

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.

I made arrangements with the golf pro at the 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



Earl, Lou and Tom at golf tournament

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 position 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



Lou and N20554, Grey Ghost in SSFC

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.

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



Jason, Lou and first Mooney

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.

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



Phil, Lou and Howard

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.

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

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.

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

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

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.

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

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



Bob Lou and Mooney

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.

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 Asheville 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.