

Sandy Bender Wilhelm Autobiography



**Sandy Bender
June 1945**



Ed & Marie Bender 1944

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Introduction

The story of my life begins in a coal bin in the basement of our house on 4651 Alter Rd on Sunday, February 27, 1944. Mom and Dad gave Nancy and Mike a dime each and sent them off to the show on Mack near Chalmers. They then tip toed off to the coal bin because Grandma Nellie Dahl was upstairs in the living room and in those days there was no second story. When Ed and Marie came back upstairs and sat with Nellie in the living room Sandy was on her way into this world.



Mildred Bender Neff



Mickey Marianne Nancy 1944

1944



Sandy 7 months



Billy & Sandy Bender 1950

Ed took many pictures of me and Bill in those early years. The first two pictures Ed took of Sandy was when she was 5 months old, sitting up and with her head cocked to one side, she was frowning and holding her ear. Marie said she had an ear infection, one of many suffered over the next 5 years. The other very young picture was when Sandy was 6 months old in Elenore and Herman's yard on Coyle being held by Marianne with Nancy next to us.

Another young picture of Sandy was taken by the next door neighbor Juliette Meeseman. Juliette loved me and used to baby sit me. One time she took me down the block on Alter and took a picture of me in a snowsuit. I always was disappointed that she did not take my picture in front of our house on Alter so I could've seen the house in the background to see what the house and front yard looked like at that time.

1944 July

Eight weeks later, Sandy almost exited this world shortly after her debut. Marie had her son and her daughter, and as Mildred Neff often said, until they invent another sex there is no need for any more children in one's family. Nancy was almost ten and Mickey was 6 ½ so a new baby was an unwelcome surprise. At first Marie had thoughts of terminating that unwanted pregnancy, but did not do so for fear of her health. Grandma Elizabeth Bender said to Marie that there is always room for one more in the family.

Marie was expecting Sandy during World War II so everything was rationed, including milk, meat and fish. When mom would run out of rations stamps she would plead with the shop owners that she was pregnant and needed the milk and /or meat for the baby. She usually got what she asked for.

What Marie craved all through her pregnancy was a food that was not rationed – cream puffs. Boy, did she crave cream puffs! Marie said that baby was nourished very well on cream puffs for the duration of 1944. Marie said she was quite tired during this pregnancy and usually slept every day till 1 p.m. She said that Nancy and Mickey were old enough to get themselves off to school alone in the mornings.



Mickey, Nellie, Marianne, Nancy, Marie

In July of 1944 Marie had her picture taken sitting on Alter Rd front steps along with Nancy, Michael and Grandma Nellie. Marie laughed and said that Sandy was in that picture too, inside Marie!



Elizabeth Ott & Henry Chas. Bender

On August 2, 1944 Edward's parents Elizabeth and Henry Bender celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Grandma Elizabeth (Lizzie) and Henry (Hank) were dressed up in beautiful attire as they celebrated that day in great joy. All of their children and older grandchildren were there as well as many of their relatives and friends. Hank was the highlight of the celebration. He was an extremely handsome man and very cordial, so many of the women wanted to dance with him. Lizzie was really upset with him as she loved him dearly and wanted to dance with him exclusively. Grandpa Hank went downhill health wise rapidly after that as he had congestive heart failure.



Minna Kaiser & Friedrich Johann Dahl



Minna Kaiser Dahl Henkel

In August 25, 1944 on Marie's 10th wedding anniversary Marie got a very sad call. Her Grandmother, Minna Kaiser Dahl Henkel had passed away at age 80 of heart failure in Aunt Anna's living room at 8144 Cadillac in Warren. The wake was held in Aunt Anna's house. Marie went to visit Minna and was very curious if her long lost dad William Dahl Sr. would be there at his mom's funeral. Mildred Dahl Stocker and Elenore Dahl Mc Kinin, Marie's sisters also came to the wake at various times of the day and night and they too were looking to see if their dad was there. No one saw him during those few days and he was also missing at the funeral procession, which was a very impressive affair as it was during World War II and Grandma Minna's body was born on a horse drawn wagon with a military escort walking on foot from Cadillac in Warren to the Mt. Olivet cemetery at Van Dyke and 6 Mile Rd. She was given full honors as a Gold Star mother because she had lost 2 sons in World War I, Fritz (Frederick Jr) and Tony (Anthony). Fritz is buried in France. He died on October, 1944 on the battlefield in France and was buried in a mass grave there.



Sandy, Craig & Scott



Minna & Fred Dahl's tombstone

1944 August

Grandma Minna bought her own grave site in 1918 when she was awarded \$20,000 (\$10,000 each boy) for the loss of her 2 sons. She used the money to buy a family plot in Mt. Olivet where she had her husband Fred Dahl's body removed from a single grave to the central part of the Dahl family plot. She then reserved a plot for herself next to her beloved Fred. It was into this plot where she was being laid to rest with military honors on August 28, 1944.



Marie & Sandy at Minna's grave



Marie Dahl Bender at Nellie's grave

Marie and Edward were at the graveside as was Nellie Dahl, Marie's mother. Elenore tried to get there for the burial service. She had to come by bus from Coyle on the west side of Detroit as Herman could not take off work to drive her. The buses did not run on time and after an arduous journey she arrived there too late and had to return home without seeing her Grandma laid to rest. The casket was set on ropes over the open grave and the priest asked all of the relatives to kneel down on the grass while he intoned the final prayers for the dead. After the prayers were completed all were asked to rise. Nellie who was 254 lbs and partially paralyzed from the flu of 1918 was unable to get up on her own, so she put all of her weight on Marie's shoulder in order to get up with great difficulty. Marie, who was 5 ½ months pregnant with Sandy said she thought she was going to die with all that weight on her shoulder. The casket was then lowered into the earth next to Fred Dahl. Marie, Edward and Nellie returned to their home on Alter Rd.



Elizabeth & Henry Bender

On November 9th, 1944 Edward got a very sad call from his Grandma Lizzie. Hank was close to death, Lizzie told her son. Edward jumped in his car and drove immediately to Hank and Lizzie's home on Frankfurt in the Parkside Projects. Edward ran into the house and saw all of the relatives down stairs but he didn't see his dad. Where's dad? Ed asked. Upstairs, was the reply. Ed ran up the stairs, taking two at a time. He found his dad standing against the wall with his hands over his head, leaning against the wall. Dad, why are you standing like that? Ed asked. Hank looked at Ed from under his shoulder and said, "because they is the only way I can get my breath", was Hank's reply. Hank then looked at Ed and said to him with a bit of a wry grin on his face, "Son, all I have to leave you is my good will". Later that night Hank, exhausted, laid down in bed. Lizzie, who loved Hank

dearly, stayed standing directly over her beloved Hank until he stopped breathing. Ed and the brothers and sisters said they do not know exactly when Hank died as Lizzie completely covered Hank till the end.

This Sandy lost her Great Grandmother and Grandfather a few months before she was born. Sandy was physically present at both funerals, but still in the womb. She felt a special attachment to both because they exited this earth at the same time she was entering.



Mike, Nancy, Harold, Virginia, Gary,
Evelyn, Norman, Mildred, Marie & Grandma Elizabeth

Nancy remembered Minna as being a hard boiled harsh spoken woman with a heavy German accent, but she had very little contact with Minna. Nancy knew Hank Bender and went on picnics and visited with him and Grandma Elizabeth in Edward's house and at parks. Michael never remembers meeting Grandma Minna and has only a very fleeting, fuzzy memory of seeing his very tall very elderly Grandpa Bender standing at the top of the stairs at the Parkside Projects, Nancy was 9 and Mike was 6 when they passed away.



Nancy, Marie, Harold, Mildred and Mickey

Mom and dad continued to have picnics with the kids a few more times after Mildred and Harold stopped due to lack of interest as they were getting older. I remember the time we had a picnic at Kensington State Park. We almost didn't get in as the park was so crowded on Memorial Day. We got a very nice spot right near the lake. After we ate Nancy slipped into her bathing suit and went for a swim. I wanted to go in too but mom said no, it was too cold for swimming. Nancy was 15, I was only 5 so mom felt Nancy could tolerate that cold water better than I could.

Marie went into labor in the early morning hours of December 5, 1944. Her due date was December 2, 1944 so she was 3 days overdue to deliver. Edward drove Marie that morning to Cottage Hospital in Grosse Pointe Farms Michigan. Ed got the shock of his life when Dr. MacKenzie told Ed he was to stay in the labor room with Marie and witness the labor and delivery. Ed was shocked – he was never in the labor or delivery room with any of his other children. Dr MacKenzie told Ed he wanted him to witness the pain Marie went through with delivery so hopefully this would be her last pregnancy. Ed and Marie already had 2 children so there was no good reason to keep having children. Ed said he tightened up with every contraction and was totally exhausted when Sandy was finally born as it was a much harder delivery than the first two because this baby was overdue and weighed 8 lbs 2 ozs. Nancy and Mike were in the mid 7 lb range and therefore easier to deliver, especially considering Marie was only 4 ft 11” and weighed only 110 lbs.

Sandy was born a very healthy baby at 3:30 pm on December 5, 1944. Edward was so exhausted that the doctor asked Ed if he would like a shot. Ed gladly said yes, he needed something to revive him from this hours long ordeal. When the

doctor came with a hypodermal needle Ed was shocked. “No, I don’t want that kind of shot, Ed said, I want a shot of good bourbon!”

Ed said goodbye to Marie and then headed home to Alter Rd. When Ed parked his car in front of his house he decided to go to the drug store at Warren and Chalmers and buy a pint of bourbon that someone told him was very smooth. Ed walked to that drugstore, bought the pint of bourbon and walked down Warren Ave. in the rain drinking the bourbon straight out of the bottle. By the time he got to Warren and Alter the bourbon bottle was empty and Ed, now being two sheets to the wind, decided to go to Dave’s drug store at Warren and Maryland and buy another pint of bourbon. He then walked in the rain the 4 blocks back home.



Nellie Dahl

Ed sat down in the living room feeling very mellow listening to the programs on the radio with Nellie Dahl who was babysitting Nancy and Mickey. A very funny thing happened a few days later. Harold Neff came over to visit Ed and Nellie while Marie and Sandy were still in the hospital and when Harold was asked to fix Nellie’s bed as it had just broken overnight. Harold burst out laughing and asked Nellie what she and Ed were doing to break the bed. Nellie, who was always above board in clean behavior, blushed bright red at this statement by Harold Neff. Nellie did not think this was one bit funny. Harold brought out his tools, fixed the bed, and no more off color jokes was said at Nellie’s expense.

