# Written In Stone

## The Life and Times of Louis (Lou) Stone

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# Prologue

The motivation to write this autobiography came in two different forces. The first force was from my three children: Charlotte, Beth, and Les. Their entire lives have been filled with me telling them stories about my experiences, ranging from my early childhood until the present time. The second force was my own self- interest in recalling the events that had spanned my lifetime. This lifetime spanned a period from when I recall seeing horse-drawn wagons delivering ice on the streets of Orlando up to the present time when a rocket delivered men to the moon and everyone has a personal computer and a cell phone. As Tom Brokaw wrote in his book, it was the era of the “Greatest Generation“.

In writing this autobiography, I have attempted to organize it into phases of my life, rather than time periods. Since many of these phrases overlap, there will be many instances of where you will read of the same event. This is inevitable since the same events overlap in different phases of my life. This occurs more frequently in the middle periods of my life, rather than at the beginning and at the end. This is only natural, since the middle part of one's life is the most active.

It was never my intent to record anything in this autobiography that was not as I perceived it to be. If there are any untruths in this writing, it is because of my perception, rather than any effort to make things appear different than what they really were. There also may be slight differences in details of the same events in different phases of the story. These can be attributed to the frailties of memory of someone more than 85 years old attempting to recall events of almost that many years ago. I have not included many experiences and events in my life. As I spent time recalling the past, I edited out those times I considered unpleasant or irrelevant to this book.

This autobiography is available to any and all who want to learn more about me and my life and the times and events that shaped it.

# Early Years

I will begin my autobiography with a short genealogy of my family. My father's family migrated to Florida from Lumberton, North Carolina. They lived in Alachua, Florida, which is near Gainesville, on the site of a turpentine distilling operation. I do not know how long they had lived there when my father was born in 1902. His siblings consisted of one sister and three brothers. The oldest was Hattie, the only girl. Next was Hector, then Dad (Landis), followed by Clarence, and then Dewey.

Dad's father, my grandfather, was a foreman on the turpentine "still". The turpentine still operations were migratory, following the pine forests throughout the South. The sap from the pine trees was collected from the trunks of the trees where slashes were cut in the bark, allowing the sap to drain into clay pots. These pots were similar to clay flowerpots, except they had no holes in the bottom. The slashes were in the shape of a "V" with a leg length of about 12 inches. The bottom slash had two metal parts nailed under each leg of the V, which directed the sap into the clay pots. Workers would go through the forest, collect this sap in the clay pots, and transport it to the stills. "Still" is a slang word for the device that would distill the sap. The sap was boiled in the still and the vapors would be condensed, resulting in turpentine. There was a gummy residual matter formed in the process, which was called resin. Resin was used in many ways, but mainly to secure waterproof joints in sailing vessels. Thus, these products were called "naval" stores. At that time, there was a huge market for both turpentine and resin.

As a young boy, I can recall Dad telling us about his life as a lad growing up on the turpentine still. All of the workers were black. The white families were actually the minority group on the stills. My favorite story was one in which he told about going on a horseback trip with his father one day to inspect the area. During the trip, they came upon a house in which one of the black families lived. Going into the house, which was customary, they found no one home. However, they did find a hot meal on the stove. They then served themselves some of the food. Dad commented that this was probably one of the best meals of his youth. The food was possum and sweet taters, which was a classic meal for the black workers.

Another favorite story, although sad, was the occasion in which Dad's brother Dewey (Uncle Dewey) was blinded in one eye. As an infant, probably between one and three years old, Dewey would integrate himself with the older children while at play. One time, Hector (Uncle Heck) was playing with a drawn top. A drawn top was a toy, which was pear-shaped with a metal point on one end on which it would spin. To get it spinning involved wrapping a cord around the base

of the top and throwing it down, while jerking the cord away from the top. The spinning top would fly through the air and continue spinning on the ground where it landed. Unfortunately, in one of these throws, the top ricocheted, and the spinning pointed end hit Dewey in the eye. With no medical care possible, the only alternative was to try to make him comfortable. I recall Dad telling me that the primary means of comforting him was riding him on a railroad service vehicle. This vehicle was propelled on the narrow gauge railroad by two people pumping handles up and down similar to the action of a see-saw. Dewey lost sight in that eye. It was ultimately removed and replaced with an artificial one in the early years of his manhood.

Gramma Stone

The only story I remember about Uncle Heck was Dad telling about him being the family bully, always intimidating the other male siblings. Hattie (Aunt Hattie), being female and the oldest, was not intimidated by Heck. I guess the bully stories about Heck subtly created in me distant feelings about him for the rest of my life. I feel sure that Dad's favorite brother was Clarence, who became police chief in Orlando. All the boys revered and honored their only sister, Hattie. I was also very fond of my Aunt Hattie and looked upon her as a sort of second mother. All of Dad's siblings lived nearby in Orlando, and we visited with them regularly.

As for my grandparents, the only one which was still alive during my youth was my dad's mother, Grandma Stone. She lived in Orlando also, and visiting her was like going to see the Grand Old Dame. Her

relationship with her grandchildren was nothing like the relationship that most children enjoy with their grandparents today. I will never forget the fact that she dipped snuff. She always had a container beside her in which to spit. That was a requirement of dipping snuff. Whereas men would smoke or chew tobacco, it was not uncommon for women to "dip". On rare occasions, when she would visit us, we had to have a spittoon, usually a coffee can, available for her. I can vividly remember that the one she used in her home was white enamel, with a removable lid. At Christmastime, we children would pool our money and purchase a couple of cans of Buttercup Snuff for her.

I was born in Orlando, June 4, 1924, six years after the end of World War I and five years before the stock market crash of 1929 which marked the beginning of the Great Depression era. The Depression continued unabated until the impact of World War II and colored many aspects of my "growing up" years.

Lou as 1 year old infant

In those days, Orlando was a small town with a population of about 20,000 residents. It was known as the "City Beautiful" and was proud of the fact that there were thirty-two lakes within its city limits. The economy centered on two things: the citrus industry and winter tourism. Adjacent to Orlando was the town of Winter Park, the mecca of sophisticated winter tourism in Central Florida. Its many wealthy tourists were responsible for building most of the beautiful homes still existing around the chain of lakes in Winter Park. I mention Winter Park because during my youth my dad

managed the Bumby Hardware Store in downtown Winter Park. I would accompany him to work sometimes as a boy, and I later worked there in the summers during my teenage years.

Lifestyles were simple then. Indoor plumbing and electricity were not found in every household. Where indoor plumbing was installed, the sanitary systems were served by septic tanks, since municipal sewer systems were not very widespread. I remember helping my dad rebuild our septic system several times at our Conroy house. Electricity was used only for indoor lighting in the residences circa 1924. The common method of cooking was by either kerosene or wood stoves. An artificial gas distribution system had been built in Orlando, and gas stoves were beginning to appear. My first recollection of a kitchen stove at our residence on Conroy Avenue was a gas stove. The gas plant was located on West Robinson Avenue, just behind where the Omni Hotel at Expo Center is now located. This artificial gas service continued in the greater Orlando area until natural gas arrived in Central Florida in the early 1960's.

We had no hot water, except what we heated on top of the stove. During cold weather, a large pot of water was heated on the stove and then carried into the bathroom where it was poured into the bathtub. This took the chill out, and that is about all it accomplished. Our first hot water heater was a gas sidearm heater. It had no controls; you just lit it when you knew you were going to need hot water. This was a great advancement in improving our lifestyle! Soon thereafter, Dad installed a heating element into our wood-fueled heating system. This provided us with hot water as a side benefit from space heating in the winter. Later, Dad had a plumber friend build us a solar hot water heater. This was in the mid 1930's, evidence that solar heating is not a modern idea. Whereas now it is looked upon as an environmental saving, Dad's motivation was purely for financial saving. One of my chores as a boy was to drain the heater on a winter night when freezing temperatures were forecast. The solar water heater worked well and lasted until after Ken and I returned from World War II, and I am sure the old sidearm heater was also still working at that time.

Block ice, which was home delivered on residential routes, was the common method of refrigeration. It was kept in our "icebox". Our first electric refrigerator was a Norge, which appeared on the scene in about 1936. It was a used unit, which Dad bought from a friend who had an electric shop in Winter Park. It did not work at first, and I can remember the grief Mother gave Dad on making the deal. Ultimately, it was repaired and became a source of pride and joy for Mother, but I do not think she ever admitted that to Dad.

Telephones were available, and we had a telephone at our house on Conroy Avenue. Our phone number was 4340 until Orlando started adding exchanges after the war. In fact, Orlando was sophisticated enough to have a dial system, but party lines were common. You received a distinct ring for your number. When you wanted to use the phone, you picked it up and listened to see if it was

being used by another party. We had a four party line for many years. Just before I went into the army, we got a private line. Price was the primary consideration, rather than facilities, although the reverse was true after the war, when Helen and I were first married.

Automobiles were becoming the primary means of transportation in the 1920's, although horses were still being used for some delivery purposes. The only horses I can remember seeing were used by the ice wagons which delivered in the downtown Orlando area.

There was one radio station in Orlando, WDBO, which originally started operations at Rollins College. The station letters were identified as "Way Down By Orlando". Only a few families had the capability to listen to stations, which came from such points as Pittsburgh or Cincinnati, and the quality was such that you could only understand a portion of what was being broadcast. Uncle Heck was one of the few with the technical expertise and interest to have a radio. It was at his house that I remember hearing my first scratchy, static-filled radio program. I have no recollection of what it was. It was analogous to us in the early days of television in Orlando, in the 1950's, trying to receive a fuzzy program coming out of Jacksonville.

Radio developed and became the most popular home entertainment. As a boy, I recall Dad demanding quietness during the "Amos and Andy" show. It was broadcast at 7:00 pm. This was about our dinner (supper to us) time since Dad worked until 6:00 pm at Bumby's in Winter Park. "Amos and Andy" was followed by "Lum and Abner". There were no networks then, and we received the shows from WLW in Cincinnati, Ohio. This was known as the Crosley station, one of the most powerful stations in the country. There were many early radio programs that originated there that are now considered classics and contributed to the culture of our country at that time. Will Rogers was one of the most popular entertainer-philosophers until his premature death in a plane crash with Wiley Post near Nome, Alaska in the mid 1930's. He had a weekly radio show, as well as a newspaper column. His death was a great loss to grassroots America. The newspaper "Extra" published on the day of Will Rogers' death was found in Grandma Stone's personal effects after her death. This is a manifestation of how Rogers' death affected the common American.

Since newspapers were the primary source of news in those days, when an event of national significance occurred, an "extra" edition was published and released with the late breaking news. The extras were not distributed through the regular routes but sold from the streets at key locations. I can recall a few other extras during my youth. They were: the conviction of the Lindbergh kidnapper; the crash of the Hindenburg zeppelin; the national elections in 1932 and 1936; and the Pearl Harbor attack by the Japanese in 1941. The wire services of AP (Associated Press) and UP (United Press) were the main disseminators of news, and this was done on Teletype systems. Generally, the

newspaper offices were the only place where these teletype machines were located. As radio developed and news broadcasting became a part of its business, they also installed the teletype machines.

It is also worth noting that, at that time, Orlando published two daily newspapers. The morning edition was called the Orlando Morning Sentinel, and the one published in the afternoon was called the Orlando Reporter Star. My family subscribed to the afternoon edition, because there was never enough time in the morning for anyone to read the paper. It was a common practice for my mother and father to read the paper after they had retired to bed. The next morning, the paper could always be found scattered on the floor next to their bed.

My first memory of anything specific during my early years was the birth of my brother Jimmy. I had just had my fifth birthday. I can remember going to stay with Aunt Hattie and Uncle Gus. They then lived on Greenwood Avenue, just a block from where is now the entrance to the Greenwood Cemetery. I had also stayed with them during Ken's birth, but I do not remember that months old when Ken was born. Births at that time occurred in the home, attended by a midwife or the family doctor. My mother was attended at all her births by her family doctor, Dr. James A Ford. The "James" was the origin of Jimmy's name. On one of my visits to see the new baby with Uncle Gus and Aunt Hattie, I tugged on Uncle Gus after a while and said, "Let's go home". When Dad heard that, my stay with Aunt Hattie and Uncle Gus ended.

Aunt Hattie and Uncle Gus
Circa 1940

I am sure that it was during this stage of my life that I developed the bonds with Aunt Hattie and Uncle Gus that survived until their deaths. In fact, Aunt Hattie

named me as executor (now called personal representative) of her will. It was during this process that I developed a closer relationship with Dahlia, Aunt Hattie's daughter, and J.C., Uncle Clarence's son, a lawyer and prior county judge who handled all the legal aspects of the probate.

As a young boy, I began going to work with Dad on Thursdays. Thursday was chosen, because in those days it was the day of the week that many businesses closed for a half day. I helped Dad load his supplies at Bumby's in Orlando and unload them at the Winter Park store. Living in south Orlando made it convenient for him to be the re-supply carrier, bringing the supplies from the Orlando store to Winter Park.

One thing I can remember is that Dad always carried some type of small advertising book, about 2" x 4", in his rear pocket. It would contain the merchandise list which he was to pick up at the Orlando store. When he would load his truck in Orlando, he would scratch off the items he had picked up and charge them out to the Winter Park store. It was during those charges that I deciphered the cost code for Bumby's merchandise. Those that remained in his book would be the items he would order from salesmen who called on him in Winter Park. Dad was known for his terrible handwriting. His notebook of wanted items looked like a scratchy mess. I remember on a few occasions he forgot his book and called Mother to read off the items in the book over the phone. She could only interpret about half of them, and some of what was left Dad could decipher by clues from one or two letters. The remainder would go unfilled until the next day. After I had spent a few years as a handyman at the store, I learned his jargon and was used as the interpreter.

One of my chores was to sweep the concrete floors of the store from stem to stern using the "dust down". This "dust down" was nothing more than sawdust in which a small amount of oil had been added to control the dust. I continued to work in the store after my army service and while attending Rollins College. In fact, I was working part time there when I accepted the job with Orlando Utilities. I even worked part time at Dad's hardware store after he opened his own hardware business, and I served as his bookkeeper until we moved to Indian River City in 1960. The exposure at Bumby's during my formative years was a valuable experience for me. It developed my understanding of human nature, ethics, business procedures, and many other disciplines needed in life.

During the Depression, which occurred during the early part of my life up until the start of World War II, recreational activities were limited, due to the economy of the country. One of the major recreational activities of the middle-income class during that period was the game of softball. In those days, it was called "diamond ball" due to the diamond shape of the bases. My father was one of the leaders of that activity in Central Florida. All of the softball games in Winter Park were played at Harper-Shepherd Field, now the home of Rollins College baseball. Dad was the playing manager for the team sponsored by Bumby

Hardware in the Winter Park league. In softball, the manager is the “king bee”. He makes all the decisions regarding the fielding of the softball team. Dad also served as coach when the team was at bat and as the third base coach when they were in the field. I remember one of our perennial competitors was Lakemont Dairy. Our team won many league championships.

As a boy, I spent a lot of time at Harper-Shepherd Field. Originally, I was the “batboy” for the team. That job involved removing the bats when our team batter got on base by either hitting the ball or being walked. It is a position that all teams utilize, even in the major leagues today. The job also involved being the “gopher”, primarily for the manager but also for the team in general. It was an active and ubiquitous job. All batboys were dressed in the same uniforms as the rest of their team. As I became older, this honorable job was passed on to my siblings, Ken and then Jim. I then became a spectator, sitting in the stands with those from the neighborhood who accompanied us to the games. There was no charge for spectators to come to the city league games. There would only be an admission charge for special events, such as traveling team exhibitions or national team champion exhibitions. The commitment of the community to support the teams was overwhelming. At the end of the season, teams vying for a playoff spot would draw “standing room only” crowds.

Mom at clothesline

In the early days of softball in Winter Park, the standard uniform consisted of white cotton duck pants and a jersey, which identified the sponsor. The jersey was purchased by the sponsor, but the white duck pants were provided by the individual. It was the individual’s responsibility to have his uniform clean for each game. I can remember my mother’s commitment to having a clean, starched, and ironed pair of white trousers for Dad for each game. And this was before the days of our family having a washing machine. Mother spent countless hours making sure that Dad’s uniform was spotless. There were many superstitions about cleaning the uniforms. The most challenging one would not allow the cleaning of the uniforms when the team was on a winning streak. I remember this as being a point of conflict between my parents on many occasions.

One of my mother's favorite expressions was, "Cleanliness is next to godliness". All during the Depression, she never violated her detail to cleanliness. She often said that maybe her boys would wear the same outfits to school over and over, but they would always be clean. Another one of her sayings was that, "My boys look good in blue". She said that because if we were not in blue, we were nude. One of my early childhood memories is that of seeing my mother washing clothes using a hand scrub board, then two rinse tubs, one which contained "bluing", starching certain pieces, wringing them out, and finally hanging them to dry on an outdoor clothes line. All of this happened after the clothes had first been boiled in a large open flame wash pot.

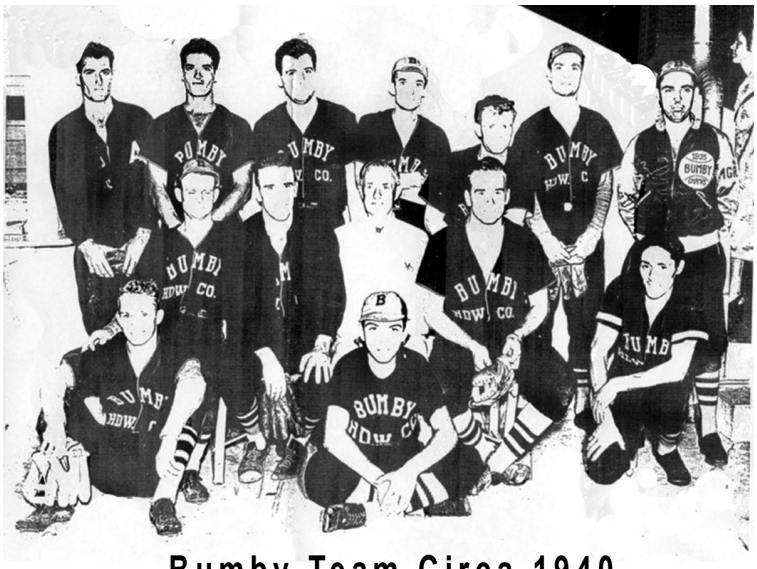
When I was old enough, one of my chores was to make sure that adequate firewood was available for the wash pot. This was not too difficult, due to the fact that my dad would bring home wooden boxes from the hardware store. In those days, most shipments came into the store in wooden crates. All of the washtubs were located on a wooden bench, which was shielded by the garage overhang. A dramatic improvement occurred when the tubs on the bench were replaced by two tubs coupled together on a roller stand. This did, however, create some confusion, due to the fact that the tubs on the stand were square in shape and had drain hoses for emptying. The other tubs had been round and sat on wooden benches. This was the first change in Mother's washing history.

The next change came about when Mother got a "modern" wringer washing machine. This machine changed the way clothes were handled during the scrubbing stage and when they were wrung out in the rinse water. Due to the agitation of the washer, it also eliminated boiling all but the dirtiest clothes. Improvements in detergents were also being made. The effect on me was only that I had less wood to prepare during the boiling process. Clothes were washed in the agitated washer and then passed through rollers to the rinse water. Two hand rinses were still required, as well as starching for those clothes that required it. The clothes still had to be hung out to dry.

Eventually the big breakthrough came with the invention of the automatic washing machine, which eliminated the rinsing. And then along came the automatic dryer. Along with this evolution came better detergents and, just as important, the development of new materials for clothing, which eliminated a lot of the old problems associated with the care of one's wearing apparel. Even in her later years, Mother had the reputation of being very focused on keeping up with her laundry. It was well known that if a garment was left lying around her house, don't bother to look for it. It would have already gone into the laundry process.

Going back to my discussion of our softball days, the sport grew in popularity in Winter Park, and also in Orlando. The city of Orlando built a softball stadium at

what is now known as Expo Park. The stadium was named the C. L. Varner Stadium, in honor of a long time recreational advocate in the city of Orlando. Clarence Varner was the individual who introduced tennis to the city of Orlando. The city facilities at Expo Park contained both the softball field and multiple tennis courts. The Orlando and Winter Park softball programs ran concurrently for many years, although it was generally recognized that the better players were a part of the Orlando league.



**Bumby Team Circa 1940**

After a while, undercurrents began to surface that maybe some of the teams in Winter Park might be competitive with the teams in Orlando. I was not privy to the details, but somehow Dad was able to convince Bumby's that they should sponsor a team in Orlando. The little "Raggedy Andy" softball team from Winter Park now was in the big league. Whereas, in Winter Park only upper jerseys and caps were furnished, the players in Orlando were furnished with the complete uniforms, including stockings. The team continued to be managed by Dad. This visibility significantly enhanced the sale of sporting goods by Dad, who was the only sporting goods salesman for Bumby's. Prior to that time, most of his sporting goods sales were to Rollins College. As things developed, his primary competitor in business became Denmark Sporting Goods, who also became their prime adversary on the softball field.

Softball flourished in Orlando and became one of the leading spectator sports in the city. One of the interesting historical notes is that during World War II, the Orlando Air Base had a team in the City of Orlando league. They became a powerhouse, since many of the able-bodied men from other teams had entered the military service. It is also a matter of history that many of the former Air Force Base veterans returned to Orlando after the war and became part of its growth.

Dad's contribution to the growth of softball in Orlando was later recognized. After the war and the return of the local veterans, softball continued to grow in all areas. There were many levels of play, with softball fields springing up in all areas of the city. Many of these fields were named after those individuals who had contributed to the growth of softball in the city. One of them was named the

Landis Stone field, after my father. As I remember, the field was located at the Grand Avenue school where my two brothers and I had attended grammar school.

Later on in life, softball played an integral part in my history at Orlando Utilities Commission (OUC). Shortly after I became employed in July of 1949, OUC joined an industrial league. They had previously employed "Runt" Waller, who had played softball for my dad in Winter Park. They were looking for a catcher to play opposite Runt. I turned out to be just what they were looking for. Softball got my career off to a good start at OUC, in that it provided me the exposure I needed to be noticed. Before too long, I was known by many people who were interested in OUC's softball success. This exposure created an atmosphere which allowed me to be satisfactorily employed by OUC for forty years, attaining the position of Assistant General Manager.

Orlando was just a small community during my youth and teenage years. In the 1930's, there was no I-4, no Mills Avenue, no OBT, and no Highway 50 through Orlando. Colonial Drive stopped at what is now the OBT (Orange Blossom Trail). Colonialtown was the center of commerce for the northeast portion of Orlando. My mother's sister Esther lived on a street in that area called Mount Vernon. I can recall that I learned to ride a bicycle on a hill near her house, which was one block west of Hillcrest Elementary School. I learned to ride by first coasting down the hill and learning to keep my balance.

I don't remember the year, but Aunt Esther and her family moved from that location to East Central Boulevard, near the airport. The airport was within walking distance of their house. In the late 1930's, a flight of B-17's landed at the airport. I can remember looking through the chain link fence at these gigantic aircraft. We all know that this plane later made a name for itself in the 8th Air Force in Europe and is one of the weapons credited with winning World War II. I had always had an interest in aviation, and seeing these planes served to further whet my appetite for flying. I was committed to entering the Army Air Force at the beginning of World War II, but my freshman year in college placed such a strain on my eyes that I was unable to pass the physical when the time came. In retrospect, it is my conclusion that there were so many volunteers for the Army Air Force at that time, I believe they were looking for any excuse to eliminate the volunteers. I had to put my flying interest on hold until I was almost fifty years old. Learning to fly at that age became the hobby that dominated my leisure time after that.

One thing I can remember about my childhood and until I went into service is the fact that we were never without chickens. I guess it is because of this that Mother was known by family and friends as being the finest fried chicken cook around. A fried chicken meal did not require any special occasion at our house. We had it many times a week. In addition, we had chicken in all forms that southern cooking provided. Dad's favorite chicken dish was chicken and dumplings. Mother always

made sheet dumplings rather than the now common drop dumpling. By sheet dumplings, I mean that she would make up her dumpling dough and roll it out on a flat table, as you would a piecrust. Then she would cut the sheet into strips about two inches wide, section the strips, and then drop them into the simmering chicken broth, which was filled with a lot of chicken meat and plenty of fat. Where all these chickens came from is a story in itself.

During the Depression, President Roosevelt (F.D.R) was elected on a platform of Depression recovery. He initiated the first in many governmental programs that Lyndon Johnson referred to as the Great Society. In reality, they were social welfare programs that form the basis of our socialist society in America today. It was in these turbulent times in the world that Adolph Hitler obtained his strength and power. One of Roosevelt's programs was the National Recovery Act, commonly called the NRA. It was used for a lot of infrastructure building, but its main purpose was to provide jobs. These jobs paid one dollar a day. The NRA was ultimately declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, but it had left its mark on American politics. I don't know the issue on which the NRA was invalidated. I only mention these social and political issues to set the stage for us having chickens during my youth.

Survival during the Depression was a struggle but very few complained. They did what they had to do to survive and raise a family. Raising chickens for eggs and food was a common undertaking. Baby chickens (biddies) were sold at many seed and feed stores, including Bumby's, but many people chose to order their biddies from hatcheries. The unit price was less, but when one considered the shipping charges and, even more profound, death to the day old biddies in shipment, it was probably a washout. In any event, many people ordered their chickens from the hatchery, C.O.D (cash on delivery) parcel post. On many occasions, the shipments were refused at the post office by the addressee due to lack of money or, in some cases, the large number of deaths in the shipment.

Shipments were made in a three-foot square carton, about eight inches high, partitioned into four quadrants with twenty-five in a quadrant, for a total of 100 chickens per shipment. Since the post office was not in the business of raising chickens, they had to do what they could to salvage, as much as possible, the cost of the postage and the cost of the chickens. Their means for doing that was by taking bids from the public who had stated their interest in obtaining chickens. Dad was on this list. In addition to being on the list, one of his closest friends was Gerard (“Jiggs“) Denning, the Postmaster. His name is still honored by having a street in Winter Park named after him.

The procedure was for the post office to call or contact those on the list and inform them that they were taking bids for a shipment of chickens. They generally set a deadline of 12:00 noon on the day of the bids. This was usually the same day as the refusal by the addressee, so the notification would generally be made around 9:00 am. This gave about three hours for those interested to examine the

chickens and submit their bid. If Dad was interested, he would go to the post office, about a half block away, examine the chickens and withhold submitting his bid. A short time before closing bid time, he would contact Denning. Denning would tell him what he should bid if he wanted the chickens. Depending on many factors, such as the chicken's health, the price, how many we had at home and other variables, Dad would decide whether he wanted to bid the necessary price. I am sure that sometimes he submitted a low bid just to keep things looking okay. In any event, when he was notified of his successful bid, he would call Mother and tell her to get the brooders ready, because he was coming home with a load of biddies.

I remember one particularly cold winter night when Dad arrived with a box of chickens. There were probably at least seventy-five three day old biddies. I make this estimate because they were generally shipped in lots of one hundred, and Dad would not bid on a lot in which many had died. His logic was that if many had died, the survivors could not be in very good shape either. It was too cold that night to put the brooders outside. They ended up under the bed that Ken and I shared. Light bulbs were placed in some coffee cans inside the brooders to be used as heat. Of course, you always had food and water available for them. You can imagine the noise of this many biddies cheeping and chirping all night under the bed in which we were trying to sleep. It is no wonder that I remember that experience more than seventy years later.

After a period in the brooders, they were ready for the chicken yard. We had several pens in the yard to separate the chickens by size and, in some instances, by variety. It was amazing how certain varieties were natural enemies with other varieties and would constantly fight with each other. They were also separated by those which were for eating only and those which were saved as egg producers. There was a certain size to which the chicks had to grow before they were ready for the frying pan, pot, or roaster.

The chicken yard also had a chicken coupe where the chickens roosted at night. It contained rungs across the inside at sloping heights and was slatted on the sides for ventilation. As dusk began to fall, it was amazing to watch them slowly migrate to the coupe and pick out a spot on one of the rungs in the coupe. By dark, not a chicken was seen anywhere. They were all settled down for the night inside the coupe. The bottom of the coupe in our pen was covered with galvanized sheet metal. This would catch the manure droppings and allow for cleaning, which was usually done on a weekly basis. This manure was our private source of fertilizer. I don't recall ever using commercial fertilizer until I was married and had my own yard, without chickens.

A mulberry bush and several castor bean trees were also in the chicken yard. The castor bean trees were for the prevention of fleas and chicken mites. I don't know if this was effective, but everyone I knew that had chickens also had castor bean trees in the chicken yard. They produced a cluster of green berries which were

spiny, but the spines were tender and didn't prick. They would eventually dry up and leave a hard bean about the size of a large peanut. These dried beans would then be used for producing castor oil. We never tried to harvest any of ours and produce our own castor oil. Also in the yard was our alligator pen. Yes, an alligator pen in the chicken yard. Maybe a little explanation is in order.

During those years, there was considerable interest by the winter tourists in purchasing small baby alligators and having them shipped back to their friends and family in the north. Dad saw this as an opportunity to make some added income. There were no rules governing the capture and sale of alligators at that time, nor were there any rules or regulations regarding their shipment. These baby gators were about ten to twelve inches in length. The primary source for these baby gators, for sellers like Dad, was young black boys who robbed gator nests and sold them. This was one of their means of survival. They would generally stalk a female gator and learn her nest location. They would then wait for the hatch. Alligators lay eggs in a mulch nest, and the eggs hatch after a period of incubation, like any other egg.

One of the miracles of nature is that the ratio of males versus females is controlled by the temperature of the incubation. Nature instills into the female how this balance in nature is doing. The female then adjusts the amount of mulch cover over the eggs in her nest, therefore adjusting the incubation temperature, which predetermines the male/female ratio of the hatchlings. This little bit of information adds no weight to my story but was reinforced when I visited the Grand Cayman Islands on one of my Mooney flights. I visited a turtle farm there and found that sea turtles use the same method of controlling the ratio. They do it by the burial depth of their eggs in the sunny sand. I don't know what the ratio is for gators, but at Grand Cayman they told us that the turtle ratio should be about one male per four females.

Now back to my story. The going price of the baby gators to the resellers like Dad depended on many variables, but all related to the fundamental economic principle of supply and demand. Dad usually paid something in the range of ten to twenty-five cents. He would generally buy them in lots of twenty-five to fifty and put them in a small pen behind the store at Bumby's in Winter Park. The pen was fenced with a small pool for them to swim in. The pool was generally a buried garbage can lid or some similar pan. He would place a sign in the Bumby front display window telling of their "For Sale" status. The price was $1.25, including shipment by parcel post. Now this was solely an enterprise of Dad's, not Bumby Hardware Company. During the Depression, it was common to do the uncommon thing to make an honest dollar. Shipment of the little gators was made in a wooden cigar box, with holes cut out for ventilation. I made many a trip to the parcel post window at the Winter Park post office to mail a cigar box containing a live alligator. At the end of the tourist season, those baby gators became excess, since they would be too large to sell next season. The winter buyers only wanted the ten to twelve inch little gators.

This is where the pen in the chicken yard at home came in. Dad would bring them home, and we would raise them in the chicken yard pen until they were ready to be sold to tanners for their hides. This was generally in the range of three to five years, and they would be in the range of three to four feet in length. I have no idea what they were worth for their hides. Caring for the gators was minimal, since they were rather lethargic. We only had to feed them once a week, although we would occasionally throw meal scraps to them during the week. The weekly feeding generally consisted of raw meat scraps that Dad would get from the local butcher shop. As a young boy, I was always puzzled at how they could survive and grow when only eating once a week.

I will recite one incident that describes the life of a gator farmer. One of Dad's chicken yard gators became extra lethargic, and he was not eating at all. I don't know how it was determined, but the suspected cause was due to an undigested castor bean in the gator's stomach. I think Dad had discussed the gator's problem with some of his friends, and they said that castor beans were deadly to gators. In any event, Dad concluded that surgery was the necessary remedy.

One of the characteristics of small gators (up to about three feet) is that they will become quasi-hypnotized when placed on their backs and their bellies are stroked. This was the method of sedation for the surgery. After the gator was hypnotized, Dad used a Gem single-edged razor to make an incision in the gator's underside where he thought the stomach was located. He then incised the organ he considered the stomach. Lo and behold, there was the undigested castor bean. After removal with a pair of tweezers, he then sutured the stomach and incision with some of mother's heaviest sewing thread. I am sure it was cotton, since synthetics had not been developed at that time. Probably the nature of cotton rotting after a period of time and not requiring suture removal contributed to the success of the surgery. After the surgery, the gator was rolled over and placed on its four feet on the ground. In a short while, it slowly crawled to another spot for recovery. In just a few days, it was as mobile as the other gators. I don't remember any facts after that, but I am sure the gator grew to the proper size, and he was sold for his hide. He made a great recovery, only to face this eventual fate.

I cannot recall a period of time in my youth when we didn't have someone living with us, even though our house was only around eight hundred square feet with two bedrooms and one bathroom. We had a sofa bed in the living room for transient guests. We did not have a third bedroom until we put on an addition to the main house in my adolescent years. The addition of the back porch bedroom was the brainstorm of Mother and Dad. The construction effort was done by Reece Wilson, my cousin and Aunt Hattie's only son by her first marriage. Reece had recently reappeared in Orlando after an absence of several years. I later learned that he had served a tour in the army as a result of being involved in a robbery as a juvenile.

That was a common option for juvenile offenders at that time. One could either enlist in a branch of the service or serve time in an institution. At the beginning of World War II, many of the veteran training soldiers were young men who had exercised that option and then chose to remain in the service. Crime was a common occurrence due to the state of the economy. Young people saw no future or answer to their dilemma and resorted to petty crimes. Smoking was prevalent among young boys, but drugs were only heard about in movies or novels about the Far East. Female smoking was rare, even among adults, and was looked upon as being ungodly.

Reece was an excellent craftsman, and he and Dad decided on a way to add another bedroom. We had a lean-to screened back porch on one side of the house. It was where we ate most of our meals in the summer time. It was also where I cleaned and cut up many a chicken with Mother. It was desirable, because with its screened in opening on three sides, it offered an open setting in the summertime. On the west side of the porch was a goldfish fish pond that Dad had built when we boys were very young. It was also where I had grown a record sized sunflower plant. I had scavenged the sunflower seed from the chicken feed. We had two types of feed for the chickens. One was a mash that we mixed with water and fed them. The other was a mix of various seeds, such as corn, wheat, sunflower, etc., which we called scratch feed, since they would scratch around on the ground for it. Before the construction was able to begin, demolition of the old screen porch had to commence. This was a part in which I could participate: demolition.

Nearing completion of the demolition, I stepped on a nail and ended up with a pretty nasty wound. A puncture wound is always the worst for infection, because it does not bleed freely and wash out the harmful bacteria. Turpentine was one of the standby antiseptics, but none of them was very effective. Antibiotics had not been developed, so any wound could be deadly. Blood poisoning was common and often the cause of the loss of a limb, or even death. I recovered and was able to help Reece with the construction. During that time we became closer and closer. He became like a big brother to me. After our job was completed, he worked for a plumbing company, and I worked for him one summer as a plumber's helper. It was during this time that he taught me how to drive an automobile. He was the closest thing to a big brother I ever had.

Our home was always the shelter for anyone Mother knew who needed a safe and secure place to live. Even though we had few of the amenities of life, Mother always had a door open for anyone needing help. She had provided a home for both her brother Tommy and sister Mary after their mother’s death, when she and Dad were first married. Later Dad’s brother Dewey lived with us. When I was away during World War II, I understand that Johnnie McEver lived with Mother and Dad. All this was possible with the addition of the sleeping porch that we had constructed. Jim had a single bed, and Ken and I shared a double bed

on that porch. That left our old bedroom unoccupied, and it was there that the visitors slept. However, it did not offer a lot of privacy, since all of us boys had to go through this bedroom to get to the only bathroom in the house.

I can recall a few of the individuals who lived with us during my teenage years. The first was Inez Calhoun, a neighbor who, as I recall the circumstances now, was subject to harassment by her family. Inez lived with us for a considerable length of time. In retrospect, I now feel that there was some sort of sexual harassment by her father. Of course, that was something that was never discussed with teenagers during that era. The Calhoun family unit was a classic example of southern rednecks. The father drank heavily and was often inebriated in our presence. There were four girls in the family. Teti (pronounced Tee-tie) was the youngest and about school age at the time. The next was Inez, then Hazel, and the oldest was Rudell. There were junk cars in the yard and the house was barely habitable, even for those times. I remember that they had no indoor plumbing and cooked on an oil cook stove, common for many families at that time. There was an outhouse behind the main house, next to a ramble shack garage, where Mr. Calhoun had some mechanic's tools and a crane he used for removing engines from cars. The place was filthy, having dirt as the floor and greasy items everywhere.

The Calhoun house was unfinished, with no ceilings and only wooden lathes on the studs in the main body of the house. For privacy, the bedroom walls were covered with what I suspect were old sheets. In those days, there was no such thing as drywall or any other type of wallboard. Most places were plastered. This plaster was placed on wooden lathes. These were about ½" x "1 strips of wood that were nailed onto the studs about 3/8 inches apart. They would act as the base for the plaster placement. A proper plastered wall consisted of two coats of plaster. The first coat was called the gray coat. It was the heaviest and was about 3/8 of an inch thick. It was applied and allowed to dry, generally about three days. Then the final coat was applied, which was primarily composed of lime slurry. It was troweled to either a smooth finish or some type of architectural finish. A true plasterer was not only an expert craftsman, but also a talented artisan. Plastered walls continued for generations until drywall construction was developed. All of the houses we have lived in during our marriage have been of the plastered construction. Drywall construction is much faster and cheaper due to the extreme labor intensity of plastered walls. Nowadays, the art of plastering has just about died out.

The neighborhood where we lived was not unusual for the times. We have often referred to it as the Conroy crowd, but it encompassed several more streets than just Conroy. It was bounded by Division on the east, by Indiana on the north, Avondale on the west, and Miller on the south. Much of that area is now a part of I-4, located "across the tracks" from the train station, which is still behind Orlando Regional Hospital. At one house, they routinely butchered hogs that they transported from Georgia. The butchering produced a lot of fat and grease, and

they made washing soap from it. This was lye soap and was much like the traditional Octagon soap, or what we later had as G.I. soap in the military. Another household cooked sugar cane and made sorghum or molasses. Another was in the produce business and would job out the task of shelling peas or snapping beans to neighbors on a unit price basis. That practice continued for many years, throughout World War II and even after. That became one of the sources of Grandma Stone's "cookie jar" money. I can remember having hampers of beans on our front porch. Mother enlisted the help of all the family and neighborhood children to help her in this endeavor. I know that my mother enjoyed doing this, especially having all of the children under her wing.

Mother was a woman whose total existence centered around her home and her family. Nothing else ever really mattered to her. That is why the trauma of two of her sons being in World War II, and the third being in military service shortly after the war, created such an emotional impact on her. As a mature parent now, I understand the miseries that my family endured during World War II. During the first few weeks of 1945, my parents were notified by the War Department that Ken was missing in action. There was no further communication concerning any of the details of his status. They held a dim ray of hope that he had been captured by the Germans, but they also knew that the largest battle of the war was taking place, the Battle of the Bulge. They speculated that it was in the area where Ken's division, a rookie division from Great Britain, had been recently sent. Coincident with Ken's status was the fact that they were not hearing from me, because I was staging for the invasion of Okinawa. For over three months, they had no word from Ken or me.

The first notification that Mother and Dad received was from the Red Cross, stating that Ken had been taken as a prisoner of war (POW) by the Germans during the Battle of the Bulge. A short time later, they received a letter from me telling them that I was in the invasion of Okinawa. Not too long after receiving the letter from the Red Cross, they received a confirmation from the War Department that Ken was a prisoner of war. Their anxieties were only slightly relieved, since they now knew that Ken was a prisoner of war and I was involved in a battle for the Japanese homeland. To the best of their knowledge, their two sons were still alive, but still in harm's way. They became elated in May of 1945, when Germany surrendered and Ken was released from the POW camp. They knew he would be coming back to the United States shortly. They also knew that I was involved in a life-and-death struggle with the Japanese for their homeland.

Ultimately, the U.S. prevailed in Okinawa, and a few months later I was on a navy transport headed back to the Philippines, where my division would stage for the invasion of Japan. On that navy transport back to the Philippines, I learned of the atomic bombs being dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We were all elated. Shortly thereafter, Japan surrendered and the war came to an end. As young soldiers, we could not realize the emotional misery that our parents had undergone. It was only many years later, when we young soldiers became

parents, which we gained an insight into what war must have meant to our parents back home. One of the greatest loves of all is the love a parent possesses for their children.

The Conroy neighborhood was composed of a true cross section of lower middle income America during the Depression years. Across the street from us lived a typical family. The father was handicapped by being crippled from polio but worked on WPA projects for one dollar a day. The mother worked during the wintertime as a fruit packer at a fresh fruit-packing house that was within walking distance of where we lived. Fruit packing was a common job for women in those days. It was strictly "piece" work, which means they were paid by the number of boxes they packed. I can remember her telling some of the tricks the old-timers would pull over the rookies in order to get the best packing conditions. I guess mankind has never changed. There was no such thing as a wage and hour labor law then. You were paid for how many boxes you packed, irrespective of how long it took you. That family had no automobile. Their oldest son was married and was living comfortably due to his wife's family's status. The next son, in his late teens, was one of my mother's nurtured neighborhood offspring. He had run afoul of the law as a teenager and was sentenced to the boy's reform school at Marianna, Florida.

Mother would write the neighbor boy regularly and send him care packages. They became very close, and Mother was one of his confidents. After he was released, he spent more time with Mother than he did at home. The U.S. involvement in World War II began in 1941. This was not too long after this neighbor was released from reform school. He enlisted in the army, received his training, and became involved in one of the earliest actions of American forces in North Africa. I can remember that he continued to communicate with Mother via mail when he was in North Africa. As I recall, he was wounded, and I lost track of him after I went into the army. The youngest child of this family was a girl. She was a classic tomboy and fit in with the boys in the neighborhood. She was a year or so younger than I, but she had the responsibility of being the family housekeeper while her mother worked. She was married while I was in the service and became lost to the Conroy crowd.

Our next-door neighbors on Conroy were an elderly couple who had moved there from New Jersey. The husband was an immigrant from Scotland, known to me as "Pop McGinnis". He had retired as a machinist in New Jersey and was now working as a janitor for the Baby Grand Theater in Winter Park. He drove an old canvas-topped touring car, which he had rigged with a quasi-governor that prohibited it from traveling more than fifteen mph. Next to Pop's garage was a small building that he had converted into his workshop. It was filled with many, many tools and a large scrap pile. Almost everything he made came from that scrap pile. Every tool was manually operated, even the hand drill. As I recall, the only things electric in the shop were the light bulbs. Pop would usually come home from the theater around 2:00 pm, and I would arrive home from school

shortly thereafter. I would head over to the workshop whenever I could. He always had a project underway. It was he who taught me the love and care of tools.

As youngsters we didn't realize it at the time, but health issues were very critical. This was a time in our history before many of the vaccines we have today had been discovered, and even more significant, it was before the discovery of the antibiotics which are so widely used today. Many diseases were life-threatening. These were diphtheria, typhoid, tetanus, pneumonia, blood poisoning, and others that are now routinely treated. These also included many of the childhood diseases such as measles, chickenpox, mumps, etc. But the scourge of the generation was polio, although we didn't call it that at the time. It was called infantile paralysis. It was especially feared because it primarily struck younger children and was a crippling disease with no cure. I mentioned earlier about an adult neighbor suffering from this disease. Additionally, as part of the Conroy crowd, a young girl who was a contemporary of mine also was crippled by the disease. This disease was a Damocles sword hanging heavily over the heads of all youth at that time.

