Gen. James R. Montgomery (1952). Montgomery served as Commanding General of the 310th Theater Area Command, Fort Belvoir, Va. He prepared the command at all CAPSTONE subordinate units (Active Component, U.S. Army Reserve National Guard) for the defense of Europe wartime mission. He served as director of the Institutional Research at both UT and Virginia Tech. He cofounded the (National) Association for Institutional Research (AIR), and helped to found the Southern Association of Industrial Research (SAIR) and the Virginia Association for Industrial Research. In 1994, at 66, Montgomery received his law degree and began practicing law."

An interesting story about my cousin Jim is that he was a licensed pilot, and on one of his flights from Blacksburg, Va., to the Pentagon, his airplane engine failed and

he crashed in an attempt to land on the freeway, landing instead on the back of a pickup. Jim, when you read this if you do, feel free to offer editorial improvements as long as it is limited to spelling and punctuation. I follow the rule that if it is 51% correct or greater, it's history.

The Three Rivers area and the Ramsey house outside Knoxville have history predating White's Fort and the city of Knoxville. In exploring the Three Rivers area, a local family, because of our interest in its history, offered us books from their cellar because I agreed to give them to the University of Tennessee through my cousin Jim. These books were ledgers of items of trade occurring on the river in earlier times.

Jim remains to this day one of my favorite friends, and we stay in touch as much as miles and time allow.

## *The Irish Pub*



On my serendipitous travels I was in Ireland but I don't know why, but I took a bus to see the surrounding communities. The bus driver was helpful, but at 11:00 pm he announced that this was where he stopped for the night, and I said, "But what do I do?"

He said, "Well, there is a pub across the street."

It was cold and I was underdressed as I always seem to be. So I went there and had an Irish whisky or two, and I said, "I need a place to stay."

The innkeeper said, "We have rooms upstairs if you don't mind the bed bugs."

So I stayed. In the morning I had some kind of an Irish breakfast which I think was good, but I don't remember much of it. And I re-boarded an early bus and returned to my hotel in Belfast.

That night in Belfast I dreamed of Stonehenge and the ancients who created it and I vowed to visit it again. The next day I departed for London. From there I took a tour bus for a tour of Stonehenge and the surrounding historical places of interest for the Roman baths and ruins. I vowed to return so I could fully appreciate this area, and I did as you will read in future stories.



## *Titan Rocket Models*

Today, Sharon and I were talking about many things, philosophy, history, and the weather. On the old cedar chest set three models of rockets that represented the technology to which I devoted so much of my time and energy over the years. My interest in rockets started in the 1930s at the age of five when I could see that the old boiler in the vacant lot down the street could be made into a rocket. Mother offered the owners of the lot and boiler all that she had, I think \$3, to buy it for me but they refused.

In Charleston, SC, a young girl across the street, whose dad was in the Civil Air Patrol, had some signal rockets in his garage. He had removed the pellets from the nose to use for fire works on the 4th of July. She gave me the rockets which I carried home and put in my dresser drawer. They were two and a half feet long. Mother found them and told me to get rid of them. So I took them to Boy Scout Camp and the Scout leaders thought it would be great to launch them one night when I showed them to them. We went out by the Mess Hall and I mounted them on a stick which I stuck in the ground to launch them, but made the mistake of putting the stick on top of the rocket so when it was fired it made a circle in the air and crashed back next to the Mess Hall and zipped around under the Mess Hall which was on stilts to keep out of the swampy area, and set it on fire. At that point I knew I had a career in rocketry, and it turned out to be true.

And so, many years later I am sitting in my living room in Denver talking to Sharon and looking at these models of rockets from MX to Titan III to Titan IV. These models were presented to me as I transitioned from one phase of my career to the next advanced stage.

The last model I received was an all-aluminum one in



Chuck Bowker and John at John's Retirement, March 3, 1993

1994. It was made by a machinist in our maintenance area at the direction of Mr. Carnahan, Director of Vandenberg Operations, for the purpose of giving them as gifts to VIPs including government VIPs, which becomes almost like bribery. One evening I received a call from our machinist who lived in the valley below my Cambridge Way house saying that the FBI was there threatening him. I jumped in my car and drove down to his house advising him to say nothing and that my lawyers were on the way. The government people departed, stating that "You have not heard the last of this issue," and invoking the name of J. Edgar Hoover. The FBI had come looking for the models to justify legal action and confiscation of the models. Only three people that I knew of knew where the models were. Chuck Bowker, my close friend and assistant, would not tell me where they were in order to protect me from involvement.