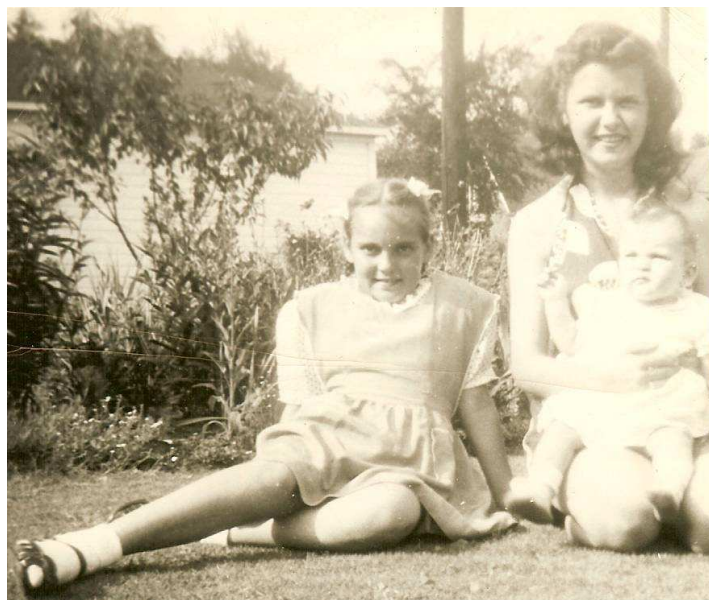
When Marie got home 10 days later, on December 15, she was shocked to see the new house going up on the other side of the street was fully finished on the outside. Marie was surprised to see that there was snow on the ground that day as the ground was dry when she went into the hospital on December 5th. Christmas was around the corner but

Christmas presents for Nancy and Mike were scanty this year as Marie had a pregnancy and then a new baby to contend with that year.

1945

In early January Marie suddenly felt terribly ill and felt she was about to pass out. She had no idea what was happening. So she sent Nancy to the neighbor Elodie Meeseman's house to call Ed to come home and take her to the doctor. Right after that Marie insisted on installing a telephone as she had quite a scare. If she ever got sick again she wanted to be able to immediately phone for help. We had one or 2 party lines in those days, so you had to wait your turn to use the phone or if there was an emergency you told the party line to get off the phone, that you had an emergency.

Sandy was baptized on January 14, 1945 at St. John Berchman's church at Lakeview and Warren in Detroit. Mildred Neff and Harold Dahl were her sponsors. Sandy asked Mildred if she cried when she was baptized. Mildred gave a big muffled laugh and said that Sandy let out the biggest fart that was heard all over the church when the Priest poured the holy water over her head and said the words of baptism. The priest looked at the baby and said, "I hope this is not a harbinger of what she will feel about religion when she gets older".



Nancy & Sandy Bender, Marianne Mc Kinin summer 1945

When Sandy was 3 months old Marie was crocheting a dining room table cloth while sitting in the living room facing the kitchen. She suddenly saw movement in

the kitchen and stopped crocheting and looked up to see what was moving. It was 3 mice playing with each other, running around in circles in the kitchen by the stairs. Marie, who was always terrified of mice, dropped her crocheting and ran as fast as she could to the next door Mrs. Meeseman's house. Mrs. Meeseman let Marie into her house and there mom stayed till Edward came home around 9 pm, leaving little Sandy alone in her crib! .

In April, 1945 Marie was feeding Sandy her bottle while sitting on the living room couch and living to the radio when she was shocked to hear that President Franklin Delano Roosevelt passed away in Warm Springs Georgia.



Sandy Bender, June 1945 (Sandy has an ear ache here)

There is only one picture of Sandy that was taken when she was 5 months old. Marie said that Sandy had her head to one side and put her hand over her one ear as she had frequent earaches. Marie had Sandy's tonsils removed when she was 4 years old as Sandy had repeated ear infections. The surgery cured the ear infection problem. Sandy remembers going under the ether. They put a mask over her face and as she went unconscious she saw and heard a train going around and around and making noise in her head all the while she was unconscious. Surprisingly she had no pain from the tonsil removal. (Michael suffered a great deal from the pain of his tonsillectomy. He was on ice cream for the better part of a week.)

In the spring of 1945 Sandy started cutting teeth. She had a rough time of it. She developed a fever of 104 degrees for the better part of a week till the tooth cut through the gum.

With the advent of spring, Marie decided that the home needed a face lift. So she painted the living and dining room. She was very pleased with her new blue walls.



Mickey Bender

In 1945 Mickey made his first Holy Communion. Marie took Mickey to a professional photographic studio, all dressed up in a white first communion suit and had several different poses taken. He then made his first communion at St. John Berchman's Church.



Nancy Bender

Also in 1945 Nancy made her confirmation at St. John Berchman's Church at Warren and Lakeview. She was dressed in a beautiful white dress. Juliette Meeseman was her sponsor.

When I was 1 year old Marie put me into a playpen on the front porch in November while she did the wash. She had an old fashioned wringer washer and no clothes dryer. So she spent a good deal of time in the basement and then in the backyard to hang up the clothes. After getting the wash on the line Marie went to the porch to check on the baby. Sandy's feet were almost blue with cold as she had taken off her shoes and socks.



Sandy Bender 1946

On another wash day Marie almost lost Sandy. This time Sandy was in a walker in the backyard while Marie was hanging the wash. Sandy reached up and pulled a plastic flower off the wash and put it in her mouth. She tried to swallow it and it got stuck half way down her throat and started choking. She was unable to breathe at all as her windpipe was cut off. Marie grabbed Sandy and turned her upside down and banged on her back. The flower dislodged and Sandy started breathing again. Then a minute later the flower obstructed her windpipe again, and she started turning blue. Marie grabbed Sandy again and ran to Mrs. Meeseman for help. Once again Marie turned Sandy upside down and suddenly the very slimy plastic flower slid out of her throat and the crisis was over.



Nancy & Marie Bender, Harold & Mildred Neff & Mickey Bender



Mickey, Nancy, Harold, Virginia, Gary, Evelyn, Norman, Mildred, Marie & Grandma Elizabeth Bender

The Bender family used to go on picnics in the park a number of times. Sometimes they went with Harold and Mildred Neff, other times with Norman and Evelyn Bender. In the picture above Sandy was at that picnic but was sleeping in a buggy.



Tommy Dahl



Sandy Bender Wilhelm

Ed and Marie took the kids on a picnic with the Dahl family. Marie laughed and said that Sandy was a very quiet baby at home but cried and carried on whenever they took her to a picnic. Tommy Dahl, on the other hand was a terror at home but was a calm, peaceful child on a picnic.



Sandy Bender

1945

When I was 1 year old mom bought me a pink snow suit. Juliette Meeseman took me to the corner of Alter Rd and Canfield and took my picture in the suit. When I was 1½ years, mom bought me a beautiful pink spring coat for Easter which is what I was wearing that day. Juliette was our next door neighbor. She was a single

girl about 15. She paid much more attention to me when I was an infant than Nancy or Mike did.



Sandy Bender & Juliette Meeseman 1945

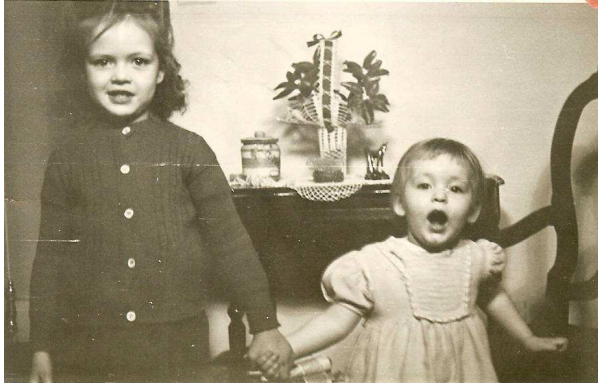
Marianne De Maria was a good friend of Juliette Meeseman who lived next door to us. When Marianne would come to visit Juliette, she would also stop over Marie Bender's house and would pick up little Sandy and carry her around in her arms. Juliette married a few years after this picture was taken.

1946



Sandy Bender & Thomas Dahl 1946

Sandy and Tommy were only 1 week apart in age so they played together whenever the two families got together. It was so sad that Sandy and Tommy never met again until they were in their late 30s because of the feud that occurred between the 2 families.



Patricia Dahl Nowicki & Sandy Bender Wilhelm



Tommy Dahl & Sandy Bender Wilhelm

Sandy, Tommy and Patty Dahl visited back and forth in 1945 to 1947 and had a number of pictures taken in those years. No more pictures were taken until the 1960s.

One very snowy day when Sandy was 2 years old Ed decided to take some pictures in the snow. So mom put Sandy's snow suit on and sent her outside. Ed took several pictures in the snow and then Ed ran into the basement, opened the north basement window, had me peek out the basement window as he was shooting pictures through the basement window.



Marie Bender holding Sandy Bender, 1945

At Easter time when Sandy was 2 years old Marie bought a cute Frilly pink spring coat with a frilly hat. Marie then held Sandy still so Edward could get a picture without the kid running off.



Mickey, Sandy and Nancy Bender Easter 1946



Sandy Bender Easter Sunday 1946

Here is a picture of little Sandy holding her Easter basket on Easter Sunday, 1946. Marie always provided her children with expensive colorful Easter baskets every year. She always put a large chocolate Easter bunny in the basket along with yellow marshmallow peeps, chocolate eggs, jelly beans and multi colored Easter eggs that she wrote our name on. The bottom of the basket was always lined with green Easter grass. Mom always hid the Easter basket somewhere in the house and made all the kids hunt for their basket. The older the kid, the harder it was to find our Easter basket. Mom put Bill's basket half hanging out of the dining room drape.



Sandy Bender on old couch on Alter Rd 1946

When Sandy was 2 years old Ed and Marie decided to finish off the attic as they were getting rather crowded with the 3rd child. Mike used to sleep in the unfinished attic and Nancy slept in the front bedroom downstairs. Harold Neff finished the attic into nice living quarters with 3 bedrooms and a dark room. As Harold was finishing the attic little 2 year old Sandy ran out the front door, down the porch steps and down Alter Rd. Nellie, who was watching little Sandy started hollering for help as she could not run after the little kid. Marie ran down stairs and down the street and scooped up Sandy.



Sandy

Dad and Mom were very impressed when 2 year old Sandy was able to completely dress herself. So Ed put Sandy in the front bedroom where there was better lighting and had her completely dress in front of the camera. There was a whole series of pictures. When Mildred Stocker saw them she was so impressed that she took the pictures to work to impress her fellow workers.