Polio received national recognition during the latter part of President Roosevelt's second term as president. It became known that he had been crippled with polio since his inaugural and could not walk a step. Shortly thereafter, the National Foundation of Infantile Paralysis was formed and the March of Dimes became a reality. This was a voluntary program to raise monies for research to find a cure for polio. The concept was that every household could afford a dime, and there were various types of fundraisers. As I recall, February was set aside for their big fundraiser, and young mothers would canvas the neighborhoods and raise money. During the war, these efforts were significantly reduced but not curtailed. After the war ended, the fundraising resumed full force with an emphasis on developing a safe vaccine for the prevention of polio. After many years of research, Dr. Jonas Salk developed the first safe vaccine. The polio vaccine has virtually eliminated polio as a dreaded childhood disease in our country.

Most families did not escape being exposed to at least some major health issues. As a young boy, I can vividly remember having pneumonia in one of my lungs. Unfortunately, my father was ill with the same disease at the same time. This is quite memorable to me, because it was during the trial of Bruno Richard Hauptman, the alleged kidnapper of the Lindbergh infant. Dad and I would lay in bed listening to the trial being held in New Jersey. We would eagerly await the arrival of the afternoon paper to read about the trial’s progress, after having listened to it most of the day on the radio. The jury's verdict was “guilty”, and Hauptman was executed for this crime shortly thereafter. Death sentences were carried out rather hastily in those days, without all the appeals and length of time commanded today.

Living in the days before antibiotics, most households used home remedies. The

most common means of treating pneumonia in those days was the use of a “mustard plaster“. A mustard plaster consisted of a mustard paste made with dry mustard and water and then spread with a knife on a cloth cover the size of the individual’s chest. When initially placed on the chest, it was very uncomfortable due to the mixture having been made with cold tap water. Soon thereafter, however, it would begin to warm up due to the action of the mustard and the heat of the human body. Eventually, it would become so hot that it became almost unbearable. One or two of these a day, coupled with bed rest, was the common treatment for pneumonia. Nowadays, laying horizontal is considered bad practice for the treatment of pneumonia, because it allows the fluids in the lungs to collect and become more infected.

Blood poisoning was also a very traumatic experience in many families. Most of the children in our neighborhood went around in the summertime barefoot, which exposed them to many foot wounds. Stepping on a rusty nail was very common, as were cuts from broken glass. The most intense case our family experienced was with Jimmy. He was riding as a passenger on the rear of a bicycle, when his foot became entangled between the rear wheel and the frame. It created quite an injury, which ultimately became infected, and blood poisoning ensued. I can remember sitting with him countless times while he soaked his foot in hot water in which a home remedy had been added. The most common remedy was table salt or Epsom salt crystals. His recovery was “touch and go” for a couple of weeks, with the prospects of him having to have one of his legs amputated. Fortunately, he recovered completely and developed into the best athlete in the family.

Another little-known fact is that Ken missed a complete year of school because he was diagnosed with rheumatic fever, which left him with a permanent heart murmur. As was the case then, medical diagnosis was not nearly as thorough as it is today. The treatment prescribed for him was constant rest and little stress. This occurred when I was in junior high school, so that would make it around 1937. Up to that time, Ken had always been one grade behind me. With him missing a full year of schooling, he now became two grades behind me. As the war began to develop, most people felt that Ken would never be inducted. He was not only inducted, but was captured by the Germans during the Battle of the Bulge and became a prisoner of war.

It is quite an anomaly that Ken and I are still surviving, while Jimmy died as a result of aortic surgery. It is the old adage that the operation was a success, but the patient died. Jimmy died of a heart attack the evening of his surgery. I feel confident that the reason for Jimmy's demise was his addiction to smoking. Even though Ken still smokes cigars, there is no doubt that they are less harmful to the body than cigarettes. God was with me when I stopped smoking in 1964. It was one of the easiest things I ever did, although I had tried to quit unsuccessfully four times previously. My mother believed it was an answer to her prayers, which could be so, since I tried to quit unsuccessfully so many times.

Another childhood exposure, which is not very common today, was the risk of broken bones from climbing trees, primarily oaks. In my youth, climbing trees was a common activity for children looking for a pastime. In our neighborhood, there were three cases of broken necks. I imagine they would be classified as spinal injuries today, but they were frightful and terrible injuries. Tree houses were common and many of the neighborhood children would join forces to construct a tree house. Today those outlets are focused on gang activities, on drugs, on concerts, etc., rather than joining up with one's friends to work on a common project.

Earlier in this autobiography, I mentioned how important softball was in our lives. This caused me to recall many things, the most prominent of which was that I was introduced to a young woman who was the closest thing to a big sister I ever had. She was a cousin on my mother's side of the family. Her name was Evelyn Hunnicutt, later to become Evelyn Hagan. My mother was a Hunnicut before she was married. My first contact with Evelyn was the first time I ever went to Statesboro, Georgia. It was with mother's sister, my Aunt Esther, and her husband, Uncle Bill. I would estimate it was in the mid 1930's. My recall of that trip is very limited, and about the only thing I remember is that we went through Jacksonville and spent the night with Uncle Bill's sister. Statesboro is a small town approximately fifty miles west of Savannah. At that time, it was only a small farming community, whose major crops were cotton and tobacco. Two of Mother's uncles lived in Statesboro. They were both brothers of her mother, and were referred to by the family as Uncle Tom and Uncle Charlie. My impression was that both uncles were wealthy landowners. However, unknown to me at the time, they both were sharecroppers and ran rather large farms for the owners. Uncle Tom Was Evelyn's father, making my mother and Evelyn first cousins. Their family was the center of our visitation.

A few years after my first visit, my mother interested my father in making a trip to Statesboro. This developed into a regular sojourn for them, which they continued well up until after I was married. On one of the early trips, Evelyn made the statement that she would like to return with my mother and visit us in Orlando. As I recall now, this was a year before she graduated from high school, which only required eleven grades in Georgia at that time. She did this and, as usually happens, she fell in love with Orlando. After she graduated from high school, she returned with Mother and Dad and became a resident of our household on Conroy Street. She met one of the neighborhood boys, and we began double dating. This was during the height of Dad's softball activities, and she became a regular spectator of the sport. Living together and dating together, we became very close.

After living with us for a while, Evelyn began looking for employment. This was during the Depression and before the U.S. involvement in Would War II. She procured employment at Morrison's Cafeteria in downtown Orlando. While

working there, she befriended several of the other servers. After a short time, two of them decided they would accept a transfer to a new cafeteria being built in West Palm Beach. They did this, and at first it seemed to work out successfully. Before long, however, the two of them realized they had bitten off more than they could chew. After a few months at West Palm Beach, they returned and I had my sister back. Shortly thereafter, Evelyn made an application for employment at Kress' "five and dime" store. It was a new store in town, competing with Woolworth's and McCrory's. She loved the work and achieved a level of success while there. All this time she continued dating the neighborhood friend, C. A. Morrison, and eventually they fell madly in love with each other. They had many cultural similarities, and both were even from Georgia. None of their friends ever questioned the sincerity of their relationship.

Lou and Evelyn, Circa 1942

Soon, the dark clouds of war began to cover the sky, and the draft was initiated. It was known as the Selective Service Act and was administered on a local level by the local draft board. C.A. immediately received a classification of IA, which meant he was ready for immediate service. Unfortunately, C.A. was one of the first draftees from the Orlando area, and Evelyn lost the boyfriend with whom she had fallen in love. Shortly thereafter, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and the United States was in the war in both the Pacific and Europe. C.A. was sent to Guadalcanal. Evelyn and C.A. corresponded regularly, but the war continued to become more and more of a burden on all Americans. Evelyn was from a family of seven children, two of whom were males. The brothers had been drafted, and working a hundred acre farm totally with brute force and no machinery was becoming burdensome. Her family suggested it would be prudent for her to return home to Statesboro. After much anguish and debate, she returned. I lost my big sister again.

I am not privy to what occurred between Evelyn and C.A. I only know that after her return home to Statesboro, I received word while in the army that Evelyn was getting married. Her husband would be Ernest Hagan, a local boy who was

exempt from military service due to his physical impairment. He was crippled, either from polio or as the result of an accident. He worked for the City of Statesboro and remained with them throughout his working life. Sometime after their marriage, they had their first child, a daughter named Sandra. Retrospectively, this daughter was only a year or so older than our oldest daughter Charlotte, and they became playmates when my parents would take Charlotte with them to visit in Statesboro.

After Sandra's birth, Evelyn worked in a privately owned grocery store as cashier. Eventually, she gave birth to a second daughter, Karen. Karen remained single all of her life and lived at home with her parents. As the children matured, Sandra went to college in Savannah, where she met a young Air Force pilot. They ultimately married and provided Evelyn with grandchildren. Her husband became a pilot for TWA after his release from the Air Force and flew with them for many years before having a heart attack. After this, he became an overseas pilot for an airline, hauling only cargo due to his heart condition. During his tenure with TWA, they moved to Virginia Beach, a suburb of Norfolk. In the meantime, Karen stayed at home and became the nurturing offspring for both her father and mother. Eventually Evelyn's husband Ernest died.

After Evelyn's marriage, she continued to be close friends with both my parents and me. Mother and Dad would visit them regularly in Statesboro. Evelyn and Ernest visited with my own family after I was married, when we still lived in Winter Park. After I learned to fly, I had several occasions to visit with Evelyn and Karen. On one trip, my two brothers and I visited them. On one occasion, I remember that my son-in-law Dan flew my Mooney and me to Statesboro for a visit with Evelyn and Karen. On January 13, 2010, while I was working on this autobiography, I received a call from Karen. She informed me that her mother, Evelyn, had died a few days prior. We had been close friends most of our lives, but now the loss of my big sister was final.

The attack by the Japanese on Pearl Harbor occurred on December 7, 1941, right in the middle of my senior year of high school. There were some classmates who immediately quit school and joined the military. Most of us went about our daily lives, but aware that a dramatic change was inevitable. The nation was now committed to a war on two fronts, and it began to mobilize. In retrospect, I can sincerely say that at no time in my memory were all of the citizens of the United States so committed to a common goal. The only other time I can remember that comes close to such a united commitment was in the 1960's, when our country was committed to landing a man on the moon.

In June of 1942, I received my diploma from Orlando High School, approximately six months after the war had officially begun. After graduation, I was in a dilemma as to what to do regarding my military obligation. My father was the eternal optimist, and he indicated that I should attempt to finish a year of college before selecting military duty. As it turned out, I was able to obtain a community

scholarship, and enter Rollins as a freshman in the fall. My scholarship contained a provision that I would work out a certain portion of it at the soda fountain at the Student Union building at Rollins. In the fall, I suddenly became a college student and a soda jerk at the same time.

Immediately after enrolling in school, the military began recruiting enlistments for the reserves. Their sales pitch was that they would not disturb us during our current year of college. Almost all of the men enlisted in a reserve unit. Our options were the Marines, the Air Force, the Army, or the Navy. Again I was confronted with the decision of joining an officer reserve unit or taking my chances with the draft. I had previously passed some of the preliminary physicals to go into the Air Force flight training program. At the time, this was my first choice. I decided not to join any of the reserve units and let fate decide my course. Things jogged along, and the entire country was getting geared up militarily for the war effort.

During the Christmas vacation, the War Department concluded that it would call up all of the officer reserve units. They would immediately report for active-duty. At the end of the Christmas vacation, I returned to school and found that I was one of the very few males left on campus. Most of the young men left on campus were those who were classified as unfit for duty, usually due to some physical impairment. In the meantime, my draft board had reclassified me to 3A, which meant that I would be able to finish my freshman year. At the completion of my freshman year, the draft board was true to their word, and I was inducted into the US Army in July of 1943. Thus began my “War Years” portion of this autobiography, but first my recollection of my school years.

# School Years

From early childhood I was blessed with curiosity and an aptitude for learning. Therefore, I was diligent in the pursuit of all my studies and participated in those extracurricular activities that appealed to me. When I got to high school, this enthusiasm and work ethic catapulted me into a position of leadership. In my senior year in high school, I was elected vice president of the Student Council and achieved most of my goals. The fact is, I was a student from the "wrong" side of the tracks, but due to my personality and ambition, I was thrust into the middle of all the important activities. I have never regretted a single minute of such a thrust.

In 1930, the year I started grade school, there were only five grammar schools in greater Orlando: Grand Avenue, Princeton, Delaney, Marks, and Concord. Each was named for the street on which it was located. As an economy measure, Grand Avenue and Princeton were built from the same plans and were therefore identical. The schools represented the demographics of their areas, since school areas were defined with the school being the center of their service area. They therefore represented the socio-economic status of their communities. Grand Avenue, where I attended, was the lowest of the socio-economic levels of the grammar schools in Orlando at that time. Delaney was probably at the top of the socio-economic level, because it included the area we now know as Delaney Park and other upscale contiguous areas where some of Orlando's leading citizens lived.

Jim, Ken, & Lou Circa 1934

It was in grammar school that I was first exposed to ethnic differences, although I didn't even know the word "ethnic" then. The major focus of these cultural differences was the Hage and Fekaney families. They owned grocery stores that catered to the black section of Orlando, which at that time was almost

exclusively located in the area bounded by Division Street on the east, Gore Street on the south, Westmoreland Avenue on the west, and South Street on the north. There was a small section known as “black bottom” on east South Street, at about where Mills Avenue intersects now. The Hages and Fekaneys were Armenian. The Hage’s store was at the corner of Gore and Division, and their living quarters were above the store. The Fekaney’s store was on Division, just south of South Street, and, likewise, they lived in the same building as the store. This arrangement was common at that time. I can remember my Grandmother Stone living in a store she and Granddad Stone operated on the corner of Hughey and Pine streets. She continued to operate it for a short time after his death, but soon sold it.

One of the things that was apparent to me even as a youngster was the cultural difference between these Armenian children and my classmates and peers. The Armenians were very aggressive and clannish. They were slovenly dressed and their hair was always unkempt. As a young boy with very limited relations with others outside of my family, I could see that they were not like us. They were outsiders. One of the ways Uncle Clarence would chide us as young boys would be to accuse us as having one of the Hage or Fekaney girls as our sweetheart. He would refer to them as “Wops”. When I became more educated about ethnic groups when I was in the service during World War II, I learned “Wops” were Italians, who were also called “Dagos”. The French were “Frogs”, Spanish were “Spics”, and Polish people were “Polacks”. What an education.

The curriculum was very specific then. I remember we looked forward to getting to the third grade. That was where we made use of the ink wells located on every desk. We began writing in pen and ink. The care and use of the pen was the first order of instruction. The pen tips which were inserted into the end of a pen holder were replaceable. This holder had a cork grip for about an inch around the end of the holder where the pen tip was inserted. On the day we were to use pen and ink, the school janitor would fill the ink wells in the morning before we arrived. The ink needed to be blotted, and one of the promotional items furnished by Coca-Cola and other businesses was a blotter. They had the absorbing paper, usually blue, on one side and the advertisement on the other. The ink was jet black and not washable. Many a student had his good school clothes stained with ink for the first time in the third grade. The little ink wells were also the source of pranks for the mischievous ones, usually boys. Their favorite prank was to take the locks of hair of the girl sitting in front of them, preferably blondes, and dip them into the ink well. When we were in sixth grade, all students received a prized gift, a good fountain pen. Parker and Schaeffer were the elite brands of these pens.

Another part of the structure was the beginning of penmanship. This was one of the few classes where another teacher would come in and teach as a specialty. The only other one I recall is music. Even those special teachers had their regular classes, but they would exchange teachers during the specialty teaching. In each grade there were two classes, so in a grammar school of six grades, the school had only twelve teachers, a principal, a part time nurse, and a janitor. That was it. There were no guidance counselors, no teacher assistants, no assistant principal, and none of the other specialty personnel that are so common in our current educational system. Class sizes were around thirty.

Music was a part of the curriculum starting around the fourth grade. One of the special groups was the harmonica band. We learned to play a harmonica and, by the sixth grade, we gave presentations for various groups such as the elderly and

the confined veterans of World War I. We had to purchase our own harmonicas. The standard was a M. Horner Marine Corp Band, key of C, ten reed harmonica. They are still being made. By special arrangements, we could purchase them from Emericks Drug store on West Church Street for fifty cents. As with many of our educational activities, the indirect education was as meaningful, or more meaningful, than the direct benefit. This harmonica band taught teamwork, personal discipline, competition, and commitment. It also taught compassion for others, by virtue of our exposure to the elderly and those who were less fortunate.

The normal school day was from 8:30 am to 3:00 pm, except for the first grade, which had a shorter day. Attendance and tardiness were taken very seriously, and truancy (skipping school) was not looked upon lightly by either students or the school system. Awards were given each year for those with perfect attendance and no tardiness. These were highly prized awards. I remember winning an award for these two requirements. I was as proud of that award as any scholastic award I ever received. I can vividly remember one girl who was awarded a special award at my high school graduation. She had never been tardy and she had not missed a day of school in her entire twelve years. I don't think I have heard of anyone else ever achieving such an accomplishment.

A part of the structured curriculum was an assembly program each Friday morning. The program always began with some Bible reading, prayer, the salute to the flag, and singing of the national anthem. It was a time for the school administration to communicate with the student body. The programs were diverse, with each room having the responsibility for at least one program each school year. There were little skits, one act plays, and local guest speakers such as the chief of police or sheriff. There were traveling exhibitions, such as the yoyo promotions, traveling entertainers such as dog shows, whistlers, saw-playing musicians, and sometimes even full-length movies. In most cases, the full length movies were extracurricular in nature and cost five cents to attend. There were movies for the different age groups. The Depression limited family entertainment, and the schools provided a lot of this. These assembly programs continued throughout my entire school life, only being modified to appeal to the age group of the students. One can see that the culture and patriotism of my generation was directly related to the educational system that taught us.

The school system was divided into three different levels. The first level was the grammar school. It consisted of grades one through six. There was no such thing then as public kindergarten or preschool programs. Kindergarten existed on a private level, but there were none for the masses in the public system. They were reserved for the economic elite. The next level was the junior high school, consisting of grades seven through nine. This was intended as a preparation for entrance to the tenth grade and high school. There was no such thing as a middle school then. Even though credits for graduation began accruing in the ninth grade, you were never considered a high school student until you were in the tenth grade. During my school years, there were two junior high schools in Orlando. Cherokee Junior High, located in Delaney Park, essentially covered the south and east portions of the city. Memorial Junior High School, located on the west side of Lake Eola (where a hotel-condominium now exists) covered the north and west portions of the city. These two junior high schools were staunch rivals. The only high school was Orlando High School. It was located at Robinson and Summerlin and covered all of Orlando and contiguous areas. It had its first class in 1927 and closed out as a high school in 1952. It then became Howard Middle School.

As I evolved through the school system, my visibility slowly increased. The first occasion, which I can recall, that contributed to my notoriety occurred when I was in the sixth grade at Grand Avenue Elementary School. This was circa 1935-36. One of the popular events during the school year was the designation of the grammar school spelling champion. This school champion would then compete with the champions from other local schools at a spelling bee which was carried live on the local radio station. The winner at the radio station would then become the area's representative to the national spelling bee. At the local school level, an elimination contest was held in each of the sixth grade classes. At Grand Avenue there were two sixth grades. Finally, there would be a runoff between the winners in each of the two sixth grade classes. After several elimination contests, I was the winner in my sixth grade class. There was also another winner in the other sixth grade class. This set up the big spelling bee between the two winners. It was to be held during a general assembly in front of the entire student body. The way I remember it, the hype created by this contest can only be compared with the hype created today by the contestants in the Super Bowl.

Finally the day of the contest arrived. The entire student body was assembled in the main auditorium. After the opening exercises, the spelling bee moderator then outlined the rules for the contest. The tension was so thick that you could cut it with a knife. The highlight of the school year was finally here. I don't recall how it was determined, but my adversary was given the first word to spell. The word she was given was "led". The moderator then used the word in a sentence. My opponent then spelled the word l-e-a-d. Her spelling was immediately declared incorrect. I was then asked to spell the word. I spelled it correctly. I then only needed to spell the next word correctly to be declared the winner. The moderator called out the word "across" and used it properly in a sentence. I then spelled out a-c-r-o-s-s and instantly became the spelling champion of Grand Avenue. What had taken several months to be finalized and contained the hype of the Super Bowl was over in approximately one minute. The entire student body was disappointed, since they had planned on being out of classes until almost the noon hour. In retrospect, I consider this as being one of the most anticlimactic experiences of my life. I also know that this was a significant event in my life, by virtue of the fact that today, over seventy years later, I remember the two words and the girl from the other sixth grade, Martha Cox. The follow-up to the school spelling contest was my appearance at the local radio station.

The next big issue of visibility in my school years came while I was a student at Cherokee Junior High School. Even though the ninth grade was considered our freshman year of high school, it was our senior year in junior high school. Junior high schools had a quasi graduation for its ninth grade students. This ceremony was not as elaborate as the graduation from high school, but it was considered significant by the school and its students. As part of the graduation ceremony, various awards were presented. One of the most cherished awards of all was the American Legion Award of Honor. This award was given to the outstanding boy and outstanding girl in the graduating class. This award was not given on the basis of academics only, but also included character, leadership, and citizenship. One of the reasons this award was so meaningful was the fact that the winners were selected by the teachers. I was overwhelmed when I was selected as the male recipient of the American Legion Award. I would now carry this identity to Orlando High School.

In high school my visibility slowly began to increase as I became more active in extracurricular activities. I believe my first endeavor was a role in a Glee Club operetta. This was probably a carryover from my junior high days when I also appeared in a Glee Club operetta. Music has always been a love in my life. I also became active in other school clubs. I was on the baseball team in my sophomore and junior years. In my senior year, I became active in Student Council activities. As a result, I ran for president of the Student Council. The rules of the Student Council provided that the individual with the most votes would become president and the runner-up would be vice president. I was the runner-up and became vice president. The winner was probably the most popular person in our senior class and was a terrific young man. He was later killed in a flight training accident in World War II.


Lou High School Graduation

My senior year in high school was interrupted by the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. I can well remember the entire student body being assembled the next day in the auditorium of the Orlando High School and listening to the speech by President Roosevelt over the radio declaring war on Japan. Some of my classmates would take the drastic step of foregoing their senior year in high school and enlisting in the military service. Such was the mood of the country. Although I was seventeen at that time, I felt good about taking a little more time to make such a drastic decision.

I continued my high school education and graduated in June of 1942. There were slightly more than four hundred students in my graduating class. At the graduation exercise, the most coveted award was the Guernsey Citizenship Trophy. It was awarded to the young man who had defeated me in the Student Council race for the presidency. The next highest award was the American Legion Award, which I

have described previously. I received that award again at my high school graduation. As fate would have it, the female recipient was the same young lady who had won the award with me in junior high school. Even though there were two junior high schools in the Orlando area, on this occasion both award winners came from our junior high school, Cherokee Junior High.

After graduating from high school, I was faced with the dilemma as to whether I should immediately enlist in the military or whether to delay, since I knew it would be some time before I would be drafted. Compulsory military service had been enacted by the Congress sometime before this time in my life, and on my eighteenth birthday I was required to register for military service. Knowing that my family could not afford any kind of college education, I began working immediately after graduation with Southern Bell Telephone Company. In order to give you an insight into the economy at that time, my starting pay was forty cents per hour.

Shortly after my graduation, my father had some casual conversations with one of the professors from Rollins College. This professor indicated that there were always local scholarships available for deserving local graduates. Further investigation and research concluded that I was eligible for an Orange County scholarship. This would be a work scholarship, whereby I would be required to work for a portion of my scholarship. I don't remember all the details at this time, but it was ultimately worked out that I enrolled as a freshman in 1942. For the work requirement, I was assigned to work at the soda fountain in the Student Union building. I was required to meet periodically with the comptroller of the college to make sure that my work schedule was such that I would complete my payment requirements by the end of the school year.

Recruiting by the military was very active at the beginning of my freshman year. The United States had been in the war for less than a year, and there were many eligible young men going to college. This was a fertile ground for recruiting. The main argument the recruiters had for enlisting recruits was that the recruits most likely would not be called to active duty until the end of the present school year. Another argument was that these recruits would be enrolled in an officer training school. Those arguments allowed the recruiters to enlist practically the entire male student body into the military. Almost the entire football team, along with many others, enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps. Additionally, the U.S. Army and the U.S. Navy attained a large level of success. There were only a very few holdouts. I was one of them. Even though there was a lot of pressure exerted by the military recruiters, I decided that I would not make a decision until necessary.

Time passed on that school year, and we arrived at the Christmas holiday season. Successes by the United States and its allies were very few. The military began to get its act together by the construction of hundreds of military bases throughout the United States. Apparently the operation of many of these bases came about earlier than had been anticipated a few months prior. During the Christmas holidays, all recruits that had been enlisted in the reserves earlier in the school year were called to active duty. When I returned to school after the Christmas holidays, I was only one of a few male students remaining. Most of those remaining had been classified by their local draft boards as 4F. This was the classification designated for those individuals who had physical or mental infirmities that would preclude them from military service. My fate was now in the hands of my local draft board. Whether I would receive a deferment until the end of the school year was their option, since I had elected not to enlist in any reserve unit.

Some time in the early spring of 1943, I received orders from my local draft board to report for a physical examination. I then forwarded to them a request to be deferred until the end of the present school year. Before the time I was to report for the physical examination, my request for deferment was honored. I would be able to complete my freshman year in college with the few males still on campus. The campus was not, however, void of males. First there were eight contingents of flight cadets from the Army Air Corps receiving some college training. Secondly, by that time, Orlando Air Force Base was filling its ranks. There were a lot of young officer personnel who were looking for female companionship for dating. The girls at Rollins filled that bill. Working as a soda jerk in the Student Union building, I became acutely aware of this scenario.

Around the first part of July of 1943, I was transported to Camp Blanding in Florida for my physical examination. I will always remember the apprehension I felt while on the bus trip to Camp Blanding. My biggest fear was that I might fail my physical and become a 4F. I did not fail, however, and reported for active duty on July 19, 1943. My life in the military for the next thirty months is chronicled in another portion of this autobiography.

Before we depart this era in my life, I want to make a couple of comments about the history and effect on me of my freshman year in college at Rollins. As mentioned earlier my scholarship was a work scholarship, whereby I was required to work for a certain portion of it. I don't recall the pay scale, but it was minimal for that time in our economy. Each time I met with the college comptroller to determine my pay status, it showed that I was slightly ahead of schedule. The underlying reasons this came about was due to the fact that several of the other workers in the Student Union building were seniors and were actively involved in extracurricular activities and social functions. When these activities conflicted with their work schedules, they asked me to work for them. As a freshman, I had a lot more time available for working than they did as seniors. At the end of the school year, it was determined that the school owed me slightly in excess of fifty dollars. At that time, fifty dollars was a lot of money. It represented two weeks pay for my father. Listening to the comptroller wailing about having to pay me that money, one would have thought it would bankrupt the college. They couldn't carry it over to the next year, since I was entering the military service and my return was questionable.

The other comment is about the significance of this freshman year to me. All during my earlier school life, I had all the attributes of being a leader, but I was inhibited due to the fact that I was continually in a battle with a subtle inferiority complex. I suspect that this battle was created by my feeling that I was not economically equal to my peers. After the completion of my freshman year of college, that complex completely disappeared. I have analyzed all the conditions and have come up with an explanation. The Student Union building was the location where all students, both resident and day students, would congregate. The bookstore, mailboxes, sundry store, and most important for me, the soda fountain, were all located in the Student Union building. The soda fountain sold sandwiches and snacks and was the location where many students would eat, rather than going to the college commons. My position as a soda jerk exposed me to every student on campus. By Christmastime, I knew every student at Rollins, and I suspect every student there knew me. I was as well known to the student body as the star football player. Wherever I went on campus, I was always greeted by other students. This acceptance and familiarity gave me the

confidence to date other students. The fact that they were daughters of millionaires, with some of them having personal checking accounts in the thousands of dollars, did not faze me in the least by the end of the school year. I had completely outgrown this complex of inferiority. For this reason, I will always feel that my freshman year at Rollins was one of the most important years of my life. I was now ready to face other challenges that would be presented to me in my life in the military.

Looking back now through the perspective of over sixty-five years, the first year I was released from military service was a very active one. I got married, soon after was expecting a baby, decided to go back to college, and started construction of a new home. All of that was accomplished on the basis of hope and prayer. My decision to return to college was based on the advice of several men with whom I interviewed for jobs. Every one of them told me that they were ready and willing to employ me, but that I would be a fool not to return to college, particularly since I could receive the "G.I. Bill" benefits and would have a one-year jump on most of the returning veterans.

During the latter stages of World War II, Congress passed what is commonly called the G.I. Bill. This bill enumerated the benefits offered to servicemen for their military service during World War II. One of the paramount provisions of this bill was to cover certain scholarship costs as well as to provide a monthly subsistence allowance to the ex-military participants who were pursuing education and training for career purposes. For single veterans, this subsistence amount was sixty dollars per month, and for married veterans it was one hundred twenty dollars per month. It sunk in for me that I was receiving free advice from men who had already achieved a certain level of success in their careers, and I decided to return to college. My sophomore year began in the fall of 1946.

During the early stages of my postwar college years, I was somewhat ambivalent as to a career path. But luckily I was able to make that decision rather quickly. Even though Rollins was a liberal arts college, I decided I wanted to pursue a technical career. This was probably due to my interest in all things mechanical. I had always been a "tinkerer". Fortunately, their School of Science was staffed with excellent professors and their curriculum for the pursuit of a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree was adequate.

About midterm in my sophomore year, early in 1947, Helen and I moved into our new house, which had been constructed in Winter Park within walking distance of the college. Accompanying us in that move was our newborn daughter Charlotte, who had been born in December of 1946. Furnishing a new home, paying for the expenses of the birth of a new child, and being a full-time student on a subsistence allowance of one hundred twenty dollars a month was rather formidable. I was able to supplement this subsistence by working part time at Bumby Hardware in Winter Park, where my dad was the quasi manager. As a part of that arrangement, I was able to purchase many of the items needed for a new home. These included various types of gardening equipment, as well as household utensils and appliances. Not having the cash available to purchase these items, they were placed on a charge slip which we referred to as the "ticket". On many occasions, when we would add up my weekly hours, I was asked whether I wanted my pay credited to the ticket, given to me in cash, or a combination of the two. This practice continued until I graduated in June of 1949.

My total income for the period I was in college amounted to approximately two

hundred dollars per month. As an indicator of the business climate during that period, we purchased many of our groceries from a locally owned grocery store. This grocery store would not only provide us with credit for our groceries, but would deliver items to our home where Helen had purchased them via the telephone. When my monthly subsistence check would come in, the first people I would pay would be the charge account at the grocery store. This ability to charge groceries was not only an indication of the economy, but it was also an indicator of the moral integrity of our culture at that time. Since then there has been an improvement in our economy, but there has certainly been a dramatic decline in the moral integrity of our culture.

Lou with Bachelors Degree

In my freshman year, before I went into the military service, I had been lobbied by all the high profile Greek fraternities on campus. I had declined all of them, since I realized I was not in a financial position to participate. After the war, being a member of a fraternity was not quite as significant as it had been before. Most of the male students were veterans and many of them were married. Their education and commitment to their marriages was more important than being in a fraternity. In my junior year, I did pledge one of the low profile fraternities, Delta Chi. In retrospect, I feel that my primary motivation was the fact that several of my very close friends were members of that fraternity. One of those friends remains so to this day, Ivor Groves, along with his wife Marjorie. I can recall those days when Ivor was a station engineer at the transmitter for WDBO in the Dubsdread area of Orlando. Since we had several classes together, I would go out to the transmitter site when he was on duty, and we would do our homework together. Ivor was one class ahead of me and graduated in 1948. His participation in my pursuit of a career is covered in another part of this autobiography.

The three years of college life after the war were very significant in my life. I experienced them as a student, as a father, as a husband, as a homeowner, as the head of a household, and as a war veteran. Living in a house rather than an apartment led us to become the focus of many social functions for my peers and

their wives/girlfriends. As a married couple, we were also allowed to be a part of the chaperones for my fraternity at the weekend beach retreats at Rollins' beach house, The Pelican, at New Smyrna Beach. This beach house was also offered to alumni after graduation for use in the summertime. As our family grew, we took advantage of this opportunity. The Pelican became synonymous with beach activities at New Smyrna Beach. When we obtained our own condo at New Smyrna Beach in our golden years, we named it "The Stone Pelican".

One of the highlights of the year on the Rollins calendar was the presentation of the Animated Magazine. This was the brainchild of Hamilton Holt, who was the president of the college. World renowned personalities were invited to the college as speakers. The general format was that the first day they spoke on an outdoor stage to the audience, which sat in bleachers in the Sandspur Bowl at Rollins. On the following day, we had a convocation in Knowles Memorial Chapel, and an honorary degree was bestowed upon the guest. There were many notables there during my time as a student, but the two most memorable to me were then President Harry S. Truman and the renowned World War II newscaster Edward R. Murrow. I can vividly remember that while standing in line to march into the chapel for the convocation, Edward R. Morrow was next to me. The thing that has always stood out in my mind was the fact that he was a chain smoker. You never saw him without a cigarette. It could only follow that his untimely death was attributed to lung cancer.

One of the characteristics of an education at Rollins during that era was the utilization of the "conference plan", whereby each student would periodically have a conference with his/her professor during the term. This was also a concept of Hamilton Holt. It was possible to accomplish this due to the small number of students enrolled and the small class sizes. I would estimate the total enrollment during my last three years was around eight hundred students. Being a student in the sciences, my classes were especially small. The largest classes I had were in the survey courses, and they were around twenty students. A survey course was one that was not directly associated with your major. The liberal arts students would take scientific survey courses, and the science students would take liberal arts survey courses. The purpose of these is obvious, since they broadened your knowledge outside the area of your major pursuit.

One of my survey courses was in economics. The professor's method of instruction was assigning lessons from the textbook and then calling on students in the next session with questions about the material covered in the reading assignment. Somewhere around the middle of the term, I became cognizant of the fact that this professor would spend almost the entire class period querying me about the reading assignment and even covering issues outside the assignment. With my first conference with him, he was curious as to why I was pursuing an education in the field of science. He stated that I was one of a very few students he had experienced during his teaching career who exhibited such an aptitude and understanding of the theories of economics. He made every effort he could to convince me that I should change my major and pursue a career in economics. In retrospect, I am glad I withstood that challenge, although economics has always fascinated me as being so logical and straightforward.

After experiencing many adventures and challenges during my undergraduate studies at Rollins, I was awarded a B.S. degree in June of 1949. Although the B.S. degree did not carry a major concentration, I essentially majored in the study of physics. The commencement speaker at my graduation was Hamilton Holt.

The title of his address was "Our Commencement". I still have a copy of that address to the graduating class. It was quite appropriate, since he had submitted his resignation at that time. Rollins went through considerable turmoil during the next few years with its presidency. I was now ready to start the transformation from being a student to establishing a career.

In the early 1960's, probably in 1962, while in the position of superintendent of Orlando Utilities Commission's Indian River Plant, I decided that I wanted to pursue a master's degree through the night program that Rollins College had recently started. One of the requirements to get into that program was the passing of the Graduate Record Exam. Further investigation revealed that these exams were given at the elementary school in Winter Park. This was where both Charlotte and Beth, my two daughters, had started school. After successfully passing this examination, I enrolled in the night program at Rollins to seek a Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.) degree. Shortly after enrolling, I learned that a neighbor, David Schweitzer, had also enrolled in the night program. We rode together, and this made the commuting from the Indian River Plant in Brevard County to Rollins College in Winter Park much more economical and enjoyable. This carpooling with Dave continued until I moved back to Orlando in August of 1964.

The pursuit of my master's degree was the most enjoyable educational experience of my life. I had been out in the business world for thirteen years, and in a management position for the last few years. The courses I was now taking related to business applications and were much more meaningful to me from a practical standpoint than the courses which I took as an undergraduate student, which were mostly theoretical. In all candor, I think the most important courses I took in pursuit of my master's degree were my courses in accounting. These provided me with so much insight into the financial aspects of my company that it was unbelievable to me. Most of the other courses I took also provided much insight into all elements of my future career, but the accounting courses definitely provided the most. The advantages of having both a technical degree and a degree in business are unimaginable. They both served me well.

Lou with parents and Master's degree

I must interject here the instruction of my survey economics professor when I was

an undergraduate student. It relates to my master's thesis. He explained that the manner in which regulated electric utilities make a profit is complex, and one of the basic ingredients uses the term "Return on Equity" or ROI. In my master's thesis, I proposed and demonstrated that by using the same basic rates, but improving the load factor by using various marketing efforts, the ROI would be significantly improved. This idea of load stabilization ultimately became the way of life for the electric utility industry. This was not, however, for the purpose of improving ROI, but for the purpose of energy conservation. My concept had been presented on the basis of economics. My old economics professor's insight into my understanding of the principles of economics was profound. I might add that the research necessary for the writing of this thesis and the understanding of the accounting principles I had learned provided me with much of the knowledge that I would utilize during the remainder of my career while climbing the corporate ladder at OUC. The thesis was also a bright light in increasing my visibility.

I received my Masters of Business Administration from Rollins College in May of 1966. Although this was my last participation in any type of formal education program, throughout the years at OUC I took advantage of opportunities to participate in many seminars, training classes, and various industry conferences. I also attended a junior college class in computer programming during the early days of personal computers. I am convinced now more than ever that education is the key to our nation's and its individuals' welfare. I also strongly believe that exercising the mind is as vital as exercising the body as one ages.

# War Years

A close study of World War II history will show that the United States was involved almost from the beginning in supporting the war in Europe and attempting to contain Japan in the Far East. However, the war for us really began with the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. These are my memories and reflections of my experience during that time in our nation's history.

World War II began when Germany invaded Poland in 1939. This was a surprise attack, even though armies had been marshalling on the borders for days. The attack came on September 1, 1939, and on September 3rd, Great Britain, France, Australia, and New Zealand declared war on Germany. On September 10th, Canada declared war. This was on Labor Day weekend here. I can remember it well, because our family was on a long weekend vacation at New Smyrna Beach. As was typical with my mother and dad, not just our family was there. We brought friends and relatives along for the fun and games.

I don't remember all who were present, but I remember specifically Evelyn, along with C.A. and Frog Morrison. The reason I can remember them vividly is because C.A and Frog said this was the beginning of the war for the U.S. and they would have to go to war soon. I pooh-poohed their remarks since, as a 15 year old, I said the war would never touch me. Retrospectively, I wonder how convinced I was of those statements, since those events and those arguments I made then, almost sixty years ago as I write about them, are still so vivid in my memory. Maybe it was subconsciously my way of trying to convince myself that this would never happen.

The fighting in Europe and also in the Far East between China and Japan developed into a "world war", because all of the major countries of the world were involved. The countries that joined with Hitler in Germany (mainly Italy under Benito Mussolini) and Japan were called the Axis powers. They were opposed by the Allied powers, which included England, France, the United States, Russia, and China. When Germany first invaded Poland and World War II began, many thought that Russia (the U.S.S.R.) would join forces with Hitler and control all of Europe and western Asia. However, this fear was eliminated when Germany invaded Russia. This made Russia an ally of England and the United States, which is ironic when we consider our "cold war" history with Russia after World War II.

In 1939, the economy of the U.S. was still smothered by the withering stagnation of the Depression, but signs were beginning to indicate the changes ahead. Most of these were prompted by a nation boosted by a government beginning to

prepare itself for war. As the war in Europe expanded, our country was beginning to become “the arsenal of democracy”. Our government's Lend Lease Program was providing a boost for our industrial complex. This was a program in which our government said to the Allies, particularly Russia, “We will lend or lease war materials to you, and you can pay us later“. As we all know, later never came.

Many young American men were already joining the war effort. Some were going to Canada to join the Canadian Air Force. Pilots were also joining with General Chenault and his Flying Tigers in China in the fight against the Communist Rebellion taking place there. The U.S. Merchant Marine force was expanding with its delivery of war materials to Russia and England.

With the horrors of the bombings of the entire British Isles and the Battle of Britain underway, our government decided we had better learn from the British and organize a Civil Defense. Civil Defense training began in all disciplines. I cannot remember them all, but most were focused on reaction to bombing raids. These included medical first aid training and disposition of the wounded. As a high school student, I attended a fire-fighting school at a local fire station once a week for several months. I learned many things that have been useful to me all of my life. These included such skills as how to handle a high pressure hose, how to handle a ladder, handling lines, etc. I remember how I looked forward to these classes each week.

The young girls learned how to make all types of bandages and other medical supplies. There were even classes in knitting for making various garments that were in short supply due to the war production. A national mood was beginning to gel before December 7, 1941, but that act by the Japanese crystallized the American people into one homogeneous group who had only one goal - to win the war.

The United States had no compulsory military requirements prior to WW II. Our military was composed entirely of volunteers. In fact, many of the volunteers were young men who had gotten into trouble with the law with petty crimes (generally petty thievery such as stealing a car or shoplifting) and made a plea deal to go into military service, rather than to a reform school. The “service” was also a place that provided a warm bed and three meals a day during the Great Depression. The Officer Corps was made up mostly of either graduates from the military academies or the ROTC. It was around this nucleus that we built the military force that tipped the scales in favor of victory for the freedom of the world.

With the apparent need to enlarge our armed forces, military conscription was ordered by our government. In other words, all males between certain ages could be drafted for military service. This was commonly referred to as "the draft". I believe the ages were between eighteen and thirty-five. All single men

were included and some married men, those without children. The draft organization was controlled on the local level by a draft board. Each draft board was responsible for registering all eligible men in their area. They were also the arbiters of any claims for exemptions or deferments.

After a young man registered, he was classified according to his eligibility to be conscripted (or called up for military duty). The highest classification was 1A. This classification meant that you were ready to be inducted into the service. The lowest classification was 4F. This classification meant that you were ineligible for duty in any of the military services. The most common reason for this classification was due to some type of physical infirmity. Between these two classifications there were other classes, which were determined by number of dependents, your age, and other qualifying characteristics. As I recall, I was classified as 3A because of my student status. I received notification by my draft board in December of 1942 that I was to report for my pre-induction physical. At that time, I was halfway through my freshman year at Rollins College. I petitioned my draft board for a deferment until June of 1943, so that I could complete my freshman year. My request was granted, and that was how I obtained the 3A classification.

This put me in a rather unique situation at Rollins, due to the fact that all reserve students were called up for active duty during the Christmas holidays. This left me as one of the only able-bodied male students on campus, along with the 4F's, when I returned after the Christmas holidays. Don't get me wrong. Regarding the ladies, it was not like returning to a land of plenty. Orlando Air Force Base had opened, and Rollins College was a mecca for the officers from that base looking for attractive young college coeds. Additionally, there were military training programs conducted by Rollins, which brought other able-bodied males on campus.

In retrospect, I am very glad that I made the decision and was granted the request for deferment, since it allowed me to get one full year of college completed before I went into the military service. After the war, I only needed three additional years to get my bachelor's degree. This put me one year ahead of most of the returning veterans who entered college under the G.I. Bill.

When a young man registered for the draft, he then protected the security of his draft registration card with all the resources available to him. It was more valuable that cash. There was no such thing as a credit card at that time. Failure to produce a registration card was a major offense. Failure to register was an even greater offense. Both were federal crimes and were prosecuted by the federal government. There was no was such thing as running off to Canada at that time to avoid the draft, since Canada was also at war.