Sharon tells me that we have not talked about Chuck Bowker, so now I must tell about Chuck and his wife Nancy, and how without his help, so much of what I am given credit for in my career would not have occurred. Chuck started out in the Coast Guard, transitioned to a career in the Air Force; he was assigned to the Air Force Test Wing at Van-



denberg. When I was a test conductor out at the Air Force launch site, it was difficult to do our job because some Air Force personnel resented contractors. Chuck was a facilitator who worked to resolve these issues. When he came up for retirement I resolved to bring him in to our team, and I did. We hit it off immediately.

Chuck's family had owned oyster beds in the Chesapeake Bay and for family reasons he wanted to return to help with the oyster harvests. So he left Martin Marietta to go to the family business. The irony of it is that he hated oysters, but he would give them to everyone that came to visit. Later, when I was working for MX, I went to him and got him to come back to work to help me with his influence in the Air Force to counter the Boeing Company's attempt to take away some of our contracts. He was successful and then went back to the family business at the time I went to Denver.

## *The Old Road to Cade's Cove*



The old road led from just outside Townsend, up through the mountains, over and down a twisting, washed-out, muddy road into the Cove. My first trip to the Cove was on this road with a group of Boy Scouts and adult leaders to spend a few days exploring the Cove. At that time the Cove was still occupied by descendants of the original settlers who by law were allowed to remain as long as the line of descendants was maintained.

A year or so later, a new road to Cade's Cove was started from a point at a location called the "Y," where three rivers came together. At this time the Cove became more accessible and was the destination of many of our hikes and camping trips. We could stay in the campground and hike 2.2 miles to Abram's Falls and swim in the lake there, or hike up to the Appalachian Trail, about six miles.

Every time we had a family reunion in Townsend, I would get up early, take anybody with me that wanted to go, and drive up the new road to the "Y" and be at the entrance to the Cove by 5:00 am, and drive the loop through the Cove before the crowds, and the deer or bear were out and about. We would return to Townsend in time for the family breakfast.

## *John Sevier, Governor of “Franklin”*



News today is full of the tragic story of Gatlinburg and surrounding area being burned by the terrible forest fires. At this time it is reported that 22 people have been killed and many injured and hundreds of homes destroyed. (Dec. 2016) Today they have determined that two teenage boys are responsible for setting the fire.

Dolly Parton has set up a fund and a program to help those who have lost their homes. It is only the latest of the many things that she has done with her wealth to help the people of Sevier County and Knoxville from which her fame and wealth originated. I first met Dolly when she was a little girl singer at the Cas Walker store. I worked in the stock room, a skinny little boy with buck teeth that nobody paid any attention to. She was a star but she was as insecure and uncertain of herself as I was. Between shows on the Cas Walker radio network which were broadcast from his store, she and I would share our problems and concerns.

Cas Walker was very good, he had a lot of money compared to East Tennessee people. He would give jobs to people without a lot of consideration of who you were. If you were a kid that needed a job or a woman without a job, he would let you bag groceries, and help around the store. His stores made a lot of money, but they were run-down, not organized. If he got a truck load of potatoes, he would put them out, but you had to bag them yourselves at a lower price than downtown stores. He might bag them himself for you if you needed help. That was Cas Walker.

A little money went a long way if you did not own a car or a house, with all the costs of that ownership. In spite of

that in those days, we all aspired to own our own home and to have the independence of a car to drive. When we first moved to Knoxville we lived with our relatives, the Montgomerys, on Valley View Rd. However, as soon as we could find a place of our own we moved to our own new home.

I want to clarify what I meant when I said I was a skinny, insecure kid. Insecurity creates defense mechanisms, and defense mechanisms create stress; and those can be great benefits in dealing with the challenges of life. So much of life in our accomplishments results from these benefits of insecurity and the stress created by it. An example of that would be an old man sitting, trying to justify his life, his mistakes of which there are many, by dictating to a talented lady stupid stories from his limited and distorted memory.