Mildred Stocker holding Sandy

Mildred & Sonny used to visit our house on a regular basis in the 1940s. Mildred was always a very funny, happy person. And she had some wild stories to tell on

occasion. One story she told us when I was a young child that Mickey and I never forgot was when she came over to our house all excited and told us that a woman went into a downtown department store, was getting into an elevator when as a suddenly the elevator dropped and cut off her head which in turn rolled down the escalator.



Sandy 1946

Marie and Ed were also impressed that 2 year old Sandy was able to pour a whole glass bottle of milk into a glass without spilling anything. They couldn't believe that a 2 year old would have that much strength.



Sandy & Mickey Bender 1946

Mike holding me in this picture surely was not his idea. Without a doubt dad put me in Mickey's arms for the sake of taking the above picture. Mickey is sitting on the dining room chair which was a very elaborate dining room set. I was so sad when that set suddenly was taken away and a Danish blond set was substituted.

Ed took a series of pictures in Marie and Ed's front upstairs bedroom when Sandy learned to dress herself. Ed and Marie were so astonished that she could dress herself at such an early age that they recorded it in pictures. Nancy took the pictures to school to show her classmates and Aunt Mildred Stocker took it to her work place to show her fellow workers.

Marie also used to be astonished that 2 year old Sandy could get on a chair, open the refrigerator, get a very heavy glass milk bottle out and pour herself a glass of milk without spilling it. Marie said that took a lot of strength to hold and pour that heavy glass bottle. In those days the bottle had a cardboard cap on it for a lid.

Marie used to tell Sandy a bedtime story every night before putting her to bed. First Marie would get Sandy into pajamas or underwear in hot weather and then have Sandy snuggle up to her on the couch while she would read her a bedtime story out of a 365 day a year story book. Marie would first read her the story for the day, then Sandy's birthday story and then the December 4th story of two little twin black babies in a coal bin. Marie would often prepare us a bedtime snack of a piece of bread and butter with sugar sprinkled on top.

Dad was always very kind and affectionate to me. When I was little he always had pet names for me. He called me "Taffy amber" due to my yellow hair and hazel eyes. He also called me "Wa Woo!" He was the one who named me Sandy. Marie wanted Cynthia. Ed never liked that name. First Marie tried to name Nancy Cynthia and Ed nixed that name the first time around as well. I was so glad that Ed named me Sandy. The name Cynthia I felt never fit to me at all. It was a much too prissy, sissified name for a tom boy. Nancy said she wished she had been named Cynthia as she liked that name better than Nancy.

Our front yard had a huge tree on the lawn but a few years after we moved in dad and mom had the tree cut down. Mike wondered why they had it removed. We didn't have any grass on the front lawn either until Mr Schneck came along with his grass seed and heavy roller and planted grass for us. I don't remember that tree as it was removed before my time.

1947

At Easter, 1947 Edward took a picture of Nancy, Sandy and Michael Bender on the side of the Alter Rd house. Michael was dressed in a boy's suit, Sandy in her new pink frilly spring coat and Nancy in dark blue jumper.



Sandy Bender 1947



Sandy Bender Wilhelm 1947

Nancy was sitting in the kitchen reading when the doorbell rang. 3 year old Sandy ran and answered it. The Schneck boys gave Sandy a lit fire cracker and told her to run real fast and put it in Nancy's shoe. Not knowing any better, Sandy did it. The Schnecks rang the door bell again. Nancy ran to the front door without putting her shoe on. So the fire cracker blew up without her foot in the shoe. Boy, was Nancy mad at Sandy.



Sandy & Marie Bender 1947

One day Dad came home early from work and saw me sitting by Marie's feet. I grabbed mom's glass pie dish and started playing with it. Then I turned it upside down and started walking on top of it. Normally mom would not have let me do that for fear of breaking the glass dish but Ed wanted some cute pictures so mom ignored what I was doing. Mom was expecting Bill in this picture.

I also on many occasions pulled mom's Lloyd C. Douglas books out of her book case in the living room and walked all over them, putting them in a straight line and pretending they were train tracks.



Sandy in 100 degree weather jumping rope

One very hot day in the summer of 1947 Marie put on a very cute sun suit that Mildred Neff had sewn for her and then wiggled her figure in front of Sandy's face and said, "Now you stay clean" Sandy then went down into the basement and found her button on galoshes and put them on and went outside on the side of the house and went skip roping in the dust covered mud between Meeseman's and our houses. Nellie Dahl looked out the kitchen window and said, "Oh Marie, look at how dirty little Sandy is". Marie once again brought Sandy back inside the house, washed her up and put a clean new sun suit on her.



Sandy Bender 1947

Boy, Sandy did not like being scolded for bad behavior. Not for even a minute did Sandy think that there was anything wrong for playing in the sand or the mud.



Sandy Bender

Sandy was a very active child all of her childhood years. She would play very actively all day long and then come evening she would settle down in a chair and get ready for bed.



Sandy

Sandy always had a happy disposition, laughing often at happy occasions. She enjoyed being with mom and dad and conversing with them.



Marie & Sandy Bender

Most nights Marie would set Sandy next to her on the couch and read her bedtime stories. Marie bought a book titled 365 days of the year bedtime stories. I always had mom read me the story of the day, the story on my birthday and the story on December 4. The December 4th story was about 2 little kids who got black from playing in the coal bin.



Betty Bender Gamache

Ed's sister Betty used to take little 3 year old Sandy with her to Ed's store at 9100 Mack Ave at McClellan St in Detroit. Betty would walk Sandy down Alter Rd to the street car line at Mack and Alter. It was a trolley car that ran on an overhead

electrical line. It ran on tracks and had a very wide door on the side. One had to walk right into the middle of Mack Ave to board the trolley as the trolley ran right down the middle of Mack Ave. One had to wait until the traffic cleared before walking out to the middle of the street. It was a long walk for a little kid and it was a problem getting a small child's legs up those steep stairs.



Edward Bender

When Sandy would go back home people would ask her what her dad did all day. Sandy would tell them that Ed sat on a stool and blew a whistle (what he did do in order to tease her by clowning around).

Mom bought me some red shoes with openings in the toes. I loved those shoes and asked mom to get me another pair but she never did.

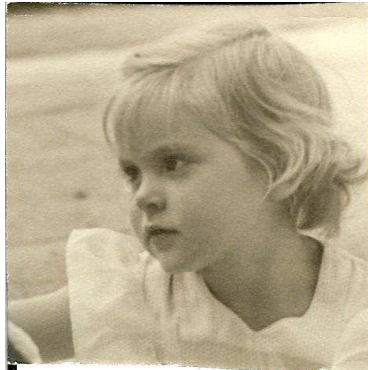


Beatrice Gamache

Betty was really nice to Sandy and on one occasions she gave Sandy a cute little green ring to wear. Ed felt the ring was too valuable for a kid to lose so when Sandy woke up in the morning, the ring was gone, on its way back to the Mack Ave store.

Sandy loved the 2 RCA Victor dogs that were kept on a high shelf in Ed's store. It had the big dog with its hear bent, listening into the large end of the victrola and a little dog standing next to the big dog. And the sign said, "He hears his master's

voice". I loved that dog and asked dad if I could have it when he was going to discard it. I never got that dog. No doubt it was too big for the house.



Sandy (Taffy Amber)

When Ed and Marie went for a Sunday drive they used to put 3 year old Sandy in the front seat between them. Ed used to call Sandy Taffy Amber because her hair was such a golden color when the sun shone on it. Ed had a on the floor gear shift. He used to put his hand on Sandy's head and pretend that he was putting the car in gear.

Ed's car had a starter button the floor. You had to push the button down in order to start the car. But us kids liked to sneak in dad's car and push the button to move Dad's car forward, then put the car in reverse and push the button again to get the car back where it came from so dad wouldn't know we were playing with the starter button as that could run down the battery.

Sandy used to walk down Alter Rd toward Canfield, sit on the curb and see what was in the gutter. The one thing Sandy loved to eat was chalk that she found there. It was good tasting, I loved shaving off the side of the chalk and taste it. Sometimes I also like to eat small amounts of dirt in the gutter.

One time when I was about 3 years old Nancy aggravated the devil out of Mike and when he had enough He grabbed a knife from the kitchen drawer and ran after Nancy who was in the dining room, telling her he was going to stab her. Boy did she scream and run around and around the dining room table with Mike running in circles, knife in hand, after her. Years afterward, Mike said he was glad she kept running because he had no idea what he would do if her caught her. I stood there in the kitchen, watching them, thinking that maybe I should run out of the house to be safe, although I knew that Mike would never be dangerous.

Another time again I was about 3 years old and was standing in the front yard watching Nancy talking to her friends when Mike rode up on his bike, put his foot down on the pavement and just stood there listening to the kids. Nancy got really bossy and told him to get out of there. Mike just quietly stood there. Nancy got bossier and bossier, mouthing off at Mike, trying to be a big shot in front of her friends. Suddenly Mike had enough, got off his bike and started lightly slapping Nancy around. Boy, was she embarrassed!

Nancy got really bossy with me one day too. She came in with her friends and sat down at our dining room table. I pulled up a chair and sat down next to her. She told me to get lost, these were her friends. I told her that I lived here too so I had a right to sit at the dining room table. Again, in a really bossy voice she told me to get lost. I stayed at the table. She swung her arm at me, knocking both me and the chair flying. Dad was watching the whole thing and he told me that he started to get up and put Nancy in her place. But before he even got out of the living room chair, I got up off the floor, pulled the chair back upright and sat back down on it. Dad said this got really interesting, so he sat back down and watched it play out. I refused to leave despite Nancy bossing me around, so in tears she got up with her friends and left the house.

Sandy loved wearing Mike's clothes which she found stored up in the unfinished attic. Mom had them in boxes. Sandy went through them and took out her favorite items to wear. Marie let Sandy wear some of the items that were not boldly masculine. Louise's mother allowed her to wear Levis, which were just coming out. Sandy begged and got permission from Marie to also buy and wear Levis.

When Sandy went into the unfinished attic she had to be very careful to keep standing on the boards and not in between or she would land in the ceiling below. Sandy also wandered through the attic some what looking for a gun that dad said he had stored there. Sandy never saw any trace of a gun.

On Sunday mornings Ed would sit at the kitchen table, read the comics and stir up a bowl of ice cream and down it with a glass of beer (yecck! Marie would say about that combination.) One fine summer day 2 year old Sandy went down the alley and stood listening to the two Westingberger neighbor hood women scream four letter words at one another through their kitchen windows. After having gotten an earful Sandy went back home, walked back into the house through the back door, climbed the back steps and stopped next to her dad, who was not paying a bit of attention to what she was saying as he was engrossed reading the comics. Sandy gleefully spewed out the 4 letter words she had heard the

Westingburger women gd, sob, damn, &*(, %\$# said Sandy. Uh huh, uh huh, said Ed. “Marie, do you hear those words Sandy is saying!” Nellie said to Marie. Yup, Marie replied. I am totally ignoring her because then she will forget everything she is saying right away. If I make an issue out of it, she will then remember those words.