A young man's classification was, in most instances, a sense of pride. In some cases, it could be a source of embarrassment. Unless an eligible young man

had a physical disability that was obvious, such as being crippled or some other readily apparent malady, being classified as 4F could be an embarrassment. Patriotism was such an embedded value in our culture that no young man could bear the thought of not being eligible to serve his country. I recall that when I was on the bus on my way to Camp Blanding for my pre-induction physical, my biggest fear was that I might not be acceptable. It took a pretty severe physical impairment to be rejected. The old wives' tale of being flat-footed as a cause for rejection was not true. Even the loss of sight in one eye was not a cause for rejection. One of my best friends in my combat unit had lost the sight of one eye in a 4th of July holiday firecracker accident. He remained with our unit until we were on the verge of combat assignment. He was then assigned to a SCU (service command unit). These were units that provided service to the combat forces. They provided such services as supply, planning, personal records, etc. The combat units facetiously referred to them as the “sick, crippled, and useless” for the acronym SCU. This is just one small example of how pride was manifested in the patriotism of the young men of America at that time. Everyone wanted to be a war hero. It is also an example of how you could be ridiculed in the service. Think of how much more ridicule you could receive by being at home with a 4F classification.

My pre-induction physical was a mass of male humanity being checked for mental and physical defects. There was a saying at the center, that the doctors would shine a light in one ear and if they didn’t see light shining out the other ear, you were okay for service. It was many a young man’s first exposure to immodesty. We were given a wire basket in which to place our clothing and, for the rest of the day, we paraded from station to station nude, with physicians looking at every nook and cranny of our bodies.

Another impact of this immodesty was manifested when it came time to provide a urine sample. This was most draftees’ first exposure to the military rigidity of rules. It was a rigid rule that nobody left the latrine until he had a urine sample to turn in. Some would stand in front of a urinal for seemingly an eternity, trying to get that sample. Others would let it flow like Old Faithful. In more cases than the military would like to admit, the Old Faithful producers would share or sell a bottle full to the guy who couldn’t produce a drop. Many recruits passed the urinalysis test with someone else’s urine.

My examination trip was during summer, the middle of July as I remember. Typical of military procedures, everything was a "hurry up and wait" activity. Sometimes this waiting was in lines outside in the sun. Water was at a premium. This made soft drinks sold in vending machines priceless. Vending machines in those days had no coin changers. It was correct change, maybe a dime, or no drink. Many dimes were sold for a quarter, half dollar, and even a dollar. By the end of the pre-induction exams, which generally lasted two days, you knew if you were satisfactory for military service.

My memory is a little hazy on this matter, but it seems to me that those who were physically and mentally okay were sworn in and took the oath of duty at that time.

After being sworn in, we were transferred to an area to be processed as new recruits. This is where we packed our civilian clothes and shipped them home, while being issued G.I. clothing and supplies. We also began the never ending process of getting our inoculations in preparation for being assigned to a basic training unit. Fort Blanding in Florida was a basic training base but could not train all the inductees that were examined there. Most were sent to other bases throughout the United States. For basic training, I was transferred to Fort Hood, Texas, near Waco.

Basic training is just what the name implies. It trained us in the basic requirements of being a soldier. Our training was also focused on how to be a soldier in wartime. Even though we could eventually be assigned to any type of unit, our basic training was always that of an infantry soldier. Discipline and obedience were the benchmarks of basic training. No military unit ever succeeds without enforcing these principles.

During basic training, many tests were given in order to develop a profile of each soldier. This was a rather broad brush, but effective on a grand scale, since the military had so many disciplines to consider and millions of draftees to analyze. Fundamental to all tests was the Intelligence Quotient (IQ). This was a large factor in the final determination of your direction in the military. There were minimums for officer training and minimums for most other specialty training. As a matter of fact, the minimum for Officer Candidate School (OCS) was 120. For Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP), the program to which I was later admitted, it was 135. There were many psychological tests, dexterity tests, vocational tests, as well as just about every other test conceived by mankind up to this point in time. These tests were used to assign personnel to perform in the best interest of the war effort. There was, however, one overriding criterion. That criterion was, “What is most needed NOW?” I was to find that out later when I was enrolled as an engineering student in the ASTP at the Illinois Institute of Technology.

The military was trying to make up for lost time, so there was not time to consider the factors that were influencing the results of these tests. Since they were done during our basic training, fatigue was one factor. Many times tests were given after an energy-draining drill exercise, some after a night of guard duty, others after a long day of KP duty. Very seldom was there a time for relaxation while in basic training. Probably the most compelling experience was the feeling of loneliness and homesickness. For most of the recruits, this was their first time away from home. For many, it was the first trip they had ever taken. In almost every case, this was the first time away from home for more than a few days. Homesickness was pervasive. Friendships were difficult to develop, since we knew that these relationships would only last for a maximum of thirteen weeks.

After that, we would be scattered to the four winds to pursue the common goal of winning the war. In spite of loneliness, homesickness, fatigue, and in some cases depression, a spirit of camaraderie developed. This developed since support of each other was the only place to go. I am sure it is that feeling of dependence on others in the same situation that enabled the average G.I. to carry on in spite of all odds and, ultimately, to prevail.

One of the most devastating thoughts every soldier had to confront was that of seeing no end to his situation. The time for our tour of duty was defined “for the duration, plus”. No one knew when that would be. The air corps developed a schedule of rotating pilots after a certain number of combat missions. This created a lot of hard feelings in the other services since, to my knowledge, no other service had such a formal procedure.

Basic training not only instructed us in military procedures and techniques, but it taught us a lot about ourselves. It taught us just how rugged both our bodies and our minds were. Sometimes it was difficult to distinguish between the two, since the mind has such a strong influence upon the actions of the body. We learned that the body can do things we never imagined, and we learned that we can act and react under circumstances we never thought possible. We were being conditioned to win a war, regardless of what would be our ultimate individual assignment.

Top on the list of training activities was knowledge of and protection of our “piece”. This was the army’s term for your firearm. It was okay to call it a rifle or a pistol, or whatever its specific identity carried, but it was never a "gun". We were taught from the beginning that guns were for the artillery and navy ships. Soldiers did not carry “guns”; they carried “pieces”. We were trained in the use of the M1 Garand rifle. This was a semi-automatic rifle which had been adopted by the army a few years earlier. Due to shortages, it was not used for training purposes until 1943. Up to that time, the old Springfield and the British Enfield rifles were used in training. The Springfield was a very accurate rifle and was still being used at the end of the war as a sniper rifle.

Care of our pieces was instructed in many ways. The first was learning the serial number of our pieces. Then we learned the name of every component of our weapons. We learned to disassemble and reassemble it blindfolded. We also learned to do the same in pitch darkness. Weeks were spent learning all aspects of aiming, shooting, and range safety with our rifles before we were allowed to fire the first shot.

That first day on the rifle range was a grueling experience. Generally our first day began early, around 4:00 am. The early time was due to the fact that there was such a demand for use of the range. The beginning shooters were the early morning shooters. As we progressed, we went later in the day. That may sound better, but it wasn't, since the later shooters had to march out to the range. The

early shooters were taken out in 6x6 trucks. The ranges were several miles from the center of the base, since they required a lot of space and a lot of isolation.

Probably the most dramatic rifle training was an obstacle course through which we carried our loaded pieces. This involved rope climbing, wall scaling, and wriggling like a snake under a barbed wire network about one foot high with bursts of machine gun fire over us at approximately 24-30 inches. In most instances, the ground was either sandy and dusty, or muddy. The countless trainees had scoured away any vegetation months, or even years, previously. At the end of this obstacle course was a pit large enough to hold three or four trainees. At the completion of our wriggle through the barbed wire portion, we rolled over into the pit with whoever completed the trip at the same time. While in the pit, a tank rolled overhead and we got to see how the bottom of a tank looked. But that was not the purpose of the exercise. Its purpose was to show us that we could find safety in a hole while being attacked by a tank.

After that event, our final test was to take place. Coming out of the pit, we were directed to another area where we took out our piece and fired it into a safety pit. We had to empty a full clip of ammunition into the pit without any jamming or malfunction of our piece. If we failed, we had to determine the cause of the malfunction (usually it was from mud or dirt), clear it, and get ready for another tour of the obstacle course. We were advised of this prior to the exercise, but this did not prevent many failures.

Weapon handling was not the only training exercise, and weapons were not confined to personal pieces. We covered most of the weapons used by an infantry company in combat. These included hand grenades, mortars, machine guns, bazookas, and flame throwers. We also were given demonstrations of the various types of explosives.

Basic training was also our indoctrination into military courtesy and etiquette, as well as all the other many rules of being in the military. We were taught the general orders and all the requirements of being a soldier. We were literally frightened into what we had to do and what would be the response if we did not comply with all the requirements of being a soldier. Fear and intimidation were a vital part of the indoctrination. Most of all, we learned the absolute requirements of discipline and authority. We were taught not to question the authority and orders of our superior officers and noncommissioned officers. This was the true structure of military order and discipline. It was a known fact that when we got to combat and when the order to “charge” was given, there would be no doubt that we would obey.

Camaraderie was a vital part of our lifestyle. We learned that our very survival depended on our fellow soldiers. Even as early as basic training, we learned that our unit was like a family with a common cause. The largest family unit was generally the company. A company consisted of approximately two hundred

soldiers. The next was the platoon, around forty-eight soldiers, and the smallest was the squad, twelve soldiers. The company consisted of four platoons with service personnel such as cooks and administrative people, which made the total around two hundred.

My basic training in Texas started around the end of July in 1943. It was deep in the heart of Texas and right dab in the middle of summer. Being a southerner from Florida, the hot weather was not as difficult for me as it was for those who were from a colder climate. Many of the recruits in my training company were from the northeast and, for many, the summer weather was almost unbearable. Some were from metropolitan areas like New York City, and the intense hot weather and wide open spaces were foreign to them.

During our training in the middle of the summer, we had several deaths in our training battalion from heat strokes. Efforts were taken to combat heat strokes by requiring everyone to take salt tablets regularly to prevent sodium loss through perspiration. This was contrasted with teaching water rationing by allowing a limited amount of water use during training exercises. Water and liquids were even controlled at meal times. All this was to train the individual in self-discipline and to get the body and mind ready for the hardships of combat.

Basic training taught me many things, but the primary purpose of basic training was to get the soldier in shape, both physically and mentally, for combat. The military initially assumes that everyone will go to combat. It is only after basic training that we were assigned to specialty outfits for further training. At the end of basic training, most soldiers were already assigned to a replacement unit, where they were then disbursed to their next unit for training. It was during this time that I learned that I was being assigned to ASTP. My assignment was to the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago. For a Florida boy who had only traveled out of the state of Florida to Georgia, this was really going to "parts unknown".

My trip from Fort Hood, Texas, to Chicago, Illinois, was aboard a U.S. Army troop train. Having been inducted in the middle of July, and with the traditional army "hurry up and wait" at both ends of my basic training, it was late November when I arrived in Chicago. We arrived in the train yards during the night. It was when I awoke and looked out my window that I saw snow for the first time. At that time, coal was the primary fuel for locomotives. The train yards always had coal piles. During the night a light snow had fallen. This was the setting for my remarkable first view of snow. As I looked out my train window, I saw the jet black coal peeking through a small layer of freshly fallen snow. The vivid contrast between the black coal and white snow is a picture that will remain in my memory forever.

I do not remember too much about getting settled, but I do recall that our home was the former location of the 108th Engineers' armory. This was a rather large

building with a basketball gymnasium floor in the middle, surrounded by other rooms. These rooms varied in size, ranging from an occupancy of four up to around twenty. As I recall, my room had eight. In reality, our roommates became our family. They took on the qualities of a squad from our days in training.

The first thing I can identify about this location was the horrible, noxious odor. We were not too far from the Chicago stockyards. The stench from the stockyards was overwhelming. It boggled my mind to think that anyone could live under these conditions. Little did I realize that the physiology of the human body was such that, after a short period of time, it desensitized the organs of the nose against certain odors. It only took a short while until, when visitors complained about the odor, we would say, "What odor?".

The armory in which we were housed was on Wentworth Avenue, directly across from Comiskey Park, the home of baseball's Chicago Cubs. On many occasions, we took our physical training exercises in Comiskey Park. Our days began with reveille at 5:00 am. Our routine in the morning was a jog of approximately one mile. At first, snow on the ground was intermittent. But the deeper we got into winter, the heavier the snow became. It became not uncommon for us to have our outdoor jogging exercises cancelled due to the heavy snow. During those cancellations, we would do in-place exercises inside the armory building, where we had a large basketball court. This is where we held formations and also did intramural sports. These sports activities were a part of our additional training exercises. I became interested in wrestling and became the champion in my weight class. One thing the army would never let up on was the requirement that we remain in top physical condition.

Since I had already completed my freshman year in college, many of the courses I was required to take were repeats. There were, however, many new courses for me, which were very appealing. I can still remember one very specific course that has served me well all my life. It was a course in logic. I often think of it as the “cause and effect” subject matter. Many times you will hear people say they didn't "think it through". What they are really saying is that they didn't consider the effects of their actions. In these instances, their actions are, in reality, the cause. It is just too common, in our culture today, for people to not consider all the effects of their actions.

I will not spend too much time discussing some aspects of my stay in Chicago, since more will be covered in another segment of this autobiography. This time period did, however, generate friendships that stayed with me throughout my entire army career and even some until today. It was also the time period that led me to meet the beautiful young lady, a high school girl then, who became my bride of now more than sixty-four years.

While living in the armory and going to school at the Illinois Institute of

Technology, our lives were totally structured from the beginning of the day until we lay down to go to sleep at night. I would estimate there were approximately two hundred of us enrolled in the ASTP program at our location. All of our meals were served from the mess hall in the armory. The first thing each morning was the usual muster and roll call. Then we had our exercise period, which usually consisted of the one mile jog. This was followed by a time when breakfast began. Some chose to eat early and to dress for classes afterwards; others chose the opposite procedure.

After breakfast we were then formed into groups, and we marched to classes. The distance to our classes was approximately three blocks. This took us about ten minutes to accomplish. In the wintertime, when the snow was falling heavily, it was quite an awesome trip. We made the same trip to and from the armory at lunchtime, and again at 5:00 pm which was the end of our class day. Our evening meal was around 6:00. At 7:00, supervised study began. Every student was required to be in his room and at his desk until 9:00 pm.

From 9:00 to11:00 pm was free time. This was not enough time to travel away from the armory, so most everyone developed some use for this free time. Many would play a pickup game of basketball on the gym floor. Others would spend time in all sorts of body conditioning. It was during that time that many of the students would make their daily phone calls. Getting to a telephone to make a call was not easy. As I remember, there were only about five telephone booths, and many would be occupied for more than an hour. Waiting for a phone booth created more personal confrontations than any other cause. At 11:00 pm, it was “lights out“.

This was our weekly routine Monday through Friday. On Friday nights, rather than having a tortured supervised study, we were allowed free time from 7:00 to 10:00 pm. During this free time, we were at liberty to leave the armory. Since this time was short, very few soldiers left the armory. My experience in finding a local neighborhood bar is covered in another phase of this autobiography. Saturday mornings were spent in traditional army tasks, weekly inspections, and clean-up time. We were then at personal liberty from noon on Saturday until 6:00 pm Sunday evening. At 7:00 pm on Sunday evening, our structured study period began again. We were confined back in the armory, with our structured routine, until the next weekend.

Chicago was truly a serviceman's town. Since it was such a large metropolitan city, the influence of service personnel had little effect on its activities. The city's elect took many steps to make Chicago a pleasant experience for service personnel. Probably the most universally utilized benefit was the offer of free transportation on the streetcars, except during rush hour periods. Most service personnel knew exactly when these rush hour periods began and ended. We would arrange our travel accordingly. There was also a way of beating the system if we were at the beginning or the end of the rush hour. Many of the

streetcars had dividers in the middle where a motor man would collect fares. As we passed this divider, we paid our toll. If we realized we would reach our destination after the rush hour began, we would go to the back of the streetcar. If we knew we would reach our destination after the rush hour ended, we would remain in the front of the streetcar. This was one of the little tricks we learned as time progressed.

There were many additional benefits for servicemen. Not only were there discounted rates for practically all the events in the city, the USO had many free tickets for most of the plays and major activities of the city. The fact that we were limited in pay to fifty dollars per month had no effect on our ability to take part in the cultural and recreational activities of Chicago. As an aside, deducted from this fifty dollars was our insurance, and we were also required to pay for our laundry. Our net disposable income was approximately forty dollars.

It was in Chicago that I saw my first legitimate stage play, my first professional football game, my first ice hockey games, and my first major sports competition between the “Big 10” colleges. I saw Bronko Nagurski play football for the Chicago Bears. I saw Angelo Bertelli play football for Notre Dame. I saw the last competitive sports contest, which was basketball, by Otto Graham of Northwestern. I saw George Mikan play basketball for DePaul. All of these athletes are legends in their respective sports. As I look back on my life now, it is my opinion that my short stay in Chicago and my freshman year at Rollins College changed my perspective of life dramatically. Those two time periods, even though they spanned only a little more than a year and a half, opened my eyes to a bigger world than I had known. Even though I was not conscious of it at the time, they were life-changing times for me.

As the war continued in Europe, and particularly in Africa and Italy, the army realized that it would need more foot soldiers to accomplish its goals both in Europe and in Asia. A ready and ripe source for these foot soldiers was the ASTP program. So those of us in the ASTP program learned in late winter of 1944 that the program was being closed down. We were not sure of our fate, but we knew that we would be assigned to an infantry line organization. After going through the usual shutdown procedures and getting ready for shipment, we learned that all of the ASTP students in the Chicago Corps area were being shipped to the 96th Division in Camp White, Oregon. I don't know exactly how many students this represented, but it was several thousand.

There were several troop trains from the Chicago area departing and arriving in Oregon around the same time. This trip was across the northern states, many of them bordering Canada. It was a beautiful trip, considering it was on an army troop train. As was customary for the army, stops were made where all troops disembarked for exercises. I remember that, being in the early spring of the year and along the northern route, many of the stops had snow on the ground.

Lou's first squad with 96th Division

The 96th Division was an infantry division that had just completed maneuvers in Fort Lewis, Washington, and had relocated to Camp White. It was being brought up to full strength for assignment to combat training operations. Many of the original soldiers that formed the 96th Division were from Texas, and many of them were of Mexican descent. The addition of the students from the ASTP brought the division up to combat strength. The makeup of the soldiers in the division represented quite a contrast in educational and social backgrounds. Most of those from the ASTP program had finished at least one year of college and represented a middle income social class. Many of the incumbent soldiers in the division had never finished high school and were from a lower income class. Privately, I had officers tell me that they were elated to have soldiers who could read and write. I'm not sure it was the intent of the army when they shut down the ASTP program to increase the IQ level of the combat organizations, but that was the end result. When we joined the division in the middle of March of 1944, all of the ASTP students were privates. By the time we were involved in our first combat operation, approximately seven months later, a large number of the ASTP students were in leadership roles as noncommissioned officers (noncoms). By the end of the war, the majority of noncoms in our division were former ASTP students. This was the first revelation to me of the power of knowledge and education.

At first the task of assimilating us former ASTP students into the division was an arduous one. The incumbent soldiers were constantly chiding us about not having been on maneuvers with them. There is no doubt that these maneuvers had been difficult and exhausting. Nevertheless, we newcomers tried to fit in and began our training with the line organization. Naturally, we were not as skilled in combat operations as those who had been training while we were going to school. However, in a short time we began to fit in. Each of the groups, old timers and newcomers, began to recognize what each had to contribute.

Training continued, but now with all the vacant spots filled. All that was needed now was some specific training for the combat operation in which we would be involved. It didn't take too long for us newcomers to start receiving promotions within our respective organizations. Due to the fact that my résumé and subsequent aptitude tests indicated that I was interested in and capable of radio

communications, I was made acting communications sergeant of my company. The acting designation did not bother me initially, since I was now an acting noncom. In that capacity, I did not have to either serve on KP or wall a post on guard duty. In a rather short time I did, however, begin to resent the fact that I was doing the job but not getting paid for it.

Lou on bivouac in Oregon

About six weeks after we arrived at Camp White, Oregon, the entire division was relocated to Camp Callan in southern California. This was a former anti-aircraft training site. It was located in La Jolla, just north of San Diego. As an aside, after the war a championship golf course was built on this location and it became the site of the Andy Williams Open. Even today it is one of the tour stops on the PGA tournament schedule. The purpose of our relocation to this site was to begin amphibious training. The marines at Camp Pendleton were our instructors.

During the early stages of World War II in the South Pacific, the U.S. Marine Corps created and developed the elements of amphibious warfare. It was these elements that we would be taught while we were at Camp Callan. They consisted of every aspect of amphibious operation, from abandoning a ship at sea to landing in an assault craft. Much of the training could be conducted on dry land, but a lot of it required going to sea. Going on simultaneously with the amphibious training were classes for support groups. These classes included such subjects as communications, ship loading, medical care, evacuation, etc. It was there that I began training as an amphibious communications specialist for my company. With this training, I finally became the communications sergeant for my company, and thus I was finally officially promoted.

I was assigned to carry an SCR T300D radio, known then as the "walkie talkie". This radio was essentially for communications between the company commander and the battalion commander. Additionally, we had smaller radios called "handie talkies" which were used by the company commander for communications with his platoon leaders. All of these radios used rather large batteries since those were the days before solid-state electronics. They all used vacuum tubes which required filaments to be heated by the A battery and the higher voltage supplied

Lou on maneuvers in Oregon

by the B battery. Modern technology with solid-state electronics has made communications equipment of that era collector's items.

The training that we received on the base at Camp Callan primarily involved classroom instruction. When we needed training in the amphibious phases of the operations, we would go to the naval facilities in San Diego. This required a motorized trip of approximately one hour. We would travel in convoys, with troops dropped off at key intersections for traffic control. I can remember acting as a traffic controller on many instances. San Diego was the location of some rather large aircraft building facilities. As part of the camouflaged defense for these facilities, they were covered in their entirety with fence netting. False residential neighborhoods were built on top of the netting. The magnitude of some of these camouflaged installations was mind-boggling.

A lot of our time was spent in learning how to properly go over the side of a large ship in order to board the landing craft. This was accomplished by using rope ladders. These rope ladders were, in essence, large rope nets that extended for several hundred feet along the side of the ship. This descent was accomplished with full field packs and our weapons slung over our backs. In my case, I was also carrying a radio. We practiced this for many hours on dry land, but in no way could it truly simulate the wave conditions you would encounter aboard a ship at sea. Even in a relatively calm sea, the movement of the mother ship and the movement of the landing craft which we were boarding were never in sync. The real test was the moment we felt the bottom of the landing craft with our feet, we must immediately release all attachment to the rope ladder. If there was any hesitancy on our part, the next step down might be twenty feet when the landing craft was in a trough, or the converse, we may be struck by the floor of the landing craft when it was on a crest.

We could only practice this under lab conditions. The practical test would come when we were at sea.

Another significant benchmark was going through the “abandon ship” drill. Since there was always the possibility of our transport ship being torpedoed, the abandon ship drill was a critical step in our training. The culmination of this drill was when we were required to jump off a pier into the ocean. The height of the pier above the water simulated the distance of a ship deck above the ocean. This was approximately thirty feet. Everyone was required to make this jump. One of the fundamental requirements was that no soldier could be pushed off. All had to jump on their own. I remember a few timid souls who were so frightened that they were required to stand on the pier ready to jump for almost twenty-four hours.

The correct procedure for abandoning ship and jumping into the ocean was to have our arms crossed in front of us, holding on to our life vests. Then with our legs crossed, we were to jump feet first. Thank goodness we never were required to implement this training. As an aside, I recall an abandon ship drill when we were approaching the invasion of the Philippines. One of the procedures upon abandoning ship was the announcement as to the direction and distance to the closest land. On this specific drill, the loudspeaker announced that the closest land was five miles away, straight down. At that time we were over one of the deepest spots in the ocean.

Lou on furlough, 1944

After approximately two months of training, we were given our port of

embarkation (POE) furlough. After our furlough, we would return to Camp San Luis Obispo, which was in the San Francisco Bay area. From there we would make hard departure to the Pacific theater of operations. We had no clue as to where we might be headed. One night while we were at San Luis Obispo, we encountered a tremendous explosion that shook our barracks and rattled the windows. We later learned that this was the now famous Port Chicago explosion that destroyed a munitions ship being loaded and killed hundreds of sailors. Many of the casualties were black stevedores involved in loading the ship. This explosion was approximately twenty miles away from where our barracks were located. A few days later, we were taken by barges to our transport ships, and we passed the docks where the explosions had occurred.

Lou, Dad, Ken, & Jim 1944

There was no training while we were at Camp San Luis Obispo. All of our activities were focused on embarkation. While our ship was tied up in San Francisco Bay, I witnessed my first contact with seasickness. Our company's first sergeant was extremely sensitive to motion sickness. In fact, he did not finish a plate of food during any of our amphibious training operations while in San Diego. He would become deathly ill the moment he stepped aboard one of the landing craft. When we boarded the transport in San Francisco, he immediately went to his bunk and remained there for the next five days until we arrived in Honolulu. Even when the ship was tied to the dock, he became ill. To some degree, he was able to overcome the extremes of this condition before we landed in the Philippines, but he never was able to overcome it completely. He succumbed to an illness in the Philippines, probably due to his weakened condition, and I never heard of him again.

Sailing out from San Francisco Bay under the Golden Gate Bridge is an experience I will never forget. Most of us stayed on the deck as we departed and remained there until we were out of sight of land. Approximately five days later, we could see landfall and by then we had been informed that our destination was Hawaii. Sailing into Pearl Harbor was uneventful. There were no signs whatsoever of the devastation that had occurred there on December 7, 1941. This was approximately two and a half years later. The port was a beehive of activity. It had become the staging area for all military operations in the Pacific. That is exactly what my infantry division would do while in Hawaii. We would train and stage for a military operation. No one knew at that time that we would make an amphibious landing in the Philippines and, for the first time during the war, recapture territory that had been seized by the Japanese. This would be the invasion of Leyte in the Philippines.

After unloading our troop ship at Pearl Harbor, we traveled by motor convoy to our camp, which was about twenty-five miles from Honolulu. The camp was located near a small town called Wewa. The camp was considered an annex to the Schofield Barracks, which was the main army installation in Honolulu that had been damaged during the attack by the Japanese on Pearl Harbor.

After a couple of days, we began serious advanced amphibious training. I recall with fond memories our training in a large pineapple field. The purpose of our training was the proper coordination between tanks and infantry in a combat situation. Tanks were a very formidable weapon, but they were at the mercy of foot soldiers for their protection during close combat. This was necessary, since a tank could not effectively protect itself against a foot soldier, who could bombard it with a Molotov cocktail or some other kind of explosive. Protective foot soldiers were their best friends. It was in these large pineapple fields where we conducted our training exercises.

As is the case with many agricultural products, only the prime products are harvested for the commercial market. Such was the case with pineapples. These large pineapple fields contained many delicious pineapples after the harvest. We salvaged many and ate pineapples until pineapple juice was running out of our ears. We even brought them back to our mess halls, where our company cooks prepared fruit cups and made pineapple upside-down cake. All of us were saddened when our tank infantry training was over. An interesting aspect of this training was that I never saw a tank in actual combat conditions, except when I was on Okinawa, where flame-throwing tanks were used in routing out the enemy soldiers who were entrenched in caves and foxholes.

Most of our training was focused on actual marine amphibious operations. No longer were the U.S. Marines our instructors. Our instruction was now conducted by our own leaders, implementing the knowledge we had learned in San Diego before leaving the United States. We were now getting serious. The culmination of all our amphibious training was the simulated invasion of the island Maui in the

Hawaiian chain. At the conclusion of our training in San Diego, we had made a simulated invasion of the island of San Clemente, but this invasion of the island of Maui took on all the characteristics of a real combat operation.

After boarding our transport ship in Pearl Harbor, we headed for the Island of Maui. It was only an overnight trip, but when we arrived offshore of Maui, the wind was blowing fiercely. To have attempted a training operation under these conditions would have been disastrous. The simulated invasion was cancelled, but the high command determined that it was necessary for a small group to go ashore and check out the beach. As a radio operator, I was selected to be in the small group. When we arrived at the shoreline, it required considerable skill by our landing craft coxswain to keep the landing craft from becoming "broached". Broaching is when the landing craft is rotated such that its centerline axis is parallel to the beach. When this occurs, the boat coxswain is unable to move the craft backwards and away from the beach. It only takes a short time for a broached landing craft to be grounded and destroyed by the pounding waves of a rough surf. In our small group that made the landing, there were several craft which were broached. It broke my heart to see those beautiful landing craft with their Chrysler marine engines being totally destroyed by the pounding surf.

The weather conditions did not significantly change during the day, and we were forced to remain on the island overnight. I can recall what an ordeal that was, since we had not brought with us any food or shelter for an overnight stay. The following day we were able to return to our transport, and the simulated invasion was subsequently carried out. This was the last simulation in our training. The next time it would be for real.

Even though our training was intense when we were in the Honolulu area, we did have some time to see the sights and experience a small bit of the culture of the island of Oahu. In addition to the large pineapple fields, there were large sugar cane fields located on the island. I was able to take a tour of one of the facilities where brown sugar was processed from the sugar cane. The brown sugar was then shipped to the United States, where it was refined into the white sugar which we commonly use for cooking and baking. It was there that I learned that they set the sugar cane fields on fire prior to the harvest. This had no effect on the juices and the cane, and it eliminated the chaff from the cane stalks. I also learned that after the juice had been pressed from the cane stalks, the stalks were used for fuel in the factory boilers. This cane pulp fuel was called “bagasse“. It was also a common fuel in the sugar cane fields of Florida. Little did I realize at the time that the term was common with the boiler service personnel who would service the power plant boilers for me later in life when I became involved in power generation.

I also took advantage of several trips into Honolulu. The town was totally focused on being a playground for military personnel. My recollection is that it was like a glorified carnival midway. It did, however, have many prestigious

eating establishments, and it was there that I experienced my first grilled steak. I also made several visits to Waikiki Beach. Many of the hotels along the beach were taken over by the government for the use of officer personnel for recreational purposes. However, this did not preclude the use of the beach by other military personnel. One of my memories of the beach is the presence of coral in the surf. This made the surf a little less pleasant than what I was accustomed to at New Smyrna Beach.

It seems that we were in Hawaii for approximately two months, due to the following analysis. We had sailed from San Francisco the latter part of July and the invasion of Leyte in the Philippines was on October twentieth. The invasion of Leyte was approximately one month after we departed from Hawaii, which means that our training in Hawaii took place during August and September. All of this was in the year 1944.

We boarded our transport ship to leave Hawaii approximately one week before departure. During this week, we were not confined to the ship; we could come and go as our schedule allowed. One of the highlights of this week's activities was a USO show performed there in the shipyards at Pearl Harbor. The star of this show was Eddie Peabody, the banjo king. This was my first USO show, and I was significantly impressed with the quality of all of the performers. This brings to mind another incident that occurred while in Honolulu involving entertainment stars. Our company mail clerk, Roy Sachs, was the first cousin of Jack Benny. While we were in Hawaii, Jack Benny was there en route to a USO performance in the Pacific. Roy Sachs contacted him and spent a few days with him while he was in Honolulu. We all listened in awe at the stories Roy told us when he returned from this visit.

When all the troops were confined to the ship, we knew that our departure was imminent. As I recall, the departure from Honolulu and Pearl Harbor was in the middle of the night. After a few days at sea, we were informed of our destination. This destination was the island of Yap. Yap is located in the Western Caroline Islands and was the location of a large Japanese naval installation. We were informed that it would be necessary for us to eliminate it as a Japanese base of naval operations, in order to control the sea in that part of the Pacific. Daily we would have classes and training on the beaches where we would land. The details of our mission were so complete that we knew the island of Yap like the back of our hands.

A short time before the invasion date, it was announced that the invasion of Yap was off. Our route was changed, and we were on our way to another place to stage for another invasion. I will always believe that this was a diversionary tactic conceived by the military to keep our ultimate destination a secret. There were just too many people who knew our destination was Yap when we departed Hawaii.

Lou with company guidon
Leyete Phillipines

The destination for our staging area for the invasion of the Philippines was Einewetok in the Marshall Islands. This was a very primitive atoll which was a part of the Carolines. It is where the now famous H-Bomb tests were conducted after WW II. It was also the general location of a U.S. military tracking station, which was used during the development of the intercontinental ballistic missiles. It was during this trip to Einewetok that we crossed two artificial boundaries which, by tradition, prompted ceremonies aboard our troop ship. The first was crossing the International Date Line. The second was crossing the Equator. The latter one prompted the most elaborate ceremonies. This ritual was similar to a college fraternity initiation. After it was over, we were considered members in good standing with those who had made these crossings. We were given cards with our names on them in recognition of this event. I remember having mine for many years after I returned from service, but it eventually was lost.

While staging in the Marshall Islands, there were no military facilities available, so we stayed aboard the troop transport, although we were shuttled to the island regularly for exercising and relaxation. As I recall, before we left the area and headed for our invasion, we changed the troop ship we were on. I later learned that this was to facilitate our disembarking from the ship onto our landing craft. Our landing crafts for the invasion of the Philippines would be Amtraks rather than LCVPs (landing craft vehicles and personnel), which had been the norm for amphibious operations up to that time. The Amtrak carried slightly fewer soldiers

then the LCVP. It did not have a bow door, and it was propelled by rotating tracks on each side. In the water it was not nearly as maneuverable as an LCVP. But the advantage of it was that when it reached the shore, it became a self-propelled vehicle, much like a tank.

Vernon, Lou, A.B. Windham
Leyete Phillipines, 1944

I don't know what was going on logistically while we were at Einewetok, but one thing I remember vividly is that no military training occurred while we were there. Even though we were shuttled almost daily to shore, it was almost like a daily picnic. Other than time spent in physical training, the remainder of the time we were playing volleyball, poker, and indulging in other recreational activities. I even remember receiving small rations of beer. On one of these daily visits, I remember seeing a scene provided by a native woman of the island that was indicative of their primitive nature. A native woman was breastfeeding a piglet instead of a human infant. I am sure she also had a baby human to nurse, but the care and feeding of this animal was as critical to her primitive lifestyle as was the care and feeding of her own infant. In contrast to our culture, it was startling to comprehend that such primitive activities still existed.

I would estimate that we stayed at Einewetok around two weeks. When we departed, we were on our way to recapture the first American territory seized by the Japanese at the beginning of WW II. That was the central point of the message that was used in the psychology for the troops involved in the invasion of the Philippines. We were not at sea very long until this message was being hammered home. We learned that our destination would be Leyte. Leyte was an island in the Philippine chain, located about midway between the northern and

southern extremities. Much of our time at sea was spent reviewing aerial photographs of the beach area where we would land. In retrospect, I recall that the surveillance and knowledge information we received for the invasion of Yap was much more extensive than what we received for the invasion of Leyte.

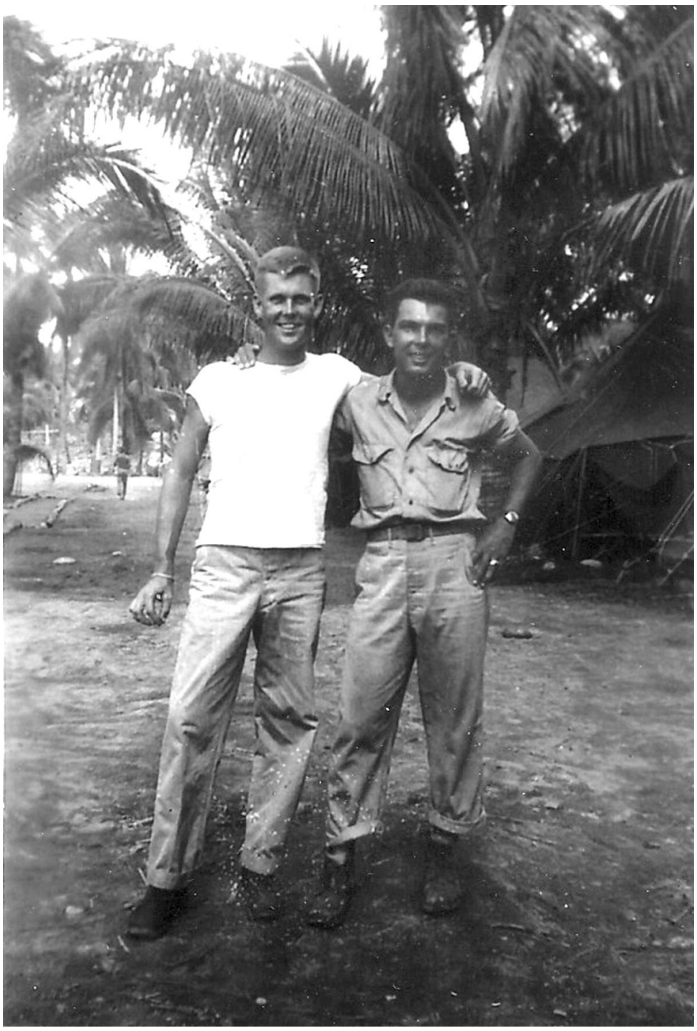
Whether a date certain for the invasion was given us is not clear in my recollection, but I do remember vividly that all of us realized that it was imminent and inevitable. One thing I can say about the American soldiers, most of whom were in their late teens or early twenties, is that I never saw a single one who ever displayed or expressed any fear. Even though we knew without a doubt that some of us would be injured or fatally wounded, I never saw but one soldier who thought it would happen to him. That soldier was our first fatality on Leyte.

One memorable event occurred the night before our invasion. There was a group of three of us leaning over the troop ship's railing, watching the phosphorus in the water light up the wake of the ship. Inevitably, the conversation led to talk about the invasion in which we would all be involved the next morning. One of the group made the observation that the religious diversity of our group was the thing that had made America so great and for which we were fighting. In that group of three soldiers, one was Catholic, one was Protestant, and the other Hebrew. To my knowledge, that was the first time we had ever recognized the different religions among us. It may be significant that we had just completed the various religious services aboard ship. The ship's loudspeaker would announce when and where religious services would be held. The night before the invasion, the attendance was the highest I ever saw. Very few soldiers stayed away. During the war one of the most renowned war correspondents, Ernie Pyle, coined the phrase “There are no atheists in foxholes”. This was a manifestation of that phrase.

Early the next morning, we were awakened, although I seriously doubt that there were many soldiers who slept that night. Unknown to us at the time, we were about to receive our last hot meal for many days to come. During the trip, we had received our ammunition and all the supplies we would carry ashore with us. After we ate, all that was left was for us to do was don our battle gear. Before daybreak we began disembarking our troop ship and loading into the amphibious Amtraks. As the Amtraks were loaded, they began circling in groups off each side of the ship. The groups ultimately contained around twelve Amtraks. Each group represented an invasion wave. Obviously there were many groups in a wave, but the sequence had been previously designed by the military commanders.

To the untrained eye, it appeared that all of these small bustles going around in circles were in chaos. Such was not the case. There was a planned order and months of training behind it all. There was a landing controller who gave the signal for the invasion waves to form. Ultimately another signal was given, and the wave began heading toward shore. While all this apparent chaos was going

on around the troop ships, the shoreline was being bombarded by U.S. Navy planes and ships. This bombardment ceased as the first wave approached the shore. All of our amphibious training was now about to be executed as the kickoff of the "big game" began.



A.B. Windham & Lou
Layte Phillippines

As our company communications sergeant, I was always in the presence of the company commander. Since he went ashore in the first wave of the invasion, I was also in the early waves of an amphibious invasion. The time interval was only a matter of a few minutes. When we landed at the shoreline, we were to proceed inland in our Amtraks until we were stopped by enemy fire. That was a good military plan, but it turned out to be our first lesson in combat. Military plans often do not occur the way they are planned or anticipated. We met no enemy resistance on the beaches where we landed. We were greeted by scantily clad male natives who could not speak English. We shortly learned that they understood Spanish very well. Since we had some Mexicans from Texas in our company, they immediately became our interpreters.

As we began to move inland, we encountered swampy land and the Amtraks became useless. For the reminder of the campaign on Leyte, we would be on foot. We began moving inland without any enemy resistance, accompanied by countless natives. There were no roads in the area, and I only recall walking through marshy fields with very little large growth of trees. Coconut palms were everywhere. The coconuts were the sustenance of existence for the natives. During my stay in the Philippines, I learned how vital the coconut was in every phase of the native's life. In a few days, we would run out of food and water due to outrunning our supply lines, and the coconut provided the food and water for many of us.

Lou in Layte Phillipines

All of the native males wore a large knife on their sides. It was about half the size of a machete and was carried in a scabbard. It was essential to them in their dealings with the coconut trees. Of the thousands of coconut trees I saw in the Philippines, I can't remember ever seeing one that did not have steps cut in it. They would climb the trunks of these coconut trees almost at the pace of a trot. When we ran out of drinking water, they would climb a tree and cut down several coconuts at the right stage of ripeness. They would then take their knives and hack off a section and we would pour out the liquid and drink it. This liquid we drank was slightly turbid; it had not matured into coconut milk.

The natives were very emphatic that we not drink any of the better milk, nor eat any of the dried coconut meat. We later learned that this liquid from the green coconuts was what the mothers fed their infants when they were unable to breastfeed them. They used the dried coconut meat as a source of coconut oil, which had many uses but was used extensively for the care of their hair. Many times I have seen Philippine women washing their hair in a stream and then pouring chopped coconut meat on it and then combing it out. That is the superb coconut oil treatment. As is the custom in all civilizations, the Filipinos also made an alcoholic drank from the coconut. I do not know exactly how they did it, but the operation took place while the coconut was still attached to the tree. It was called "tuba". It had an appearance similar to beer, but tasted nothing like it. It had a slightly tart taste, and I would guess the alcohol content was similar to that of wine.

On the first day, there was only sporadic contact with the enemy as we moved inland. We had no idea what the other troops were encountering, but we knew that we only had minimal resistance. In the late afternoon, we ceased our advance and prepared to dig in for the night. We never, ever advanced at night.

During all of my combat operations in the Pacific theater, we only moved during the day and dug in at night. During the hours of darkness, we shot anything that moved. There were many occasions where close friends were shot by their buddies when one would leave his foxhole to relieve himself. We actually had two occasions of such fatalities in our company. In one instance, a soldier shot and killed his very best friend. As General Sherman said during the Civil War, "War is Hell".

Lou,Vernon, Leyte, Phillippines

After the first shovelful of digging our foxholes, we encountered groundwater. That was indicative of how swampy the terrain was. Nevertheless, we were forced to dig out a trench deep enough for us to lie in. Around dusk and after we had completed our foxholes, the Japanese enemy began to shell us intermittently with mortar fire. This required us to immediately seek the refuge provided by our foxholes, wet as they may be. This was our true initiation to combat. During these mortar shellings our company incurred its first fatality. The soldier, a platoon sergeant, was the one aboard the troop ship who had stated he would not survive. Even though he was a Mexican from south Texas, his grandfather had been a Dutch immigrant to Mexico, and his name was Van Dyke. He was my first platoon sergeant when I joined the division and remained so until I became involved in the communications activities of my company.

I will never forget that first night in combat, sitting in a foxhole waist deep in water. It may sound crude, but I remember how comforting the warmth from urination would feel when sitting in the water-filled hole. When we emerged from the foxholes the following morning, many of us observed leeches on our bodies. When attempting to pull them off, they would break apart, with their tentacles still attached. We quickly learned the proper technique for removing leeches. We would contact their slimy bodies with the lighted end of a cigarette. This would cause them to curl up and release their grip on our bodies. This became the SOP (standard operating procedure) for removing leeches. This encounter with

the parasites of the tropics in the South Pacific was a harbinger of things to come. In retrospect, we encountered more non-battle casualties on Leyte than battle casualties. The non-battle casualties were primarily the results of parasites and fungi which caused dysentery, jungle rot, infections, etc. Most of these problems were disabling, but not fatal.