John Sevier was an early pioneer east of the Appalachians and led many pilgrims into the land. He is one of the great heroes in Tennessee and his statue stands in front of the courthouse in Knoxville. His life and his contribution deserve an additional story.

## Where There Is Life There is Hope



In Charleston I attended James Simons School through the 6th grade. In those days there were no school buses, so I walked to and from our home on Ashley Ave., and on the way home I passed an old fashioned grocery store which had everything including books and magazines. I saw a book called *Where There's Life There's Hope*, by Bob Hope and it cost 50 cents. I saved my lunch money and one day bought it. It was a large paperback, as I recall, bigger than *Time Magazine* but smaller than *Life*.

I searched for that book without success. On the Internet I found *They Got Me Covered*, by Bob Hope, copyright 1941, and I bought a copy for \$4.95. But I could not find what I thought was the original book title.

Why, at the age of 11, a poor simple minded kid, would I have spent my lunch money on a book about Bob Hope? Fifty cents would have bought five school lunches; so to have done that just to buy this book, there must have been a pretty good reason. I went there every day to that little store, so it was not a whim or careless purchase. I must have heard him on the radio or seen an old movie that I no longer have any memory of, and wanted to learn more about him through the book that caught my eye.

Many years later, Tricia and I attended the Air Force Ball in Los Angeles each year as a guest of the Air Force. Bob Hope was always a guest of honor along with Secretary of Defense, Secretary of the Air Force and so on. It was a big Air Force event and I have written about it in "How Reagan and I Saved the World."

## Breakfast with Stephanie



Once upon a time while travelling in Rome with Kathy, Jeff, Joshua as a little baby, and Stephanie, we stayed in a hotel across the street from a coffee shop. Needing my morning cup of coffee, I awakened early, as did Stephanie, and so together we exited the hotel and crossed the street for a cup. At that time Stephanie did not drink coffee, but I bought her a cup anyway as European coffees are mostly cream and sugar. I had mine black, basically a triple espresso in a coffee cup, and we had a chance to talk, which I greatly value to this day.

Kathy and Jeff were committed to experiencing Europe even though Jeff had to work during the week. On Friday afternoon they would pack up the kids, and we would all go somewhere on an adventure. I remember Paris, Vienna, and Venice, I think.

Kathy and Jeff were dedicated to seeing Paris with the kids, so on a Friday afternoon we boarded a train to Paris. Kathy pushed the stroller and Stephanie was running ahead and I was trying to keep up. In Paris there were a lot of stairs, but Jeff and Kathy with their kids did not seem to be slowed down by any of them, but I had trouble keeping up. Right there was an example of the generation gap.

## *A New Watch for John*

Last week Pete Colangelo, an old friend and handyman, stopped by at #216, and I asked him to refinish my deck overlooking the golf course. He said he would, and a few days later, because of a string of good days' weather in the middle of March, he came by and started the job. I had cleared the deck of all furniture and given him the old gas grill and the round patio table, which he carried away. He did the whole thing in one day, but under strict orders I could not put anything back up on the deck for two days.

I had thought I would give him a watch as a gift, in addition to paying for the job of the deck on the first floor and the smaller deck off the master bedroom on the second floor. I ordered a nice watch on-line and when I received it I tried it on for size. Pete, who had promised he would be by on Friday or Saturday when the deck was thoroughly dry, never showed up. I began to get worried about him by the next Tuesday. However, by that time I had become very fond of the watch and decided to keep it for myself, especially after I called Pete and discovered he was okay, but seemed not to have remembered that he was supposed to show up much earlier.

## *Tricia and I Adventuring Together*

Tricia was my life-long partner and joined me on my adventures wherever they led us: to Europe and the Middle East, on the *Tehamana*, sailing on the open sea or scuba diving or snorkeling under the seas, to Peru and the Rain Forest Project, and to Hawaii. She also shared the excitement of observing several rockets being launched by my programs.

Tricia was an open and friendly person, whereas I was reserved under new, non-business related matters. So she was able to create friendships with many people. Our travels were enriched by her, by our loving life-long relationship.

John and Tricia Scuba Diving in the Tropics



## *The Last Page*



As in life, the last page can be varied and exciting as one approaches what one might call the final page, and this page may be written by others. The last page should be hopeful and ongoing. Until you hear otherwise, this is the last page.