Mickey used to go alley picking and came home with some really cool stuff. One of the toys that Sandy wanted to play with was a large metal pick up truck. Marie curled up Sandy’s hair really cute when Ed wanted to take pictures of Mickey playing with the truck in the mud in the back yard on Alter and Sandy trying to join in playing with the metal truck. However she just got to stand and watch as Mickey did not want to share his new found toy. So Sandy just stood there with her arm resting on a pole sticking out of the ground.

The Dahls used to come over quite regularly when Sandy was really little. She would play with Patty and Tommy Dahl and with Sharon and Debbie Dahl. The other cousins were too old to play with as they were closer to Nancy’s age. Marianne De Maria and Doris Stocker were a bit older than Nancy so they had no interest in Sandy and really didn’t pal around with Nancy either. The only cousin Nancy was close to was Virginia Bender who was born one year before Nancy. They remained friends after they were grown.

Sharon used to come over to our house for a day or sometimes a few days. Sandy and Sharon used to love putting on their bathing suits and running out in a rainstorm. Only Marie would make us come out of the rain if it started to thunder and lightening.

Marie gave Sandy a birthday party when she was 3 years old. Sandy loved balloons and told Marie that she loved that “big lallio babaloon”. Mildred Neff brought her neighbor’s child, a very poor and sorry looking child. The child was very shy and sat in Mildred’s Neff the whole time. I felt very sorry for her, especially when I later went to her house and found they had sheets instead of doors.



Billy & Sandy

When I was 4 years old mom went shopping at Gratiot & 7 Mile and left Nancy to baby sit me while she was gone. As soon as mom left, Jay Bayer came over and he and Nancy sat on the front porch. I was there with them. Jay looked at me, then said he would give me a half dollar piece if I got lost so he and Nancy could be alone. I took the 50 cent piece and took off into the alley, bored, looking for something interesting to do. I found something interesting – the telephone pole at the end of the alley on Canfield. I went down there, checked it out, and found the pole had big nails on the bottom and then iron hooks further up for the electric pole. Sandy crawled up the pole to the very top and then stood at there surveying her kingdom, looking toward Chalmers seeing if Mom was getting off the bus and walking down Canfield or if she got off at Forest as it was fully time for mom to get home. Nancy figured that one out too and started frantically trying to find me. She walked into the alley and saw me at the top of the telephone pole! She ran down the alley, shouting to me to get down before mom got home. So I started down but told Nancy to stand back and don't grab me, that I would get down on my own. Just as I got to the part of the pole where the huge nails were sticking out, Nancy grabbed me and pulled me off the pole, ripping my leg open as it was being gouged on the nail. It left a scar and started to bleed. Nancy offered me some money if I hid the bleeding wound. I agreed. It turns out that both bribes were ill gotten money. Mom saw the two coins sitting in my golden Liberty bell bank and took them away from me.



Thomas Dahl & Sandy Bender

There are a couple of 2 year old pictures where I was sitting alone on our couch on Alter, both alone and also with Tommy Dahl, Shorty's son who was only 9 days older than me.

In September 1947 Ed got out his camera one night when it was already past Sandy's bedtime. Sandy sat on the floor at the foot of Marie's chair and started playing with a glass pie pan. Sandy knew it was past her bedtime and that she was not allowed to play with that glass pie plate but Ed wanted some natural looking pictures so Marie and Ed ignored what Sandy was doing. Sandy kept waiting for them to put the brakes on what she was doing and send her off to bed. Marie did not like this picture as she was 5 months' pregnant with Bill.



William Henry Bender

In the middle of April, 1947 Bill was conceived. Marie started calling him by the nickname "Oscar".. She often referred to the unborn child by that name. On New Year's Day, just as Marie was finishing up washing and putting away the dishes she went into labor. She told Ed it was time to go to Cottage Hospital. Bill's

delivery was by far the easiest for Marie as he came several weeks early and was only 5 lbs.

1948



New born Bill Bender Jan 1948

Mom brought Bill home 10 days later. It was a bitter cold January day when she brought him into the house on Alter Rd. She sat down on the couch on the north wall and started unbundling Bill. When she took all the blankets off and Bill was in a pajama outfit Sandy came forward to take a look at her new baby brother. Marie immediately put her hand up to guard against Sandy getting too near the new baby and warned her to stay a distance away. She stepped nearer the baby, gazed on his face and said, “Eyoo, Oxe’s ugly!!” Marie said her feelings were hurt, but when she looked down at new born Bill she had to agree that he was homely.



Marie & Bill

Marie was worried about Bill's face when he was first born as she said it was crooked, in other words, not symmetrical. But when she looked at Ed's face, she said that like Bill his face was not symmetrical either, so then she stopped worrying so much about his features. A few months later he developed into a handsome baby boy.



Bill Bender 5 wks old

Before the year was up Marie and Ed had new worries about their 4th born child. He could not hold his head up like the other kids. Mom had to put a rolled up diaper under his head because it was so flopsy. He could not sit up like the other kids till months after he should have. He never learned to crawl. He rolled when he wanted to get across the room to get a toy. Sandy tried to teach him how to crawl, with no success.



Marie & Bill Bender

When Bill was 15 months old he had no idea how to walk, so Ed and Marie spent all day Easter Sunday sending him back and forth to their waiting arms to teach him how to walk. He gradually was able to stand up and walk on his own.



Marie & Bill 4 months

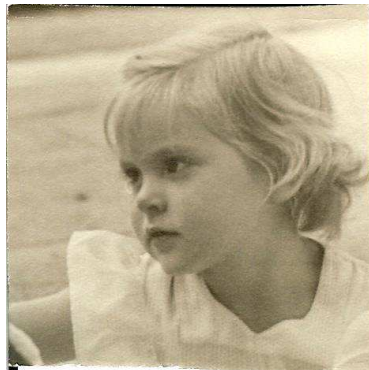


Marie & Bill 7 months



Marie & Bill 7 months

Dad took more pictures of Bill in his earliest years than he did of any of his other children. It was probably because dad had purchased a number of cameras, the Robot, the Super Iconta and the Roleiflex. The first picture above was taken at Warren Park.



Sandy Bender

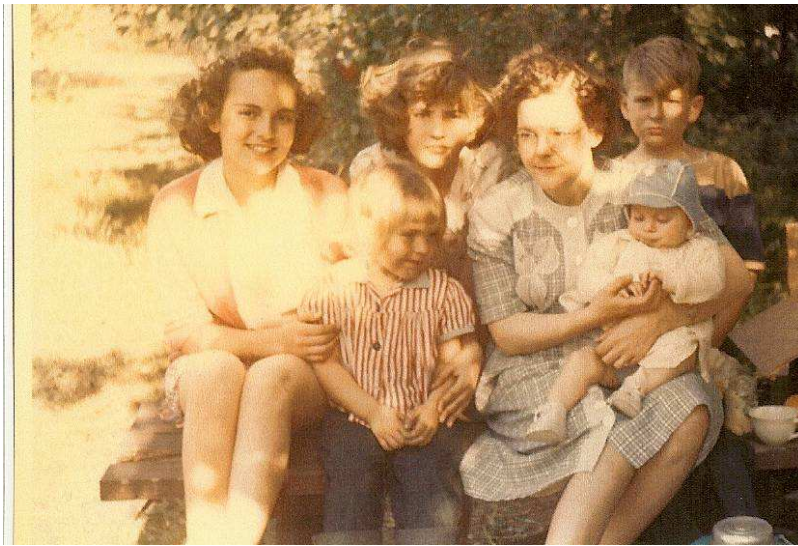
Mildred had me over to her house over night just before school was due to start in September. She gave me a bowl full of ice cream and then a bowl of chips. She then told Doris not to give me anymore as too much sweets was going to make me sick.



Sonny Stocker



Doris Stocker



Nancy, Sandy, Marilyn, Marie, Billy & Mickey 1948

Nancy was almost 10 years older than Sandy so they had very little contact with one another. One time Nancy brought her girlfriends home on Alter Rd and sat at the dining room table with them. 3 year old Sandy pulled up a dining chair, climbed up on it and sat down and listened in on their conversation. Nancy told her to leave. Sandy said no, that she lived here too. Again Nancy ordered her to leave. Again Sandy refused. Nancy stood up and knocked Sandy and the chair akimbo. Ed watched the whole thing and was furious, He was about to get up out of the living room chair and discipline her for clobbering her little sister when suddenly Sandy jumped back up off the floor, uprighted the heavy chair and climbed back up on it. Ed said he sat back down and watched as he felt it was interesting to watch. Nancy got so upset she left the house with Marilyn Spaulding and her other girlfriends. When Marilyn and Nancy reached Marilyn's house 3 year old Sandy went to the phone in the dining room, lifted up the receiver and

randomly dial the phone and got Marilyn. None of us never figured out how Sandy did that!



Mildred Bender Neff & Mrs. Neff

When Bill was born, they talked Mrs. Sally Neff, Harold Neff's mother into baby sitting me, Mike and Nancy. Mrs. Neff was a dour old soul, over 80 years old and never really communicated with me, other than to answer my question as to when my mother was coming home. She was dusting the huge Dumont pull up TV and I was looking way up high as I asked her this question. She never gave me a satisfactory answer. I was uneasy with her being there as the only adult. She was very old and did not communicate with me at all. It felt almost like being there alone.

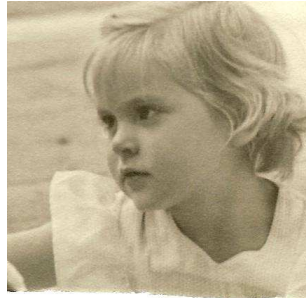


Nellie Dahl holding Bill Bender

Marie came home on January 12, 10 days after Billy was born. It was really cold out so Marie had him bundled up real good. She kept him in her lap on the way home as they had no car seats in those days. When mom brought Bill in the house she walked over and sat on the couch with Bill in her arms. When she took all the covers off Bill I walked over to get a closer look. Mom put her hand out and told me to keep away from the new baby. I leaned forward, looked at Bill and then wrinkled my nose and said "Oxer, ooh, he's ugly! Mom's feelings were hurt as

she said Bill was homely and his face was asymmetrical and she worried whether he was alright or not.

It sure felt good to have mom home again! Things were now back to normal.