While mentioning the fact that non-battle casualties exceeded the battle casualties in the Philippines, it is worthwhile to consider the status of medicine and medical care at that time. Even though the survival rate for the battle wounded was the highest in the history of warfare for the United States, it was nothing compared to modern medicine and medical care. The miracle drugs such as penicillin and other powerful antibiotics had not yet been discovered or developed. The only true miracle drugs available during WW II were the sulfa drugs. But one of the shortcomings of the sulfa drugs was the requirement that excessive amounts of fluids be administered along with the drugs. This was a difficult requirement in a combat situation, since water had to be transported to the frontline troops, in many instances on the backs of soldiers. We were adamantly instructed never to administer the sulfa drugs carried in our first aid kits unless adequate water was available. In treating those with fungal diseases, the fungicides available were crude by current standards. Tincture of Merthiolate, which has now been banned by the FDA, was a very common antiseptic. The prostheses available for those who sustained the loss of a limb were very crude compared to those available today. In general, all aspects of medication and medical care during that war was very crude compared to today's standards.

The exact sequence of the battle actions on Leyte is vague to me at this time, but I recall certain meaningful events. We were constantly supported with heavy bombardments provided by the large guns of our naval vessels and by aircraft flying off of the carriers. A few days after we landed and were moving inland, this support ceased. We only speculated that it was due to the fact that our heavy artillery had now landed. It was a considerable time later before we learned that all of the naval vessels had left our area to participate in one of the largest and most significant naval battles of the Pacific, the Battle of Leyte Gulf. It turned out to be a very decisive battle and is worth every reader’s time to read about the history of that battle.

I remember my company, F Company, relieving another company in the mountainous area where they had experienced intermittent contact with the enemy. As we were moving in and they were moving out, a reinforced Japanese patrol appeared on the scene. A fire fight resulted from this encounter. We suffered some casualties, including one or two fatalities. We were confronted not only with rifle fire, but also with mortars. The Japanese had a small mortar which they called a knee mortar. It was not fired from the knee but was held at an angle on the ground. It had no tripod or sighting mechanism like the American mortars. The Japanese soldiers were well-trained in the use of these mortars

and were very accurate with them.

We remained entrenched at this location for several days. It was from there that I was assigned to a reinforced patrol. Our assignment was to move out and attempt to make physical contact with another US division that had landed on the other side of the island, much later than our initial landing. I was selected to go on this patrol as the radio operator that would keep contact with our operations base. As was typical of so many plans, we lost radio contact after the second day. It was only restored when we were one day out from our return. We were gone for approximately one week and never made contact with the other division. I am sure we covered areas where no Americans had ever been. We went into places that I thought no human had ever been, but I was sadly mistaken. There were coconut palms all over the place, but I never saw one tree trunk that did not have steps cut in it. This patrol, however, afforded me the opportunity to see parts of the island seen by no other American soldiers.

I remember being in a rest area for Thanksgiving. It was quite memorable because we received a hot meal that day. By Christmas, the island was secure and we were getting ready with new replacements and new equipment for another operation. I remember that all noncoms were requested to make written suggestions as to how to improve any aspect of the combat operations. My suggestion was that all noncoms be provided with morphine in their first aid pouches. I had seen instances of wounded soldiers lying in pain while awaiting the arrival of a medic. Medics were not a part of an infantry company but were assigned by the medical corps. My logic was that line noncoms could administer painkilling morphine to injured comrades while awaiting the arrival of a medic. Since the use of illegal narcotics was not a consideration at that time, my suggestion, also made by others I am sure, was adopted for our next operation. Little did I realize, at that time, that I personally would be able to administer such a painkilling drug.

The things I remember most vividly about Leyte were first, the lack of involvement in an all-out attack by the enemy, and second, the jungle nature of the terrain. Our combat operations involved only sporadic contacts with the Japanese. I would estimate that the maximum number of fatalities we ever suffered in any one encounter was no more than three. As said before, we suffered more non-battle casualties there than battle casualties. We also learned a little insight into the lifestyle of the natives. One thing that was immediately obvious was that the natives never sat on the ground. They would always sit back on their haunches with their buttocks slightly off the ground. This was probably due to the wet soil conditions throughout the island. I don't know what the rainfall was there, but I remember a comment that was made in the “Deadeye Dispatch“, our division newspaper. It said that the Philippines had two seasons, the wet season and the dry season. The dry season was last Monday afternoon between the hours of three and four. That pretty much described the weather on the island of Leyte.

Another image I will always remember is the native's use of natural vegetation. Since the tropics were overrun with coconut palms and banana trees, these constituted the natural vegetation most used by the natives. They would use the banana leaves as umbrellas. It was more common to see the women using these than the men. The most universally used vegetation were the fronds of the coconut palm. Since bamboo was also very prolific, it was used for the structural elements of their thatched buildings. They would use the sinews of a banana leaf to tie the bamboo elements together. It was astonishing to see just how strong these banana leaf sinews were. I even witnessed them using them in a manner similar to the way our law enforcement people use handcuffs. The natives had a certain element of social structure in their villages. On one occasion, I was doing guard duty at a bridge near a small village. Our guard duty was to protect the bridge against renegade Japanese who had refused to surrender and were involved in insurgent activities by blowing up bridges. Meanwhile, some local natives involved in one of their games, similar to our checkers, became a little too rowdy due to too much consumption of tuba, the alcoholic drink made from the liquid of the green coconuts. In a very short time, the constabulary arrived and took one of them away with his hands bound behind him with banana leaf sinews.

Due to the rugged and impassable terrain, on many occasions supplies for the advancing troops had to be parachuted in by transport airplanes. These parachutes were brightly colored and were made of nylon fabric. The colors identified the contents of the parachutes. Blue was for water, red for munitions, green for food rations, and white for miscellaneous. It didn't take the G.I.'s long to learn that these parachutes were valuable items for bartering with the native women who, after years of occupation by the Japanese, were desperate for materials for garment-making. The soldiers would barter for house(tent)-keeping, clothes washing, and even sex. When these facts became known, the retrieval of the parachutes became more aggressive then the retrieval of the contents. There were instances of soldiers losing their lives attempting to retrieve parachutes while under enemy fire. After being there a few months, it was not uncommon to see native women wearing brightly colored nylon garments that had been made from the parachutes.

With very few exceptions, the natives were shoeless. I am sure my observations were indigenous to the less populated areas of the Philippines. The lifestyles and customs in the larger cities such as Manila were much more advanced than those which existed on Leyte. One thing that was never in doubt was their deep-rooted contempt and hatred of the occupying Japanese and their adoration and love of the American soldier. This will always remain with me as a true example of freedom. I am sure that this was the feeling of soldiers throughout the world as they liberated people from their captors. I believe it was experiences such as this that created such an understanding and appreciation of freedom in my generation.

While basking in the sunlight of having recaptured the first American soil lost to the enemy in World War II, we began our training and outfitting for what was to become one of the most ferocious and deadly battles in the Pacific, the Battle of Okinawa. At the time of our training in the Philippines, we were not aware of what the target would be for our next operation. There was no specific training, only a continuation of the exercises which did not require a lot of support. All of the amphibious training was behind us. In retrospect, I now understand that most of our training focused on military courtesy and discipline. These are the ultimate requirements when leading troops into a battle which will result in the loss of many lives.

Aboard the troopship on the way to Okinawa, I do not recall the tension being as high and the anxiety as great as it was on the way to the Philippines. We were now seasoned combat soldiers who had a combat star to our credit. Little did we realize at the time that a combat star would be worth points to us in determining our spot in line in the rotation back to the states after the armistice was signed. One thing I do remember about that invasion was the large number of vessels involved in it. At sea, headed to the invasion, there were ships everywhere. It was difficult to distinguish between the troop transports and the supply transports, but recognizing the naval vessels was easy. I don't recall seeing any aircraft carriers or battleships since they would have been miles away providing strategic protection. There were occasional cruisers, but the most common naval vessels around us were the destroyers. They were darting in and out and around like ants at the family picnic. I recall watching hour after hour the signalmen on the

Mom with calves,Circa 1945

signal bridge communicating with other ships in the convoy. They were using the signal lights and the semaphore flags. I don't know for sure, but I suspect that was their primary means of communication between ships, since it was likely that radio silence was in effect.

The date of our invasion was Easter Sunday morning, April 1, 1945. As explained earlier in the amphibious invasion of the Philippines, after loading in the landing craft, the naval coxswains would organize their landing craft in circles that would rotate slowly in the proximity of the ship from which we had disembarked. For this invasion we were using the LCVP landing craft which would ground itself on the beach. Then a large steel bow door would hinge down, allowing the troops to disembark from the landing craft onto the beach. All this time, the coxswain was attempting to hold his craft perpendicular to the beach by the use of the twin propellers on the craft. I will always remember the skill of these coxswains in handling their craft. We landed on the beaches of Okinawa around 8:30 am on this Easter Sunday morning. There was no enemy resistance on the beach where we landed. Being a radio operator, I was privy to hearing about small to moderate resistance in other areas. It was nothing like we had been led to expect in landing on Japan's home territory for the first time. Many of us began to think this would be another invasion like the Philippines, but without the impediments of a jungle environment. Little did we realize that the Japanese were concentrating their troops along specific battle corridors for an all-out defense of the island.

Before going any further with these accounts of this battle, it is necessary to interject a few comments and additional information about Okinawa and its people, in order to put my following narrative in perspective. Some of this information is based on my own memory and some from sources that recorded this battle. Okinawa was the largest amphibious invasion of the Pacific campaign, and it was the last major campaign of the war in the Pacific. More ships were used, more troops put ashore, more supplies transported, more bombs dropped, and more naval guns fired against shore targets than any other operation in the Pacific. More people died during the Battle of Okinawa than all those killed during the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Casualties totaled more than 38,000 Americans wounded and 12,000 killed or missing. More than 107,000 Japanese and Okinawan conscripts were killed, and perhaps 100,000 Okinawan civilians perished in the battle. Okinawa was home to about 300,000 civilians. At the conclusion of hostilities, around 196,000 civilians remained. However, U.S. Army figures for the eighty-two day campaign showed a total of 142,058 civilian casualties, including those killed by artillery fire, air attacks, and those who were pressed into service by the Japanese army.

The topography of the island was rather hilly to the south, with low mountains to the north. These hills were composed of a material that was soft enough for the natives to have excavated many caves in them throughout the centuries. These caves were in essence tombs, where the bones of the deceased had been

placed in clay and ceramic pots. There were literally thousands and thousands of these family caves over the countryside. One of the factors that contributed to the ferocity of the Japanese defenses was that these caves became havens for their soldiers. They also became the favorite foxholes for the American soldiers. They certainly were not built for comfort, since they were all occupied with rats, lice, mites, etc., not to mention the bones of dead humans. But they sure provided protection against enemy fire.

Farming was rather common on the island, but the only farm product that I remember were the small bushes of tomatoes. The tomatoes were about the size of a marble. I recall many times harvesting as much as my helmet could hold and then eating them with salt which I had garnered by crushing the salt tablets which every soldier carried along with him. Consuming a fresh vegetable during the height of a combat operation was pure ecstasy. That was the first time I had ever seen those small tomatoes, but they are now common in our grocery stores. Perhaps their ancestors came from Okinawa.

On the first day of the invasion, the weather was beautiful, and we encountered meager resistance in our sector. By the time we stopped moving in the late afternoon and began to dig in, we had moved inland approximately one mile and were located on high ground that provided an excellent view of the harbor. At dusk that day, I witnessed what was probably the most spectacular sight during the war From where we were located, our view of the harbor, which contained more than a thousand ships, was fantastic. All of a sudden, tracer bullets began to appear in the sky from the ships on the perimeter. It didn't take too long before the sky was a brilliant red from the glow of the tracer bullets coming from a thousand ships. This fusillade of tracers in the sky lasted for several minutes. Realizing that tracers only represented a fraction of the total bullets fired, it was incomprehensible how any aircraft could have flown through that curtain of antiaircraft fire untouched. I don't know whether any were successful, nor did I know where the aircraft came from. I suspect they came from a field there on the island which was still operational, in spite of the tremendous shelling and bombing that it had sustained. The vision of that red night sky will remain in my memory forever.

The details of the preliminary military actions are hazy in my memory, but I do recall that our military forces moved in across the island, and we essentially separated the island into two military campaigns, one to the north and the other to the south. My division was involved in the campaign for the southern part of the island. It turned out that this was the most vicious and ferocious of the two campaigns. The area to the north was more mountainous and rugged. It was toward this direction that the U.S. Marine forces turned. The southern part of the island was where the majority of the population was centered and was also the location of the island capital. This was where the intense combat occurred, which became the identifying mark of the Battle of Okinawa. To place the campaign in its proper perspective, after the marines secured their area to the

north, they joined the army forces in the battle for the southern portion of the island.

A few days after our division had made the turn to the south, we received the unsettling news that President Roosevelt had died suddenly, while vacationing at Warm Springs, Georgia. This was on April 12, 1945. I received the news in a division mimeographed newsletter while in a foxhole. If the combat conditions were not too intense, those who brought up our supplies would also bring along mail and other items of interest. Division headquarters would publish a newsletter periodically that kept us informed of those events of particular interest to combat soldiers. The death of our commander in chief was certainly one of those events. None of us had ever heard of Harry Truman. Little did we realize at the time that he would be the one who would authorize the use of the atomic bomb, which allowed countless thousands of American soldiers to survive by avoiding the invasion of Japan. This autobiography is being written by one of those countless thousands of American soldiers who survived. I will never be able to understand the logic or rationale of those who criticized President Truman for that decision.

As we inched our way southward and the island narrowed, the intensity of the battle increased. Fatalities occurred on a daily basis. Added to these fatalities were the ever-present wounded. It was a recognized fact of warfare that a wounded soldier required much more resources in the way of men and equipment than a dead soldier. However, I can say without reservation that the United States Army during World War II had a strong commitment to the proper care and management of the bodies of the soldiers killed in action and proper accounting of their personal items. I will address more about this issue later in this narrative.

As we approached the narrow portion of the island known as the Naha-Yonaburu line, also called the Shuri line, the ferocity and intensity of combat increased. Someone recently asked me what I considered to be the most harrowing and excruciating event of the war for me. I paused for a few moments to collect my thoughts, but I immediately knew it was an experience that occurred during this period of the combat. It happened shortly after we had stopped advancing for the day and began digging in for the night. Most of us would start digging our foxholes immediately, but there were some who would take the opportunity of a lull to just relax for a few minutes and others would take this time to eat their evening rations. All of a sudden, mortar rounds started landing in our area. They were coming down like rain. The barrage lasted for several minutes and it is my perception that we sustained the most casualties in our company of any combat operation during the war. We had many fatalities and countless wounded.

My foxhole, in the general shape of a “Y” and accommodating three soldiers, sustained no physical injuries, but one of the occupants became so mentally distressed that we were forced to physically restrain him during the barrage. He

wanted to get out of the foxhole and run. This psychological affect occurred quite often with combat soldiers. I am sure there is an appropriate medical term for this, but we referred to it as “battle fatigue“. This soldier was evacuated as a medical casualty, and I never heard about him again. During this mortar barrage, one of my very best friends, from when I first joined the division in Oregon, was killed. I still remember his name. His last name was Augustine but his nickname was "Augie". He was considered the “old man” of our company. He was approximately thirty years old. That should give you some perspective of the age of the combat soldiers. Augie was a BAR (Browning automatic rifle) man and loved that rifle with a passion. It has always been my theory that he had chosen to clean and service his rifle before digging his foxhole and was caught on top when the mortar barrage began. I will always remember seeing Augie carried out on a stretcher with a gaping wound on his left side which allowed me to see his heart beating. I knew he had no chance for survival.

I am sure the Japanese chose this time and place for their mortar attack, since they knew that we would be concentrated in a relatively compact area and would also be in a state of disarray in preparing our defenses for the night. After the barrage, we anticipated a counterattack by their infantry soldiers, but that counterattack never came. I have often thought about that, and I have serious doubts about whether we could have withstood a charge by their foot soldiers. I suspect they were trying to inflict as much damage as possible to us without sustaining serious casualties of their own.

All of the U.S. forces were raising stubborn resistance on a daily basis. The following events may not be presented in their proper order. Nevertheless, they represented intense battles in which my company was engaged.

As we were moving forward on one occasion, we encountered heavy resistance from the enemy. This resulted in considerable casualties in my company.

As was the normal procedure, evacuation of the wounded was carried out, primarily by the “medics“. These medical teams consisted of corpsmen who administered the very first echelon of medical care and litter-bearers who would transport the wounded back to the aid stations. We always referred to all of them as medics. The call to them for help was usually done the old-fashioned way, by yelling out loud, “Medic! Medic! Medic!”. When you heard that call coming from several different spots, you knew you were in for a serious fight. Such was the case on this occasion. As the intensity of the battle subsided, the task of retrieving and caring for the wounded increased. As the enemy withdrew, there were always a few well-placed snipers to cover their withdrawal and prevent a counterattack by our troops. These snipers were always a hazard and threat to all those attempting to evacuate the wounded. It was during this battle that I received the Bronze Star for my actions. Since my memory of the events has been shaded by the many years that have elapsed since then, the language of the official citation is printed as follows:

## Bronze Star Citation

*"Sergeant Edward Stone, 34788469, Infantry, United. States Army. For heroic service in connection with military operations against the enemy in the vicinity of Maeda, Okinawa Island on 22, April l945. While the rifle company was advancing under heavy enemy fire from small arms and mortars one platoon was caught in a cross fire and was pinned down. Several casualties were inflicted, Sergeant Stone, hearing that all casualties were evacuated except one, volunteered to lead a. litter squad to try to evacuate the man even after an aid man had been killed in an earlier attempt, Smoke grenades were used but they did not give the necessary concealment. Thus with utter disregard for his own safety, Sergeant Stone crossed the sniper covered area and was able to evacuate the wounded man to a point where he could receive proper medical attention .His heroic and courageous action saved the life of his comrade and was an inspiration to his company."*

This is an exact copy from the yellowed and tattered original citation issued by the commanding general of the 96th Division in their General Orders Number 950, dated 4 October, 1945. My first name Louis was omitted from the citation but my serial number was correct. In the "hurry up and get home" events that occurred at the end of the hostilities, I never received the medal. As was the case of most World War II veterans, we began our lives anew and put our wartime experiences behind us. Such was the case with me until I started recalling these events as a part of this autobiography. The one thing I remember about the conditions under which I received the Bronze Star was that the soldier I retrieved was a medic that had been wounded in the evacuation of our wounded. It occurred right at dusk and I never heard any follow-up on his condition. I never knew whether he lived or died.

Shortly thereafter, I had the occasion to administer my first injection of morphine. We were involved in an intense battle for the highest ground in the area. For us veterans of the 96th Division, it was known as the Battle of Conical Hill. It was probably the most intense fighting we encountered, and it was one of the bloodiest battles of the entire Okinawa campaign. We had been stymied for a few days in our efforts to take the high ground. I can remember the words of our regimental commander concerning the efforts to secure this ground. These words, addressed to the company commanders of our battalion, were as follows: "Gentlemen, you will secure that ridge. This is not a suggestion. This is not a plan. This is not a desire. This is a goddamned order!"

The fighting intensified and continued. As we were inching our way up the ridge, a sergeant from my old platoon was wounded near me with a shot in the leg. He was what we considered a "walking wounded", but he still needed assistance in this condition to be able to make it to the aid station, which was a few hundred

yards behind the front lines. I was to assist him while turning my radio over to a helper. We had only hobbled about fifty yards when we heard a muffled explosion. Turning around, we saw a soldier rolling down the side of the ridge. We recognized him as the platoon sergeant from the same platoon as that of the walking wounded sergeant. He told me to go back and offer assistance to that soldier, and he would continue on to the aid station on his own.

When I arrived back at the side of the fallen soldier, I recognized that he had stepped on a land mine. One foot had been completely blown off at the ankle and the other was mutilated across the instep. He was still conscious and very little blood was flowing from where the foot had been severed from the ankle. This lack of blood flow was due to the body being in a state of "shock". I often saw that condition, whereby a wounded soldier's body would have a difficult time accepting blood plasma being administered by medics. In combat, the traditional manner of doing this was by hanging the plasma bottle on a rifle stuck in the ground by its bayonet. I immediately knew that this was to be my first instance of giving a morphine shot. As I opened my first aid kit to extract the syringe, I recall being more nervous than my patient. I do not recall a moment when there was any sound from him indicating he was in intense pain. Reflecting on my memoirs of the war, I do not remember ever hearing anyone make a sound that would indicate they were in pain. Maybe my mind has erased that memory, but I would like to think of it as being indicative of the manhood of the young men of my generation. Shortly after the administration of the morphine, medics with a stretcher removed this wounded soldier. I never saw him again, but he wrote to our company on two or three different occasions reporting on his care and welfare. One thing, in one of those letters, that I will always remember was his statement, "I don't have anything to kick about, or with". His mutilated foot was also amputated at the ankle. I lost track of him after being discharged.

As an aside to this story, the regimental commander who had given the order to secure the ridge was fatally wounded during a visit to the front lines on that same ridge. Indicative of the intensity and ferocity of the Okinawa campaign is the fact that two other luminaries were killed during the battle. One was Ernie Pyle, the most celebrated war correspondent of World War II. The other was three-star Commanding General Simon Buckner of the Tenth Army, of which my 96th Division was a part and which was responsible for the invasion of Okinawa. General Buckner was killed just a few days before the island of Okinawa was secured. The huge bay, which after the war became the location of a large U.S. Navy installation, was named in his honor, Buckner Bay.

Another harrowing experience for me occurred just a few days later. We had moved forward during the day and, as was our custom, stopped our forward movement and dug in for the night. In many instances the battle line perimeters allowed certain foxhole teams to select caves that had been previously excavated from the sides of the hills. Such was the condition on this occasion for me and my foxhole buddies. They were the company commander, a runner, and

myself. As a radio operator, I was usually always with the company commander. The runner was also with us to carry verbal messages back and forth from the company commander to the platoon leaders. During that night activity had been sporadic, with only an occasional outburst of rifle fire, mortar rounds, and artillery in the distance. As was normal for night operations, our artillery batteries would fire harassing rounds in preselected areas ahead of our front lines. Additionally, they would also fire flares intermittently which would lighten up the area like daylight. This was done since the Japanese committed most of their offensive actions during the night.

At the break of day the next morning, the company commander stated that he was going to make a personal survey of the company's action during the night and would return shortly. The company runner and I remained in the cave, where we made some hot coffee by burning a small amount of the plastic explosive known as composition C. We had learned early in the Philippine operations that this explosive burned with a roaring flame and that a piece about the size of a marble was all that was needed to heat a canteen cup of instant coffee. All combat soldiers carried a lump of this explosive, along with their cigarettes, matches, and toilet tissue, in the web of their helmet liners. This, in many instances, would be the only dry spot on a soldier's body. Shortly we observed, at the foot of the hill where our cave was located, our company commander returning. Just before he arrived at the entrance to the cave, the runner said he would exit in order to go downhill and relieve himself. His exiting before the company commander arrived at the entrance to the cave would eliminate the congestion of two people at the cave entrance at the same time. He exited just as the company commander arrived.

Suddenly, there was the chatter of small arms fire, either a machine gun or a rifle, with one of the bullets striking the cave entrance. Immediately the company commander fell forward with his right arm landing in the mouth of the cave, and I could see the company runner rolling down the hill. The company commander gasped, “I'm okay; I'm hit in the arm”. I rolled him over and pulled him into the cave with me. I immediately noticed the glassy look in his eyes. He was dead. The bullet had gone through his right arm at an angle, but what the captain had not known was that it had entered his body on the left side, at heart level, and then exited on the right side just below his elbow where it hit his arm. He was dead almost instantly.

I then saw that the company runner at the foot of the small hill was already receiving attention. The company runner was named George Resetco from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. When he was evacuated, I had no idea of the extent of his injuries. I learned shortly that his gunshot injury was one of those true miracles of warfare. The bullet had entered his leg in the hip area. As it penetrated his body, it passed through the opening in the pelvic bone and exited his body without touching a bone, an artery, or any organ. He was back to active duty in our company in approximately one month. It is interesting to note that he

was one of the attendees at my division reunion, which I attended in Cincinnati in 1998. As with so many of the veterans of World War II, he entered college after the war. He became an accounting executive with Bethlehem Steel.

The death of my company commander, Captain Larsen, caused me the most grief of my wartime experiences. Not only was he my commander, but we had developed a significant personal rapport, due to being in each other's presence throughout the Philippine and Okinawa campaigns. Since he was about thirty-five years old, I suspect now that he had become a father-figure to me and that I looked to him for guidance, leadership and discipline, all of the qualities that we look for in fathers. Shortly after this incident, when I became the first sergeant for our company, I became privy to the information relating to the soldiers in my company. From that information, I wrote to his wife with my condolences. She was very interested in the circumstances surrounding his death, which I shared with her. We wrote letters back and forth a few times. I never sensed any bitterness in her letters, only pride in her husband's efforts and grief for his loss.

During this time, I was involved in other critical personal activities which I recall vividly. I don't remember the sequence of these events, other than that they occurred on Okinawa. They are as follows:

At nighttime, the usual makeup of a foxhole consisted of three soldiers. One soldier would be the lookout while the other two were sleeping. The order of sequence and the time on duty was up to the members in the foxhole. The normal time on duty was one hour, followed by two hours for sleeping. Lookouts began at dusk. On this particular occasion, our foxhole was in reality a cave at ground level. During the night there had been moderate small arms fire from our company area, indicating the probability that the enemy was infiltrating the area. Such incursions were not unusual, since all of the Japanese offensive actions were confined to night operations.

While being the lookout during the middle of the night, I observed what I thought might be a crawling body. I knew that nerves and imagination could play tricks on us when we were serving as lookouts. Even at that, I felt that I was seeing a human. To confirm my suspicions, I selected a point of reference and remained motionless, in order to determine if the object was moving. In a short time there was no doubt about it being an enemy soldier. I waited until he got close enough to me that I would be sure to hit my target. I fired a couple of shots, and it was all over. I limited the number of shots I fired so as not to give away my position in the event he had other comrades in the area. At daylight, the body lay where I had hit it. As I recall, there were other enemy bodies scattered throughout our company area.

As we made our advances along the main Japanese defense line, the Shuri line, we learned the hard way that, as we moved forward, it was necessary to search and secure every cave and tunnel we passed. We dug in one evening where we

had not been so meticulous. During the night, the Japanese soldiers came out of these caves and tunnels which we had bypassed and wreaked havoc within our lines. As a result they had annihilated some of our soldiers in their foxholes and had taken them over. It was now necessary for us to ferret them out and take back our foxholes. I remember clearly working with some members of our weapons platoon who were Mexicans from Texas. This platoon was almost exclusively Mexicans, but they had been recruited for this activity in order to provide as many groups as possible to clear the area of enemy soldiers. I was thoroughly impressed with their stalking skills. In carrying out our assignment, it was necessary that we move about as quietly as possible. I can still picture them tiptoeing around. They reminded me of cats stalking a bird. Watching them, I became convinced that they were excellent soldiers.

Once, while approaching an area where we felt convinced an enemy was located, we heard a ”tap, tap, pop” sound, followed by a muffled explosion. We immediately knew that the sound we heard was a hand grenade, and we hit the ground. When we heard the muffled explosion, we were relieved. A Japanese soldier nearby, knowing that his death was imminent, had committed “hari kari” (suicide) by activating his grenade and then rolling over on it. One of the characteristics of the Okinawa campaign was that neither side took prisoners. The need for intelligence data from captured soldiers became so acute for the American forces that headquarters offered a reward for prisoners. I do not think that provided much incentive, because the combat soldiers felt that taking a prisoner exposed them to conditions with which they did not want to deal. Postwar data indicated how many Japanese soldiers had committed hari kari during the Battle of Okinawa.

On another occasion, while moving forward through the Japanese defense line, I was part of a group securing a large tunnel and cave which we had passed. It was large and had evidently been an operations headquarters as part of the Japanese defenses. In clearing out the tunnels, we always preceded our advances in them with concussion and phosphorus grenades. Armed with a 45 Colt automatic pistol for close encounters, I cautiously moved around a bend in the tunnel. Instantly I saw a body lying on a ledge, and he began to roll over, facing me. Obviously our grenades had not been one hundred percent effective, but I sensed this soldier was stunned. Otherwise he would have rolled over faster and probably shot me with a handgun. The reverse, however, happened and I hit him two or three times with bullets from my 45 revolver. The impact knocked the body off the ledge onto the tunnel floor. I had witnessed firsthand the tremendous impact of a 45 caliber slug.

It is worth noting here that the 45 caliber pistol was developed for the army as a result of the Spanish-American War in the Philippines. Up to that time, the standard sidearm for the military was a 38 caliber revolver. In the fighting in the Philippines, the U.S. soldiers sustained considerable injuries from enemy participants who were able to kill or wound them, even after they had been struck

several times with bullets from the 38 caliber pistols. The military recognized that they needed a sidearm with more impact, thus the development of the 45 caliber pistol.

Around the time of this event, we learned that the Germans had surrendered to the Allied forces in Europe. We received this news with mixed emotions. On the one hand, we were relieved to know that millions of our fellow soldiers were no longer faced with battle and that possibly we would see some relief or help in what we knew would be the ultimate invasion of Japan. On the other hand, we knew that we were facing a dedicated and entrenched enemy, who would never surrender.

Even though hearing that the Germans had surrendered was a slight sparkle of light at the end of the tunnel, we never lost sight of the fact that we were in the army for the duration of the war. That was probably the most frustrating aspect of all for us soldiers. We knew that we would only go back home under one of three circumstances: (1) in a body bag, (2) severely wounded, or (3) the enemy's total capitulation. As combat soldiers, we had certain classifications for the wounds we received. The first was a $1,000 wound. It was rather superficial and would only take you away from combat for a short time, after which you would have to return. The ultimate was the $1,000,000 wound. It was one that would get you back to the states, but not leave you severely crippled. Additionally, it would preclude you from returning to combat. Almost any wound that fractured a bone or involved a major organ fell into this category. The ideal injury was a fracture of one of your limbs that didn't necessitate amputation. In fact, there were instances of SIW's (self inflicted wounds) that fell into this category. Occasionally one of these would happen in a rest area, and the injured soldier would claim it was an accident that occurred while cleaning his weapon. If there was any chance of proving any of these SIWs were done for the purpose of avoiding combat, the soldier would be court-martialled.

One of the major weapons utilized by the American military forces on Okinawa was the flame thrower. These flame throwers came in two sizes. The smallest and most common was one that fit on a soldier's back, similar to a large sprayer used for dispensing insecticides. Their range was limited to a distance of around fifteen feet. The largest and most formidable size were tanks which dispensed the napalm through a long barrel protruding from the turret of the tank. This barrel looked a lot like the 75 mm guns that tanks of that era contained. Flame throwers became indispensable in ferreting out the Japanese enemy from the caves and tunnels which had formed their main defense line. I never saw the heavy fire bombings or the results of the atomic bombs, but to me the most awesome weapons we utilized in the Pacific were the flame throwers. These, in concert with hand grenades, including concussion, phosphorus and fragment, were the primary implements used in finally forcing the Japanese to capitulate on Okinawa.

The island was finally declared secure around the middle of June of 1945, after two and a half months of the fiercest and most ferocious fighting of the war in the Pacific.

The loss of the first sergeant whom I replaced was not due to battlefield injuries, but due to his incompetence in the handling and disposal of the personal effects of killed and wounded soldiers. The army was very concerned about this issue and had specific and detailed instructions on how they were to be handled. When next of kin began to complain about the receipt of personal items from the killed and wounded of our company, an internal investigation concluded that it was due to the lack of following procedures and protocol by the first sergeant. While in a rest area behind the front lines, I was called in to the new company commander's tent. After asking me a few questions about the administration of the company, he told me that I would be the new acting first sergeant and that I was to form the company for retreat. Retreat is the traditional formation conducted by the military which signifies the end of the normal workday. It is that military ritual when the flags are lowered and cannon shots are often sounded. Even though we were in a rest area, our day began with reveille and ended with retreat. Even though we were in combat, we were still in the army. We were never allowed to forget that.

When I was informed of my new status, I was overwhelmed. Of particular significance was the fact that I was jumped up three grades in the noncommissioned hierarchy to become first sergeant. I estimate that my promotion caused me to leap over about twenty other sergeants in my company. When I stood in front of the company that afternoon and called it to order for the retreat formation, the members were as much in awe as I had been when the company commander informed me. At that retreat, the company commander announced that I was the new first sergeant and that anyone who had any questions about the decision should contact him and not me. He further indicated that he would back me to the limits of his command authority. Privately, he told me that as far as the company was concerned, I could do no wrong, but I would have to answer to him for all mistakes and shortcomings. I do not recall the two of us ever having any cross words.

Shortly thereafter, my promotion was disapproved by the regimental commander, with the explanation that I was too young. My company commander told me not to be concerned, that he would solve the problem. Within a month my promotion was approved, even though I had been in an acting status up to that time. As an indication of the rapport that developed between me and the company commander, one afternoon after retreat he invited me into his tent. He then retrieved a flask of whiskey and we each had a drink. He told me that the flask had been sent to him by his sister, concealed in a baked cake. The baked goods I got from my mother never contained such goodies.

I quickly learned that the primary duties of a first sergeant were more administrative than troop leadership. In combat, his primary responsibility was the proper disposal of the personal effects of the killed and wounded and making sure that letters from the company commander were sent to the next of kin in these situations. These letters provided little detail into the actual circumstances of the deceased soldier's demise. They only provided the date and general location of where the incident occurred. There was “boilerplate” language included in all of them. In many instances, the next of kin would write back requesting more details. In these instances, as well as the original notification, the first sergeant prepared the letters for transmittal.

Probably the most important daily function of the first sergeant was the preparation of what was known as the “morning report“. It was the official document of the company that described the status of the approximately two hundred soldiers that were assigned to it. Transfers in and transfers out had to be documented with written orders. The preparation of the report itself had to be flawless. Flawless meant no erasures or strikeovers of any kind. I can remember sweating for hours over a detailed report, and then making a mistake on the last line. The report was made in triplicate by the use of carbon copies. While in combat, indelible pencils were allowed, but when in a rest area, typing was required. This was before the days of word processors and ballpoint pens. Those were the times that tried men's souls.

At the division reunion in Cincinnati in 1998, which I mentioned earlier, one of the soldiers of my company, being a native of and living in Cincinnati, hosted a cocktail party for the members of our company prior to the general meeting. It provided us an opportunity to reminisce and even to relive some of our experiences. I recall making the comment that I was only one of thirteen original members of our company that had gone through both combat operations without being killed or wounded. One of the fellow attendees corrected me. He said that he had kept a record, and I was only one of eight who had done this.

I have often commented that my only battle wounds were some deep cuts on my right hand from opening a C-ration can. Since I went to an aid station for this wound, the attending medic offered to submit my name for a Purple Heart. Knowing that I had not received this injury due to enemy action, I of course declined the opportunity. Little did I realize at the time that I would be giving up points that would be utilized at the conclusion of hostilities to determine our rotation order back to the United States.

When the Okinawa campaign was over, we knew that we would be moving to another area, probably the Philippines, to prepare for the invasion of Japan. The time interval between the end of the Okinawa campaign and our departure to the Philippines is rather vague. I just remember that, during this time, I was extremely busy executing my duties as the first sergeant. My days were filled with preparing next of kin letters, seeing that the disposal of personal effects was

proper, preparing daily morning reports, preparing duty assignments such as guard duty and others, as well as being the mother hen for a group of two hundred men. I had little time for personal relaxation or recreation.

During that time frame, one of the most popular outlets was the softball competition. Even though I had been a catcher on our team at home and we had won a championship, the demands of my job were such that I was unable to play with our team regularly, but I always attended the games when I could. Another form of relaxation was the first-run movies that were shown regularly at a central point after dark. On occasions, there would be top grade live entertainment sponsored by the USO. That organization, the USO, was worldwide, and the military participants will forever be grateful for the service they rendered during World War II. It and the Red Cross were the two most visible volunteer organizations during the war.

After waiting on Okinawa for probably about six weeks, the division boarded troop transports for relocation and staging to the Philippines. Our destination was Mindora, not to be confused with Mindinowa. The Philippines are made up of numerous islands, with Luzon, the home of Manila, being the largest. One of the aspects of troops being aboard a ship for many days at a time is the necessity of them staying in top physical condition. To this end, we would gather for exercises at least twice a day. Most of them were in-place exercises but, nevertheless, they maintained our aerobic systems in top shape. This was accomplished throughout my many travels in the Pacific aboard ship, not just this relocation to Mindora. Although it had not been officially announced, all of us knew that we were headed to Mindora to stage for the invasion of Japan. Previously secret information released after the war indicated that this invasion was to take place in November, approximately three months after our departure from Okinawa.

I can remember well the exact place, while at sea on this relocation, where I learned of the atomic bomb being dropped on Hiroshima. I was in a lunch line heading to the serving area where food was dispensed, cafeteria style. Just before entering the serving area, there was a bulletin board where current news events were posted. This was the manner in which the troops aboard the ship were informed of current events. I realized that there must be a newsworthy item on the board, since a crowd had gathered around it and the line had stopped moving. It would move forward in bunches as the crowd completed reading the news story and then moved out for the next bunch of readers. The story indicated that the bomb blast was the most powerful force that had ever been released by mankind. As I recall, there were few details regarding its impact and effects, as well as little reaction from the troops who were reading it. The general thought was that maybe now the Japanese would recognize the might of the United States, but I don't recall any of us thinking that the Japanese would surrender and the inevitable invasion of Japan would not take place.

Three days later, under the same circumstances, I learned of the bombing of Nagasaki. All of us then realized that the capitulation of Japan was imminent. Shortly after the bombing of Nagasaki, the Japanese unconditionally accepted the conditions of the Potsdam Conference. The armistice ending the conflict was signed aboard the U.S.S. Missouri in Tokyo Bay on September 2, 1945. The war was over! However, it would still be a long four months before I was to return home and be honorably discharged from the U.S. Army.

We set up camp on Mindora where we had planned to stage and train for the invasion of Japan, but now all of our activities were focused on efforts to prepare us soldiers for our return to civilian life. The army had spent much effort and time training us how to kill, without any regard for our social skills. An effort was now being made to refresh those skills among us. Almost immediately, a written order came from the high command demanding the elimination of profanity from our casual speech. Profane language had become normal with combat soldiers. One of the most vicious and biting verbal reprimands I ever received came about as a result of that order, even though I was not guilty of using profanity myself. While walking through the company area, the company commander overheard some soldiers in a tent using profanity. He went directly to the tent serving as my orderly room and began chastising me unmercifully. The basis of his reprimand was that soldiers under my leadership were using profanity. Such was the manner of the chain of command in the military.

In addition to the order prohibiting profanity, we attended classes in regaining other social skills. These included such things as the manner in which we addressed seniors, ladies, and other members of society. They also included the proper etiquette for many occasions, including the wearing of proper attire. Can you imagine the soldiers returning from Vietnam, Bosnia, Iraq, etc. receiving such instructions today? But such was the culture of the United States in 1945.

Along with the disposal and handling of all of the material elements of warfare, the military was faced with the task of establishing a fair criteria for prioritizing the return home of its millions of soldiers. A basis for this had been developed for the soldiers in the European theater of operations at the conclusion of the war with Germany. The return of the soldiers from the Pacific created a slightly more complex problem, due to the fact that they were so scattered and the distance was much greater. The basic program for establishing the priority was a point system. Those with the highest points would be the earliest to return and then down the line. Each shoulder's points were calculated on the basis of time in service, time overseas, number of combat operations, number of medals received, and possibly other criteria which I do not remember.

As with any system having so many participants and so many variables, there would be anomalies. Probably the one that was the most irritating to soldiers like me, who had never been evacuated to rear echelon areas due to wounds, was the awarding of points for being a patient in a hospital that was still considered a

combat theater. Even though combat had ceased in these areas, an official end to hostilities had not been declared, and therefore they remained combat zones. There were examples of some of our wounded soldiers, who had returned to duty, passing through as many as three of these "combat zone" medical areas and receiving priority points for each one that hastened their return home. In contrast, those of us who had not missed a day of duty were delayed.

Finally, four months after the armistice had been signed, the point level for my return home had been reached. It was Christmas Day of 1945. What a Christmas present! Prior to embarkation, we were segregated into groups according to the military installation where we would be discharged. My group would be headed for Camp Blanding, the same camp were I had been inducted. It was located in north Florida between Jacksonville and Palatka. In the segregation process, the ranking member of the group was designated the group commander. With no officers in our group, I held the highest rank and was therefore designated group commander.

When we boarded ship for our return, I learned that I was the only noncommissioned officer in charge of a group. This created some confusion among both the navy crew and the other group commanders. The group commanders were given a special location that provided them with certain privileges not offered to the rank and file. The problem was that all of them were officers except me. Maintaining military dignity and protocol would not allow an enlisted man (me) to bunk and live in an area with officers. Wow, what an interesting dilemma. It was finally resolved when I was assigned a berth with the “chiefs” of the ship. That would give me a bunk and living quarters with my peers, since my first sergeant rating and a chief rating are equivalent.

For those who are not knowledgeable about the inner workings of the U.S. Navy, the chiefs are the ones who make things happen and see that they are done. As the Br'er Rabbit story goes, I had been thrown into the briar patch. Not only were their facilities superior to those of the group commanders, our privileges were second to none. There was no rationing of fresh water for our showers and our mess facilities were separate and private. It was almost like being on a cruise ship heading home! I did have one problem, however, that of rounding up soldiers from my group who had been assigned KP. I would post their names, but half of them would not show up, and it was impossible for me to locate them, since they were all strangers to me and none of their peers would admit knowing them. Of the approximately one hundred fifty soldiers in our group, about two thirds were black. Even though the service was not integrated at that time, most of the blacks had been serving in support functions, primarily as quartermasters.

A classic event occurred on the trip home. When crossing the International Date Line, one will either lose a day or gain a day, depending upon the direction in which one is traveling. Westbound travelers lose a day, and eastbound travelers gain a day. It was our fortunate experience to cross the International Date Line

on December 31st, the day of New Year's Eve. This meant that we had two New Year's Eve celebrations. Being berthed with the chiefs, they broke out clandestine bottles of alcohol. You can imagine the frivolity among us with the war being over, heading home, and celebrating the New Year. We did this not only once, but again the second night. Those were New Year's Eve parties which I will never forget.

Until just a few days before our arrival, our port of entry was unknown. With the tremendous amount of returning troops, the infrastructure for handling them was at a premium. The only thing we knew was that we would probably berth at a port on the California coast. A few days before we landed, it was announced that we would land in the Los Angeles area. We had left from San Francisco passing under the Golden Gate Bridge and were now returning to the movie capital of the world.

The details of the arrival and subsequent cross-country trip are hazy in my memory, but one thing that stands out is the gracious welcome we received by young ladies from the Red Cross as we disembarked from the ship. They greeted us with little welcome packages and had stations set up along the pier, where they served coffee, doughnuts, and other confection items. These were instantly devoured, since sweets were very sparse in our overseas rations.

The procedures for our separation and discharge at Camp Blanding seemed to me, at the time, to be excessive. In retrospect, however, I now understand that most of them were done for our future benefit. The benefits afforded to veterans of World War II would require various forms of documentation, and this was being done as a part of our separation and discharge. I was at Camp Blanding for approximately three days, so near and yet so far from home. My final act while there was to arrange for my transportation back to Orlando. My original plans were to take a bus, but on my last day I met a soldier from Orlando whose parents were coming to Blanding to pick him up. He offered me a ride, contingent upon approval by his parents when they arrived. That approval was granted, and we departed Camp Blanding in late afternoon.