Sandy Bender

A couple of years later I was sitting on the dining room table as mom was cleaning that room and I asked her where I came from as I couldn't remember. She said I came from Heaven. I thought real hard but I could not remember anything about being in heaven.



Nellie sitting next to lace curtains dog shredded

Mom never had a dog when she was growing up on 1763 Baldwin so when Mike brought a stray dog into our house on Altar it was a strange occurrence for mom. She knew nothing about dogs. Right after the dog came into our house us younger kids went to bed and fell fast asleep. Then mom and dad went to the show. When they got home the dog had been frantic and shredded mom's brand new lace curtains in an effort to get out of the house and back on the street. When mom saw her new curtains totally tattered that poor dog got his wish – mom opened the front door, hollering at the dog, OUT!!! Out he went, never to be seen again.

At about the same time a stray cat showed up and started staying under our front porch. I asked mom if we could feed the cat and she bought a can of moist cat food. The cat liked the food, but boy, did that cat food ever stink! It probably had horse meat in it, we guessed. That cat lasted only a few days, passing on to better pastures.



Beatrice Gamache



Edward Gamache

One time when mom and dad went on vacation they gave me to Bea and Ed Gamache to be babysat. I very seldom saw them so I was uneasy spending a few days there. Ed Gamache brought me into the house right away and then said to me that we should hide from Bea which we did much to my delight. Bea called our names but we did not respond and kept hidden until she found us. Bea thought it was all nonsense.

The first night they gave me a bologna sandwich and I didn't want to eat it unless they put ketchup on it. Ketchup on bologna, eywe, said all the adults. but Ed said give the kid what she wants, we want to keep her happy.

So Don Gamache put me in his convertible and drove me down Gratiot to find a bottle of ketchup. Here I was, sitting in his front seat, not able to look out the window, so instead I looked straight up into the sky and looked at the street lights sailing by. It was a magical night for me. We found the ketchup, I ate my sandwich and went peacefully to bed. In the morning I walked into the bathroom and watched Ed Gamache shave. He cut his face, which fascinated me. He was very nice to me as was Bea and Mary.



Aunt Beatrice went into her attic and brought down two toys that belonged to Mary when she was young. One of the toys was a stuffed pig. I was disappointed that I was not able to keep the stuffed pig. Mary was over 18, so I couldn't figure out why Bea didn't give the toys away.

Sandy also played with the Spear kids who were 2 doors over. Gary and Pamela were about Sandy's age and Gail was several years older. Ed took a cute picture of Sandy kneeling on the living room couch looking out the window at Gary Speer. Gary would ask Sandy to come out and play and Sandy would reply, "I can't come out, I got frozen footses!"

Aunt Mildred Neff sewed most of Sandy's clothes. They were adorable dresses and pinafores. Sandy's all time favorite was a green dress made of 7 dwarves pattern. Sandy wanted to wear it every day but Marie made her change off. Sandy was so upset with her mom when she found out that Marie gave that dress away when Sandy out grew it.



Mike with garage

Mike always got really cool presents for Christmas. One of the presents I really liked was the filling station garage he received. As always, I was never allowed to play with that garage. Mike's toys were always strictly off limits for me.

When I was about 4 years old I used to reach through the fence and pull the tops off the McCubbin's yellow flowers. She told me don't pull the tops off, ask me and I will cut some for you. But she was never friendly so I never asked her for cut flowers.

Mrs. McCubbin had a 12 year old Bull Dog that she used to open the front door and let the dog out to do his business. This happened every day without incidence. Then Mrs. McCubbin's daughter had a new baby which she often brought over. That upset the Bull Dog so much that he walked right out into Alter Rd and got hit by a car and died. That made us all so sad.

Mom had some nonsense songs she sang to us that she had learned when she was a child. Some of them that I remember are, "It was midnight on the ocean, not a street car was in sight, so I jumped into a taxi and drove all day that night."

"Yes, we have no bananas, we have no bananas today We have apples and peaches and apricots, but yes, we have no bananas, we have no bananas today".

"Marsie doats and dosey doats, and little lamsie divey, kiddely divey too. wouldn't you". "If the words sound queer and funny to your ear, a little bit jumbled and jivey, then sing Mares eat oats and does eat oats and little lambs eat ivy, kids eat ivy too, wouldn't you."

"I was walking down the street, oh so neat, down the street, when somebody moved my street, I fell down and went boom! I sighed and cried and ran home to mommy dear. Oh how that certain place was hurting. Mommy put me straight to bed, oh my head straight to bed. When somebody moved my bed, I fell down and went boom!"

Dad had a dark room in the upstairs on Alter Rd where he and Mickey used to develop film in the dark with a red light. Dad and Mike used to take the pictures, bring the film to the dark room and develop it in the dark. Mike and dad used to develop a picture several different times if they thought it was too dark or too light. We have a bunch of excellent black and white pictures as a result of their efforts. Sometimes in the 50s dad and Mike stopped developing pictures.



Sandy sitting with Boots

Whenever we would visit Mildred and Harold Neff Sandy would go into their backyard and hug their two Springer Spaniels, Boots and Sissy. Marie would not go into the back yard to get Sandy as she was afraid of the dogs so she would stand on the back porch and call Sandy. Mildred Neff made the sun dress that Sandy is wearing. Mildred made many dresses for Sandy.

Dad took us on a picnic when I was about 4 years old to outside the Rochester State park. We drove over a back dirt road and suddenly came to an old wooden rickety bridge over the river. Dad was very leery about driving over that old bridge with his heavy car so he asked Mike to get out of the car and jump up and down on the bridge and take a guess as to whether or not the bridge would hold the car's weight. Ed decided to take a chance. He slowly drive over the bridge and made it very safely to the other side. Mom decided to have a picnic on that spot so we all ate olive filled baloney sandwiches. It was an odd taste and I never ate that stuff again.

1949



:Upper: Sandy, Nellie and Sharon Dahl
Lower: Nancy, Mike & Marianne 1949



Sandy

On a beautiful summer day mom had made a delicious beef dinner with all the trimmings. I was 5 years old at the time. When I finished that wonderful dinner I was beyond full. I walked out into the back yard and met Mrs. McCubbin the next door neighbor to the south of our house. I told her I was so full I could hardly move, but I said to her it was important for me to eat all that food as it will help me to grow. She looked at me with disbelief.



Billy & Sandy

On a number of occasions when Bill and I were playing in the back yard we would throw a rock or a ball and it would sail right through Mrs. Meeseman's garage window. Every time Mrs. Elodie Meeseman would calmly walk over to our back door and tell mom that one of her kids broke her garage window. Every time mom would immediately replace the broken window while apologizing to Mrs. Meeseman what her kid did to her window. Mrs. Meeseman and mom were always best of friends. Mrs Meeseman was a quiet soft spoken Belgium from the old country. She told me that she had to leave her oldest daughter Sara in Belgium with her relatives as she and her husband Victor only had enough money for her

and her husband's passage to America. She sent the money in the future for her children as she saved up the money to bring them to America.

There was a beautiful 5 year old boy who lived on Ashland. His name was Guy Gramble. Several times he came to my house on Alter Rd and we used to sit on the porch rail and talk. I really liked him, but our friendship was short lived because his mother panicked when she couldn't find him and when she found him sitting on my porch she brought him back home and forbade him to go back to Alter Rd. and mom forbade me to go to his house so that was a very short lived romance. I called him "Guy scrambled eggs" because that is what his last name sounded to me.



Mickey

One day Mike had a Quaker Oats box which he wanted to put holes in. He asked Sandy to hold the box while he punched holes in the side of the it. She said no, that she was afraid her hand would be stabbed. Mike got disgusted with her, telling her nothing would happen, just hold the box, Sandy held it and as a sudden the knife slipped and her hand started bleeding. With no word, Mike grabbed her by the writs and walked her into the bathroom and ran her hand under cold water. Once again Sandy kept her mouth shut.



Mike Bender

Mike was a real quiet kid and never intentionally caused me any trouble. Once in a great while if I didn't like what he was doing or saying to me I would tell him, "I'm telling dad!" And that was the end of that. Mike would quietly walk away.



Mickey

The few times Mike would interact with me that I remember was being with him on a teeter totter at a state park, watching him play with his big truck in the back yard on Alter Rd., or asking him why he didn't eat his spaghetti after dad and mom brought him home from the emergency room after he poked his eye with a stick when he was trying to open up the latch on the coal bin door. He knew he had been so lucky to not have permanent eye damage but he was really shook up from the accident.



Mickey Bender

Mom had to heat up the spaghetti for Mike as they had to stay in the hospital till after dinner time. I was sitting next to him in the kitchen when mom put a plate of spaghetti in front of him. When he did not eat the spaghetti I asked him why he wasn't eating. He replied that he would not eat what he couldn't see.



Mickey and Sandy in back yard

Mike used to go alley picking and brought home some really cool toys, usually trucks. One time he brought home a really big, neat truck. I would stand in the back yard and watch him play with that cool truck. I would ask him if I could play with it too, but he said no, that was his truck.



Mickey

One day I got really upset over what mom had said to me and so I decided to run away. So at 2 am I went downstairs with the intention to make myself a sandwich and then run away. As I was standing there thinking through a run away plan Mike came out of his bedroom and told Sandy she had no where to go so go back to bed. That's what I did knowing I had no place to go.



Marie & Nancy Bender

Mom was always much closer to Nancy than she was to me, which was understandable as Nancy was ten years old when I was born and she and mom had forged a strong bond between them before I was even born. Nancy was a well dressed well mannered lady, I was a dyed in the wool tomboy, climbing trees, riding bikes and wearing Mike's cast off clothes, so she and mom were kindred souls where I was almost considered as a 4th son. When I first came along I was a nameless, faceless baby with no personality of my own until several years later. So mom and Nancy had a very close and loving bond with one another from 1935 till Nancy moved away from Michigan in 1969.



Edward & Sandy Bender



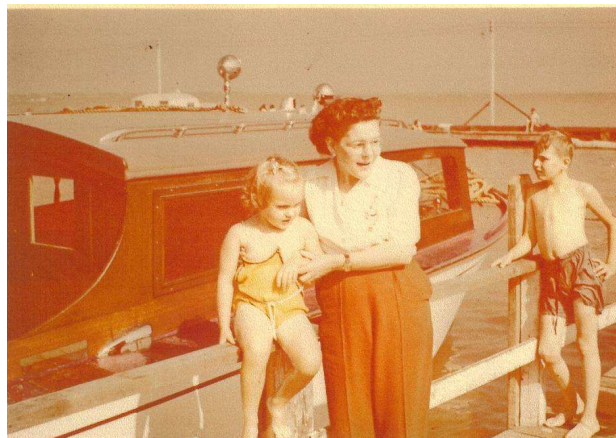
Sandy & Edward Bender

Nancy and mom were very close, and on the other hand Dad and I were always very close. Nancy was mom's child, I was daddy's. Dad was always very proud

of me. I was athletic and I was always on the honor roll in school. Dad was very upset when I was born and he saw I was a girl. He said he always thought that he was so masculine that he would only have boys, so having a 2nd girl was a big disappointment. But he was proud of me for my accomplishments but he was always disappointed that I was not a boy. He often said to me in his proud moments, “You can do anything a boy can do but you can do it better”.



Sandy playing softball



Sandy, Marie and Mickey in New Baltimore

We used to go to the city beach in New Baltimore, Michigan. We had to sneak into the park as it was for residents only. When I was the age you see in the above picture it was kind of scary to go swimming as there was a board across the beginning of the water and I had to sit on the edge of the board and slip into the water which came almost to my chest. Mom put 2 year old Bill on the sand just before the board because there was a puddle of water there so he could sit in the water. But he leaned backwards and fell on the other side of the board and over his head in the water. Dad was much closer to Bill but hollered at mom to jump in and save him as dad had several cameras around his neck that he did not want to ruin.

For years afterwards Mom told us all that dad valued his cameras more than he did his kid.



Mike Bender

For several years when I was about 4 years old we used to go to the McCracken turkey farm on South River Rd just outside of Mt. Clemens with mom, dad, Harold and Mildred Neff. The turkeys were in a pen on the farm. We would walk up to the turkey pen and pick out which ever turkey we decided upon. Then we would come back one week later and pick up the dead, defeathered turkey and take it home for thanksgiving dinner. Mike said he hated to go to the turkey farm as he hated to see mom and dad pick out a live turkey and come back the next week and pick up the turkey that they had killed and plucked.



Elizabeth Bender & Billy

Grandma Lizzie Bender came over to our house on August 19, 1949 for a birthday dinner. Mom put baby Billy on the broad arm of the chair for Grandma to play with him. She put her finger on his belly, teasing him. I was standing right next to her waiting for her to smile at me or say something nice to me. I was so disappointed when she totally ignored me. Mom said it was because Grandma was so worn out from having so many children and grand children. (I went to a psychic in Indiana many years later. She shocked me when she said that there was a

relative standing right behind me, folding her arms around me, saying that she was hugging me now. I took it to be Grandma Bender contacting me from beyond).



Billy & Sandy Bender

Billy had a jumper in which he could bounce up and down. Bill was unable to crawl so the jumper was useful for him to get some exercise. The bunny in the tray was not his favorite stuffed animal, in fact he did not pay too much attention to it. What he really liked was a stuffed monkey. When Sandy asked Billy what he was going to name the monkey, Bill said “Mon- key” Sandy said, yes, we know it is a monkey but what name are you going to give him? Bill replied “Mon – key” So Mom said, I guess the monkey’s name is monkey!



Nancy & Sandy

Mom and dad used to take us to Plymouth State Park a lot where we would have a picnic, play on the swing set and the slide and then walk around the park before heading back home. This one time Nancy insisted I slide down the slide at the park. It was very high so I did not want to climb up it. Nancy insisted it was safe and pushed me onto the steps and standing under me, encourage me to climb to the top, which I did. Nancy then showed me how to use the handles to get down onto the slide. As soon as I got on the slide and started down I was howling in pain! The metal on that slide was extremely hot, burning my legs and arms. I went running to mom as soon as I got off the slide. She saw my burned skin and, of all things, she smeared my burned skin with butter, sealing in the heat of the burn!



Sandy, Marie & Nancy Bender

In this picture we were visiting Mildred & Harold Neff on St. Clair St. in Grosse Pointe Park. Later on she let her 2 dogs loose, Boots and Sissie, Springer Spaniels in the back yard. Marie was afraid of the dogs so she went back into the house. Nancy had no interest in the dogs so she too went indoors. Sandy sat between the two dogs and put her arms around them.

Mom and I used to take the bus downtown to the J.L. Hudson store. In December mom used to take me to the 12th floor to go see Santa Claus. We would stand in a long line to see Santa. Along the way we would see toys on display. I was given a free present by Santa. After we saw Santa we went to lunch and after lunch mom took me to see Santa at Crowleys. She saw that I was confused to see Santa at two stores so mom told me that he is at Hudsons in the morning and Crowleys in the afternoon. I believed that.



Nellie Dahl

Nellie used to defend me when Mom and I had a disagreement. One time in particular I put the black bike in the garage and when mom asked where it was I told her I didn't know, when in fact I did know it was sitting in the garage. When Marie discovered I put the bike in the garage she told me I was grounded. Nellie spoke right up and told Marie not to ground the kid, let her ride the bike which she so dearly loved doing.



Sandy Bender, Nellie Dahl & Sharon Dahl

The day Nellie Dahl turned 65 was a momentous event for the Dahl family. First thing in the morning Elenore took her mom Nellie by bus to the social security office to apply for her old age pension. After that was done Elenore brought Nellie back to Marie's house on Alter Rd. Nellie was really sad about going back home and asked Elenore to take her out for her 65th birthday. Elenore knew she couldn't do that because the family was giving Nellie a surprise birthday party and Elenore had a lot of food to bake that afternoon for the party so she had no time. Nellie was so very sad when she was told this. To the end of her life Elenore felt so guilty about not taking Nellie out for her birthday. Elenore said she never again wanted anything to do with a surprise party as it so upset Nellie. ED took Nellie on a fool's errand to get her out of the house while Marie finished cooking and setting the table and hanging birthday balloons. He told Nellie he was taking her to see her won Bill for her birthday. He rode all over town and then told her he

could not find Bill's house. He drove Nellie back to Marie's house and when she got in the house they turned on the lights and shouted, "Happy Birthday!" I was part of the birthday celebration and got to wish Nellie a happy birthday.

In 1949 Grandma Elizabeth Bender was invited over to our house on Alter for her birthday. She sat in the chair nearest the front door. Marie put 9 month old Billy on the arm of that chair next to Grandma. Grandma smiled and poked her finger into Bill's abdomen. I stood right next to Grandma's chair and waited for her to turn her attention toward me. She never did. I really felt left out for years afterward. That was Grandma Bender's last visit to our house. She died the next year in the end of September.



Marie, Sandy, Billy, Nancy & Mickey 1948



Sandy on new tricycle

On Sandy's 5th birthday Ed bought her a tricycle. Sandy was already in bed when Ed brought it in and assembled it. Once it was put together Ed Marie went upstairs, woke her up and brought her down in the living room to see her new bike. Ed, Marie and Nancy were anticipating how excited Sandy would be when she saw her new bike. They were so greatly let down when Sandy said in dead pan fashion, "Oh, my new bike" and got on it and started pedaling it in the living room.



Sandy

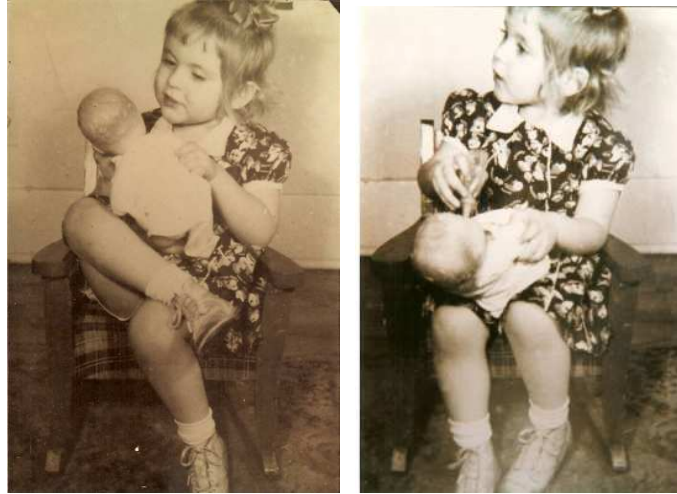
Bill and I loved playing cowboy/cowgirl. For Christmas mom gave us matching cowboy outfits, complete with vest, jodhpurs, skirt and hats. In the summer mom bought me a cowboy hat and a gun and holster. Dad stopped by the side of the road and I got out of the car and filled my hat with sand. Mom found sand fleas in the sand and made me throw my cowboy hat away. That sure made me one unhappy cowgirl!



Louise, Sandy, Leonard & Billy 1949

The next year Marie also gave a birthday party for Sandy by inviting the neighborhood kids to our house for dinner and party games. Dad took a picture of me, Louise Reichard, Leonard Ligotti and Bill at the table celebrating.

Mom and dad bought me a doll for Christmas every year till I was about 8. The first doll I remember had a cloth stuffed body and eyes that opened and closed. I was never attached to that or any other doll. But I did take it to bed with me every night. I get a feeling that was mom's idea, not mine.



Sandy wearing her dopey dockey sneezy dress

I also remember when mom bought me twin dolls and a stroller to put them in. The twins had no real hair, just painted on. Another time I got a doll whose mouth had a small hole in it where you could put a bottle in it. I loved the dress I was wearing in these pictures. Mom would not let me wear it every day. I was so upset when mom decided to throw it away, thinking I had out grown the dress.

When I was 5 years old I came very close to losing my life. I went upstairs to bed and once I climbed into bed I started playing with a nickel. As I was falling asleep I put the nickel in my mouth and suddenly the nickel got totally stuck in my windpipe, totally cutting off all air. I jumped out of bed, ran downstairs through the living room where all the family was sitting. I ran right into the bathroom and leaned over the sink. Suddenly that nickel popped free and I was able to breathe again. I could not have alerted mom because I was unable to speak. That sure was a close call! Doing the Heimlich manover on myself saved my life.



Sandy & Mickey

A very weird thing happened to me when I was 5 years old. It was after dark and Mike opened up the front door of the house on Alter Rd. I stepped a few feet out

onto the porch and looked right down Alter Rd. There was a red light coming toward me and I knew that I had to get into the house fast so it did not get me. I ran into the house full of terror and once inside knew I was safe. I never had a feeling like that before.

I also had measles when I was 5 years old and missed a week of kindergarten. Mom put me in a very darkened room in the front bedroom on Alter and told me not to scratch the marks as they would create permanent scars. I am sure I had chicken pox too but I don't remember.

When I was in kindergarten it was hard for me to get up in the morning as it was cold in that back bedroom and just before I had to get up I used to hear a lot of banging noise as the trains on St. Jean would be loading and unloading box cars. And when the wind would shift we would hear the steamers blowing their whistles on the Detroit River.