If I recall correctly, it was my dad and my brother Ken who picked me up at the bus station. Mother, my other brother Jimmy, and my soon-to-be wife Helen had gone to a movie earlier, in order to help pass the time while they awaited my arrival, which was earlier than all of us expected. I vividly remember the ecstatic feeling of being home and seeing the ones I loved so dearly. I also recall two other special feelings of that evening. The first was how small the house and rooms felt to me. I experienced a strong feeling of claustrophobia, but I overcame it shortly. The other was the awkward feeling when I took out a cigarette and lit it in the presence of my parents. That was the first time they had ever seen me smoke. I was no longer in my youth. I was an adult. And I was HOME at last!

# Married Life

The offer of an engagement ring to my beloved Helen was typical of my immaturity at the time. That was the beginning of our life together, but our history of getting to that point began slightly more than two years earlier. So I will begin our story at the "very" beginning.

Composite says it all

After finishing basic training at Fort Hood, Texas, I was assigned to the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP), and my training was at the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) in Chicago, Illinois. IIT had been formerly known as the Armour Institute. Its roots were from the Armour family, who owned one of the original large meat packing businesses centered in Chicago. Chicago had one of the largest stockyards in the nation, and was known as the center of the meat packing industry. Kansas City and Omaha were also known for their meatpacking, but Chicago was the largest. The meat packing industry evolved around large rail center destinations. The trains would bring cattle from the large cattle growing states, primarily Texas and Oklahoma, to the rail center stockyards. The logical result was the growth of meatpacking in these destination cities. Armour, Swift and Cudahy are names I recall from that era as being the leaders.

IIT was located on the south side of Chicago, adjacent to the El, Chicago's rapid transit system, and near Comiskey Park, home of the Chicago White Sox baseball team and the Chicago Cardinals NFL football team. It was recognized as one of the leading technical schools in the country. To keep technology in perspective, it is important to remember that World War II is what gave impetus to the technological revolution. Before that time period, we were living in the era of the Industrial Revolution, which had increased productivity many fold over the manual efforts of man since the beginning of time. It was that effort, industrial and technical, along with the United States being immune from enemy aggressive action on its soil, which provided the margin of victory for the Allies during World War II.

The technologies developed during the war included radar, jet propulsion, rockets, magnetic recordings (first wire and later magnetic tape), and the most notable one, nuclear power. These developments spawned many offspring, the most active now being the computer revolution with all of its applications, which includes space travel. It was in anticipation of these technological developments that the Army ASTP was created. The U.S. Navy had a similar program. As an aside, Harry Luff, my co-worker at OUC, was a product of the navy program. Another participant in the navy program was C. R. Munn, my quasi-cousin, who ended up making the military (U.S. Marines) his career.

During my stay in Chicago, my living quarters were the 108th Engineers armory, a national guard unit called to active duty, located at 3401 Wentworth Avenue. This was on the south side of Chicago, across the street from Cominsky Park and in the heart of a Polish neighborhood. To the south of us was a Black section and to the north, towards town, was a Chinese section. Even with these diverse ethnic neighborhoods, there was never any concern about safety on the streets, even when alone or in very small groups. Being out in the neighborhood was not of particular concern usually, since our free time was very limited. Our time was extremely structured. I described in the "War Years" how intense our schedule was. But we did have a few hours on Friday evenings to relax, although this was not enough time to travel far from the armory.

The first weekend I was there, a group of three or four of us went out walking to explore the area near where we stayed. Not too far away we found an inviting small neighborhood bar. We decided we would go in and have a drink, being the macho men we were at age nineteen. While seated at the bar, we began a discussion with the lady barmaid, who was obviously the person in charge. During this discussion, she asked me some personal questions as to age, where I was from, etc. Of course I had to lie about my age since I was underage for being an alcohol customer. There was never any mention of that fact again. Soon the truth came out. The lady barmaid said that I reminded her very much of her son who was also in the service. Right then and there, she adopted me, without me even realizing it.

She was not only the chief barmaid, but also the owner of this neighborhood bar. She filled us with Polish food and drinks. When it came time to leave, she said we did not owe her a cent. Additionally, she asked that we come back. We told her that Friday nights were our only opportunity and that we would be back the next Friday. We did, and she had freshly cooked Polish food for us. It was there I was introduced to "kielbasa", the famous Polish smoked sausage. I didn't realize it then, but Chicago has the largest population of Poles outside of Poland. My friends and I had found a "home away from home" on Friday nights for the entire time I was in Chicago. Others from our dormitory found this same neighborhood bar with its pool tables and camaraderie, but none got the treatment of an adopted son like I did.

Chicago was a haven for service personnel, especially those of us from “small town U.S.A“. It had everything in the way of entertainment that anyone could imagine. For sports, it had college football. Northwestern University was on the north side and the University of Illinois to the south. It was in close proximity to the Wisconsin and Minnesota teams as well. Basketball was the same. For professional football, the city had two football teams, the Chicago Bears and the Chicago Cardinals. For hockey, it had the Chicago Black hawks. It also had many excellent theaters performing live stage plays. It had two great downtown movie theaters which had first class live entertainment when showing first run movies. It was in Chicago that I saw many bands such as Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey, and Charlie Barnett, as well as other well-known entertainers, Frank Sinatra being the most notable.

Chicago also had the world’s two largest ballrooms, the Trianon and the Aragon. The Trianon was located on the south side of Chicago, and the Aragon was on the north side. While I was there, Eddie Howard was playing at the Aragon and Lawrence Welk was playing at the Trianon. I don’t remember the details now, but somehow I had met a girl from Winnetka, Illinois, and she was my date at the Aragon Ballroom. I had planned to meet some of my roommates from school, but they didn't show up on schedule. It became time to leave in order for my date to catch a train back to Winnetka. As I was leaving around midnight and walking down the stairs from the ballroom, I encountered some of the group from my school. We were introduced to each other’s dates and one young, beautiful girl, with red hair, immediately caught my fancy. Not only did she have these fantastic physical attributes, but her date also said that she had been born in Gainesville, Florida. The attraction became even more interesting. Little did I realize at the time that I would celebrate our 64$^{th}$ wedding anniversary with her while writing this autobiography. To complete “the rest of this story”, my early departure from the Aragon ballroom in order for my date to catch the last train to Winnetka was in vain. We missed it by a few minutes. She had no recourse but to call her father to come get her. Winnetka was about thirty miles from the ballroom, which was significant travel at 1:00 am. Needless to say, that was the last date I had with her.

The following week I attempted to obtain the name and telephone number of the pretty Florida girl I had seen at the Aragon ballroom. In no way would her date for that night give it to me. However, during another casual conversation, I learned that one of my roommates dated the girl who had arranged a blind date for the Florida young lady. So I asked if his girlfriend would make a date for me with this Florida girl for the next weekend. It was subsequently arranged. We planned a double date, and we were to meet and pick up the ladies where they were working at Marshall Field’s Department Store in the downtown Chicago Loop.

I remember arriving with my roommate the following Saturday afternoon at Marshall Field’s. I was overwhelmed with the size and volume of merchandise of

such a large department store. The largest department stores I had ever seen were those in downtown Orlando, which was just a small Florida town at that time. One thing that really impressed me was the fact that the store had its own station on the El line. That gave me an insight into the significance of Marshall Field's. Following closely behind my friend, we located his date for the evening, who in turn took us to where my date was working.

I was introduced to her and for the first time I learned her name was Helen Taggart. I certainly did not remember that from the casual introductions the previous week. When I first saw her, I did not immediately recognize her, but after seeing her beautiful red hair, her gorgeous smile, and hearing her distinct laughter, I knew it was the same girl I had met when leaving the Aragon Ballroom the week before. It was the Christmas season, and her job for Marshall Field's was gift wrapping merchandise which their customers purchased. I later learned that, even though she was still a high school student, the school system allowed students to work at the various retail stores during the Christmas season. This helped to make up for the shortage of employees due to the war effort.

When our dates finally checked out from their work, we all began a discussion of what we would do. As usual, we guys had made no plans whatsoever. Whatever we did would be limited, because our financial resources were limited. We finally decided that we would eat at a moderately priced restaurant and go to a movie. We soldiers had not yet been in Chicago long enough to learn about all the "freebies" that were available to the military personnel. As with all endeavors in life, we were at the bottom of the learning curve. I remember the name of the restaurant where we dined on that first date. It was called Stauffer's. I don't recall the movie which we saw or any of the other details of that date. However, I do remember getting Helen's phone number so that I could contact her again, and I remember that phone number to this day. It was Bayport 7-0767.

The following week I called Helen to see if we could have a date on the weekend. I do not recall the details today, but I do recall that for a short time she was vacillating between dating me and dating George Reno, the one she was with when I first met her at the Aragon Ballroom. I finally became the beau of choice when both of us showed up for a big date during the Christmas season for the Sonja Henie Ice Show. Sonja Henie was an Olympic ice skating champion from Finland. She catapulted ice skating into the forefront of the nation's recreational entertainment, just as Babe Ruth did for baseball and Arnold Palmer did for golf. Her ice show was the highlight of the Christmas season in Chicago. Obviously we soldiers couldn't afford tickets to such a prestigious show, but they were made available to us at no cost through the USO. This is just a small example of how servicemen were treated in Chicago during World War II.

The night of the big show neither George nor I was aware that both of us had a date with Helen. As we left the armory where we were living, a large group of us were waiting outside for a streetcar. Shortly, one came by that was headed

downtown to the Loop. All got on board except two, me and George Reno. Neither of us acknowledged the other as we boarded the streetcar and headed south. Helen lived on 77th Street, but the streetcar only stopped at 75th and 79th Streets. The two of us almost simultaneously reached for the cord to request stopping at 75th Street. When we got off the car, both of us began to realize things were a little fishy. We soon realized that both of us had dates with Helen for the ice skating show. When we appeared together at the entrance door to the apartment where she was living with her parents and sisters, the look on her face said it all when she answered the door.

We quickly learned that she knew she had committed to both of us, but she was unable to reach us to resolve the situation. Because of this, she had made arrangements for the odd man to have a blind date with one of her friends. I quickly learned, then and there, that I was Helen's date of choice. It was a tense situation. We spent so much time debating and discussing the remedy that we realized, due to the time constraints, going to the ice show was out of the question. After more discussion and deliberation, a decision was made to go to a local movie. One of the audience members in that movie was watching George Reno constantly looking over our way at us holding hands. That seemed to be the act that demonstrated the fact that he no longer had a chance to be Helen's suitor.

For the rest of my stay in Chicago, I dated Helen every Saturday evening and Sunday afternoon. Additionally, I would phone her every evening after our supervised study and before lights out. Those calls consumed most of the evening free time since there were only a limited number of telephones in the armory where I lived, and many of the G.I.'s had the same idea as I. Sometimes the wait to get a free phone to make a call consumed more than half the free time. When the bell rang ending our supervised study period, there was a mad dash for the phones. Since most rooms were on the second floor, those wanting to run for a telephone would always feign the need to use the toilet facilities, which were on the main floor and much nearer the phones. This became such a problem that ultimately guards had to be posted outside of the living areas, and only those who could demonstrate a compelling need to use the toilet facilities were allowed to leave their rooms.

Shortly after we began dating exclusively, the photograph of Helen and I and her family's black Cocker Spaniel Tarbaby was taken in front of the apartment where they lived. To this day, that picture represents a pictorial record of how we appeared in Christmas of 1943. Before I was transferred to a combat division in March of 1944, Helen and I had created a union and love for each other that continues to exist to this day. We also had a lot of fun seeing the sights and enjoying the opportunities which Chicago offered to the young. One of my fond memories now is walking back to her apartment from the I.C. train station which we used many times for our commute to the Loop and other points north of where she lived. Most of the time when we did this, the sidewalks were frozen

and glazed over with a thin sheet of ice. As a young man from sunny Florida, it was all that I could do to keep from falling or slipping when walking on these glazed sidewalks. The antithesis of my stumbling and staggering was Helen taking a few rapid steps and then skimming along the glazed ice, similar to what we now see with young people skimming along the shallow water at New Smyrna Beach. In the past sixty-four years, she has taught me a lot, but that is one thing that I never learned.

Another incident that will always identify the early romantic years with Helen was my experience with a Chicago beat cop. Our normal dating routine was for me to arrive in the late afternoon, visit a while, and then Helen and I went off on our evening date, wherever it may be. All of our travel was on commuter trains, the most common being the Illinois Central (IC). We would then return to her apartment, usually around midnight. We would then do what all young lovers would do then, "smooch"(kiss). We also used that time to talk and get to know one another better and better, gaining insights into one another's personalities. In retrospect, it was during those times that the seeds were planted for what has proven to be a lifelong relationship. All of these "smooch sessions" were conducted in the living room of the apartment in which she and the rest of her family lived. After a couple of hours, generally between 2:00 and 3:00 am, I would give her my final "goodnight and goodbye" kiss. I then walked a couple of blocks, where I would catch a streetcar back to the armory.

On one particular night, the temperature was in the teens, and I saw the streetcar heading away from my stop when I was about a block away. Not knowing the streetcar schedules, I did not know when the next one would be, but I knew that I would have to wait for it. Without an overcoat, and with only light socks on, I began to feel chilled and located a doorway in which to stand. This at least shielded me from some of the wind, but did nothing to warm me up. After a short while, I was startled by the bright beam of a flashlight shining in my face. I immediately recognized the flashlight wielder as that of a policeman. He asked me what I was doing there. I replied, "Freezing". I then went on to explain to him the circumstances associated with me being there. He told me that the streetcars only came by once an hour at that time of day, and that it would be fifty minutes until the next one passed. He then said that he would take me over to an all night coffee shop, where I could wait until time for the next streetcar.

At the coffee shop, both of us had a hot cup of coffee and doughnut, compliments of the shop. After chatting for a little while and finishing our coffee and doughnut, he stated that he needed to get back on his beat, but that I should stay at the shop until time for my next streetcar. He then went on his way and out of my life forever. However, he left a lasting impression with me because of his kindness and consideration. This attitude towards the servicemen during the war was indicative not only of the people of Chicago, but of all of the people of the United States. It is my strong conviction that World War II was the last time that all of the people of this country were united in a single purpose.

After dating Helen for a little while and becoming acquainted with all the other members of her family, I was granted the opportunity of staying overnight one weekend, with the understanding that I would sleep on the sofa in the living room. I do not recall whether it was on my first overnight visit or on a subsequent weekend visit that I sustained the ire of Helen's mother, later to be known affectionately by all of us as “G-Tag” (Grandmother Taggart). The first occasion was created by me causing some disruption to her favorite radio program. At that time there was a fledgling news reporter from a local Chicago radio station. His name was Paul Harvey. He attracted a lot of fans among the locals, and G-Tag was one of them. In some manner, I interrupted her when Paul Harvey was reporting the news. Never one to keep her feelings suppressed, I found out quickly that I had committed one of the unpardonable sins of that household.

Another occasion in which I violated one of the house rules was a result of my using the bathroom. Since my use created some rather noxious odors in the bathroom, I slightly raised the window in order for fresh air to come in. I gave little thought to the fact that the temperature outside was in the teens. I left, and soon thereafter, the bathroom could have been used as a refrigerator. G-Tag went to the bathroom with her newspaper in hand. She soon screamed out, “Who raised that bathroom window?” I acknowledge that I had done it. She then explained to me that the bathroom was located on top of the furnace in the basement. As a result, it was the warmest spot in the house. More importantly, it was G-Tag’s favorite spot to sit and read the newspaper while answering the daily call of nature. Even in spite of these two formidable violations, I became G-Tag's first son-in-law.

I don't recall every place Helen and I visited, but we covered the gamut from the cultural, by visiting the museum of science and industry, to the sporting events, by watching the Chicago Black Hawks play ice hockey. Even though I do not recall us ever talking about a future life together, the bonds that have held Helen and I together ever since were then being created. We certainly packed a lot of things into our schedule during just four months of seeing and being with each other. Little did I realize it then, but our relationship was creating for me that strong motivation and desire to return from the war. One of the most depressing aspects of being in the service during World War II was the fact that we were in for the duration of the war, and no one knew when the duration would end. That indefinite endpoint became even more of a consideration once you were confronted with combat. We saw the war end for many when they were killed or wounded and sent to a hospital as a casualty of war. The total and complete surrender of the enemy was not in sight for the rank-and-file soldier on the frontlines.

When it became known that the army was closing down the ASTP program, I recall that I was less concerned about my future than I was about leaving the companionship of the young woman whom I had only known for a few months.

We had been together for a short span of time, but she had become an integral part of my life. As plans were being made for my departure, I vowed to her that I would see her again, even though I had no idea of when or where or what the future was to bring. The train trip from Chicago to Bend, Oregon, the location of Camp White, took almost a week. We took the northern route, which was beautiful, but to us young G.I.'s, this was not a sightseeing trip. The experiences of my war years are covered in more detail in another section of this autobiography.

Prior to shipping out for duty in the war in the Pacific, our division was granted a furlough, probably about two weeks, when we could return home and see our families before leaving the States. Shortly after I left Chicago, Helen's family had moved to Jacksonville where G-Tag had gone to work for the U.S. Navy at the large Jacksonville Air Station at Mayport. She took the ferry across the St. Johns River each morning and afternoon on her way to and from work. Helen was enrolled in high school at Landon where she graduated. She later said this was her twelfth school in twelve years. Their relocation to Jacksonville made it very convenient for me to see her on my furlough. I elected to stop in Jacksonville to see her on my return to California, rather than upon my arrival in Orlando.

After visiting with my family and friends in Orlando, I headed for Jacksonville to spend a few days with Helen. I remember that they lived in an area that had just been built and lacked many of the amenities of home ownership. In particular, they did not have an electric refrigerator and were required to have ice delivered regularly to preserve their perishables. Many items of convenience were in short supply. Since the total productive economy of the United States was centered on the production of war materials, such consumer products as electric refrigerators were not being produced. In fact, this was the case for most items that required metal for their production. Only the

Lou & Helen, Jax, POE furlough

very essential products necessary for survival were being produced. Many of those, including shoes, were rationed. Nonetheless, Helen and I took up where we had left off in Chicago.

Not long before my furlough, while in training in California, I had sustained a small cactus thorn wound in my left hand during our simulated invasion of San Clemente Island. While visiting Helen in Jacksonville, my hand became much sorer and showed signs of being infected. Being a member of the military, I reasoned that I should seek medical treatment from the local military. On our next trip to town, we went to the railroad station and contacted one of the MP's stationed there. Events transpired quickly, and without Helen understanding or knowing what was going on, she saw me walking off, flanked by two MP's. She did not she realize that I was being escorted to a local aid station, where they would attend to my hand injury. I learned later that she thought this would be the last time she would see me. This incident has always been symbolic of our final visit together before I left for combat. As we parted, both of us were wondering whether we would ever see each other again.

After a few days with Helen, I departed for my return to California where I would ship out to the Pacific theater of operations. Only those who have experienced it from the days of World War II can really understand all of the fears, anxiety, and other emotions that such a departure generates. In retrospect, I suspect the greatest anxiety was due to the fact that we were facing the unknown. At that time, there were two terrible wars under way, against Germany and the Axis in Europe and against Japan in the Pacific, with neither showing any signs of victory. The only images the American people had of those two wars were the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor and the horrendous air attacks during the Battle of Britain. Very few people in America saw any hope of an end to the conflict.

During my time in the Pacific, the courtship of Helen and I existed in two mediums. The first medium was that of our hearts. The second medium was those words contained in letters to each other. It is absolutely necessary to understand the simplicity of communications at that time. There was no such thing as the Internet and no long-distance telephone calls available. The mail was the only realistic means of communication. Since transportation was almost totally handled by railroads and ships, the mail often took at least two to three weeks to reach its destination. I wrote as often as I could, and I knew that Helen would write me everyday if at all possible.

One of the things that still remain vivid in my memory is the little artistic drawings at the end of each of Helen's letters. They were sketches of sexy female figures drawn in the style that had been created by a very popular cartoonist at the time, Vargas. It is difficult to describe in this written autobiography how meaningful the words and letters from back home meant to a lonely soldier, who often had doubts about whether he would ever see, touch, or hold his family and sweetheart again.

When I left Chicago, there had not been any serious conversation between Helen and me relating to marriage, children, or spending a life together. The foundation for our relationship was established by getting to know each other as we dated for a period of less than four months. However, our relationship evolved through the magic of being absent from one another for one and a half years and communicating constantly by mail. Eventually it became understood between us that we would marry when I returned from the war. Helen even moved to Orlando and lived with my parents.

When the armistice with Japan was signed and the war was over, the United States was faced with the need to convert from a war-based economy back to a civilian-consumer economy. Additionally, it was confronted with the need to return its soldiers back to their homes so that their lives could began again. It was this last need which was in the forefront of my ever thought. I knew that Helen was waiting for me in Orlando, and this meant that our wedding would take place as soon as reasonably possible after I returned home.

I was discharged on January 15, 1946, and we planned our wedding for February 10. This short time frame necessitated that our wedding would be simple and our lifestyle would be basic. Considering that newly wedded couples have so many decisions to make with respect to housing, career pursuits, etc., it is obvious that little thought was given to these elements, other than the fact that we were in love and were going to be married. Helen had at least taken care of one of the issues by having made arrangements for a place for us to live. It was a garage apartment in which my cousin Doris was living. The apartment was owned by my Aunt Pete. Doris' husband Roy was coming home from service in the navy, and they had found another place to live. The garage apartment was one of two, a duplex arrangement, behind a residence on Amelia Avenue, which was located where the front part of the now active T.D. Waterhouse Center is located. I recall that Helen and I did some painting, as part of our refurbishing efforts before we moved in.

In order to accommodate propriety, it was proper that I should give my engaged lady an engagement ring. I purchased the ring from Orlando's premier jeweler at the time, Lawton Jewelry Company. Anyone familiar with the history of Orlando will always remember the large towered four-faced clock that was in front of Lawton's store. It was probably about fifteen feet tall. When they moved from South Orange Avenue, next to the First National Bank, to another location to the north on Orange Avenue, they also relocated this clock. It was an icon of Lawton's until they went out of business.

Having the ring, I was super anxious to give it to my beloved. All the stories about giving your sweetheart her engagement ring in a romantic setting were meaningless to me. I just wanted to give it to her and see her wearing it on her finger. When I arrived home after my discharge, Helen was working at the local

Southern Bell Telephone Company, a job which she had also obtained through my cousin Doris. As I mentioned previously, she had moved in with my family and so we were living at the same residence.

The day that I purchased her engagement ring, Helen was working. When she came home that evening, I was in a tizzy to give her the ring. The event still remains with us as one of the benchmarks of our relationship. With the ring in its case, and the case in my hand, I walked into the bedroom where she was starting to remove her stockings after a day at the office. She was standing with one stocking off and attempting to unsnap the other while still standing, I approached her with the ring case in hand and, in my most romantic tone, I said, “Here”. What transpired after that has been the subject of discussion for more than sixty years. In any event, it was the only engagement ring either one of us has ever had.

Due to our ignorance, we ran into a little snag when we attempted to secure our marriage license. At the time of our marriage, Helen was only nineteen. When we applied for our license, we learned that she needed parental consent to be married, because she was under legal age, which was twenty-one at that time. Helen's mother was in Florida, having come down from Chicago to her father's funeral in Groveland, but she was ill. She was scheduled for some gynecological surgery in Gainesville about the same time we were to be married. Gainesville was chosen since it was the home of her sister, Helen's Aunt Grace.

Since Helen's mother was incapable of driving at that time, we decided we would drive to Gainesville. This would accomplish two objectives. The first was the opportunity to visit with Helen's mother before her surgery, and the second was to secure the written approval for Helen's marriage. When we arrived, we learned that her mother was in the hospital awaiting her surgery. It is necessary to place this in its proper perspective. At that time, hospital stay was not a significant cost issue. It was not uncommon for surgical patients to remain in the hospital for at least two weeks. In fact, most births also included a hospital stay of two weeks. We thought nothing of it that Helen's mother was in the hospital for several days prior to her surgery.

This scenario prompted another of the classic stories of our marriage. When we entered the hospital room where Helen's mother was assigned, the first words she said to me were, “What type blood do you have?” It is a joke of ours that, instead of me asking for Helen's hand in marriage, her mother asked for my blood. Interestingly enough, our blood types were compatible and I gave her a person to person transfusion prior to her surgery. I was able to trade some of my blood for her written approval to marry her daughter. As events occurred, she had her surgery just a few days before our wedding and was not able to attend. On our honeymoon, we visited her in the hospital at Gainesville.

Even though the wedding was very simple, it required some planning. Helen's

dress and my suit had to be selected. I recall purchasing the suit in which I was married from Walter Menges store for men on North Orange Avenue. My Aunt Hattie was a dressmaker and was the de facto wedding consultant for our wedding. She evolved into this position as the family member with the most knowledge of social protocol and etiquette. She designed and organized the floral arrangements, and she assisted Helen with her wedding dress. Helen spent the night before our wedding with Aunt Hattie and Uncle Gus. This was to accommodate the tradition of the groom not seeing the bride on the day of the wedding until she comes down the aisle of the church to be wed.

The wedding ceremony was held in the College Park Baptist Church. The church at that time was an old wooden building. The pastor who performed the ceremony was Fayette Hall. Over the years, in addition to being our church pastor, he developed into a close personal friend. We only had two attendants at our ceremony, Jimmy and Alice Poole. Jimmy had been my closest friend when I went into service and remained so until his relocation to Baltimore in the late 1960's. Alice was chosen as the matron of honor due to her relationship with Jimmy. One of my regrets now is that we had no photographs taken of our wedding. We had none before, none during, and none after. There is no pictorial record of Helen in her wedding dress or me in my wedding suit. In addition to having no photography, we also elected not to have any type of reception. After greeting a few of our friends and relatives in the church foyer immediately after the ceremony, we were on our way as a newly wedded couple.

Gussie Carter, Lou and Mom
on POE furlough, 1944

We had indicated that we were leaving immediately after the ceremony for our visit to Helen's mother and our nondescript honeymoon. Between the two of us, we decided that we would spend the first night as husband and wife at our apartment, but we did not want to arrive there until late in the evening, after having our first meal together at a restaurant, which we had not yet selected.

As an aside, our mode of transportation was in an automobile owned by a close

family friend, Gussie Carter. She was a close friend of my mother's, and also to me before I entered service. Even though I owned the old 1932 Ford which we called “Geraldine“, the use of Gussie’s newer Chevrolet coupe was a treat. Another perspective to remember is that we were wed immediately following World War II, and our industries had not yet made the transition from a war to a consumer production. Therefore, new automobiles were not available. The newest were those that were purchased before the war began.

As we meandered up 17-92, we arrived in Deland. We selected a restaurant in the heart of town for our first meal together. I remember us telling the owner/manager that we had just been married. He gave us a note stating that we had eaten a hearty meal just a few hours after we were married. We wasted some more time waiting for it to get dark and then returned to our apartment in Orlando. We left the next day and visited Helen's mother in the hospital in Gainesville. We then went on to Jacksonville where we spent the next few days before returning to our apartment. The honeymoon was about as simple as the wedding itself. Little did we realize at the time that we were embarking on a relationship that would continue for more than sixty-four years. No end in sight at this writing.

Even though we think of our years after retirement as our “golden years“, I consider the golden years period of my life as beginning just a few months after Helen and I were married in February of 1946. Helen was feeling sickly, and, since she was a nineteen year old new bride, we suspected that she could be pregnant. Helen made an appointment with the Stone family doctor, Carl D. Hoffman. Dr. Hoffman had recently renewed his medical practice in Orlando, after serving as a field surgeon for the army in Europe. He was a prominent physician in Orlando, and he had married the daughter of an early Orlando Mayor. He was in general practice, but he also provided obstetrical care, since at that time Orlando had only a couple of obstetrical specialists. After an examination of Helen, he confirmed that she was indeed pregnant.

After observing the distress in Helen's features upon receiving the news of her pregnancy, Dr. Hoffman attempted to console her. This consolation talk with her began with the remark that this was the best thing in the world that could have happened to her and to our marriage. He stated that raising children in the early stages of our marriage would allow us to enjoy the fruits of our companionship with each other later in life. His rationale was that in the early years a married couple would be inhibited in their activities by causes other than having children. He stated that I would need to be educated before starting a career. I would then be in the early stages of a career which would translate into low income. He finalized his consolation with the statement that we should have our children while we were young and then, when my career had expanded and our children were grown up, we would be able to enjoy life with each other.

To this day, Helen and I often remark at how profound her doctor’s comments

were. In retrospect, this incident was a part of our learning process in understanding just how wise older people can be. As the saying goes, “They’ve been there, done that”. Following up on that piece of advice from Dr. Hoffman, Charlotte was born in December of 1946, Beth in March of 1951, and Les in June of 1954. Helen was twenty, twenty-four, and twenty-seven years of age, respectively, when her three children were born. On her fiftieth birthday, our youngest child was twenty-three and my career had advanced to the point where I was the number three executive at the Orlando Utilities Commission, ultimately to move into the number two spot. We had completed our child-rearing years and now had the freedom, as well as the means, to pursue travel and other interests in life. How true Dr. Hoffman’s words of wisdom proved to be.

The first year of our marriage was marked with such significant events that it is difficult now to understand how we withstood all of them. The first event was Helen’s pregnancy, conceived in the first month of our marriage. We had stated to Helen’s mother that our intentions were to refrain from having children until after I graduated from college. When Helen called her mother to tell her that she was pregnant, her mother’s response was that she must have married the smartest guy in the world to have completed college in less than two months. This is one little family story that demonstrates G-Tag‘s personality and sense of humor. We have a lot of G-Tag stories.

The next obstacle was that the apartment which was owned by my aunt was sold. The new owners quickly told us they wanted us to move. To put things in perspective, immediately after WWII came to an end in 1946, millions of service personnel returned home. Many, such as I, married and were looking for places to live. During the war years, no new construction had taken place, so housing was very short. With our apartment no longer available and acceptable housing not to be found, our only recourse was to move in with my parents. That created an awkward situation, with Helen being pregnant and the usual tension that occasionally arises when two families live under the same roof.

I have often referred to Charlotte as my “lawnmower baby”. The reason for that is that I started a lawnmower repair business during Helen’s pregnancy. The proceeds from that business provided the money for Helen's prenatal care, delivery, and postnatal care for her pregnancy with Charlotte. The professional fee for this entire care was $200. Health insurance coverage was not common at the time, and certainly we had none. We would only become covered when I obtained a full-time job at OUC three years later. In addition to the doctor's care, I was obligated to pay all the hospital costs, which, as I recall, were even less than the aforementioned amount for the doctor.

My entrance into the lawnmower repair business came about as a result of World War II. During the war, no new lawnmowers were produced, so all of the existing lawnmowers had to be maintained and repaired. The traditional and standard lawnmower at that time was the reel type, which required pushing. The advent of

the power mower was several years in the future. Actually, there were wealthy homeowners with large lawns who had power mowers, but this was definitely the exception and was a curiosity. With hand lawnmowers requiring so much maintenance, the lawnmower shop at Bumby's became so overwhelmed that the turnaround time for sharpening and repairing a mower extended to almost a month. This was significantly impacting their business, since lawns in Florida grow considerably in a month's time.

Under these conditions, I offered to sharpen and repair mowers in a makeshift workshop in one of Dad's buildings behind the Conroy House, where Helen and I were living at the time. The agreement was that I would receive all the compensation for labor, including sharpening, and Bumby's would receive the profits from all parts installed. As a matter of information, the charge for sharpening a lawnmower at that time was $2.00. I sharpened them by lapping in the reel with the cutter bar by using a makeshift turning device for the reel. The entire lawnmower unit was located in a shallow container. The rotating device which I rigged up was rather ingenious. I would then apply a compound made up of emery powder and waste oil. After the sharpening was completed, I then needed to clean the unit which I did with mineral spirits and compressed air. The compressed air was generated by the use of an old compressor, which I had salvaged from a refrigeration unit. The proceeds from this operation gave us the ability to pay the doctor and hospital bills for our "lawnmower" baby.

The day that Helen began having labor pains for Charlotte's delivery was Sunday morning, December 22, 1946. I took her to the hospital where we were met by Gussie Carter, a good friend of our family, as well as a registered nurse. She led Helen up to the labor and delivery area and told me it would be several hours before she gave birth. I then went back to my parent's house where we were living, and decided to do some work in the lawnmower shop. In less than two hours, I was called and informed that Helen had delivered a baby girl. This was the first of Helen's three very short labors. We were now the proud parents of a baby girl, after having been married ten months. In retrospect, we have no regrets and are very proud of our family history.

The next challenge arose when I had to decide whether or not I would return to college. When I learned that Helen was pregnant, I considered the idea of not returning. I applied for several jobs, but in every instance the men who interviewed me stated that they had a job for me, but that I was a fool if I didn't return to college. Hearing this from successful people, I began to reassess my decision to not go back to college. After talking it over with Helen and trying to outline the difficulties we might have for the next three years, we agreed it was a wise decision to continue my education. I started my sophomore year while we were living with my parents.

In the meantime, with the help of my dad, we explored the possibility of building a house under the G.I. Bill. Bumby Hardware owned two fifty-foot lots on

Our first home in Winter Park, 1947

Pennsylvania Avenue in Winter Park. I purchased these lots with the savings I had accumulated during my time in service. They became the genesis for the G.I. loan I acquired to build a two-bedroom frame house. The location of the house was ideal, since it was within easy walking distance of Rollins College, as well as downtown Winter Park. We moved into that house shortly after our first wedding anniversary. It is easy to see now why I consider our first year of our marriage as being so traumatic but, in reality, we were building the foundation for our family years.

During the next three years, I attended college under the G.I. Bill, which provided us with a subsistence allowance, as a married veteran, of $120 per month. This was supplemented with part-time work at Bumby Hardware, which provided another $80 per month. We were able to furnish a new house, care for a new daughter, participate in various school activities, as well as support all the other activities of new parents, with a total income of $200 per month. I cannot let the opportunity go by without recognizing that it was through the efforts of my father that the part-time work at Bumby's was made available for me. Without that help, I doubt that I would have been able to finish school and accomplish what I did in my career as a result. I will always be grateful to Dad for this.

In my senior year at Rollins, I pledged a fraternity, Delta Chi. This increased my exposure to other students, as well as our social life. As a married couple, our little house near the college became a gathering place for social activities for other married couples and fraternity brothers. We would regularly have social events at our house, usually involving some type of card game but very rarely involving any kind of alcohol. In retrospect, I imagine most of us were too poor to afford the luxury of drinking many alcoholic beverages. One of the highlights of our college activities was when we and one other married couple were able to act as chaperones for my fraternity when it was assigned the weekend privileges at the Pelican. The Pelican was a large dormitory style two-story building at New Smyrna Beach owned by Rollins College. The college had a procedure whereby they allocated the use of the Pelican during the school year to the various fraternities and sororities. One of the conditions for the use of the Pelican was

that the group using it must be properly chaperoned. Since Helen and I were an adult married couple, we qualified as chaperones. This was a fun weekend for all of us.

Not only did Rollins make the Pelican available to sororities and fraternities during the school year, but they also made it available to alumni during the summer months. There was a specific procedure for scheduling a reservation through the alumni office. Not being able to afford an expensive vacation after I graduated, I took advantage of this opportunity for many years when the children were young. Our family has many fond memories of summer vacation at The Pelican. In 1986, when Helen and I purchased our condo in New Smyrna Beach, just a few miles from the original Pelican, we named it "The Stone Pelican". Since then, our children, grandchildren, and now our great-grandchildren have enjoyed many special times together at New Smyrna Beach.

Charlotte was our only child during my three years of college. I remember one occurrence during my senior year. Every year the college would have a Christmas event for the children of students. On one occasion, Helen took Charlotte to the Christmas party in my senior year just as Charlotte turned three years old. The president of the college went around to each student's child and engaged the child and its parent in conversation. When approaching Helen, he asked Charlotte's age. She replied that she was three years old. Hamilton Holt responded by saying that three was his favorite age for the early years of all of his children. When Helen told me what he had said, I was delighted and have thought ever since about how right he

Lou, Helen and Charlotte

was. Little did I know at the time that that Christmas party would be his last at Rollins. He resigned as president at the end of the school year in 1949. I received my baccalaureate degree in June of 1949 and began work at Orlando Utilities Commission in July. The story of my career and work at OUC is chronicled in another portion of this journal.

My employment at OUC began another phrase in our marriage as I transitioned from a college student and part-time employee to a full-time professional. At the beginning, I did not feel the status of a professional but, retrospectively, I now know this was the beginning. It was also the beginning of a certain level of independence in our lives as a married couple. At last we had a degree of economic independence. Even though, in the beginning, our income was not much more than when I was a student and part-time employee, we had hope and expectation that it would grow. Even more importantly, we felt a certain sense of financial security.

As evidence of this new financial independence, we purchased another automobile. This purchase was from Dewey Stone, my uncle. As I recall it was a 1949 black Chevrolet coupe. Even though it was a coupe, it was more than seventeen years newer than “Geraldine“, the 1932 Ford which I and my family had owned since I was a junior in high school. It had served all of us well, but it was now time for an upgrade. Some reading this may question why we purchased a coupe as a growing young family. The answer is that it was the right car at the right place at the right time. As a coupe, it had room behind the front bench seats where we placed a little stool where Charlotte rode.

Another manifestation of our newfound independence was our decision in 1950 to have another child. Our second daughter, Louis Elizabeth (Beth) was born March 6, 1951. The circumstances concerning that birth were exciting. At that time OUC sponsored a softball team in the commercial league in Orlando. The team was a perennial powerhouse and won several league championships. I played on that team as catcher. On the night of Beth’s birth, I played softball. Upon my return home, Helen advised me that her water had broken. She had planned to take a shower before going to the hospital, but when we called the doctor, he told us to get there without the bath and to make haste. Helen's sister Joda was living with us at that time. We all left the house together, and the plan was to take Charlotte to my mother's house and Joda would then accompany me to the hospital with Helen and sit with me during the many hours until the baby was born. On the drive to Mother’s, Helen began to have labor pains rather close together. The further we drove, the closer the pains came. I will never forget that at the corner of South Street and Summerlin Avenue, we made the decision to take Helen by the hospital first and then let Joda drive Charlotte over to my mother's. When we arrived at the hospital, they immediately took Helen up to the delivery room. Beth was born at 11:47 pm, the exact numerical address as our home in Winter Park. I don't recall whether Joda made it back in time for the

baby's birth or not. One thing I do know is that Helen's attending physician, Dr. Carl Hoffman, did not make it to the delivery. Beth was delivered by one of the interns. In any event, it was a pretty close call and set the stage for the circumstances of Les' birth, which would come a little more than three years later.

Even though Charlotte was four and a half years old and was able to exhibit some degree of independence when Beth was born, we could never lose sight of the fact that we now had two infants in our household. We had become one of those families after World War II which produced the "baby boomer" generation. Helen had settled into the routine of being a mother, homemaker, and wife, while I was beginning to build a career at OUC. We took a great deal of pride in our home located on Pennsylvania Avenue within walking distance of downtown Winter Park. Helen's love of beauty was manifested with all the flowers, shrubs and plants which we had in our yard.

Jimmy, Alice, Lou circa 1946 - 1947

While we had friends from the college while I was attending Rollins, our primary friendship centered on Jimmy and Alice Poole. Jimmy and Alice were married while still in the service and their first offspring, a boy, was just a few months older than Charlotte. They had a second child, also a boy, which was slightly older than Beth. Jimmy had been my best friend while in high school. He and Alice were the only two attendants at our marriage. We were frequent visitors at each other's homes, and Jimmy was my helper in performing many of the chores of a new homeowner. I recall one occasion where all four of us planted grass in our front yard. Their close friendship continued, and I was able to direct Jimmy to an opening at OUC, where he became employed approximately a year after I started. Both Jimmy and Alice struggled to complete their college educations and both successfully accomplished that goal. Alice became not only a schoolteacher, but an elementary school principal in Florida,

and later in Maryland. Jimmy also became a professional water chemist and we were not only friends, but business associates for many years. We both lived and worked together at OUC's Indian River Plant in the Titusville area.

When I was promoted to director of OUC power generation and my job as superintendent at the Indian River Plant became vacant, Jimmy became a little disenchanted with me because I did not recommend him for the superintendent's job. Shortly thereafter, he resigned and took a job with a water consultant in Baltimore, Maryland. In this capacity, he would now make his mark in his chosen field. Jimmy's talent lay in his knowledge rather than in his leadership ability, which is why I had not recommended him. His new job as a water consultant took advantage of that talent, and he ultimately became a partner in the consulting firm for which he worked. Eventually, our friendship was rekindled, and he became the water consultant for OUC's boilers both at the Indian River Plant and the Stanton Energy Center. In the early stages of his water consulting career, he made many trips to the Middle East where their infrastructure was being developed due to the discovery of crude oil in that area. Jimmy's death came about as a result of a heart attack when he was on the way back home from a trip to OUC's Stanton Energy Center.

When Beth was around two years old, Helen and I began debating and discussing whether we would plan to have any more children. One fact that was significant in our decision was the difference in our blood factors. I was Rh positive and she was Rh negative. Not a lot was known then about the blood condition of offspring resulting from these two parental conditions. One thing that was known, however, was that each pregnancy created a condition that was more tenuous than the previous one, and that couples should cease having children no later than the third child. This was the Damocles sword that hung over our heads while we were making this decision. I was also concerned about financial considerations, and I will always remember a conversation I had with my dad about having a third child. While riding with him one day, the subject came up about having another child. I mentioned to Dad that we were slowly beginning to see the light of day with respect to our financial condition, and I did not know whether we would be able to afford a third child. He instantly responded, "If you wait until you can afford something, you will never have anything". That comment remained with me and impacted many decision in my life. Shortly thereafter, Helen became pregnant.

In 1954 there was no such thing as a sonogram, only old wives' tales to indicate whether the sex of the unborn fetus was a boy or a girl. Both Charlotte and Beth were excited about having a new baby, which they named "Susie". When Helen's pregnancy advanced to the point where movement could be felt in the abdomen, Charlotte and Beth were continually asking to feel Susie's movements. By the time Helen's pregnancy advanced to the point of delivery, it was almost an accepted fact that the baby would be a girl. I remember well the day of Les' birth. On that day, I accompanied Helen to her visit with Dr. Hoffman, who told us that

Helen was ready to have the baby, that very day. We picked up Beth and Charlotte, who were attending summer Bible School, had lunch together, and then went home to pack for the hospital visit. We then took both girls to Grandma Stone's and went to the hospital. Helen still had no indication that the birth was imminent. G-Tag came by the hospital and asked what all the fuss was about, since Helen was not in labor. We were all waiting together, including Helen, in the waiting room. Finally, a nurse came in and said she was going to prep Helen for delivery. We did not see Helen again, but a short time later, Dr. Hoffman appeared in the waiting room and said, "Lou, we don't have a Susie this time!" Louis Edward Stone, Jr. (L.E.S., i.e. Les) was born on June 25, 1954.

One thing I can remember vividly is that I had already developed a response to those people who offered their condolences about having another girl instead of a boy. My response would be that I was proud of my children whether boys or girls and that I resented any regrets. That was the way I felt then, and I feel the same way now. While on that subject of mixed sexes in the offspring, I have a few comments based on experience and a perspective that covers more than fifty years. Any parents who raise their children with only one sex do miss out on a significant element of parenting. The old cliché "I'm from Mars and you're from Venus" is readily apparent after having been the parent of both sexes. Seeing their differences from infancy to maturity is one of the great joys of being a parent. This difference is manifested in their first demonstrations of likes and dislikes. It is readily apparent when the infant begins to show their interests in the different types of toys and playthings. This unique difference exists throughout their formative years into adulthood. I know it is a matter over which we have no control, and I would have been very happy and content to have three girls. However, I feel very fortunate as a father and a parent to have experienced all of the various joys and exultations of raising both sexes.

It was not long before we discovered that our growing family had outgrown the capacity of a coupe automobile and a small house with only two bedrooms. Knowing that moving into another house was out of the question and that a major renovation was beyond our financial capabilities, we explored the possibility of modifying our existing residence with the sole purpose of obtaining another bedroom. We accomplished this by converting the existing dining room into a bedroom and closing in the screened porch and making it into a dining area. This was done without changing the roof line and was made possible by the fact that I did most of the work myself. This change made our living quarters adequate. Yes, our next car had to be a sedan. We purchased a four-door Chevrolet that wasn't much newer than the coupe we owned, but it certainly had more room. No longer did Charlotte and Beth have to ride on the little makeshift seats we had fashioned for them in the coupe. Now they had their own adult seats. That sedan served us well until we purchased a station wagon in the late 1950's, which was our family car when we moved to the Indian River Plant.

Due to the rapid growth of Orlando, the demand for electrical power eventually

exceeded the output of OUC's two power plants in Orlando. OUC was in the process of building a new power plant on the Indian River, halfway between Titusville and Cocoa. There was a lot of interest and speculation as to who would become the superintendent of the new plant. It was considered one of the outstanding positions at OUC. Obviously, I had my dreams about such a job, but I knew it was impossible, because there were so many power plant personnel who were much senior to me. I received the shock of my life when I was informed in the latter part of 1958 that I would be the new plant superintendent.

Around the middle of 1959, before we moved, we learned that Helen required some serious lung surgery. All during our marriage she had been plagued with a chronic cough, and she was susceptible to lung congestion and infections which would cause her to become bedridden for days at a time. Her problem was finally diagnosed as being bronchiectasis, a chronic lung condition that resulting in fluid retention in the lung, which eventually caused the tissue to die. This could only be resolved by removing one of the lobes of her lung and scooping out a portion of another lobe. After lengthy discussions and debate, we decided to proceed with the surgery. This meant that Helen would be immobilized for quite some time, even though she was a busy homemaker and the mother of three children. We were able to manage the situation with help from family and friends. Les stayed with my parents. Beth stayed with Al and Joda, and Charlotte stayed with one of her schoolmate's families. Even with the removal of half of her lung on the left side, Helen's recovery was remarkable. I don't remember exactly how long it was, but before too long we were all back together as a family.

One aspect of my new job as the power plant superintendent was that our family would live in the residence being built directly across from the power plant on the banks of the Indian River. Even though Helen's rehabilitation was slow, we could now begin our planning for the move to the superintendent's residence at the Indian River plant. When I was first appointed to the job and we knew that a residence would be provided, we planned on moving before the beginning of the school year in September of 1959. As happens to most schedules, this one was changed due to Helen's surgery, as well as delays to the completion of the superintendent's residence because OUC changed the architect. The end result was that we moved into the residence at the Indian River Plant during the Christmas holidays in 1959. By doing this, Charlotte and Beth could begin their schooling in Brevard County at midyear.

Even though the residence was located on a beautiful spot on the shores of the Indian River and the house was the first one we had ever lived in that had any kind of air-conditioning, the early months we were there were less than desirable. The large area between the house and U.S. 1 was barren, and the sand blew across the property like the Sahara Desert. Additionally, the garage was not enclosed which exposed everything out there, including the laundry, to the blowing sand. Ultimately, these deficiencies were corrected and life on the

Indian River began to take shape. Many changes occurred while we were there. The first was that the huge area between the house and U.S. 1 was completely grassed, with a sodded lawn being placed around the house. The second big improvement was that the carport was remodeled, making it into an enclosed garage. It was heavenly to me that all the yard and lawn work was done by OUC's maintenance personnel.

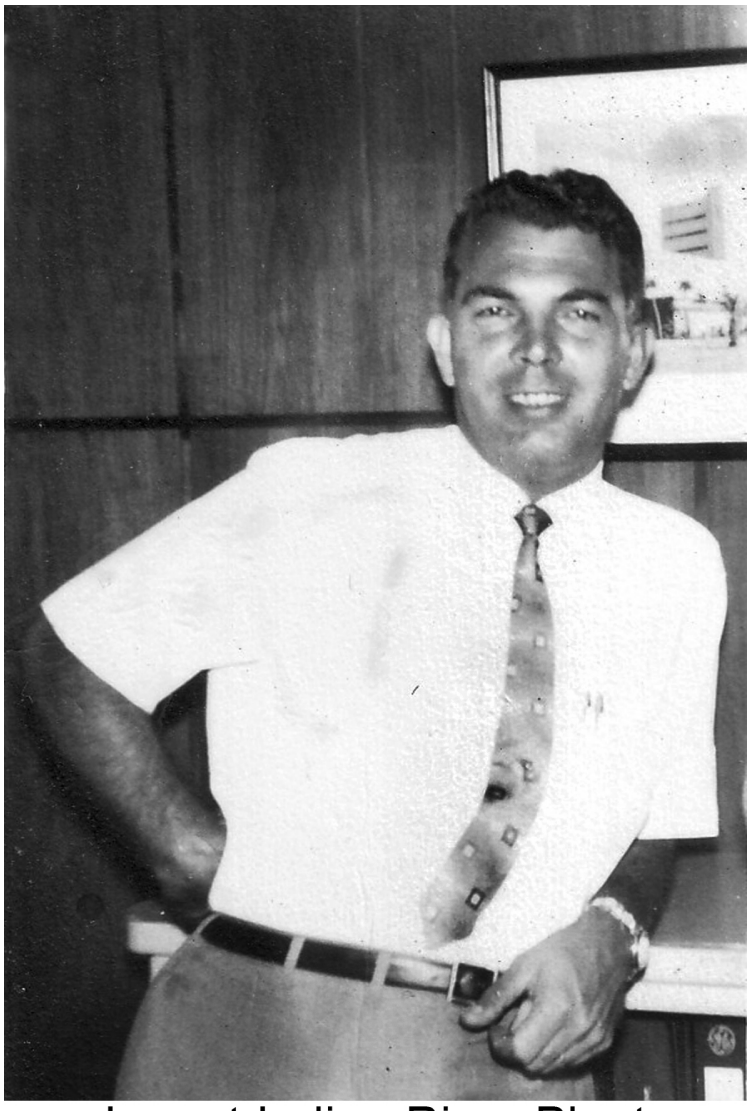
Our family was now living on the Indian River with all of its amenities. Foremost among these was the sea life that it provided. The water from the river which had been used for cooling in the power plant was discharged back into the river, by means of a manmade canal from the power plant back into the Indian River. This "discharge" canal bordered on the north side of the house. This water was warmed by the process, and the canal attracted all sorts of marine life in the winter, including manatees and many types of fish. With our interest in sport fishing and our love of seafood, this was a fishing haven for our family. The fishing was phenomenal, and I called it my "million dollar fishing hole". At the "intake" canal south of the house, there were traveling screens which prevented the sea and plant life in the river from entering with the water for the cooling of the power plant. This provided a plethora of shrimp and crabs for us to harvest. We could fish or gather from the intake and eat our catch for supper that evening. My father especially relished his trips over to visit us and fish at either the intake or discharge canal. I suspect these were the most successful and pleasant memories of his fishing life.

Even though living in this environment provided many wonderful experiences for all of us, I would say unequivocally that being smack dab in the middle of the missile and space development program was the most exciting of all. Our residence at the power plant was directly across from Kennedy Space Center, although at that time it was still called Cape Canaveral. When we first arrived in Brevard County at the end of 1959, the military missile development program was the center of most activity. By the time we left in 1964, NASA was beginning to take precedent over all military activities. This was due to the fact that in his inaugural address, President Kennedy had made the commitment to land a man on the moon within 10 years. As mentioned in another portion of this autobiography, I don't recall in my lifetime, other than during World War II, a time when our country was so united to a specific cause.

The development of the military missile programs had provided the knowledge necessary to create rockets capable of sending a human to the moon and back. During my tenure at the Indian River Plant, I witnessed the development of such rockets. It was such an exciting place to be and witness from the periphery. In the early stages of rocket propulsion, liquid fuels were the primary means of power. This did not satisfy the military's needs, since handling and storing liquids presented a serious logistical problem. This opened the door for the development of solid fuels for rocket propulsion. One of the first applications was the development of the Polaris rocket for submarines. It allowed the storage for

many months of a missile that could be launched from beneath the water anywhere in the world. After it came the Minuteman, the ICBM (intercontinental ballistic missile) developed by Martin Company, and then the medium-range missile, Pershing, developed by the same company. Both of these overcame the logistics of handling liquid fuels, which allowed the Minuteman to become the military's choice for placement throughout the U.S. in strategic locations. The Pershing missile became the military's choice for a mobile launcher intended for intermediate ranges.

OUC's Indian River Plant started up on February 20, 1960. The children had been enrolled in school, and we began to integrate ourselves into the life of Brevard County. At that time there was no significant NASA presence on Cape Canaveral. All of the Cape activity then was focused on developing the various rockets for the military. The Brevard community was like a town patterned after those of the Gold Rush period. There was a classic saying among Cape workers, "Eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow the contract will expire". Such was the attitude that prevailed during that period of the rocket/missile development. This paints the picture of the atmosphere under which we lived during our four years at the Indian River Plant. Most of our friends and acquaintances were associated with the missile industry in some form. From the early days of my tenure at the Indian River plant, many people tried to convince me that switching over to the missile development program would be the right thing for me since there was a crying need for my expertise in pressure systems. History proved that I was correct in not succumbing to this temptation by virtue of the



Lou at Indian River Plant

fact that many of my friends who had tried to get me to convert came back to me looking for jobs after I had returned to Orlando when the missile industry suffered a severe cutback in the 1970's. Destiny ultimately proved that the electric power industry was the place to be for me.

Our years of living at the Indian River Plant were very significant in the history of our family. It was not only my first management responsibility at OUC, but it was a time that provided many of the values and actions which became so significant to our family. In 1964, I was promoted to the position of director of electric operations, which meant relocating back to the Orlando area. As a side story, in 1999, twenty-five years later, our family had a reunion with our old home on the river on OUC's IRP property. This was the idea of our son Les who made the arrangements for this visit as a surprise and part of my 75th birthday celebration. At the time, the house was vacant. We took a picnic lunch and spent an enjoyable day reminiscing together about our special shared experience of living there on the power plant property during those exciting years in Brevard County.

Upon planning our relocation back to Orlando, we had decided to research the areas of new home development. Even though it was in the mid-1960's, home construction was beginning to take a firm grip on Orlando. Helen was very diligent in her research of our options for an area in which to live. On several occasions, she went over to Orlando with a packed lunch and spent an entire day in a neighborhood that she was investigating. At that time, one of the most popular areas being developed was in Dover Shores. Helen spent considerable time investigating that area, but she finally vetoed it because of the air traffic noise due to being on the flight path of the B-47 bombers flying into Pine Castle Air Force Base. These were still the years of the "cold war" with Russia, and the noise would become even more profound when SAC made the transition to B-52 bombers. That became a profound decision, due to the fact that the air base later became the location of the Orlando International Airport, one of the busiest airports in the country now, due to Orlando becoming such a popular tourist destination.


Our Home for 44 years on Sweetbriar

After considerable deliberation, we chose a site for our new home on Sweetbriar Road, just outside the city limits of Orlando but within the service area of OUC. We chose a builder and were on our way to becoming homeowners again. The location was

on a dead-end street that had formerly been an orange grove. As an aside, two families, the Buckners and the McGaughys, who were residents when we moved into the neighborhood in 1964, still occupied the same homes on the street when we moved into the Westminster Towers forty-four years later. Our street was approximately fifty percent completed when we started construction. In approximately one year, it was all sold out. The house plan that we selected was one which we had seen in Winter Park and was originally designed by Rutenburg Homes. We made some minor adjustments and the contractor had plans drawn up for it. After going through the torments that all homebuilders go through during construction, our house was finally completed, essentially on time. The total price we paid for the house and the lot was $25,000. It was a well-constructed and designed home.

As another side story, I recall that, approximately ten years later, I ran across the contractor at lunch one day and commented to him about how well the house had been built. I told him that after living in it for more than ten years, not once had I referred to him as "that SOB contractor who built my house". This was the highest compliment that I could give any homebuilder. The quality of the material and construction was one of the reasons we were able to sell it so quickly when we retired to Westminster Towers. One of the ironies about the house on Sweetbriar is that it was the largest house we had ever lived in since our marriage, and yet we moved in at a time when our family was showing signs of becoming smaller. Charlotte had just entered college, and in a few more years both Beth and Les would be leaving the familiar trappings of our household. Nevertheless, the house on Sweetbriar served us well for the next forty-four years. It became the site of many joyful family times, as well as a few family sorrows.

Charlotte began her college life at the University of South Florida, Beth was enrolled at a local junior high school and Les attended a local grammar school. I began my second step in the hierarchy of OUC as the director of generation. Helen became more deeply involved in the many facets of being both a wife and mother. The latter two assignments encompassed a multitude of virtues and challenges. Life for our entire family had begun anew.

Helen had the most formidable job of all, creating a new home in which the family would live. From a basic house built on a lot in a desolate, old orange grove, she created a thing of beauty with her artistic talents and hard work, both inside and out. I have always particularly enjoyed seeing what Helen could do with outside landscaping. The landscaping around our home became a thing of beauty, and everyone was always impressed with Helen's knowledge of plants and their welfare. The house at 902 Sweetbriar before too long became the home of the Stone family. Even though living at the superintendent's residence at the Indian River Plant held many exciting and enjoyable times for our family, the crux of family life was fully established while living at 902 Sweetbriar.

Charlotte was enrolled at the University of South Florida in Tampa in 1964, which made her class one of the earliest ones to graduate from this new university. It was only in its infancy at that time, but it subsequently became one of the leading universities in Florida. It was a liberal arts school originally, but it developed into strong technical college, and a medical school was eventually added. In 1964, Interstate 4 through Orlando was in its final construction stages, and that portion between Tampa and Orlando had been completed. The drive from Orlando to Tampa was very short and enjoyable, with traffic being at a minimal. Charlotte was elated to learn that one of her classmates from Titusville High School, Allana Bourne, had also registered at the University of South Florida. They became roommates and very close friends. Dan Holland, Charlotte's boyfriend from Titusville, was attending a Christian school in Tampa, and he would offer rides to Charlotte back to Orlando on many weekends. Such a ride back to Orlando is the source of one of my funny stories.

During the strawberry season in Florida, Dan and Charlotte decided to stop at one of the strawberry fields which had a special offer if you picked your own strawberries. The owner told them that since they were college students headed home, they could have all the strawberries they could pick free of charge. When Dan and Charlotte arrived at our house in Orlando that evening, Dan's automobile looked like one big mobile strawberry. There were strawberries coming out the roof, the windows, the doors, etc. They unloaded many at our house and we ate strawberries in every form possible for days to come. The whole family was involved, and I remember that we attempted to make strawberry jam. It never set up properly, but we had a huge quantity of what we called "strawberry syrup". The main thing that is so memorable to me is the pride that Dan and Charlotte had in their conquest of the strawberry field.

Another memorable event about Charlotte's college days is that she and her friend Allana were selected as exchange students to the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. Allana had an aunt who was living in Newport, Rhode Island. This became their center of traveling almost every weekend while attending the University of Massachusetts. I can vividly remember receiving a collect call from Charlotte Stone late one evening, about midnight as I recall. As any doting father would do, I accepted the call since I thought my daughter needed my help. Immediately upon the call going through, she responded with, "Daddy, guess where I am!" I replied, "I have no idea." She immediately informed me, "I'm calling you from the top of the Empire State Building in New York City." Obviously this got my attention. She and Allana had driven down to New York City for a day of sightseeing. This was one of the many trips she and Allana took, all over New England, while students in Massachusetts.

After an off and on romance throughout their college years, Dan and Charlotte were married on February 9, 1968. This was during Charlotte's senior year back in college at Tampa, but even more profound, it was during Dan's furlough before leaving to serve in the army in Turkey. Charlotte was a good wife and became a

schoolteacher while awaiting Dan's return from Turkey. Upon his return, he was stationed at Fort Ritchie, Maryland, only an hour's drive from Washington, D.C. They were living there when our entire family, including my mother and dad, visited them. I will always remember that trip, since it was in their living room that we saw on television the moon landing and the first man walk on the moon. Upon their return to central Florida, Dan completed his education at FTU, later to become UCF, and was hired by Florida Power Corporation and assigned to the Winter Park office.

In 1974, Dan and Charlotte provided us with our first grandchild, a baby girl named Carin Ruth, "Cari". Cari's middle name, Ruth, was a testament to my mother, Ruth Stone. During Cari's preschool years, they lived not far from us, and we were able to see them often. Then Dan was transferred to St. Petersburg, where Florida Power's corporate offices were located at that time. As Dan's career progressed, his family moved to Monticello, Florida, and then ultimately back to the Orlando area, where Cari graduated from high school. Cari excelled in her studies and decided to attend Florida College, a small private Christian college in Tampa, Florida. Her father had also attended this college. It was there that she met the fine young man, Aaron Smith, from the mountains of North Carolina, whom she would eventually marry. I have more to say about their marriage later on. Cari did return home to Orlando and complete her degree in elementary education at the University of Central Florida.

Beth was beginning to make her mark in Cherokee Junior High School. This was the same junior high school that my siblings and I had attended. She became very interested in public speaking and debating while a student there. She became close friends with her young speech teacher, Sharon Bowers, and that friendship remains to this day. Beth's training in speech served her well through her years as a student and even more so when she confronted the world of business. After receiving her high school diploma, Beth attended the University of South Florida where her sister had graduated. After a time, she became disenchanted with college life and living away from home and returned to Orlando where she obtained a job at Sun Bank. Before too long, she was in contact with her former junior high school speech teacher who was then working on her PHD at LSU in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Sharon knew Beth's capabilities and was eventually able to talk Beth into going to Baton Rouge and becoming a student at LSU.

The decision to go to Louisiana was a turning point in Beth's life. She received an excellent education while there. And, even more profound, she found a wonderful Razorback from Arkansas, Steve Rudolph, whom she married in her senior year in the student chapel at LSU. Steve was working at the time as an application engineer for Square D. Upon their marriage, he decided that he wanted to move to Florida, and he sought a job with Florida Power Corporation. He was ultimately employed by them and assigned to the office at Lake Wales, Florida.

Beth and Steve have lived in Lake Wales continually since settling there soon after their marriage. Over the years, they raised two fine sons there and became pillars of their community. Steve has never left his job at Florida Power Corporation and has actually survived several employee layoff/buyouts. Ironically, both of my sons-in-law have worked in the power industry. Both were engineers and worked their entire careers primarily with Florida Power Corporation, now known as Progress Energy.

Beth and Steve's two sons, Jason and Jeremy, were good students and athletes in their formative years. They were both enrolled in dancing classes as youngsters and excelled in that activity for many years. An annual outing for the rest of the family was to attend their dance recitals at the end of the year. My recollection is that Jason was an excellent hip-hopper, and Jeremy was an outstanding tap dancer. Also, Beth and Steve worked hard as supportive parents for the annual recital, as lighting and stage managers and many other various jobs over the years. We learned that dancing is a sport that requires just as much energy and skill as other more traditional sports for young men. Plus, as the boys explained, there are no girls on the football field.

Jason attended Wheaton College near Chicago. Living in Illinois was quite an experience for a Florida boy, but he survived, and ultimately graduated with his degree in Christian Formation and Ministry. In January of 2009, he married and gave Beth and Steve their first "daughter". Jason and his wife Joy are now living and working in Orlando, not far from where Helen and I live, and we enjoy seeing them periodically. After completing high school and working at Olive Garden restaurant in Lake Wales, Jeremy had an opportunity to move with a friend to Reno, Nevada. He is currently living there and working at the Olive Garden in Reno. Obviously, we do not see him as often as we would like. He is very interested in pursuing a career in photography, following in the footsteps of his Uncle Les.

Back at home on Sweetbriar Road, as a young man, Les was continuing his venture into photography during his high school years. One of the earliest remodeling jobs accomplished to our house on Sweetbriar was made to the guest bathroom. We allowed Les to paint the walls black and convert that room into his darkroom, in order to pursue his interest in photography. At that time, all photography was wet photography, since the era of digital cameras had not yet come. Les became close friends with a neighborhood boy, John Barnett, who was the same age. Shortly thereafter, the two of them became acquainted with another neighborhood boy, Rob Byers, who lived across the lake from where we lived. Their common meeting place was at the CAP (civil air patrol) search and rescue meetings. This organization was a quasi military group, which instilled a sense of discipline in all of them. In retrospect, it is interesting to note that both John and Rob made a career out of serving in the military until their retirement. Rob also received his military training as a cadet student at West Point.

Les' photographic interest manifested itself when he became the photographer for his school newspaper while a student at Boone high school. His commitment to a career in photography was indicated when, immediately upon graduation, he accepted an offer of training and a career photographing performing arts groups in high schools. He moved to Detroit for his training, and afterwards his job involved traveling. This experience provided two elements to his development. The first was that it gave him tremendous experience in working with large groups. The second was that it made him independent in planning for his long trips and managing his schedule. These two elements were highly instrumental as he became older and more mature. After being on the road for a while, he decided that he would settle down and return to Orlando. Shortly thereafter, he became employed by Sea World as a staff photographer, working with Britt Runion, who was Sea World's chief photographer. He worked with Sea World for fourteen years and had many interesting and exciting experiences, such as traveling with them and filming sea life "gatherings" of different species in different parts of the world. He filmed everything from autopsies to the birth of the first "Baby Shamu". Ultimately, Les became a freelance photographer, and his own independent photography business was born. As the digital age developed, he made the transition to digital photography and was very successful in that area. Now he is making inroads into using his photographic experience in matters of digital security. What the future brings for his career, only time will tell.

Les and Becky Wedding

One of the highlights of living at our home on Sweetbriar Road was the wedding of our son Les and Becky High. This was one of two such weddings that were held there. Les and Becky were married on July 4, 1981. Becky moved from Atlanta to Orlando when they married and, as an elementary school teacher, readily found a job teaching in the Orange County school system. Becky had an outgoing personality, and she easily integrated herself into our family. I remember that the "girls", Helen, Charlotte, Beth, and Becky, enjoyed outings to the condo together, and they took a few trips to places like St. Augustine, Savannah, and Charleston. It was a difficult time for our family when we lost Becky to cancer in 1992.

The other event in the setting of our backyard was the wedding of our granddaughter Cari to Aaron Smith. They were married on December 17, 1994, the same day Cari graduated from UCF. She chose to attend her marriage rather than her college graduation ceremony. Upon marrying, Cari and Aaron returned to the area of his hometown in Mitchell County, North Carolina. At that time, Aaron was a barber, but his heart was elsewhere. He began studying at night and passed the exam to be a building contractor in North Carolina. He has specialized in building log homes in the mountain settings. Because of his expertise and his affable personality, he has been quite successful. And this is a good thing, because ten months after they married they provided us with our first great-grandchild, Heather Shay Smith. Two years later Emma Leigh Smith was born. Five years later, Sarah Anne Smith was born. Then, to our surprise, another five years later Luke Aaron Smith joined the family and two years after that Mark Aaron Smith arrived. They are, of course, beautiful children and each and every one of them is dear to Helen and me. This helps to explain our many flights to Asheville which I describe in my "leisure life" section.


Cari and Aaron wedding

Like most families, we have some family traditions that form the basis of our family culture. Probably, the most memorable are our Christmas celebrations. Of course, when my children were very young and my parents were still young enough, my brothers and I and our families all convened at my parents' home. Santa would come in the night and we would have the usual commotion of opening our presents, followed by a big Christmas dinner later in the day. As time progressed, the gathering was moved to one of the son's homes. When we moved into the house on the property of the power plant, and then when we moved back to Orlando, the gathering was primarily at our home. It was a lot of work for Helen, but she especially enjoyed decorating for the holidays and wrapping the presents. My dad was interested in photography, and in the early days of movie cameras, he started one tradition. He set up his camera in the living room. Everyone was required to remain in the other room and then, in single file, we walked in and waved to the camera. We did this year after year, in the 1950's, 1960's, and 1970's primarily. Smiling and waving, we have a motion picture family Christmas history recorded on film.

The extended family, my brothers and their families and Helen's sister Joda and her family, made a special effort to attend so that we could all be together at least this one time each year. My brother Ken worked in the Orange County school system for his career. He was a history teacher for many years before becoming assistant principal at Cherokee Junior High School, which he had attended as a youngster. Later in his career he worked in an administrative position in the adult education program. He eventually married Mary Ann Cartwright, and they had a son, Kenny, Jr. Kenny married a local girl from Longwood, and they have two young children whom we see occasionally. In his later years, Ken was remarried to Rita Arnold. Helen and I enjoyed flying in the Mooney to Maggie Valley and being present for their wedding. We have a tradition of getting together with Ken's family in September to celebrate the birthdays of Helen, Ken, Rita, and Kenny's wife Laura.

My brother Jimmy married a girl from Georgia, Patricia Aldridge. He and his wife "Aunt Pat" had two children, Debbie and Buddy. Jimmy worked for Sears in downtown Orlando for many years. Then when Dad opened his own hardware store on west Highway 50 in Orlando, he went to work with Dad. Eventually Pat also worked at the store, and when the children grew up, they also worked there. Jimmy and Pat took over ownership of the store after Dad died, but when their family had to face the untimely death of Jimmy, the store eventually was sold. But even today, due to their background, Buddy and Debbie both work in the hardware business.

Speaking of the hardware business reminds me of another family tradition. For all of the years that Dad had his hardware business, the family would be called in for the annual taking of the "inventory". For tax reasons, this is required to be done annually and reported to the state government. Nowadays, this is all done by computers. When we buy any item, its bar code is scanned and the computer system automatically deletes it from the store's inventory. At any given time, a store can print out its current inventory. But that was not the case before computers. For the hardware store inventory, one day was set aside and marked on the calendar by all the participating family members. In the course of that day, every item in the store was counted and then the item, the quantity, and the price were manually listed on "inventory sheets". Imagine counting every item in an old-fashioned hardware store. It was a job for the whole family, including the children once they were old enough to write. There was one redeeming event of the day, however. Around 1:00 pm, Grandma Stone and her helpers would bring in a fabulous southern-fried chicken dinner with all the appropriate trimmings and desserts. There was one other benefit of the experience. Just like my days of working at Bumby Hardware when I was a student at Rollins, everyone in the family had a "ticket" hanging in the back of the store. All during the year, when we came in to get something at Dad's store, instead of paying for it, we would just record it on our "ticket". After inventory day, our ticket was usually wiped clean, and that was our pay.

Helen's sister Joda and her husband Albert have also been regular attendees at our family's Christmas gatherings. Albert's family owned the Orlando Forge in Winter Park, and when his parents passed away, Albert "Uncle Al" eventually bought out the business from his brother Carl. This came at a time when Orlando was beginning to experience its phenomenal growth. The Orlando Forge was well-known for its custom handmade wrought iron work. He received lucrative contracts from Disney World and other large industries moving into the area. Al was an excellent craftsman and also a good businessman. Al and Joda have one daughter, Lisa Mahoney. Lisa now lives near Seattle and has two grown children. Al and Joda have always been an important part of our lives, but now in our retirement years we have been able to spend even more time together. As an aside, as I write this, it is eminent that they will be moving into our community at the Westminster Towers.

In more recent years, Les, our only child living in Orlando now, took over hosting the family Christmas gathering. Somewhere back in time, Helen learned to make a Christmas wreath butter cookie which everyone in the family loved, so making several batches of those cookies became one of our traditions. I can testify to the fact that making those cookies is a labored task. Our granddaughter Cari, along with her children, has now taken over this task. Since she lives in North Carolina, she makes them and freezes them. Then they make the journey to Orlando in dry ice, in order to be fresh for Christmas morning. When we lived on Sweetbriar Road, we had a navel orange tree in our yard, and I began making a large bowl of ambrosia for Christmas morning, which everyone still looks forward to every year. At some point, we changed our tradition from a large Christmas dinner in the afternoon to a large Christmas brunch in the late morning. In addition, we changed from the women cooking the dinner to the men cooking the breakfast. The women in our family have been somewhat liberated.

Over the years, Helen and I have been blessed with a loving family who try their best to be supportive of one another. Each one of our children (sons-in-law included), grandchildren, and great-grandchildren has his and her own unique personalities and talents, and each one is important to us in his and her own special way. In 1996, Helen and I celebrated our fiftieth wedding anniversary. When our children came to us to discuss the plans for this celebration, it was our choice to have a small family dinner, rather than a large party with many guests. At our dinner celebration, we were toasted and honored with tributes by the family members present. I remember that they spoke about how grateful they were for us, but it was also a special time for us to look back over the years and be thankful for our family.

As our children matured, we grew older and therefore less capable of maintaining our residence. Our zeal was still present, but the infirmities of getting older with their limitations prevented us from doing the things we were accustomed to doing. We found that those things now had to be farmed out to others. Whereas

I bragged earlier in my life that I had never paid for an appliance service call, I now found that I had to make such a call for any anomaly. Helen also felt the same way about issues connected with the maintenance of the yard. All of our children were an immense help when called upon, but we realized that such calling could not go on forever. We realized that each of our children had their own lives to live and that caring for their parents would not be in their best interest.

Lou and Helen move to Westminster

After much investigation and after careful consideration, we decided to move into Westminster Towers, which most likely would be our final residence. We were able to quickly sell our Sweetbriar home, which I think was primarily due to the beautiful yard which Helen designed and maintained. In retrospect, after almost two years of residency, it appears that this was one of the smart decisions we made during our almost sixty-five years of marriage. The lifestyle here suits us well, and we both are very happy being residents at Westminster Towers. We are quite content living an undisciplined and unstructured existence as retirees without the chores and problems of home ownership. We now can visit with our children in a new environment, without having to worry about those many problems associated with owning a house.

Our children still offer their love continually and their help and support when needed from time to time. Les now serves that role which I had to abandon many years ago due to my human frailties, and I would be remiss if I did not mention the fact that the help and assistance from Les is and will continue to be passionately appreciated

Lou's family reunion at IRP residence on 75th birthday

Stone family Christmas 2008

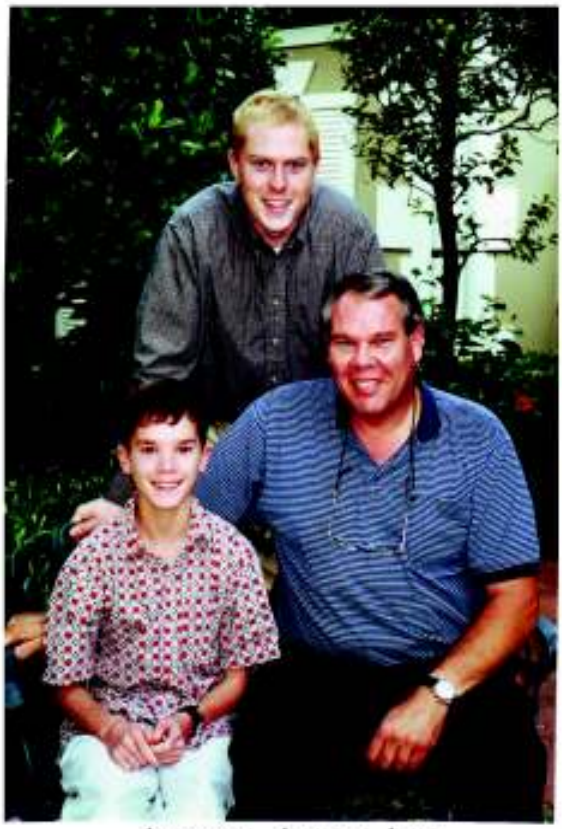
Char and Dan on Porch in N.C.

Aaron and Cari

Our five great grandchildren

Beth and Steve

Jason and Joy Wedding



Jeremy, Jason, Les

# Career Years

My career at OUC shows how God works in strange and mysterious ways. It started at a "college night" at College Park Baptist Church. College night was a Sunday evening church service during the Christmas Holidays. Several college students, who were home for Christmas, would give a short talk on what their Christianity meant to them as college students. I was one of those students who gave such a talk. The essence of my talk was that of a science major and how I could see the hand of God in everything I studied and learned. In the audience that night was a regular and staunch member of the church, Frank Little. A few months later, just a few weeks before my graduation from Rollins College, I was at a Sunday school party given by Helen's Sunday school class. Frank Little was also there, since he was dating Marilyn, who was also in Helen's class.

This was my first real introduction to Frank, since Sunday school classes were age related and Frank was a few years older than I. During the course of our conversation, I mentioned I was graduating soon and was lamenting the fact that I might have to move out of the area to get a job in some scientific endeavor. Frank mentioned that his employer, Orlando Utilities Commission, would soon be starting a new power plant in Orlando (Lake Highland Plant), and he would be needing a helper in the boiler water treatment laboratory. He further stated that he had heard my presentation during College Night at Christmastime and was impressed at what I had to say. It was that conversation and its ultimate consequences that lead me to state without any doubt that my forty year career at OUC began during College Night at College Park Baptist Church during the Christmas season of 1948. I immediately told Frank I was interested and to let me know as things developed.

My best friend and fraternity brother Ivor Groves was also a science major at Rollins and graduated a year earlier. He immediately went to work at Oak Ridge, Tennessee, for Union Carbide, the contractor which operated the facility at Oak Ridge for the Atomic Energy Commission. We had kept in contact and as my graduation closed in, I inquired of him about my chance of going to work there. He was very positive about the prospects and obtained the necessary application forms. He said they were always looking for newly graduated physics students and I fit the bill. I obtained the forms, filled them in, and returned them to the appropriate address. A couple of weeks before I graduated, I was informed that I was a candidate for employment, subject to a security check, and that my annual salary would be $3000. They neither offered any funds for relocation expenses nor explained any of the fringe benefits. They explained that those details would be forthcoming after the security check. I advised them to proceed with the security check, and I would confirm my acceptance after I obtained all of the details.

I graduated from Rollins in June 1949, and I had not heard from Union Carbide. As an interim job, I was working at Bumby Hardware in Winter Park. My father had worked at that store since the early twenties and had been the de facto store manager since the early thirties. That relationship provided me a part time job while I was attending college. My G.I. subsistence along with my hourly pay ($1.00/hour) at Bumby's provided me with enough income to live in a newly built and owned G.I. mortgaged house. It was across from the Winter Park High School and within walking distance of Rollins College and downtown Winter Park. I was also the sole provider for the welfare of my wife Helen and my first born daughter Charlotte.

There were very few two-income families in those days. The wife was a stay-at-home mother and wife. I was doing the accounts receivable bookkeeping for Bumby's during this interim while their part time bookkeeper was away for the summer. Around the end of the first week of July, I had not heard from Union Carbide, and I was beginning to have a sinking feeling about that prospect. While at Bumby's, I received a phone call from Frank Little. He said he had obtained approval for the laboratory helper, and the job was mine if I so chose. I immediately accepted. I was to report for work on Wednesday, July 13, 1949. I had neither had an interview, nor had I obtained any kind of pre-employment physical. Frank had informed me that my confirmation as an employee was contingent on passing a physical, but that was of no concern to me. I knew that I was in great physical shape, being age twenty-five and having served in the army during some severe combat operations.

What has been a family joke all these years is that when I was hired by OUC, there was no confirmation of my salary or wages. Frank had not had a value approved, but from some of the other hourly rates, he stated it would be at least fifty dollars per week. That was good enough for me. I really didn't know what my salary was until I received my first pay check. Helen's mother, Grandma Taggart (G-Tag), was living with us at the time, and she went "bananas" when she learned I had accepted a job without really knowing my salary. The stories of her chagrin about this situation are the basis for many family jokes. The date of July 13th was selected for my starting date, because it was a Wednesday and that was the beginning of a weekly pay period. Initial thought was that I would be employed on an hourly rate rather than an annual salary.

To put things in perspective, a little review of the Orlando Utilities Commission and the City of Orlando at that time is in order. These facts and figures are strictly from recall and, therefore, may suffer from being a little inaccurate, but they express the general conditions of the situation at that time.

In July, 1949, the total capability of the Orlando Utilities Commission's generating plant was 18 megawatts (MW). It was all contained in the Lake Ivanhoe Power Plant, although the plant had not been given that name at that time. It was just

the Orlando Utilities Commission's Generating Plant. Names did not come about until the Indian River Power Plant was built in the late 1950's and started up in February of 1960. I'll have much more to say about that later. The Lake Ivanhoe Plant was a steam plant, operating on a header system with steam pressure of 250 PSI. The first unit was installed in the early 1920's, at the time that the Orlando Utilities Commission was created by an act of the state legislature. It had four horizontal fire tube boilers of various sizes and four operating steam turbines in sizes from 1.5 MW to the largest and newest rated at 10 MW. The 10 MW steam turbine had been installed in 1936. Its installation created a lawsuit that eventually wound up in the Florida Supreme Court and established the autonomy of the Orlando Utilities Commission.

The controversy was between the City of Orlando and the Orlando Utilities Commission. The mayor of Orlando at that time was S.Y. Way. As a member of OUC, he was also the mayor of the City of Orlando. He led the fight against the purchase and installation of such a large generator. OUC felt it was needed for future growth of the city and OUC's customers. The resulting opposition by Mayor Way ended in litigation, with the resulting lawsuit bearing Mayor Way's name. The end result was that OUC's autonomy was established.

In 1949, OUC obtained all its potable water from surface supplies, namely from Lake Ivanhoe, which had been tied together with an eighty-four inch concrete pipeline with Lakes Highland and Concord. To assure adequate supplies were available for its customers, OUC had a deep well at Lake Underhill that pumped water through a pipeline to Lake Highland. Lake Adair had a deep well located on the shore at the southwest corner of the lake that discharged its water directly into that lake. Using surface water and having only one pumping station for the entire OUC service area had many disadvantages. This problem became more acute as the service area grew.

Lake Highland Plant

The problem with using surface water for potable use was the fact that it was constantly changing. It changed in sunny periods due to algae blooms and growth. It changed in rainy periods due to street runoff and fresh rain dilution. It changed in dry periods due to concentrations from evaporation and makeup use from the deep wells. All of these changes in some way affected the taste and

odor of the water. It was not unhealthy, since it was chlorinated to sanitize it for potable purposes. The water treatment at the Lake Ivanhoe Plant consisted of only chlorination and filtration. The filtering was done through sand filters into what was known as a clear well. From this clear well, the treated water was pumped out to the potable water users. When the Lake Highland Plant was built with its attendant water treatment plant, it added another stage of treatment known as flocculation. That was a treatment where chemicals were added, primarily aluminum sulfate, which formed a fluffy suspended flock. This flock would act as a form of filtration as it settled. The water received a final purification through sand filters on its path to the clear well. This improved the water somewhat, but those surface water tastes and odors were still evident.

The problems with only one central pumping and treatment plant are numerous. The first one is the principle of water pressure decreasing as the distance from its pressure source increases. To maintain an acceptable pressure at the extremities of the system, the pressure at the plant would have to be excessive. One means of combating this was the use of overhead storage tanks. They were strategically placed around Orlando where the pressure would get excessively low during times of high use. Water would flow out of the tanks and help boost the pressure. Then they would be refilled at night when the use was lower and the ability to fill them was present. There came times when, due to growth in the system, it would not be possible to fill them at night. Even though we think of Central Florida as a flat area, the topography of OUC's service area caused problems with water pressure. The higher points in OUC's system suffered from low water pressure coming from a central pumping station.

Another problem with a central plant is that of maintaining adequate levels of chlorine at the extremities of the system. Chlorine is an odd chemical which doesn't remain in its germicidal state continually in water. As it stays in the water, it changes into other compounds that are not detected as free chlorine and lose their ability to purify the water. There were regulations that required a certain level of free chlorine in the water at all locations. To make that possible, large levels must be present at the central plant in order to have that level at the extremities. You don't have to be a rocket scientist to understand that to have safe levels at the extremities, you must have an inordinately high level at the plant. This would cause horrible complaints from customers close to the central pumping station. OUC wrestled with these problems of surface water, pressure levels, and chlorine concentrations until it went to deep wells for its supply and started building satellite plants near these wells.

The tying of the lakes together was for the purpose of obtaining cooling water for the Lake Highland Plant's (LHP) steam turbines, which were under construction. The cooling water would draw in from Lake Highland through traveling screens, enter the main condenser, condense the steam vapor in the exhaust section of the steam turbine, and return the heated water to Lake Concord. The circulating water would pick up about eight to ten degrees of temperature in this process.

The water would then circulate through Lake Concord, Lake Ivanhoe and return to Lake Highland where it would start its cooling cycle again. By evaporation and surface cooling, the water temperature would lower back to the conditions normal for the natural environment. That environment would make the water temperature follow, but lag, the ambient temperature. Thus it would be warmer in the summer and cooler in the winter. The temperature of the cooling water had a significant affect on the efficiency of the steam turbines, hence the cost of producing electricity.

In the electric trade, BTU/KWH is the measure of efficiency of electric power production, referred to as heat rate, just as miles per gallon is the measure of efficiency for an automobile. I don't recall the exact figure for the Lake Ivanhoe Plant, but it was around 14,000 BTU/KWH. Not only was it a very inefficient plant, it was too small to generate enough power for the growing needs of Orlando. When the LHP came into operation, its heat rate was in the range of 12,000 BTU/KWH. This was the nominal efficiency for the steam turbines installed in the LHP. Unit 1 was a 25 MW rated steam turbine. The steam conditions were 900/900. That means the pressure was 900 psi and the temperature was 900 degrees. That was the state of the art for that size unit at that time. There were larger units available at that time, but they didn't fit into the OUC plan of growth and overall needs. Unit 1 was supplied steam by two steam generators rated at 150,000 lbs/hour. With a nominal use of 10 lbs. of steam per KWH, this was sufficient to make the turbine generator rating. The boilers fed into a header system which allowed one boiler to be out of service. In this case, the steam turbine generator would be limited to about half power. This header system design was a part of the overall design of the Lake Highland Plant. OUC never had a unit system, one boiler connected to one turbine generator, until the installation of Unit 1 at the Indian River Plant which started up in February, 1960.

The Lake Highland plant was fraught with design flaws. The design was by Robert and Company, a design engineering firm from Atlanta, Georgia. They designed both the power plant and the water treatment plant, which were built at the same time and by the same contractor on the same site. I am not aware of how or when Robert and Company was selected. The Lake Highland Plant was most likely their first designed central generating station. As my old-timer friend Charlie Underhill told me, "They were good cotton mill designers, but I wouldn't let them design an outhouse for me".

It was while working on these design flaws that Harry Luff's star began to shine. He was the only one familiar enough with the operation of a complex steam power plant to effectively analyze the cause and effect relationships that were creating many of the operational problems. It was during this stage that I began working with Harry, as time allowed me away from my primary duties as a plant chemist working for Frank Little. It is worth noting that at that time, Harry Luff, Frank Little, and I were the only employees at the Lake Highland Plant with a bachelor's degree.

Frank had graduated from Georgia Tech and Harry from Brown University, where he was a naval V-12 student.

Not only were there problems with the reliability of the Lake Highland Plant, the vulnerability of the 12 KV substations exposed the entire OUC system to system-wide blackouts. The system was designed with no reclosers, and when a feeder tripped, that feeder was out until it was checked or the operator tried to reclose it. The generator was tied directly through a breaker to the 12 KV bus without the need for any step-up transformer since generation was also at 12 KV. Coordination of feeder and system relays was not done in any analytical manner, but rather by the hunch of the engineering manager Leo Little.