When I was 5 years old Mickey taught me how to climb the cherry trees in our back yard. One had a lot of nice crooks in it and could be used as a "horse". The other one was straighter but could allow you to get up on our flat roofed garage. Mike would climb the tree, feet on the lower leaning branch and hanging onto the higher leaning branch. He would then work his way over to the end of those two branches and then leap onto the garage. I tried to imitate him but was unable to reach the upper branch as I was too short. Mike told me to shinny on my hands and knees. I did that and then was scared to death to leap onto the garage when I was several feet away from the garage roof. But I made it okay and then realized that I could not get back down. I asked Mike how I was supposed to do that. He told me to go over to Meeseman's side of the garage, hang over the top and with my feet kick away from the garage and land on the soft grass. I did it. It worked just fine. So I kept climbing the tree, running across the roof and then jumping down on Meeseman's side. Mrs. Meeseman got so nervous watching 5 year old Sandy jumping off her roof that she called Mom and asked her to please get me off her garage.

When I was 5 years old Dad took me to Balduck park where he was playing softball with his brother Nobbie and Norman's children. I stood on the sidelines and watched them play. Dad encouraged me to jump in the game, standing around the short stop position and catch the ball. I stood there watching the ball whiz past trying to catch one without getting hurt. But I was way over my head trying to play with grown men. Dad should have known better than to have put a 5 year old kid in a short stop position. Afterwards Norman sent his 3 year old son Pinky to

the party store to buy beer. Pinky came back struggling under the weight of the bottles, but he made it. Once Pinky came back dad bought us all ice cream from the Good Humor man who was parked in the park.

Christmas was always a nice family and children's affair on Alter Rd. We all got a usual total of 5 presents each. They were nice presents, usually what we chose from the N. Shure catalog. Poor Leonard Ligotti, a neighbor 3 doors down on Alter would get a white shirt for Christmas. One time he got a fire engine. Louise Reichard and I always felt so sorry for him as we got lots of cool toys. When I was 5 years old Louise got a new 20 inch Schwinn bike. We took that bike down the basement and spent the better part of a day wiggling around on that bike, learning to ride it. We got the hang of it Christmas day despite the tight confines of the basement. She had a new much smaller furnace so we had a lot more room in her basement than in ours where we had a huge octopus furnace taking up most of the room in the very center of the basement.

Mom and dad went to St. John Berchman's church and half way through the mass mom suddenly remembered she forgot to turn the water heater off. The water heater in those days was not automatic, you had to turn it on to bathe and then turn it off again or the water would boil and the water heater could blow up. When mom got to the pay phone she suddenly remembered that she did not know her home phone number as she never called herself! So they had to walk back home as fast as their legs could carry them and turn off the water heater.

Another time when I was 5 years old and Bill was 2 mom put us to bed and her and dad went to a show. Around 10 pm mom called Mike, frantic, telling him to put Sandy and Bill on the front lawn and then run downstairs and turn off the water heater and then run back out to the front lawn and stay there until the water heater cooled down. Sandy remembers sitting on the dew filled lawn in the dark with Mick stood next to us. I kept asking if we could go back to bed and get off that wet lawn.

I loved Grandma Dahl very much. She was a kind, cheerful soul, full of mirth and I always liked sitting on the floor in front of her in the living room on Alter Rd. She usually sat in a comfortable, old wooden rocking chair in a spot in the living room where she could see into the dining room and kitchen. She had some quaint sayings harking back to the last century in which she was born and raised. When I was in the kitchen with her one day she said to me "draw me some water from the pinstock and then let's go into the parlor and sit on the davenport". Grandma Dahl was born in Detroit and did not have an accent. She did not speak any German

even though her mother was fluent in German and could not read or write English. I always wanted to speak and understand German but there was no one to teach it to me and St. John Berchmans did not speak any foreign language. Had I been born 10 years earlier my Grandma Bender was fluent in German and maybe would have taught me, although she refused to let her children speak German. Grandma Dahl used to go to the silent movies with her Mother Pauline Bruckner and read the words on the screen to her as she could read German but not English.

1950

Uncle Sonny pumped up the tires on Doris' old balloon tire bike so I could ride it around the block. Sonny hated the neighbor next door so he told me he would give me a quarter if I ran over the neighbor's lawn with Doris' bike.



Bill & Sandy at Plymouth State Park

Our family went a number of times to Plymouth State Park in Plymouth. We would have a picnic lunch there and then walk around the park. Dad's car is in the back ground.



Mickey & Billy Bender



Mickey Bender

Mickey used to make the nicest biggest snowmen, so tall that they towered over him by at least another 6 inches. Billy and I used to go into the back yard to watch him create the snowman. When he was done with the body he would put a carrot for his nose and sticks for his arms. Our cherry tree and Mc Cubbin's house is in the background.



Nancy, age 15

One afternoon Nancy ran to her back bedroom and threw herself on the bed and started sobbing her heart out I asked her why she was crying she told me to shut up and get lost. It turned out that mom told her she was not going to let her go out on a date.



Billy Bender

Bill who was about 2 years old went up to the turkey pen and put his finger through the wire. The turkey went up to the wire and bit Bill's finger. Bill went crying to mom. I went back there a few years later and could not find the farm. It was gone.



Grandma Nellie Dahl

Grandma Nellie Dahl would come to our house every summer and stay with us until school started in September. Grandma Dahl had a wardrobe, a portable closet in which she kept all of her dresses. She was always so nervous whenever the men would strap that wardrobe onto the top of their car as she was so afraid it would slip off the top of the car and smash to pieces. But it always got to the next house safe and sound. It sure was a big relief to Nellie every time her wardrobe would be set into her bedroom, safe and sound. Poor Nellie had Parkinson's disease as a result of having the flu of 1918 so when she got nervous she would really shake much worse than normal.

Nellie used to sleep with Sandy when Sandy was pre school age. We slept in the front bedroom downstairs on Alter Rd. The mattress was very old and had a big hump in the middle. Nellie would insist in sleeping right in the middle of the mattress on the hump and Sandy would be squashed between Grandma and the wall. I would roll toward the wall and was often in danger of falling between the mattress and the wall. One time I did fall off the bed and was wedged between the mattress and the wall and I got a mark next to my eye from getting squished and the spring gouged the corner of my eye.

One could never talk in front of Nellie about death. It upset her for days. Mom told us to avoid that subject in front of Nellie. One day the subject of death came up when I was talking to Nellie and she lunged forward in her chair and said "When I die, I'm going to come back and haunt you!!"

Grandma told me a few stories of her childhood. Nellie dearly loved her dad and used to go with him to his painting jobs on Grosse Isle. She would hand him the brushes, and various painting items, working beside him all day. She would then love to walk home with him afterwards.

One time her dad was walking home after work when Nellie said she was beating a bully over the head with a pump handle in a field. Nellie said her dad was very proud of her and shouted out his encouragement, "That's my girl, that's my Lolly!"

When Sandy started Kindergarten she had to get up earlier than she used to to get ready for school. So when she woke up in the early morning before the sun came up she could hear the trains by St. Jean Street coupling and uncoupling with a loud bang. She could hear the engines running forward and backward pulling and pushing those box cars. Also heard from Alter Rd early in the morning was the sound of the whistles blowing from the large boats on the Detroit River. Both sounds were rather eerie sounding to me.



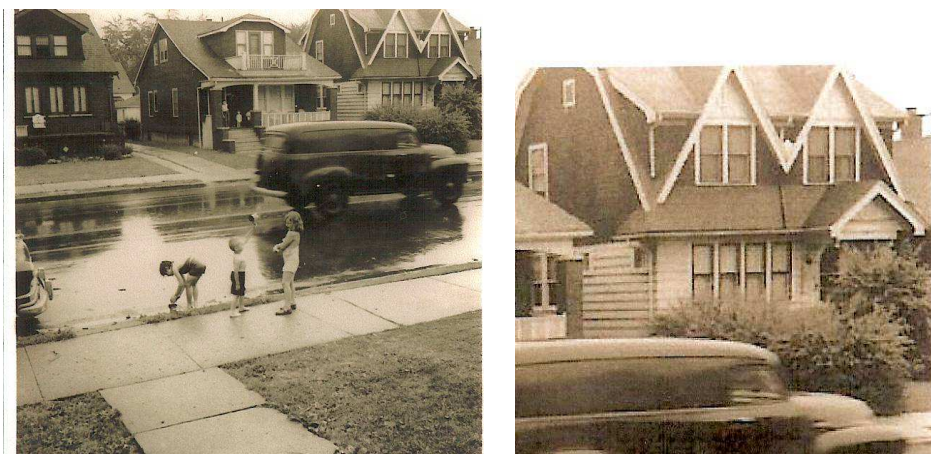
Marie Bender

Around this time in our lives dad was still stoking the furnace with coal. Mom would give dad a nudge in the ribs and he would have to get up in the middle of the night, go down to the basement and shovel out the cinders and ash and put in a few shovels of new coal to keep to keep the house warm. mom said it was particularly important to keep the house warm as we had a new baby in the house. So dad the coal furnace converted to gas so he no longer had to get up in the middle of night,

But the old octopus coal furnace was leaking carbon monoxide gas so when dad called to have the house weather stripped to seal out the cold air but when the workman came to look over the situation the work man said there should be no way anyone should weather seal this house on Alter Rd as the occupants would be killed by carbon monoxide poisoning. He suggested we put in a new furnace. Dad decided to leave the house very drafty instead of paying all that money for a new furnace when he planned to sell the home in the next few years. When Morelli bought the house on FHA, FHA put in the new furnace as part of approving the sale of the house.

Marie told us that grandma Nellie used to make root beer so we begged Grandma Nellie to make us some, but she never did as she was too disabled and had no way to obtain the ingredients. Mom forgot to tell us that at the same time during the prohibition, Nellie also made “near beer” and bath tub gin.

We watched Ed Norton, Jackie Gleason and the Honeymooners together on Saturday nights. One night Nellie thought it was so funny she leaned far forward laughing so hard she almost fell off the couch. The punch line? Jackie stopped his bus on the street and Ed Norton popped his head out of the sewer and Jackie asked him what he was doing at lunch time in the sewer and Ed Norton replied he was having a floating crap game!



Sandy, Bill & Louise Reichard

Louise's mother took Louise Reichard and I to a puppet show at Hosmer when I was in Kindergarten. That was a magical show, one I have never forgot. It was a Disneyland production it was so professionally done.

She also took Louise and I to tap dancing lessons. I liked the tap dancing but when I got home Mom had just lost a baby and went right to bed leaving me to make my own dinner. I did peanut butter and jelly and milk with a lot of chocolate syrup in it. I was so upset over the lousy dinner that made my stomach ache that I did not want to go to dance lessons for fear I would have to make my own supper again. Mom always made us nice dinners. That day was an exception.