Rodents, especially squirrels, were the nemesis of the open bus work in the 12 KV substations. Several system-wide blackouts were caused directly by either rats or squirrels. One of the Orlando Sentinel's stories on the blackouts had a picture of a large rat lying on the ground in the substation. The story told of how the rat caused the outage by shorting out the open bus at the substation. The rats intruded into the station by traveling through the tunnel from the plant to the station. This tunnel was the path for all the connecting cables from the plant to the substation. The squirrels intruded by hopping through the chain link fence surrounding the station. They would run and romp on the open bus work or on the supporting steel structure. When one of their bodies was on the steel and his bushy little tail contacted one of the busses, an arc would develop that created a short on the bus. The nature of an electric arc is such that it ionizes the air. This ionized air acts as a conductor and therefore acts as a short until the arc is extinguished by removing the voltage from it. This arc would trip out the generator breaker as a bus fault, extinguishing the arc. This was all well and good as a protective measure, but now the entire service area of the OUC, including its power plants, was dark, all because of a squirrel.

One of the paradoxes of power generation is that a power plant needs power to get it started. In fact, a power plant uses a significant percentage of it generation to generate power for its own use. A control of this use is one of the efforts to increase its efficiency. It is called station use. With no power from the power plant available, how did we start up a dark power plant? There was an answer, but it was rather involved and intricate. OUC had a very small, 2300 volt, circuit connection with Florida Power Corporation coming from the old Atlantic Ice and Coal ice plant a few hundred yards away from the Lake Ivanhoe Plant. This connection had been made many years prior to this time when Florida Power Corporation was preceded by the Florida Public Service Company. They served the Orlando area with manufactured gas and the periphery of Orlando with electric power. OUC was their staunch rival. They also had an ice plant which was operated by Atlantic Ice & Coal. This ice plant was one of their customers and even had a small substation next to it. As an aside, it later became the Atlantic Brewery which produced beer and ale at that plant. This small connection through the Lake Ivanhoe Plant over to the Lake Highland Plant was

the only source of startup electric power. Having never been used for this purpose before, very few plant operators or others understood the switching sequence necessary to make it work. The first time it was used required an inordinate amount of time, primarily due to ignorance.

After seeing this happen a few more times, I came to the realization that the present method of teaching the employees how to achieve this was not effective. In the meantime, OUC also was being criticized by the press as being irresponsible. This is where I came into the picture and made the move that was the linchpin to my career with OUC. I studied the steps necessary to make the tie with Florida Power and concluded that I could build a mock up switchboard simulator. Simulators were only for the most intimate engineering situations at that time. I don't recall all the details, but I do remember how difficult it was for me to get the necessary approval from Charlie Stebbins, the plant superintendent, to build this simulator. My budget was around one hundred dollars. I purchased the parts from a local electronics shop with which I had become familiar as a ham operator. I assembled it in the machine shop at the Lake Highland Plant. It took me around two weeks to assemble the unit. All my work was done after I completed my primary duties in the boiler water laboratory. During construction, there were many observers and a lot of interest was generated. One of my staunchest supporters was Charlie Brown, the assistant plant superintendent. I don't know for sure, but I feel that it was only through his support that Charlie Stebbins gave me approval to build the simulator.

Since I was the designer and builder, I also became the chief instructor. Starting with the switchboard operators, all plant personnel would go through hands-on switching training on the simulator. It was designed so that when an error in switching procedures was made, an alarm would sound. At that point, I would stop the process and let the operator analyze what he had done wrong. Not only was this a very successful training activity, it also became a method for retraining. By making all operators go through the process, they had already been trained when they were promoted up to the job that would require them to do the switching. After this training and the construction of a squirrel-guard fence around the substation, no more switching errors occurred when tying into this small Florida Power connection. The initial training took several weeks and recurrent training continued until a large 115 KV tie with Florida Power Corporation was made at the Pine Hills Substation when OUC built it first 115 KV lines. I don't know what ever happened to that old plywood simulator, but it served its purpose at the time.

The reason I attribute so much value to that experience being the linchpin in my career at OUC is because it elevated me from an obscure water laboratory chemist to the role of an "expert" in power plant operation. In particular, I was considered the expert on internal switching procedures. Even more important, it increased my visibility to the general manager, Curt Stanton, who had been combating an irate public and bad press from the extended outages that resulted

from incorrect switching. In Biblical terms, "I had pulled the ox cart out of the ditch". I continued working daily with Harry Luff and Bill Rowley in plant maintenance, meter calibration, efficiency tests, and every aspect of power plant operations. I studied electrical diagrams and plant systems. I often asked questions that could not be answered by plant personnel. For these I would ask the expert sales engineers who called on us as part of their representation. General Electric (GE) people were invaluable in this respect. Later, when the engineering firm of Black & Veatch was selected as OUC's engineers, I would pose similar questions to them. My three main questions were, "why?", "how?", and "what's this?" You would be surprised at how much you can learn by asking those three simple questions.

I can't conclude the story of this phase of my career without saying that Harry Luff was my true mentor. His intellect, compassion, stability, integrity, and willingness to share his knowledge were the qualities that allowed me the opportunity to achieve the success that I enjoyed at OUC. As another side note, Harry and I would often have little quiet times together. Often these occurred while we were doing an inventory of special pipe fittings we used in our work. As young men looking into the future, we would speculate about what would be our ultimate level of advancement with OUC. We never in the least ever thought it would be anywhere else. Our most optimistic conclusion was that Harry may someday be a plant superintendent, and I would be his assistant. The relationship was almost correct, but the jobs were not. Harry became OUC's general manager, the highest position OUC had to offer, and I became assistant general manager.

With the growth of Orlando continuing at an alarming rate, it became obvious that OUC needed more power generation and needed it in a hurry. As a low level chemist in the boiler water laboratory at the Lake Highland Plant, I was not privy to the selection process, but Black and Veatch (B&V) of Kansas City, Missouri, was selected to make a study of OUC's growth and power production needs. B&V dispatched a team which collected reams of data and information on OUC's system and capabilities. The research engineer for B&V was an engineer named Bud Wallace. His familiarity and knowledge of OUC's personnel and system led to his later designation as project manager for B&V.

B&V's first engineering effort after presenting their growth scenario was to modify the design of the Lake Highland Power Plant that had been made by Robert and Company. The major components, the steam turbines and power boilers, were not matched in capacity. There was steam turbine capacity of approximately 100 MW but boiler capacity of only around 60 MW. There was no possibility of increasing the capacity of the largest boiler, since it had been stretched to its limit when installed, in order to get it in the physical space available. That left the two smaller boilers as the only options for increased capacity. The Commission authorized the expenditure for increasing the steam capacity of the two boilers, and work began on an expedited basis.

Concurrently with this boiler work, engineering studies were underway for the installation of the two largest simple cycle gas turbines in the United States. Simple cycle means that the turbine exhausts to the atmosphere without utilizing any of the heat energy in the exhaust gasses. Later developments incorporated the current combined cycle units, with their superb cycle efficiency, by combining the exhaust heat into waste heat boilers, where steam was generated for use as a prime mover for a steam driven turbine for electric generation.

Similar simple cycle units as being proposed for Orlando had been used in Venezuela for gas compressors, but none as large had been installed in the United States. It truly represented the introduction of combustion turbines as prime movers for power production. The Commission approved the installation of two 15 megawatt combustion turbines for electric power generation at the Lake Highland Plant. Their installation would be inside the existing plant and would be made while the plant was in full operation. They would be installed on turbine foundations, including pilings, between the three existing steam turbines. It was an engineering and construction marvel. Piles being driven inside an operating power plant was considered by many to be impossible, but it was done by OUC and Black & Veatch and, especially, by the construction company. I can't remember their name but they were from Oklahoma and their foreman was a man named Merle Dinkens. He became a close friend of Curt Stanton and that friendship survives until this day.

Concurrent with this construction, others who made aircraft combustion engines for jet aircraft, including G.E. the provider of the stationary engine for OUC, developed designs to utilize these aircraft engines as prime movers for power generation. I don't recall the details but one of these aircraft engine hybrids may have been the first combustion power in the United States. This technology continued to develop, and the major aircraft engine manufacturers of jet engines became the leaders in this type of prime movers for power generation. Among the largest were General Electric and Pratt & Whitney.

OUC completed the combustion turbine installation, but there was a pressing need for additional power resources. Concurrent with the installation of these gas turbines, a study was completed and under the secrecy of only a few OUC personnel, property was obtained in Brevard County for a new steam plant. It was located on the Indian River, approximately halfway between Titusville and Cocoa. The Indian River would offer two strategic advantages. First, it would provide an unlimited supply of cooling water for the steam condensers. Second, it would offer water transportation for fuel oil deliveries from Port Canaveral when that was feasible and economically justified.

Obtaining the property was a very important and successful task. It had to be done in secrecy for two compelling reasons. First and foremost was that OUC didn't have the power of eminent domain at that time outside of Orange County.

Second, and almost as important, was that the missile development programs for the United States were underway at that time at Cape Canaveral. Many of the largest corporations in the country were buying up sites in order to establish their ability to become a vital part of this new defense strategy. NASA was not in the picture at that time. The real powerhouse was the Air Force, which controlled the test site and the down range facilities. All of us are now aware of what impact the missile and later the space industries had on Brevard County. OUC became a small player with its plans to build a plant there in the late 1950's, which started up in February 1960.

During the construction of the Indian River Plant (IRP), which began around 1957, there were reviews of the plans by many people in plant operations. This review was led primarily by Harry Luff, but there was no indication as to who would be the plant superintendent. There were many discussions going on behind the scenes, but nothing was more than rumor. One school of thought was that it would remain within the old establishment, and the entrenched old-timers would have the leadership roles. Since I was not privy to the internal discussions, I don't know the details of what ensued, but from later conversations with Curt Stanton and Harry Luff, I know that Charlie Stebbins, Lake Highland Superintendent, was lobbying strong and hard for Eddie Hayes. Eddie had worked in the phosphate industry as an electrician and shared some of the same history as Charlie Stebbens.

The final decision was made by Curt Stanton after consultation with Harry Luff. In December of 1958, Curt Stanton designated me as superintendent of the Indian River Plant. Later discussions with Curt indicated he felt that the Indian River Plant represented the state of the art in power plants, and he wanted someone who understood the technical aspects of this current technology. He said that the days of sawmill boilers and phosphate wood steam conditions were no longer in vogue as steam sources for electric power generation.

The Indian River Plant represented the most modern technology available at that time for steam power generation. Such new concepts were triple-flow steam turbines and boilers with reheaters. The pressure-temperature ratings were the state of the art. Steam temperatures of 1000 F and pressures of 1800 psig were at the top of the list. Even today, this is the temperature limit due to metallurgical constraints. 1100 F was tried, but was backed down to 1050 F. Then it was backed down even further and has now stabilized at 1000 F, the same as the IRP in 1960. I will not go into the history of power boilers and turbines, but the industry has stabilized on the sub-critical pressure of 2400 psig and a temperature of 1000 F as the practical limits for power generation. These are the ratings of the Stanton Energy Center units.

It was some time before the tremendous responsibilities of the superintendent's job was fully understood by me. The more I thought about what the future held in store for me, the more complex my understanding became. But I can honestly

say that at no time did I have any doubts about my ability to carry out the responsibilities of the plant superintendent.

My first responsibility was setting up and training an organization to operate and maintain the plant. I was very instrumental in selecting Bill Rowley as the assistant plant superintendent. I said it early on, and I will repeat myself now after almost fifty years, Bill was the best assistant superintendent in the country. However, Bill would not have made a good superintendent. He needed someone looking over his shoulder in an oversight position. After the selection of the assistant plant superintendent, we began selecting employees from the Lake Highland Plant for operator positions. The watch engineers then assisted in the selection of the operators. Most of the initial cadre of operators for the Indian River Plant had come from the Lake Highland Plant.

I'll never forget the fact that I went to the Orange County Jail for the release of one of the operators whom I had selected for the Indian River plant. He and I had a talk like a father to a son. He promised me that he would straighten out and become a law-abiding citizen. Little did I know that at the time he was a full-fledged alcoholic. Even with that background, he became one of my best operators. At the time I removed him from the jail, I made him a promise that if he were ever arrested again, I would discharge him. Unfortunately after about two years, I saw in the local newspaper where he had been arrested for public drunkenness. True to my word, I discharged him. I lost track of him for several years. Then one day I received a personal letter from him. He had obtained employment with one of the space center contractors and was stationed at a remote tracking site in the Caribbean. He admitted to me that my discharging him had turned his life around and that now he was a responsible citizen. The remoteness of the tracking station had helped him overcome his dependence on alcohol. That was the last word that I ever heard from him. He was a prime example of what alcohol could do to a person. He had lost his wife, his family, and finally his job.

After the operating crews had been selected, it was now necessary to start training. It didn’t take us to long to recognize the fact that we had no real knowledge of just how the plant should be operated. No one knew better as to how it should be operated than the engineers who designed the plant. With that in mind, Black and Veatch were retained to prepare an instruction manual for the proper operation of each and every system in the plant. That manual became the foundation for training and proper operation of the plant for years to come. Along with this training manual, we utilized representatives from the various vendors to act as lecturers in our training sessions.

Simultaneously with the training of the operators, it was necessary to start searching for the proper maintenance personnel. Since the Indian River plant represented a level of technology above that at the Lake Highland plant, I felt it was necessary to recruit technical people with the experience in similar

technology. This was accomplished by employing technicians from outside of OUC to head the electrical and instrument maintenance. The person selected as the chief electrician was Zach Crumpton. Zach had been an electrician for one of the major power systems in the Carolinas for several years. He was well qualified for the job. The individual who was employed as the chief instrument mechanic was Bill Schreiber. Bill had garnered most of his experience in the instrument field while working for the Hudson Pulp and Paper Company in Palatka, Florida. The head of mechanical maintenance was an OUC employee who had learned his trade in the U.S. Navy. His name was Don Blickley. Another recruited for the electrical maintenance shop was an electrician, also from Hudson Pulp and Paper Company, who also possessed experience in elevator and air-conditioning maintenance. His name was Dave Marks. Additionally, some craft personnel were employed from the construction force.

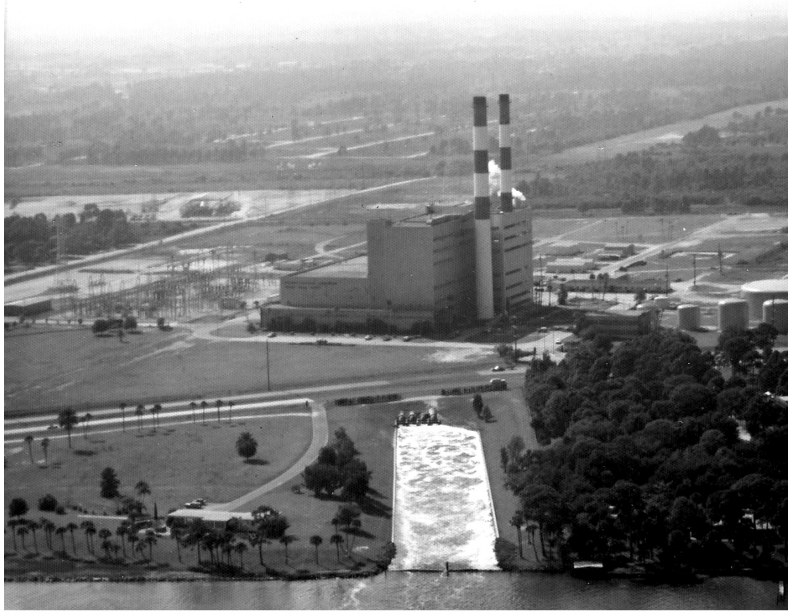
After many systems operational tests were performed and the important task of phasing the generator, the unit was synchronized and put online for the first time on February 20, 1960. The unit had a nameplate rating of 78.5 megawatts but was capable of producing in excess of 90 megawatts under peak load conditions. Usual outages were experienced by the new unit during the "shakedown" period due to various causes, including equipment, design, and operations. But the unit was declared commercial in a relatively short time after its initial synchronization. OUC had almost doubled it capacity with this one unit and was now generating electric power with state-of-the-art equipment. It had entered the big-time and was now poised for the tremendous growth that Central Florida would experience in the next few decades.

We moved into the superintendent's residence, on the plant property, during the Christmas season in 1959. I soon realized that I had obtained a completely different identity than I had previously experienced. I was instantly thrust into the position of being "Mr. OUC" as far as Brevard County was concerned. The construction and operation of the Indian River Power Plant was the single largest enterprise, other than the then fledgling ballistic missile industry, in Brevard County. It was the tallest building in the county, as well as the only building containing an elevator. I was amazed later when we began hosting school students for a tour of the plant. Many were experiencing their first elevator ride. Our auditorium, immediately off the plant lobby, was declared a community room and also served as a hurricane shelter during hurricane Donna. This hurricane occurred the first summer that we were in operation.

Because of this high visibility in the community, I was OUC’s chief spokesman for that area. That responsibility caused me more anxiety while I was superintendent at the Indian River Plant than any other aspect of my job. I also came to realize that among OUC employees, my word became gospel as far as OUC was concerned. An example of that occurred one morning during our routine office coffee break in the chemistry laboratory. During those breaks, the

topic of conversation ranged from soup to nuts. On some occasions perhaps, much of the conversation was an attempt to get into my mind and try to determine what was going on within OUC. On one occasion, after the budget had been approved and just before the next fiscal year, someone asked me what was going to be the level of pay raises for the next year. Not considering the consequences, I replied that I did not think there would be any increases. Before the end of the day, I thought there would be a rebellion of the plant employees. The word was rampant that OUC would not provide any pay raises for the next year. That was one of the lessons I learned the hard way. I learned to be sensitive to the fact that when in a management position, my word became gospel as far as the personnel of my organization were concerned.

I also learned that the image you project is very important. I specifically recall one instance where I neglected to say "Good morning" to one of the employees. As I recall, I was in deep thought trying to mentally organize my schedule for the day. As I passed this employee, I was silent, in another world with my deep thoughts. There was no intentional neglect. A few hours later I heard through the grapevine that the boss (me) was in a terrible mood that day, and if you had any requests for him it would be best to put them off. I learned that my every word and every move as a boss was an important image that I projected. Whether it was my mood, my attire, or even my desktop, it was always noticed and analyzed by my subordinates.



OUC's Indian River Plant and our home

I don't recall exactly the time, but it was probably in late 1961 when Curt Stanton asked me if I was ready for a 200 MW unit. My response was, "You put it in, and we'll operate and maintain it". That is exactly the answer he wanted and exactly what happened. As with unit one, the turbine generator was a General Electric (GE) machine and the boiler was purchased and installed by Combustion Engineering (CE). Ultimately this combination would also be responsible for the final unit, unit three, at the Indian River Plant. Unit two had a generating capability slightly in excess of 225 MW.

As plant superintendent, I was intimately involved in interfacing with the outside contractors for the project. Our engineering consultant was once again Black and Veatch, headquartered in Kansas City, Mo. I had met and worked in some capacity with one young engineer with that company, Earl Windisch, since 1956. Now with the intense planning of the new unit at IRP, Earl and I developed a close relationship, both in and out of the workplace. I have often described our careers as parallel. When Bud Wallace retired, Earl became the OUC sponsor and eventually became a partner in the Black and Veatch firm. For a few years, Earl and his family moved to Orlando, and our families are known to one another. Over the years, I visited Earl in Kansas City many times, both before and after my retirement. This has been another special relationship that has withstood the test of time. We still keep in touch with one another periodically.

My experience as the plant superintendent at the Indian River plant significantly broadened my horizons. In retrospect, it amazes me how the same person can go through such a metamorphosis with a job change. As plant superintendent, I began to become more and more oriented to the electric utility industry. My horizons broadened to encompass the entire industry, even though my focus was primarily on generation. It was during this time that I became interested in the subject of reliability, even though, at that time, it was centered primarily on the reliability of power plant equipment. Since that time, I have learned that reliability is more than just equipment issues, it is a culture that must be created and nurtured.

Superintendent's residence

It was the General Electric Company that first opened my eyes to the subject of reliability. Throughout my career, it became an obsession with me and became the genesis of the reliability theme, which is now OUC's logo "The Reliable One." Most large equipment is manufactured to exist for a certain life cycle. Life cycle is determined by how a piece of equipment is operated and maintained. One of the main components of a power plant is the power transformer. General Electric developed a method for determining the life cycle of such a transformer by how much of the time it was subjected to an overloaded condition. This was the stimulus that I needed to

become more and more interested in reliability. I must interject here that reliability is not cheap, because it encompasses all levels of almost any endeavor.

In a power plant, reliability begins with the philosophy of the personnel responsible for the design and specifications, then the purchase of quality equipment, and finally the maintenance and operation of all of these elements. From this experience, I readily learned that the lowest initial cost is not always the lowest final cost. There are many elements involved in determining the ultimate cost of any endeavor. One of the most valuable lessons I learned was the use of present worth evaluations during purchase of equipment and the life of any object. This technique allows one to determine which product was the best value if you knew the cost of money (interest) and the life of the equipment. Later on, I was able to instill this concept into the purchase of all major equipment utilized in the electric department of OUC. Another valuable lesson I learned was that in dealing with the unknown, never ever rely on the word of the marketers of a product. That vendor has a fiduciary responsibility with his own organization to stretch the truth as much as possible.

My tenure as superintendent of the Indian River Plant was a significant aspect of my evolution in the hierarchy of OUC. Of profound significance was living in the superintendent's residence on the Indian River from 1960-1964. These four years in the life my family and I will forever be indelibly inscribed in our memories, as well as being an integral part of our family's history. We lived there during the height of the development of the military missile program at Cape Canaveral, later to be named Kennedy Space Center in honor of the president who was responsible for the U.S. trip to the moon.

Les, Beth and Charlotte

The launch of a missile for test purposes during the days of the military space development was always a period of great excitement, the date and time being super secret. Even though launch dates, times, and missile contractors were classified, local residents had many techniques to bypass these security measures. One of the most

common resources was the children attending school who were the offspring of workers at the Cape. They would know when their dads or moms would be working late or getting up extra early. Another resource was the communication between the wives or husbands who were working there. After dark, work was done with the missile on the launch pad in preparation for a launch, and one sure indicator was the floodlights beaming skyward, which could be seen across the river. Once a launch date was determined, the next thing was trying to find out the time. I was able to do this when I learned the radio frequency used by the security organization that made sure there were no intruders into the ocean area designated as being prohibited when a launch was imminent. Since I was a ham operator, I was able to receive this frequency and relay the information to my associates at the plant.

The roof of the power plant was an ideal spot for watching missile launches. With binoculars, we could see the missile sitting on the pad. Our roof was the site from which many employees, family, and friends watched launches. In the beginning, the launches were primarily military vehicles, but the ultimate result was the NASA launches which resulted in space exploration. These ranged from the early programs such as the Mercury and Gemini launches to today's spectacular shuttle launches into space. I don't know what the present management's attitude about visitors may be, but I can only relate the fact that we were there during the early days of the military launches and the predecessor to today's special launches by NASA. We could see and hear and "feel" the power of the rockets when they were launched. These were the best of times.

Now back to the "career years" of this autobiography. The time spent as superintendent of the Indian River Plant from late 1958 to July of 1964 was a period of significant learning in all facets of management for me. One of the biggest lessons I learned was that of "cause and effect". I came to learn that in all situations there existed such a relationship. Even inaction is an action itself. By doing nothing, you are creating a cause that exemplifies itself in some action. This knowledge of cause and effect has served me well during all of my life, even to this day at the age of 86.

My Family at IRP, circa 1963

As a plant superintendent, I learned that it was possible to maintain the equipment rather easily, although mechanical and electrical failures occurred occasionally. What I really learned was that managing people was a very delicate and tricky job. One key to good management was the art of picking the proper people during the selection process. I also learned that in managing people there were two groups that I needed to continually satisfy. The first group consisted of those people who were subordinate to me in the management process, and the second group consisted of those people who were senior to me in the management process. It is necessary and vital that anyone in management has the confidence of both groups at all times. Losing the confidence of either will result in one's ultimate failure as a manager. Fortunately for me, I was able to preserve the confidence of both of these groups during my forty years of service to OUC.

One of my fond memories that goes back to my years as superintendent of the IRP demonstrates that confidence. As the plant superintendent, I lived on the plant site and was readily called when an emergency occurred at the plant. On one occasion, I remember arriving at the scene of a problem and some of the first words I remember hearing were, "Have no fear, Stone is here". What that meant to me was that my presence was a calming factor that reduced the tensions of the operators in the emergency. Many times the emergency had been solved by the time I arrived, but my presence was always important.

Looking back on my tenure at the IRP, some equipment failures stand out in my recall. One of the first failures was due to faulty construction. Blowouts in the fittings of the instrument air supply occurred regularly. It was determined that the air lines had been installed using an ineffective silver solder for the joint connections, thus paving the way for the failures. All joints were subsequently re-soldered, using the correct soldering elements.

Another failure during the early startup of the IRP was a tremendous water hammer, which fractured a water box on the main condenser of Unit I. It was feared at the time that damage may have also occurred to the 108-inch fiberglass piping which connected the circulating water from the Indian River to the power plant. It was also feared that there was damage to the valve system. Subsequent inspections and testing proved there was no damage to this piping and valve system. This left us with "only" a cracked water box. The water box was constructed of cast-iron and weighed several tons. After much thought and consternation, it was decided that repairing the water box was more practical than replacing it. Because it was constructed of cast-iron it could not be welded. A series of drilling and then threading holes was utilized, stitching the crack together. It was very successful and to my knowledge continues to operate to this day. As a result of this violent water hammer, the sequence of valve operations utilized on this circulating water system was changed, along with the starting sequence for the pumps.

Another big disaster occurred shortly after the first turbine generator overhaul, during startup of the unit. It was determined that the thrust plate in the high-pressure end of the turbine had been reinstalled incorrectly. The damage to the thrust plate required some precision machine work that appeared likely could only be accomplished back at the manufacturer's facility in Schenectady, New York. Fortunately for us, we determined that the Martin Company, who had recently moved to Orlando, had the capability to do such precise machine work. By negotiations with their management, OUC was able to get the work done in a few days, instead of a few weeks which would have been required if the thrust plate had been shipped back to Schenectady.

There are many operational issues that are embedded in my memory as a result of being the superintendent of the Indian River Plant. Foremost is the recollection that most major work that required an outage was done either at night or on the weekends, depending on the length of plant outage necessary to accomplish the work. Nights and weekends were selected due to the fact that these were "off-peak" times. Planned outages were coordinated on a statewide basis to ensure the integrity of the interconnected system. Having the largest and most efficient generating unit in the OUC system created some outage problems when planning emergency repairs.

One specific incident that occurred during an emergency outage will forever remain in my memory, although it was not related to our outage. First, however, I must set the stage for the incident. At that time, in 1960, the missile development program in Brevard County was beginning to take precedence over everything else locally. Brevard County was making the transition from being a mosquito-infested small town locality into becoming the top technical area of the world. Some of the most intellectual minds in the universe were being relocated to Brevard County. The county was experiencing fantastic growth in every imaginable area at that time. U.S. Highway No.1, the highway which ran the entire length of our country from Key West to New England, was the only north-south highway running through Brevard County. This was several years before the interstate highway system was completed. U.S. 1 was only a 2-lane road system where it passed in front of the Indian River plant. Port St. John did not exist at that time. Things were significantly different in 1960 than they are today, fifty years later. I don't remember the cause of the emergency outage at the power plant, but I do remember that it was one of those night outages which required that we work all night in order to be back in service by the beginning of daylight the following morning.

I would estimate the incident to which I refer occurred around midnight to 2:00 am. I was informed that an automobile accident had occurred approximately a half mile south of the plant, in the area where the entrance to Port St. John is now located. We were aware of the accident, because a passing motorist came upon it and quickly decided that emergency help was needed. Our guard shack at the entrance to the power plant was manned 24/7 and therefore became a

source of calling for emergency help. This call had to go through our switchboard in the power plant, so I was informed immediately. At the beginning, information on the accident was very scarce. The only word I received was that it was a terrible accident. As more information began to come in, I ultimately learned that there had been fatalities. We learned that it had been a head-on collision. Even more dramatic for me was the fact that the driver of one of the vehicles had been a classmate of mine at Rollins College. He was a member of Rollins' football team and had become a successful football coach in growing Brevard County. As I recall, later investigations revealed that DWI was involved. My Rollins classmate survived the accident, but he had been critically injured and suffered the consequences of it for the rest of his shortened life.

One of the most common causes of a "short time" outage was an air leak somewhere in the pressurized boiler. Whenever there was an air leak in this pressurized system, it would manifest itself by burning the outside skin casing of the boiler. It was necessary to locate the leak, repair it, and return the unit to service. This sounds pretty straightforward, but taking a unit out of service and returning it to service requires several hours. Additionally, time must be spent on repairs after the unit is out of service. Determining the location is not too difficult, since it is easy to determine exactly where the leak is occurring by its location on the boiler casing. Those leaks in the pressurized boiler became very numerous and burdensome to me personally. I vowed that if I ever was in a decision-making capacity, OUC would never again, during my tenure, have a pressurized boiler in its system.

True to my word, the pressurized units at the IRP were the last in OUC's system. In order to clarify any misunderstanding, the alternative to a pressurized unit is what is known as a balanced draft unit. This type of unit uses a force draft fan to supply combustion air, and the furnace operates at a slightly negative pressure. The induced draft fan then removes the combustion gases from the furnace and the tail end of the boiler. Pressurized units look good in theory due to the fact that they require only one draft system. This means that a pressure rise unit does not have an induced draft fan. All the air required is forced through it by the force draft fans. This cost savings as a result of only having one fan system for the boiler is soon neutralized by the outages of a pressurized system.

I might interject here that the IRP Unit 1 had very little operator input. This was due to the fact that the OUC operators had no experience in the operation of a reheat, tandem compound turbine generator. In the design of a power plant unit, many decisions have to be made. In the design of the IRP Unit 1, all of these decisions were made by the design engineers at Black and Veatch. As the operating experience of OUC personnel became more mature and learned, the design of a new power plant became a joint effort of OUC and Black and Veatch. The steam generating units at the Stanton Energy Center are prime examples of these coordinated efforts.

There were many more similar experiences during my tenure as superintendent, both relating to outages and to personnel problems. However, retrospectively, my primary memory is that it was a period in my life where I gained experience and matured personally. I would say the same thing occurred with my associates at the plant. Many of the later executives within OUC came from the cadre of personnel at the IRP. Foremost among that group was Ted Pope, who succeeded me as plant superintendent and ultimately became the general manager, the top executive position at OUC.

Sometime around the beginning of 1964, I was informed that I would be promoted and must return to Orlando. I received that information with mixed emotions. First, we lived in a beautiful residence on the banks of the Indian River. But more importantly, my family had become integrated into the social and educational structure of Brevard County, and we would lose our status as OUC's number one family in Brevard County. My daughter Charlotte was a senior in high school, Beth was in junior high, and Les was still in elementary school. He began his school years in the Brevard County system. Looking back, it was a milestone in life for me and my family, but I will never forget the trauma it created for me for a while. It was a tremendous adjustment. I now realize that it was the strong bonds of family love and commitment that helped me to overcome the trauma of this relocation and promotion.

We had sold our home in Winter Park when I was transferred to the IRP, so we no longer had a house in the Orlando area. Therefore, one of the first decisions to be made was the area in which we would live in Orlando. My wife Helen became the chief architect of our relocation. Helen found several "old" homes that were charming, but I decided that I would really enjoy not spending a large portion of my free time on home repairs, especially after having lived in a home for four years in which all the maintenance was provided. Another decision I made was that we must live in the OUC service area since employees received a discount on their water and electric utility bills. Due to my tenure, this would result in my paying only the minimum bill, which at that time was only $3.00 a month. It did not take one of those rocket scientists to see how much savings this would represent in earned income. Having selected a few desirable locations, Helen would pack a lunch and spend a full day or two in determining the characteristics of each location. Ultimately, we decided to build a new home on a one block dead-end street in southeast Orlando, which had previously been an orange grove. As soon as the house was completed, we moved back to Orlando, and I began my job as director of generation for OUC.

At that time, in the summer of 1964, OUC was operating three different power plants; the Indian River Plant, the Lake Highland Plant, and the Ivanhoe Plant. My office was located in the dispatch center building located on Webber Avenue across from the Lake Highland Power Plant. The building had been constructed to house the dispatch operations for OUC, which were located on the upper floor. On the lower floor were two executive offices and two secretarial offices. One of

the offices was occupied by my secretary and I, and the other executive office was occupied by the manager of electric operations, Harry Luff, and his secretary. As director of generation, I was one of four directors who reported directly to Harry. As part of OUC's organizational changes, Harry had been designated manager at the same time that I was appointed director. Prior to that time, Harry had been in charge of all generation, but his position had not been formally characterized. At that time there were four managers, whose corporate responsibilities were equal to those of a vice president in a non-municipal organization.

One of my first chores as director of generation was the selection of a secretary. I informed the personnel department of my need, and they began the recruitment process. One of my interviewees was only available after the close of a business day. Out of deference to the applicant, I made the interview after 5:00 pm. To make a long story short, it was that applicant whom I employed. Her name was Sylvia Waldo, and she served as my secretary and administrative assistant for the next twenty-five years. My last official duty, before the commissioners of OUC, was awarding her twenty-five year service award, from 1964 to 1989. I might interject here that referring to the job as administrative assistant is a much more meaningful title than secretary. She was an outstanding assistant. Her stenographic skills were vital, but her real value was in other areas of office management, truly "assisting" me in so many ways.

In this position, I felt almost as if I were in a holding pattern, since my duties were only associated with managing the three power plants. Even though there were three plants involved, I only interfaced with two people, since the Lake Highland Plant and the Ivanhoe Plant were under the management of the same plant superintendent. Most of the innovative and progressive ideas of Harry Luff and I had already been implemented while I was superintendent at the IRP. During this period, I began to learn more about the workings of the electric department in its entirety. Because of the proximity of my office to the dispatch operations, knowledge of OUC’s transmission system and dispatch operations were easily obtained. As director of generation, I was naturally associated with transmission due to the fact that the power from the IRP was transported to Orlando over the OUC transmission network. With the construction of Unit 1 at IRP, two 115 KV transmission lines had been constructed. Shortly thereafter, a 230 KV line was constructed. These lines were the genesis of OUC’s transmission system.

Back at home, Helen was busy with all of the trials of starting a new household. Charlotte went to the University of South Florida in Tampa for her first year of college. Beth was settled in at Cherokee Junior High School. Les began schooling at Blankner Elementary School. Beth was attending the same junior high school that I had attended during my school years. Les was going to an elementary school named after the mother of one of my OHS classmates. She had been honored due to the fact that she was one of the leaders of the Orange County School Board. Helen, a stay-at-home mom, was deluged with all the

chores of making a new house into a home for the family.

It was 1964, and OUC was beginning to experience the rapid growth which the entire state of Florida began to experience during those years. OUC was making the transition from a small municipal utility into one of the fastest growing utilities in the country. Fortunately for OUC and the city of Orlando, OUC was led by a very progressive leader, who was surrounded by young people eager to learn the electric utility business. This combination was the foundation of the culture of OUC.

This was also the period when nuclear power began its prominence in the electric utility industry in the United States. I sincerely believed that my primary duty as director of generation would be to lead OUC into the nuclear era. OUC was very interested in that aspect of generation. To that end, I made a trip to Washington, D.C., along with Earl Windisch of Black & Veatch, to meet with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Our primary goal was to determine whether such a plan was feasible for OUC. The final decision was that nuclear energy was too expensive, overregulated, and publicly unpopular for OUC to be a primary player in that part of the industry. OUC's first entry into nuclear power was as part owner of Florida Power Corporation's (now Progress Energy) Crystal River Nuclear Plant. Those of us in the electric power industry have discussed this issue many times in many forums, and the consensus of all is that the power of nuclear energy has not been readily accepted by the general population because it was introduced into our culture as a weapon of war. If it had been introduced in the normal course of human events, it would have been much more acceptable to the public, even with its negative attributes, both then and now.

My career at OUC languished for a couple of years as director of generation until, all of a sudden, I was given the opportunity of my lifetime. It was at the end of the year in 1966 when Harry Luff was made assistant general manager, and I was promoted to Harry's former job, manager of the electric operations department. In that capacity, I catapulted to the number three individual in OUC's hierarchy. I maintained that position for approximately twenty years before becoming assistant general manager of OUC. I was now thrust into the position of managing the largest segment of OUC's operation. Up until that time, most of my thinking was directed toward power generation. Now I was responsible for every facet of the operation, from its generation, its transmission, and ultimate distribution to the consumer.

I readily created an analogy in order to explain the full scope of the electric operations department (hereinafter referred to as the EOD). The analogy was that of a manufacturing facility who transported its product to the consumer. The generation division was the manufacturing arm of the facility. The transmission division was the tractor-trailer bulk hauling facility that took the product to the warehouses. The substations were the warehouses. The distribution division was the transporter of the product from the warehouse to the consumer, using

small trucks such as pickups to make the deliveries. The engineering division was the planners who determined how to make the deliveries to the consumer.

Electric power is a very unusual commodity. It is the only product in our manufacturing culture which requires that it be manufactured at the very instant it is consumed. As you can imagine from this analogy and description, the matter of flipping on a light switch is not quite as simple as it first appears. From one who was almost totally introduced into the electric power industry by means of the manufacturing process, you can readily see how much I had to learn. This challenge was the part that made the job so appealing to me. Fortunately for me, those men who directed the activities of the other divisions were as competent and knowledgeable as I was in the generation division. My learning experience in those divisions was just beginning. OUC was fortunate to have Ted Pope as director of generation, Irving Reedy as director of transmission, Vic Gardner as director of distribution, and Wendell Dixon as director of engineering. Each one of these individuals was instrumental in teaching me his area of expertise.

I had my introduction into the EOD by virtue of the fatality of one of my servicemen. He was an old-timer and everyone knew, except me, that he was an alcoholic. He attempted to climb a power pole in the vicinity of where I now reside. He was working alone and was so unsteady that he fell from the power pole and was killed. There was no wrongful death litigation initiated by any of his next of kin. Because it became known to management that he was an alcoholic, the incident opened the eyes of OUC to the treatment of people who drank. Alcoholism was becoming recognized as a disease, rather than a lifestyle. That transition became basic in the health treatment within OUC. This incident also demonstrated to me that providing electric power to the many customers of OUC was more than just having good equipment; it also required having competent people. It renewed my commitment to seeing that everyone was adequately trained for his/her job in both procedures and commission policy.

Early on as the manager of the EOD, I learned that the major cause of individual outages was squirrels on the top of power transformers, which convert the power down to the level for a group of homes. The squirrel's extended tail would come in contact with the 7.2 KV jumper which connected the transformer to the primary circuit. This would create a ground condition which would blow the fuse and also create a relay operation on the feeder circuit. This caused a total outage for those being served by the transformer and a blinking electric digital clock for all those served by the feeder. After a little research, I concluded that this type of outage could be minimized by the use of rodent guards on the transformers. The slightly additional cost increased the reliability of OUC service considerably. This practice was terminated after many years, when it was discovered that these rodent guards had a finite life and had to be replaced. These guards were constructed of some type of rubberized material which limited their life. To my knowledge, the material was never upgraded to a longer-lasting substance. Probably the cost was prohibitive.

In March of 1968, OUC moved into its new office building located on Orange Avenue on the north shore of Lake Lucerne. I resided in that building until my retirement in August of 1989. The new offices were spectacular. Of particular interest, all of the executive offices were on the second floor. This greatly enhanced the ability of all of the managers to interact and communicate with one another. All of my directors were located externally, with the exception of the director of engineering whose office was in the same building. When I was promoted to manager, I selected Wendell Dixon as my assistant. Wendell had been the director of the engineering division before being selected as my assistant. He served in the capacity as assistant manager of EOD even after I was made assistant general manager in 1986. At that time, I was replaced by Bill Herrington as manager of the EOD.

The 1960's constituted a dramatic change for OUC. I had been a part of that change with the construction of the Indian River Plant. I became a more integral part of that change when I became manager of the EOD. When I began working at OUC, it was composed of several managed fiefdoms. In the 1960's, it made the transition from a small municipal utility into a major utility, which was part of an interconnected system. I recall that one of Harry Luff's first jobs as manager of the EOD was to require the engineering division to start a mapping system that contained all of OUC's distribution circuits down to the individual service requirements. This was a project that continued for several years and was finally completed during my management of the EOD. Up until the time that a mapping system was required, the details of the system remained lodged in the minds of only a few people. Dispatching became a function of the transmission division. Both of these were relatively new to OUC. The distribution division began to work with the maps and details which were being provided by the engineering division. The generation division was slightly ahead of the others, due to the fact that it had the operation of the Indian River Plant under its purview. OUC was making the transition into becoming one of the major players in the interconnected system. All of this was made possible by: (1) aggressive management, including the Commission, (2) a young organization, and (3) the phenomenal growth of the service area.

One of management's responsibilities that is often overlooked is the requirement to keep abreast of technological changes. When I started work at OUC in 1949, World War II had only been over for about four years, and the economy was on the verge of tremendous growth. Television was in its infancy in the large metropolitan areas, and there was no such thing as a copying machine, Computers were only a dream. Hand-held calculators were well back in the mind of computer scientists. Two-way communications were just beginning, and the list goes on and on. Keeping up with these developments in a commercial atmosphere was a major responsibility of management. Fortunately, the characteristics of aggressiveness, youthfulness, and growth were a basic part of OUC. These qualities allowed OUC to take advantage of the tremendous technological growth that occurred during my tenure.

This quality of leadership after my tenure continues on with the new OUC headquarters having been awarded multiple accolades for its efficiency and green qualities.

One of the fascinating jobs that I had as the manager of EOD was the negotiation with Florida Power Corporation (FPC) for a power interchange that turned out to be the largest in OUC's history. A power interchange is where one power system is the seller and the other is the buyer for a certain amount of KW's of power for a certain period of time. To set the stage for this negotiation, it is necessary to set down a few facts. OUC had purchased and was installing a rather large unit, Unit 3, to increase its productivity at the Indian River Plant. To accommodate this large unit, it was vital that a large portion of its generation would be available for sale in the early stages of its life. FPC was constructing its first nuclear power plant at Crystal River, where some coal units were already in operation. It became apparent to the people at FPC that some type of power interchange would be necessary until the nuclear unit became operational. Thus the stage was set for the negotiations between FPC and OUC.

I was selected as the chief negotiator for OUC and Lee Scott, later to become FPC's president, was designated as the chief negotiator for them. Lee Scott had begun his employment with FPC as a distribution engineer in the Winter Park office. While there, he met and fell in love with a Winter Park girl who was the daughter of the Fire Chief, whom I remember as "Smitty". They were subsequently married, and Lee's ties to Winter Park became permanent. Several trips and meetings between St. Petersburg and Orlando ensued due to the slow negotiations. Finally, all issues were resolved, except the starting date and the ending date for the power interchange. Both parties were committed to installing "date certain" for each of the starting and ending dates. This issue was finally resolved by me stating that we could not supply the power until the Indian River Unit 3 became commercial, and they would need the power until the Crystal River nuclear unit became commercial. Commercial dates are those utilized by the power industry to indicate a unit has been debugged of the numerous startup problems that are usually encountered and is ready for commercial operation. The most significant accounting issue is that the unit now becomes a part of the corporate assets and, from an accounting standpoint, depreciation begins. On paper, the unit changes from a work in progress to part of the rate base. We both agreed to that terminology, and it became the dates utilized in the power exchange contract.

The construction of the Indian River Plant Unit 3 was inordinately delayed due to the bankruptcy and demise of the construction contractor. After much distress and haggling, the construction contract was taken over by the bonding company who had guaranteed that the work would be completed at its original cost. The construction contract was then taken over by the bonding company, who immediately turned the construction over to Blount Brothers, a large contractor in Alabama. This entire scenario resulted in a delay to the commercial operation of

the Indian River Unit 3 for several months. I could only see the power interchange contract resulting in no power being exchanged. Little did I know or realize at the time that FPC was also having delays with its Crystal River nuclear unit due to construction problems and, even more so, with regulatory problems. After substantial delay, the Indian River Unit 3 became commercial. Our power interchange agreement with FPC was finally beginning. As I recall, the agreement provided that OUC would furnish FPC with 100 MW of power. This was provided on a daily basis by schedule.

I did not realize it at the time, but the Crystal River nuclear unit continued to be plagued by substantial delays due to a myriad of reasons. The power interchange agreement continued on and on. After significant and substantial delays, the Crystal River nuclear unit eventually became commercial. At this time, I cannot recall just how long the power sales agreement was effective, but I do remember it was measured in years rather than in months. It became the most significant interchange agreement in the history of OUC up until that time.

During the latter stages of construction of the Indian River Plant Unit 3, there were rumors floating around about legal action being taken by both parties, OUC and the construction contractor who was now the bonding company, USF&C (United States Fidelity & Casualty), whose headquarters were in Baltimore, Maryland. These rumors persisted for quite some time and came to fruition with the filing of a lawsuit in the U.S. Federal Court. My memory is not too clear as to who filed the first lawsuit, but I do recall that countersuits were entered and the legal shenanigans began. Even though there were multiple parties in the litigation, the major players were OUC and USF&C. My part in all of this litigation was that I was selected to represent OUC in this legal sojourn.

Many people do not understand that a lawsuit consists of many phases. After filing the initial suit, there are multiple motions entered by both parties. These motions are ruled on by the presiding judge. Then the "discovery" phase usually consumes the major amount of time. This is the period in which each party gathers their information which will be used later during the trial itself, if it goes that far. The discovery phase provides each side the opportunity to review all the information that their adversaries may possess. The discovery phase is one of the major reasons that litigation is so expensive. It involves much traveling to the headquarters of all parties. The travel expenses which include airfare, accommodations, and meals are considered a part of the cost of discovery. Efforts to shield some of this information are one of the multiple reasons for so many motions being made before the court. Again, my memory is unclear as to the exact time involved, but I would estimate that approximately two years elapsed between the filing of the litigation and the beginning of the trial.

A trial date was finally set in federal court with the Honorable George Young presiding. OUC was represented by the firm of Guerney, Guerney, and Handley, with Leon Handley being the lead attorney. Handley was one of the finest trial

lawyers in all of Florida. He was assisted by other lawyers in the firm and by Jack Snead, who was the investigator. The lawyer for USF&C was Brian McEwen. Each of the other parties to the lawsuit was represented by trial lawyers, but their names escape me after thirty-five years. I will always remember, however, just how justice is meted out in our judicial system. It may have its flaws, but it is the finest judicial system in the world.

At the beginning, Judge Young proclaimed that the initial phase of the trial would only be for the purpose of determining guilt. At that time, he was only interested in determining whether a delay in construction had occurred and who was responsible for such delay, if responsibility could be determined. The major thrust of OUC's damage had occurred because of the delay in completing the unit on time, resulting in a delay in the designation of the unit being in commercial operation. Even though damages were not a part of that lawsuit at that time, they were constantly mentioned during the course of the litigation. After about three months of testimony before the judge, without any jury, both sides rested. It would be almost nine more months before Judge Young would issue his ruling. When the ruling was finally issued, it was a significant victory for OUC. The judge ruled that there was a delay and that it had been caused primarily by the actions of the other party, not OUC.

After Judge Young's ruling, it became apparent that the damage phase would even be longer than the initial phase. The Commission designated me as the lead negotiator in the effort to negotiate a settlement with USF&C, in order to avoid more and lengthy litigation. The lead negotiator for USF&C was their claims manager from their headquarters in Baltimore. During the negotiations, it was obvious to both of us that whatever settlement the two of us agreed upon, it would not be final until approved by our principles. During this negotiation, I was reminded of a conversation I had previously with Mr. J. Tom Guerney. He counseled me by saying that, in a negotiation, if either party left the negotiation saying, "I really stuck it to him", the negotiation was no good and would ultimately fail. On the other hand, if both parties could walk away and say, "I didn't get what I wanted, but I can live with it," then the negotiation was a success. My job during this negotiation was determining what I (OUC) could live with.

After considering all the factors involved, I developed a figure that would be my bottom line in any negotiations. This figure was determined after much deliberation with all my associates and legal counsel. The negotiations with USF&C all took place in my office in the OUC headquarters. After lengthy negotiations, I had finally reached my "I can live with it" point. Any further concessions on my behalf would only be made in a court of law. The lead negotiator for USF&C told me he felt the same way and that he would see me in court. We shook hands amicably, and he departed. Within a couple of minutes, he reappeared in my doorway, extended his hand, and said, "Lou, you have a deal". This was the end of the negotiations between the two of us.

Our principles accepted our recommendations, and the long drawn-out saga of the litigation over the delay of the Indian River Unit 3 came to an end.

The modern history of OUC came to an end in September of 1983. This was when Curtis H. Stanton retired. He had begun his employment at OUC in 1947 as assistant general manager. The manager, Martin Brown, died of an aortic embolism that same year, and Curtis H. Stanton became general manager. He served in that capacity alone until 1983. There are many and varied stories about Curt Stanton, but they can all be summed up by saying that he was the right person at the right time at the right place to lead OUC through these years of phenomenal growth and prosperity. One of his qualities of leadership that I will always remember is that there was never any question about who was boss. Curt attributes the success of OUC to the fact that he surrounded himself with knowledgeable and capable individuals and then listened to them for their advice and counsel. I have always maintained that it even went further than that by having the right people doing the right job at the right time. Curt handled the political and social aspect, Harry Luff handled the major financial problems, I handled the electric operations for which OUC was known, and the other subordinate jobs were handled just as competently.

Harry Luff was appointed Curt Stanton's successor by a unanimous vote of the Commission. A search committee was designated to investigate for an assistant general manager. I was considered one of the leading candidates, but was shortly rejected by the Commission, due to the fact that the age difference between Harry Luff and I was only a few months. The Commission wanted a younger person to be Harry's assistant, so that he would be primed to take over upon Harry's retirement. Their search remained primarily within OUC. The search committee's recommendation was that Ted Pope be made assistant general manager. This recommendation was unanimously accepted by the Commission. One thing that has not been addressed in this autobiography is the fact that the general manager and assistant general manager are appointed annually. Up to that time and, up until after I retired, there had never been a contract between the Commission and the individuals involved in these management positions.

Harry Luff's tenure as general manager was rather tumultuous. This was due to many factors, but one of the leading ones was a political faction that was led by the popular Orlando mayor. The other factor was a customer-base that was not totally convinced that building a coal-fired power plant approximately fifteen miles southeast of Orlando was a wise decision. The popular Orlando Mayor was Bill Frederick, and the two major legislative delegates were Tom Drage and Richard Crotty. This political threesome was committed to making the Orlando Utilities Commission more receptive to the political whims of the City of Orlando, which prior to that time had operated virtually as a private enterprise. The politicians were able to do this by sponsoring legislative action that would make the selection of members of the Orlando Utilities Commission determined by a

nominating committee from the City of Orlando. This nominating committee was controlled and designated by the Mayor of Orlando. The beneficial offshoot of this legislative action was that OUC no longer had to obtain approval from the City of Orlando to issue revenue bonds. Up to that point, all revenue bonds issued by OUC had to be ratified by the City of Orlando. OUC became its own financial master, but the Commission itself became beholden to the City of Orlando, and now politics were introduced into the Commission for the first time in its history.

The pressure on Harry began to take its toll. Those of us who were close to him could see that he was not the jovial, carefree individual that he had formerly been. Harry was financially secure, due to the fact that his grandfather had been one of the original settlers of the town of Windermere. In fact, Harry recently told me that his grandfather and one other man had purchased all of the property from the town of Gotha and Windermere around the turn-of-the-century. His mother had become rather wealthy upon the death of her father, Harry's grandfather. Since Harry was one of only two boys, his inheritance from his mother was rather substantial. Additionally, Harry had owned considerable property, including a grove, in Windermere. With all of these financial resources, he decided that he would no longer be the political scapegoat at OUC. He resigned his position after having served approximately two years.

The Commission was now faced with the dilemma of selecting a new general manager. They recognize that Ted Pope possessed all the qualities they were looking for, with the exception of experience. One of the commissioners, Jim Pugh, recognized this and stated that he would only support Ted Pope's nomination if I was made the assistant general manager. This was accomplished after some perfunctory searches. I will always be grateful to Jim Pugh for his recognition of my ability and tenure. As an aside, Jim is now leading the community in an effort to construct a new performing arts center in downtown Orlando. It is expected that construction will begin later this year in 2010.

With my promotion to assistant general manager, I was now confronted with the problem of designating my replacement as manager of the EOD. My position as manager of the EOD had become almost institutionalized, since I had been manager for almost twenty years. My dilemma was that I had an assistant for many years, but I knew within my heart that another individual would be the better choice. This choice was Bill Herrington, whom I designated as the individual to replace me. I will say candidly right here that Bill Herrington was the smartest individual I ever came in contact during my more than forty years of service to OUC. This fact has now been verified by his remarkable service to OUC and his huge success as a consultant after his retirement.

After having been manager of EOD for so many years, I could now involve myself in all of the activities of OUC. There was one thing, however, which I wanted to have no part in, and that was the political arena. This worked out very

well, since Ted Pope was very content in handling that aspect of our business. As time progressed, I became more active in all aspects of OUC's operations. In retrospect, I now consider that for the past few years of my career, I was running all the OUC operations. Ted Pope remained content with the political environment, which consumed all of his time and energy. One of my major responsibilities became that of wage and salary administrator. This was invaluable to me personally, due to the fact that it made extensive use of the new kid on the block, the personal computer.

I had won a TRS-80 as a door prize at a mechanical engineers' convention earlier. After it sat in my closet for almost a year, I enrolled in a computer class at the Seminole Community College. Fortunately for me, the class was also using the TRS-80 for its instruction. Shortly thereafter, the personal computer was introduced into our culture. My earlier training with the TRS-80 was a significant advantage to me in making the transition to the personal computer. As my responsibilities as wage and salary administrator progressed, so did my knowledge of using the personal computer. I am very grateful for this background, because so many of those in my generation are not computer knowledgeable, and its use has been a significant part of my retirement years.

Another one of my undertakings was that of developing the first offering of OUC mini-bonds. This afforded me the opportunity to become intimately involved in the financial operations of OUC. I made trips to both Boston and New York as part of my research for this project and became OUC's mini-bond expert. As I became more knowledgeable about the aspects of issuing mini-bonds, it became apparent to me that these would only be issued for residents of the state of Florida. Employees were our true focal point. It was during this period that I learned about the "rule of seventy". This rule states that the principle investment will double when the product of the time period times the interest rate equals seventy. This was invaluable to me, since I knew that these mini-bonds would be for ten years. This immediately told me that they should have an interest rate of 7%. In addition to this appealing interest rate, another appealing aspect was that these mini-bonds would be issued for a minimum of $100, rather then the minimum of $1,000 utilized in the structure of the corporate bonds. This was particularly appealing to the employees. The sale was very successful, yielding several million dollars for OUC's use in the expansion of its infrastructure. This was the only sale of mini-bonds that OUC conducted. I am not familiar with any of the details as to why this has not continued, but I suspect that no one wanted to give it the time it needs and deserves to be researched and implemented.

The position of assistant general manager was very rewarding and enjoyable to me. Many department managers, and others, would come to me and solicit my advice on all matters pertaining to their respective operations. It allowed me to become more involved and knowledgeable in the total electric and water services for which OUC was noted. As my fortieth year of employment was drawing to a close, I was approaching sixty-five years of age, and I considered the fact that

there was life after OUC. I submitted my resignation to be effective August 1, 1989. This would mean that I was sixty-five years of age and had served OUC for forty years.

In my letter of resignation, I informed Ted Pope that I intended to continue working until it stopped being fun, but that day seemed to never come; therefore, I was retiring.

My letter of resignation set the wheels in motion for a grandiose retirement celebration at OUC's Lake Downs facility. Since I had spent the previous sixteen years with flying as my primary recreation, my secretary, Sylvia Waldo, chose flying as the motif for my retirement and its attendant functions. Unknown to me, she made arrangements with a local used aircraft parts dealer to borrow an aircraft wing, which was appropriately decorated and fashioned as a head table at my retirement party. The retirement party at Lake Downs was open to all OUC employees and invited guests. In order to make the cost of the party partially self-supporting, tickets for all attendees were priced at a nominal level, with OUC picking up the balance of the costs for the party.

Lou and Helen arriving at retirement party

It was a dazzling retirement party. My first surprise of the evening was my transportation to the party. Unknown to many, and certainly a surprise to me, a Lake amphibian airplane had been chartered to take me from Orlando to the Lake Downs Camp. As we left our home on Sweetbriar, it became obvious to me that our route was not taking us to Lake Downs. Instead, Helen and I were taken to Herndon Airport. I then began to realize that I was being transported to the party for a grand entrance in an amphibious airplane. The trip and the arrival were breathtaking. As I disembarked from the airplane, the site of old-time friends, family and coworkers, all cheering, was almost more than I could take without breaking down.

I regained my composure and thoroughly enjoyed all of the events for the rest of the evening. I then spent considerable time walking throughout the crowd, visiting with all who were there. One of my great thrills was that my son Les had been retained to record the festivities in still photography. The album of the pictures taken at that party are a memento I will treasure for the rest of my life. The aircraft wing served beautifully as the head table. A speaker's platform was provided at the head table where all the accolades from my many peers and

associates were presented. It was really a very heartwarming and touching ceremony.
It became time for me to address the large crowd. I acknowledged all the accolades after specifically addressing the many members of my family who were in attendance. I can remember only making the statement that I had been rather stable in my adult life: I had only one job, one secretary, and one wife. In my judgment, that said it all. After the head table ceremony, the dancing began. I remember dancing with my wife Helen and with many, many others. It was a night to remember. My retirement party was wonderful, even more than I ever expected. My forty years with OUC had finally come to an end.

After retirement, I have maintained a relationship with OUC. For a while, I provided consultation to OUC in those areas in which I had been intimately involved. In retrospect, this provided a transitional phase. After that, I became a usual retiree. I have, however maintained a close liaison with OUC and many of my associates. One of the primary functions that allows such an association is the semi-annual retiree's barbecue at Lake Downs. I have attended that function whenever possible, and it is an opportunity to get together and discuss" the good ole days". In addition, I regularly have lunch with Curt Stanton as part of our weekly luncheon with a group of Orlando's old-timer community leaders. We named ourselves the ROMEO's, an acronym for Retired Old Men Eating Out. In addition to that, I regularly have lunch with many of the executive groups from our generation of management. My former personal assistant, Sylvia Waldo, has retired to North Carolina, so we are no longer able to get together. However, I maintain other contacts and have lunch with a large cadre of secretarial personnel from OUC. Of particular interest is my continuing lunch date with Linda Schwab, who served as the personal assistant to Ray Boyd for many years during my tenure. Last, but not least, I have attended some retirement functions in OUC's new office building. It is located directly across the lake from where I now reside. Since OUC was such a large part of my life for forty years, the ties that bind remain a part of my life.

Head table at Lou's retirement party

Alice and Jimmy Poole

Les and Lou

Sylvia at Lou's retirement party

Herrington and Dixon
talking at head table

Family

And MoreFamily

Family

# Leisure Life

Throughout my life, sports and sporting events have been held in high esteem. As a boy growing up, the first World Series in baseball that I can recall was between the St. Louis Cardinals and the Detroit Tigers. Pitching at that time for St. Louis were the Dean Brothers, Dizzy and Daffy. As I recall, Detroit had a super first baseman named Hank Greenberg and a catcher named Mickey Cochrane. This World Series must have been played in the early 1930's. In my early years, I was involved with my dad's softball team. Then, in high school, I played some football and baseball. Softball was the only sport in which I participated during the early years of my career and marriage. When I graduated from college and obtained a job at OUC, there were a few years in which I played softball. My tenure as a catcher for OUC is chronicled in more depth in another part of this autobiography. Interspersed in these activities was the time I spent as an amateur (ham) radio operator, which spanned the time from my early marriage until moving to the Indian River Plant. When I was appointed as the first superintendent of the Indian River Plant, around Christmastime in 1958, I had been married almost thirteen years and had worked at OUC slightly more than nine years. My resolve then was to concentrate fully on my career, and therefore improve my family's lifestyle. Any personal recreational pursuits had to take a backseat.

An interest in amateur radio operating began while I was in college. Amateur radio, sometimes called ham radio, is both a hobby and a service in which participants, called "hams", communicate with each other. You can speak to other ham operators all over the world. Although talking with people in other parts of the world is common nowadays, it was quite unique at that time. I had somehow procured a receiver which had access to many of the amateur radio frequencies. That whetted my appetite to continue in the hobby. Additionally, a very close friend, Ivor Groves, had obtained his amateur radio license several years previously. These two factors were my inspiration.

At that time, in the late 1940's, the nearest place that was available to take the FCC test for a beginner's license was in Tampa, Florida. The test Involved both a written sequence and, even more formidable, the testing of one's ability to copy and receive the Morse code at ten words per minute (wpm). After a few weeks, I received my results and I was now a novice operator. My initial call letters were "WN4ZBG". The "N" indicated that I was a novice. The license was only good for one year. At the end of that year, I had to demonstrate that I could copy and receive Morse code at a rate of thirteen wpm. I was also limited to using code only. No voice transmissions were allowed on the designated novice channels. I can vividly remember my first contact. It was with another novice in North Carolina. That was my first of many code (CW) contacts. I don't remember

exactly how it occurred, but I ultimately passed my thirteen wpm and the "N" was removed from my license. I became a full-fledged ham operator.

I remember building my first modulator that enabled me to use voice communications. Not only did I build the modulator, but I built the entire transmitter. I recall stringing an antenna from the rear to the front of my property on Pennsylvania Avenue in Winter Park. It was strung between two giant oak trees on the front and rear of our lot. One of the topics that created considerable consternation, particularly with my wife Helen, was the location of my ham apparatus. Up until the time that I became a licensed operator, all of my ham activity was focused on constructing my equipment in the garage behind our house. When I became licensed and approved to receive and transmit, it was now necessary to utilize another space. Living in a small five room house made such a selection difficult. Obviously, the bedroom was the only appropriate place to locate the ham gear. It remained in the corner of the bedroom for as long as we lived on Pennsylvania Avenue.

My interest in electronics was a lifelong sentiment. As a young boy, I can remember making a crystal radio set which would allow me to receive WDBO, the only station in Orlando at that time. WDBO had begun as a student project at Rollins College in Winter Park. It was the only broadcast station in Orlando for many years. As a boy growing up, I can remember it being located in the old Fort Gatlin Hotel on Orange Avenue. My interest in electronics continued when I joined an infantry division at Fort White, Oregon. I ultimately became the communications sergeant for my rifle company. The communications sergeant is responsible for the communications of the company, primarily between the battalion commander and the company commander and then from the company commander to the platoon leaders. In combat, the primary communications method with the battalion commander is through the SCR-300, better known as the walkie talkie. The communications with the platoon leaders was through a smaller handheld version called the handy talkie.

After the war, my interest in electronics continued when I took a lab course while a sophomore in college. Most of our equipment was war surplus electronic equipment salvaged from many sources. It was there, as I recall, that my interest in ham radio bubbled to the surface. Before I became a ham operator, I vividly remember visiting my parents on Yale Street in Orlando, where one of their neighbors was a well known ham operator and a friend of mine. I remember going over to his house unannounced, and he invited me into his radio room. He informed me that he had a scheduled appointment with another ham in a few minutes. He made a few calls on his radio and shortly the airwaves responded. We spent a good hour talking to this individual like he was in the next room, and I will never forget that session. The conversation was with another ham, VK2LG, in Lidcolm, Australia. I was now hooked on ham radio.

All of this occurred during the time that all electronic equipment was the tube type. The transistor and all of the other solid-state components had not yet been invented. The technology has changed so much that I would be lost today if I tried to pursue a hobby in electronics. Amateur radio provided a great deal of recreation for me, but it also had its price. The price was that it took away time that I could spend with my wife and children. To achieve mastery, as with all major endeavors in life, required devoting many, many hours to it. I never became as involved with it as did many of my ham friends. Although the interest and enjoyment were there, I simply did not choose to immerse myself in it at this time in my life. I enjoyed the time I did spend with it, and that amateur radio experience provided a strong foundation for what was to be my calling in life.

The first year at the Indian River Plant involved many changes in my life. For the first time in my career at OUC, I was now in a capacity of leadership. In addition to that, my family was making the transition into living in one of the fastest-growing communities in the United States. Brevard County was seeing the results of being the leader of the free world in the development of ballistic missiles. Most of my children's friends and their families were associated, in some capacity, with the missile industry. All of this occurred in the year 1960. At Christmastime of that year, I received my first set of golf clubs as a Christmas present from Helen. For quite some time, the clubs lay idle. I eventually decided that I wanted to take golf lessons before I started playing golf. This was a momentous decision in the history of my leisure life.


Earl, Lou and Tom at golf tournament

I made arrangements with the golf pro at t he Whispering Hills Country Club to begin my lessons. Before too long, we became intimate friends, due to the fact that I was a novice golfer and he was an avid fisherman. This friendship with a fisherman was because I was the superintendent of the power plant on U.S. 1, where the best fishing on the east coast of Florida occurred. The name of the golf pro was Eric Van Dusen, and we remained good friends during my entire tenure at the Indian River Plant. Although my skill continued to improve as I took lessons, I was not able to "break a hundred" on the Whispering Hills course. Breaking a hundred is the first milestone in a golfer’s life.

This means you completed the eighteen-hole course with less than one hundred strokes. I do not know exactly when that occurred, but finally it did. Before too long, I was able to hold my own competitively against most of the weekend golfers.

Golfing opened up many avenues of opportunities for me. Primarily, it offered me an association with the "movers and shakers" of the community. The Whispering Hills Country Club was the only golf course available at that time in Titusville. It became the focal point of social activities for the community. In order to expand its membership, it offered an opportunity for membership at a reduced rate, but it required a minimum expenditure at the club, exclusive of golf. My family used that provision many times to enjoy eating with others in the community. It was in this environment that many of my Titusville friendships were formed. Even after the Whispering Hills facility closed and I moved back to Orlando, the Royal Oaks Country Club in Titusville became the new focal point of my golfing. The original friendships from Whispering Hills continued to exist at the new club.

One close friend I met at the Whispering Hills golf course was an individual who had moved into town representing investors from Washington, D.C. His name was Logan Manders, and his project was the construction of the Howard Johnson's Motel on U.S. 1 in Titusville. Not only did Logan and I become close friends, but his wife also became a good friend of Helen's. In addition to golfing, his other recreational interest was boating. Eventually, he had his thirty-six foot fishing cruiser moved from the Washington, D.C. area to Titusville.

One of my memorable experiences while at the Indian River Plant was participating with Logan and the golf pro Eric in a sailfish tournament at Jensen Beach. Part of the excitement involved the trip down the intra-coastal waterway from Titusville to Jensen Beach. We berthed Logan’s boat at the Francis Langford Marina and stayed there while at Jensen Beach. Helen and the other wives joined us for the weekend before the sailfish tournament started on a Monday. On the day before the tournament began, we went, with our wives, on a short fishing trip in order to acquaint our new skipper with all of the nuances of the boat. It was a fabulous and exciting experience for all.

Another memorable experience for Helen and I was an extended weekend with the same two couples when we visited a golf resort on the east coast of Florida. I don't remember its name, but at the time it was considered a very exclusive resort. The men enjoyed golfing by day while the women shopped. Then all of us enjoyed meals together in the evening. It was a classic experience. Golfing provided two outlets for me. The first was social and the other was recreational. I benefited from both.

When I was promoted and moved back to Orlando, I continued my golfing activities both in Orlando and Titusville. Golf helped me to integrate myself into

the OUC hierarchy. I continued my sojourn in Titusville as well. By that time, the Royal Oaks Golf and Country Club had taken over as the premier location for Titusville's social leadership. Thus it became my home away from home. It was not too long before I became a close friend of Jack Cox, the builder and owner of the Royal Oaks properties. He and I made a barter exchange that was beneficial to both of us. He agreed to offer me "gratis" one of the lodge rooms at Royal Oaks in exchange for his ability to fish at the Indian River Plant. This was an opportunity of which I availed myself on many occasions. The Royal Oak Club had now become the center of golfing and social activities for me in the Titusville area, and golf continued to be the focal point of my recreational activities.

I also became active in golf here in Orlando after my return. Many of my associates at OUC were avid golfers. One with whom I developed a rather close relationship with early on was Dave Crowson. Dave was the assistant manager of the water department, which was under the management of Lawrence (Larry) Garrett. Dave and I became rather good friends, due to our mutual golfing interest. Dave had built a house just a few blocks south of where we lived on Sweetbriar Road. Our regular golfing outings occurred at the golf course off of State Highway 434 at Sanlando Springs. We became regulars at the course and participated in many functions.

As time progressed, so did my climb up the OUC hierarchy. I became manager of electric operations in the late 1960's, which catapulted me into the number three positions at OUC. Only the general manager and the assistant general manager were my superiors. I began to sense tensions beginning to build between Dave and the general manager, Curt Stanton. This, however, did not affect my relationship with Dave, and we continued to be friends and golfing partners. Along with our wives, we made a trip to North Carolina to see the changing of the leaves in the fall one year. It was a very enjoyable experience in which Dave and his wife Ginny and Helen and I had a very nice time together. This was many years before Helen and I knew our destiny would call us to the Asheville area, where not only our oldest daughter would reside, but also our granddaughter and her husband, along with their five children, our great-grandchildren.

Dave became manager of the water department upon the untimely death of Larry Garrett, due to a fatal heart attack. Larry was my next-door neighbor on Sweetbriar, and I remember his demise vividly. Larry's heart attack occurred on a Sunday afternoon, but the emergency vehicles did not create much consternation in the neighborhood. This was because he had suffered a few minor heart attacks previously and had quickly recovered. When news came that he had died, everyone was flabbergasted. Shortly thereafter, friends, relatives, and neighbors gathered together at his house.

Larry's death created a small dilemma with the personnel at OUC. Larry's secretary for many years, Alma Shultz, had made the statement very openly that

she would in no way work for Dave Crowson, the logical person to step up into Larry‘s position. She not only had lost her boss that day due to a fatal heart attack, but also felt that she had lost her job, since she could not work with Dave. During the mourning visitation at Larry's house, I remember calling Curt Stanton aside and informing him that I had a solution to the problem. He was noncommittal, but all ears. I informed him that Ted Pope, who had recently been appointed as my successor as director of generation, was looking for a secretary, and Alma would fill the shoes perfectly. Shortly thereafter, Alma was appointed Ted’s secretary. This began a relationship that continued until Alma retired from OUC.

My golfing activities continued, but as I matured, they expanded. I had begun to play golf with another associate at OUC, Steve Willis. Before too long, Steve and I became close golfing partners. This was fortunate for me because the breach between Dave Crowson and Curt Stanton became so broad that Dave eventually was forced to resign from OUC. During the rest of my tenure at OUC, Steve was my golfing partner.

With an intense interest in golf, I became infatuated with the Masters Golf Tournament held each year in Augusta, Georgia. I had begun flying in 1973, and I utilized this skill in 1976 to see my first Masters Golf Tournament**.** A friend from the General Electric Company invited Curt, Steve, and me to join him for the final two days of the tournament. It was such a delightful and exciting experience that I remember it vividly. The winner of the tournament that year was Jack Nicholas. Little did I realize it at the time, but my next recreational venture, flying an airplane, would open the door for me to see the Masters Golf Tournament nine more times.

Ever since childhood, I had dreamed of being a pilot. This dream was realized in 1973 as a result of another one of my hobbies, fishing. I had flown down to Marathon Key in a DC-3 as part of a fishing expedition. The DC-3 flight crew requirements were such that the plane required a crew of two in the cockpit. They were both very friendly when I expressed my interest in aviation. The pilot invited me to spend the entire flight in the jump seat of the DC-3. It was a thrilling trip. Much to my amazement, one of the flight crew members was a flight instructor. He invited me to visit him in Sanford after our return. That was a fateful contact for me. I visited him at the FBO in Sanford and, after only a few minutes, I was hooked. He became my flight instructor, and I was on my way to becoming a pilot. After obtaining my private pilot’s license, I eventually went on to earn my commercial pilot's license, my instrument rating, and my flight instructor certificate. It is significant to me today to recall that one of my earliest students as a flight instructor, a high school student, is currently a commercial pilot, employed by one of the major airlines.

After receiving my private pilot’s license, I asked myself, "Now what do I do?" Without an airplane to fly, it was difficult for me to exercise my privileges as a

pilot. I soon thereafter joined the South Seminole Flying Club, located at the Sanford Airport. Flying clubs own one or more airplanes, and the members, through their dues and fees for use of the airplanes, support the maintenance and all other aspects of the cost of the airplane. This allows pilots who do not own an airplane access to the club's airplanes. The South Seminole Flying Club became an institution in my life and was the forerunner of all the accomplishments I made in flying. As a member of the flying club, I became proficient at flying a Cessna 150, a Cessna 172, and a Cessna 182. The Cessna 182 was the largest and most demanding plane that the club owned at that time. To this day, it remains a very popular airplane for the private pilot. After being in the club for approximately one year, Helen and I flew the C-182 to Kansas City, Missouri to visit Earl Windisch and his wife Mary. That was my first long cross-country experience. The C-182 was the same plane that I flew to my first Masters Golf Tournament described above. As my interest in flying developed, so did my interest in the flying club. It was not too long before I was elected as an officer in the club. As both of these interests developed, so did my exposure at the Sanford Airport. Before long, the face and name of Lou Stone was known by almost everyone at the airport.

Lou and N20554,Grey Ghost in SSFC

At that time, the Sanford Airport was a small entity being operated by the city of Sanford. The original installation had been a very active naval training facility for many years. When its usefulness to the U.S. Government finally came to an end, the airport became surplus. That is when the city of Sanford became its keeper. All aspects of the airport's activities were controlled by the city of Sanford, even the flight control tower. It was a sleepy little airport, resting in the middle of central Florida. A common experience for pilots was to make a visit to the control tower. This was the same control tower that the navy had used during its operation of the airbase. By today's standards, the equipment and operations were crude, but they served their intended purpose. In fact, the core of the control tower operators had served in that same capacity when it was a naval air station. As a pilot who visited the tower many times, I can remember going up creaky stairs and finally climbing a straight ladder into the control tower. In the early days of my flying career, most controllers would alert you as you made your final approach to "check for three in the green". What this meant was

that you were to check to make sure you had three green lights for your landing gear to be assured it was down and locked. As our culture became more conscious of litigation, an order came down from Washington that all control towers were to cease this instruction. Obviously, there had been situations which had resulted from towers that did not observe this practice and were henceforth sued. This is just another example of how litigation has crept into our culture.

The Sanford Airport was not only a pleasant place to fly in and out of, but it was also a great place to learn to fly. It was small enough so that air traffic was never a concern and yet, because it had a control tower, I could learn procedures in communications. After a short time of flying, the controllers in the control tower were able to identify me either by my voice or by the plane I was flying. It was always comforting to know that the control tower operator knew my capabilities. The airport at Sanford remained a small operation until it was overwhelmed by the move of a flight school from Orlando. This flight school began during the period when the demand for airline pilots was increasing. What had once been a sleepy little airport now became a monster, with over seventy planes being used for training. The flight school was ultimately bought out by Comair, which was in turn bought out by Delta Airlines. The airport at Sanford was no longer a quiet little airport. It had now moved into the big league.

Even though I had made many cross-country trips, including flights to Kansas City with Helen, to our daughter Beth's wedding in Baton Rouge, LA, to the Masters Golf Tournaments, to Washington, D.C., etc, my interest in flying took a leap in June of 1982. That's when I became half owner of a Mooney airplane. My partner was Howard Lay. Howard had purchased the Mooney, which had small hail damage on a wing as the result of a hailstorm the previous April. Interestingly enough, the flying club I was in lost all of their airplanes in the storm, except the Cessna 182. The reason they did not lose the C-182 was because I had taken it on a trip to Augusta to the Masters Golf Tournament.

Jason, Lou and first Mooney

There is a story behind how I became a partner in the plane that had been purchased by Howard. I had been flying with a student and, after flying, I went

into the cocktail lounge there at the Sanford Airport and sat next to Howard at the bar. Conversation ensued and before the night was over, I was the half owner of a hail-damaged Mooney. Howard was not a pilot at the time, and part of our agreement was that I would be his instructor for becoming a private pilot. I provided his instruction, and he became ready for his required check ride with an FAA designated examiner. I called the examiner and explained to him that the student wanted to take his check ride in a Mooney. This can be compared to a student taking a driving test in an Indianapolis 500 racer. The examiner agreed and Howard easily passed his flight test in the Mooney. He became an excellent pilot. Howard and I developed a close personal friendship that exists to this day.

The cost of maintenance for my Mooney was significantly reduced by virtue of the fact that I was able to perform a great deal of it myself. This was possible because an A&P mechanic, Phil Ricker, worked for Howard. Phil had learned his trade as an air force mechanic and had been working for an aviation shop on the airfield at Sanford prior to taking a job with Howard. As time progressed, I learned more and more about the maintenance of a Mooney. In fact, my maintenance knowledge was significantly enhanced by two experiences. The first was when Phil and I performed a complete overhaul of the Mooney engine. The second was attending a four-day school sponsored by Lycoming in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. Proper and correct maintenance was the linchpin of my Mooney ownership.

Phil, Lou and Howard

In the spring of 1987, Howard and I bought another Mooney. It was originally purchased as an export to Venezuela. It was a 1973 Mooney M20F. In 1973, Venezuela was flushed with crude oil. That was the year that OPEC was formed. The economy in Venezuela skyrocketed. High-performance aircraft, particularly Mooneys and Beechcraft, were in high demand. By 1987, the aircraft owners in Venezuela were looking for American dollars due to a rapid decline in the value of their currency and a declining oil market. A man at the Sanford Airport, who had previously lived in Venezuela, made a tidy sum by going down to Venezuela, purchasing an airplane, and shuttling it back to Sanford for the buyer.

Lou and new Mooney

Howard called me and said there was a good price for a Mooney that was for sale in Sanford. The buyer had backed out of his agreement with the shuttle pilot and he was left holding the bag. Initially, I was skeptical of a plane from Venezuela, but after preliminary investigations, I realized it was a good buy. I went to Sanford to look at the plane, and the rest is now history. We were able to sell the hail-damaged Mooney to a couple of pilots in Tampa. We now had a ten-year newer model Mooney. The new Mooney needed upgrading, and we used the money from the sale of the old Mooney to upgrade the new one.

I retired from OUC in August of 1989. This occurred at age sixty-five and after forty years of employment. I was retained as an executive consultant for a couple of years thereafter, but I soon realized that my income was being severely impacted by social security and IRS regulations. I began to withdraw as a consultant and ultimately became fully retired. I have been asked endless times how retirement has affected me. My response has always been the same. Living a less disciplined existence, with no clocks to watch and no meetings to attend, made life more pleasant and enjoyable than ever before. I was ready for retirement, and the new lifestyle was very appealing to me as an individual. Aviation and golf could now be the focal point of my recreational activities.

Earl and Lou at Arrowhead

Regular cross-country trips that I had been doing in the old Mooney continued, and even expanded, in the new Mooney. Annual trips to the Mooney Homecoming in Kerrville, Texas, near San Antonio, continued. Trips to Kansas City to visit and play golf with Earl Windisch and to see the Chiefs play professional football continued. Additionally, the trips to Asheville to visit my brother Ken and his wife Rita at Maggie Valley continued. When our granddaughter Cari married Aaron Smith, they settled permanently in Aaron's hometown Bakersville, about an hour northeast of Asheville. Trips to Asheville became a regular occurrence in the Mooney.

The flight to Asheville is a beautiful trip that encompasses a wide variety of terrain. As we would leave Florida at an elevation of fifty feet, we would pass over pine-covered flatlands, and then, shortly, we were out over the ocean. We cruised for many miles over water and then would make landfall in South Georgia. We passed over the farmlands of Georgia, and then passed over the hydrogen bomb plant at Akin, South Carolina. We then approached the Greenville-Spartanburg area where we got our first glimpse of the mountains in North Carolina. It was only a short hop from there, and we would land in Asheville at an altitude of approximately 2500 feet. The trip takes about three hours in a Mooney. My normal departure from Sanford was 9:00 am and arrival in Asheville around noon. I would routinely eat lunch at a cafeteria immediately across from the airport. This was my routine for many trips.

My cross-country trips have been many and varied, but probably the most memorable one of all was a trip to Statesboro, Georgia. On this trip, I took my two younger brothers, Ken and Jim, to visit our second cousin, who lived with us for a while, and was the closest thing we all had to a sister. This was an enjoyable trip for all of us. We spent a lot of time reminiscing. The Mooney also provided many memorable trips for me to see the Masters Golf Tournament in Augusta, Georgia. In total, I was able to see ten Master's tournaments. It also provided me the opportunity to be an overnight guest at the Augusta National Golf Club, where the Masters tournament is held each April. I can vividly remember the course being practically vacant the day we played, with only the previous tournament winner, Ben Crenshaw, being in the group just ahead of us. In fact, we held a casual conversation with him before starting on the first tee. One of the normal characteristics of my cross-country flights was that I usually had my golf clubs stuffed in the baggage compartment, readily available if needed.

Lou, Evelyn, Tallulah, Ken and Jim in 1988

One of the milestones in my ownership of the Mooney was when I became the sole owner. Up until that time, Howard and I had owned both Mooneys equally. I

cannot remember exactly the year it occurred, but he began having vision problems, and he needed some cash for his new home on the St. Johns River. We reached an agreement for the buyout of his equity, and I became the sole owner of the Mooney. Fortunately, by then I had acquired all of the special equipment needed to perform the routine maintenance. And a Mooney FBO in Daytona Beach would loan me the special equipment needed for any non-routine work.

One of the joys of individual ownership was the opportunity to decide who flew the airplane. I had developed a close friendship with Bob Johnwick, and he became my perennial copilot. Bob and I made many trips together, not only to the Mooney Homecoming in Texas, but also to Kansas City to visit Earl Windisch. We also flew to Dayton, Ohio, to visit his son who was in the air force, stationed at Wright Patterson Field. One of my trips there provided me the opportunity to drop off John and his wife and then fly on over to Williamsport, where I attended the Lycoming maintenance school. Bob served as my copilot for many years until his untimely death, caused by a serious infection.

Bob Lou and Mooney

The last trip to Asheville, North Carolina, in the Mooney was flown by my son-in-law Dan Holland. On that trip, there were four of us: Helen, Charlotte, Dan, and me. Fortunately, a photographer made a series of photographs of the landing in Asheville. After my return to Orlando, this photographer contacted me with a series of pictures showing our landing in Asheville. I had a collage made of it, and it is a memory of my last Mooney trip there. It is also one of the last cross-country trips that Dan flew, due to his forthcoming malady with a brain tumor. The photograph of that landing in Ashville currently hangs on my wall in a place of honor.

Before Bob's untimely death, I began having vision problems which were ultimately diagnosed as macular degeneration. I had not flown alone for several years, due to my heart attack in 2000. Either Bob or my son-in-law Dan would have to serve as pilot-in-command whenever I wanted to go on any flights.

Ultimately, both of these individuals could not fly anymore, and I was forced to sell the Mooney. Howard was indispensable to me in the sale. It was sold to a former 747 pilot, who had flown for Continental Airlines. My flying career had come to an end.

Fortunately, during my career at OUC, I was exposed to the computer generation. I had won a computer as a door prize at a meeting in Chicago. It was a TRS-80 made by Radio Shack. This was before the personal computer was developed. It was sent to me from Chicago and sat in my closet for almost a year. I did not even know how to turn it on or off. I finally decided that I wanted to learn more about it and enrolled in a class at Seminole Junior College. Much to my delight, the TRS-80 was the computer being used in the class as an instruction tool. The class was primarily for the purpose of teaching us how to program in basic language, but it also taught me the fundamentals in the use of my computer. One of my jobs at OUC as the assistant general manager was to analyze the wage and salary compensation each year. In that capacity, I realized that a personal computer would be invaluable. I became fairly proficient in the use of spreadsheets and word processors. I had been hooked.

As part of my retirement from OUC, I was able to purchase the personal computer, along with the accessories, which I had been using for a few years. This now became secondary to my flying interest and provided me significant support in my recreational pursuits. This was also the time that digital photography was replacing wet photography and my son Les was developing into a computer "guru". One of the fascinating things about computer technology is its versatility. There are applications available for just about anything you desire to do. The Internet has been one of its main features for the past several years. The Internet can provide answers to just about any question you care to ask. One of the real advantages of having a son who is very knowledgeable in computer technology is that he was able to start building most of my computers. He was able to customize the computers for my usage. Eventually, I had all my computers on a local network.

One of my favorite experiences with a computer was the creation of a newsletter when I was a member of the flying club. In this capacity, I learned many things. The first is that you cannot depend upon others to provide input to a newsletter. Specific assignments are the only answer. Another lesson learned is that being the editor of the newsletter made me an insider, and I knew everything that was going on within the organization. This was a monthly production, but to the editor it seemed as if only a few days elapsed between publications. One of the advantages of being the publisher of the newsletter was that it required me to be proficient in the layout and printing of the word-processed publication. It was a valuable learning tool for Word.

There are all types of visual aids available for the visually handicapped. Computer technology being in the forefront of American culture has provided many innovative ways for the handicapped to take advantage of this new technology. As my vision became more and more diminished, I was able to counter the vision loss with magnifying accessories. Another huge assistance for me has been a voice recognition program. I can speak into a microphone, and my vocal utterances are recorded as text on the screen. That program has been a godsend to me in the preparation of this autobiography. Those applications, coupled with help from the VA, made it possible for me to continue using my computers to this day.

I am sure there are many more experiences that could have been recorded in this memoir, but this attempt should satisfy those that come after me. It records the significant events in my life for all of those who have encouraged me to make this record of the many trials and tribulations encountered during eighty-six years of living.

# Philosophies of Life

**The only thing in life that is assured, other than death and taxes, is change.**

**The first step in the learning process is learning what you don't know.**

**When someone meets their goals, they have set them too low.**

**Don't make a decision until necessary. More information may develop in the interim that will help with your decision. There is a fine line between this technique and procrastination.**

**Parents should expose their children to as many vocational disciplines as possible. This will help them make their choice for a life's career.**

**One of the most miserable existences is hating to go to work.**

**A popularity, fully democratic form of government is self-destructive.**

**The basic conflict in society is between the "haves" and "have-nots". This will be the underlying conflict that encourages socialism and creates class warfare.**

**To paraphrase one of Newton's laws of motion, "For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction". The American conscience is such that for every action, there is an unequal and opposite overreaction.**

**As Shakespeare said in one of his plays, "To thine own self be true". Always know and accept your own limitations. These can occur throughout our lives, but always be aware of what they are when you have to act. Never try to be something you cannot be.**

**Having a passion for any endeavor is the key to ultimate success. Without passion, you will never reach the level that you can with passion.**

**You can become and do anything you "really" want to do or become. The only limitation is your commitment.**

**A healthy mind remembers and recalls the good things in life and forgets or stores away the bad things.**

**When your age is under 6 or over 80, birthdays have a fuller meaning.**