One time his dog ran out in the middle of the street on Alter just as a car was coming. Mr. Reichard hollered at the dog to go down. The dog did and the car passed right over him.

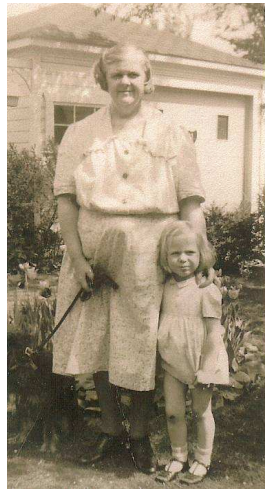
Louise and I used to straddle her porch rails and pretend they were horses. She fell and broke her arm. I never got a broken arm.

In the winter Mr. Reichard would freeze a skating rink in their back yard. The part around the tree would never freeze right so we had to stay away from that area.

Louise and I would run out in our bathing suits when it started to rain and would remain out on the sidewalk until the rain ended unless it started to thunder and lightning. If that happened we had to come on the porch immediately so as to not

get hit by lightning. Mom told me a cute story. When she was living in an upstairs flat with Elizabeth and Henry Bender and was 7 months pregnant it was such a hot day and she was melting from the 100 degree weather. Suddenly a huge rainstorm broke and a torrential rain fell. Marie ran right out into the rain, big belly and all, and was so refreshed by the driving rain. She didn't care what she looked like she just felt so good and cooled off!

Sharon Dahl Smith also loved Grandma Nellie Dahl. Once in a while Sharon was able to visit me on Alter Rd. We had a very good time together.



Nellie Dahl & Sharon Dahl

One time when she was there it started to rain. As quick as possible Sharon and I put on swimsuits and ran outside in the rain. Mom let us play in the rain as long as there was no lightening. Bill used to play in the rain with us.

Several years earlier Mike also used to stand out in the rain in his bathing suit. But years later he said he was always so distressed looking at how skinny he was in those days. As a teenager Mike decided to lift weights at the Barr's house in order he hoped, to bulk up. But lifting weights ended up throwing out his back and Mrs. Barr had him stay at her house for a few days till his back stopped hurting as much so mom wouldn't know what happened. He had his back go out now and again after that, causing him considerable pain.



Michael Bender I.

One year Mom got a really good bargain on school clothes for Mike at Hudson's. She bought the clothes in May on year end clearance, size 16, she saved a lot of money by buying year end. Mom sure got a nasty surprise when September came around and she pulled those clothes out of the drawer. Mike had taken a major growth spurt over the summer and all of those size 16 bargain clothes were way too small for Mike.

Mom and I went to Hudson's to the women's department to look for clothes for mom. She was looking in the half size section as she was only 4'11" tall. We found a beautiful light tan pattern shirt waist dress. Mom wore that dress but she was a little disappointed as it was a little too short waisted but it was pretty and it kind of fit, but that waist not being in quite the right place sort of bothered both her and me.

Nancy was the sharpest dresser of any of us kids. She had a real knack for picking elegant clothes that made her look older and more sophisticated. It is my feeling that she got the job at Johnson Realty on the verge of Grosse Pointe and 7 Mile because she was a beautiful woman and a sharp dresser. The owner of the real estate office, Mr. Carrol, was very impressed with Nancy and was so sad to see her leave when she got married. And when he went to Nancy's wedding and found out she was only just 16 he was shocked. He thought she was much older.

Louise was given a 20 inch two wheel bike for Christmas when she was five years old. She had had a very tall 3 wheel bike before that. So in the spring when Louise rode her 2 wheel bike she let me ride her 3 wheel bike. Mrs. Reichard took the bike away from me, which was mean as Louise never rode that bike again and I had no bike.

Mrs. Reichard was a sour, rather mean mother to Louise. She used to whip her with a whip. I used to run home when her mother pulled out that whip.

Louise had a wonderful father, Howard Reichard. He was so good not only to his daughter but to all of her friends. He used to take Louise and I to Jefferson Beach amusement park in the summer on a Tuesday when the Wonder bread sandwich loaf had 10 10 cent coupons. Mom would then give us one dollar to buy tickets for the better rides, such as the roller coaster.

When we would get a real bad cold Ed would make us a “High ball consisting of pop with one shot of whiskey. He felt it would kill the germs.



Bill 1950

Bill is standing by himself in the backyard because Mike is right there watching him. Whenever mom put Bill in the yard alone she tied a rope to him to keep him from running out into the street as Alter Rd was a very big street with lots of traffic. One time Bill got bored in the back yard so he untied the rope and brought it inside and handed it to mom. So much for safety!



Sandy showing vaccination John Rehfeldt died of small pox vaccination

In 1950 Bill and I got small pox vaccinations as I was about to enter kindergarten and kids had to have their vaccinations before entering school. Dad took a picture of my vaccination. Bill and I were lucky that they had perfected small pox vaccinations. Grandma Nellie Dahl's brother John Rehfeldt got one of the first small pox vaccinations and died of the side effects.

I was always a tom boy right from my earliest years. I was rough and tumble, climbing trees, riding my bike pall mall around the neighborhood, roller skating, etc. I never really played with dolls or girly toys. Marie tried to get me interested in girl stuff and girl clothes, to no avail. By the time I was 8 years old I had climbed almost every garage in our neighborhood. The garages were close together so I learned you could shinny up to the roof by putting your hands and you feet against both garages and gradually push yourself higher and higher. When you reached above the roof you leaned your body over the roof and pulled yourself to the top.

Nancy was always very feminine, always dressing in fine, elegant and more expensive clothes. When she worked for Mr. Carroll at his real estate office in Grosse Pointe he was very impressed with her sophisticated ways and appearance, so when she quit the job to get married and he found out she was only just 16 at the time he was shocked. He was very sure she was a number of years older than that.

Nancy was always making fun of me with my tomboyish clothes and actions. She and mom used to look at me and laugh over my appearance and deportment. On the other hand Louise and I used to make fun of Nancy's feminine ways and her mooning over Hollywood stars. She had a nylon box full of star's pin up pictures.

In the summer time Marie would dress me up in clean clothes and then shake her finger in my face and say, "Now you stay clean!!" I would go out into the back or side yard and play in the mud. I would come back in the house covered in dust and

dirt. Marie would change my clothes, wash me up and tell me once again to stay clean, to no avail. Marie and Nellie would look at one another and exclaim, "Look at how dirty Sandy got again!" We have a real cute picture of me in the side yard skip roping, with galoshes on, face filled with sand, very happy. Marie could not believe that I was wearing galoshes when it was 100 degrees outside.

Dad wouldn't buy me a 20 inch bike, but told me to ride Nancy's 26 inch bike that was left abandoned in our basement. The bike was huge for a 5 year old and the tire were flat. With great effort I got the bike up to the small corner gas station at Ashland and Warren. He pumped up the tires for me and I was on my way, standing on the pedals as I couldn't reach the seat, I was too short. The rotted out tires kept losing air and when I was visiting Louise the tires went flat and I tried to push the bike home but it was simply much too heavy to get it half way down the block to my house. So I left it there over night and when I went to get it the next day it was gone. Mrs. Linstead, the next door neighbor to Louise called the police and had the bike removed as abandoned.

I still wanted a bike to ride so I was told that I could ride Michael's old black bike as he got a new one, so ride it I did. What an effort that was! I was much too short for that bike. I leaned it against the Logrand's fence in the alley and climbed up the fence and worked my way onto the seat. I then found out I couldn't reach the pedals, so I got down and put my leg under the cross bar and rode the bike hanging out one side of the bike. That didn't work too well either. Later on in the year I grew and was able to reach the pedals by sliding from one side to the other as I reached down to the pedals. I got that down pat and was soon riding at a good clip. Not soon afterwards the weld broke where the cross bar and lower bar met the bike and the front of the bike separated from the back.

I asked dad if the bike could be welded and he said yes. But when I went out to back yard the bike was gone. I asked Bill, who was standing there with Leonard where the bike went. Bill replied that he and Leonard gave it to the sheeny man who came though the alley with a cart and a horse. I looked all over for the sheeny man but he had left the area.

Other times I was mean to Bill on purpose. One time I heated up a penny over the gas stove using tweezers. I then told Bill there was a penny on the floor in the kitchen and he went and picked it up and burnt his fingers. Another time I decided to play blind man's bluff with Billy. I blind folded him and watched him walk all over the upstairs when suddenly he went fast to the stairwell and half fell but caught himself in time on one of the ledges.

And then there was the fictitious character I named “Marilyn”. Whenever Bill thought I was being mean to him, he pouted and told me so. So then I tried to get myself out of hot water by telling him it was Marilyn who lived in the mirror in his bedroom. Na, he said. But then I kept on trying to convince him she really did exist inside of the mirror. He looked that mirror over front, side and rear, but when he could not find Marilyn, he didn’t think she was really there, but he was not totally sure.

Dad used to teach me the German phrases he had learned from his mother as a child. He even taught me a German poem his mother had taught him. “Ah beht say, Katze lieben Schnee, Schnee geht fort, Katze lieben drecht.” ABC, cats love the snow, when the snow goes away, cats love the dirt. Dad also taught me another phrase that his mother would say to a kid who was acting really fresh, “Halt Dein Mund, Du schmalz Gesicht” Hold your mouth, you lard face. I repeated that phrase to Father Croke at St. John Berchmans when I was feeling fresh mouthed one day when I was in the 4th grade. OOPS! He understood German!

Dad also taught me how to count to 20 in German when I was a child. He also taught me “Dane schoen” , which meant thank you

Dad also taught me how to box, how to execute a left hook and a right jab, and how to duck and weave. As I said, I was a tom boy through and through and loved hanging out with Dad and learning anything he had to teach me. We were always very close and loved each other very much. We took many walks together, going for miles, talking of everything under the sun.

I started kindergarten at Hosmer public school right after I turned 5, starting in January, 1950. Mike walked me to school on the first day and after that he told me I was on my own. Looking back, I can’t believe that mom allowed me to cross all those streets on my own, especially Chalmers, which was a very busy fast moving street, especially considering that her sister Dorothy was killed when she was 8 years old crossing Kercheval.

Not too long after I started Kindergarten I walked through a bunch of cold, very wet swampy fields on my way to school and when I got there I was freezing cold and very wet. The teacher stripped off my clothes to the underwear and then wrapped me in a warm blanket and set me next to the heat register. I really felt very funny in my underwear in the classroom full of other kids even though I was totally covered with a blanket. However, I still felt half undressed.

The first semester I just missed being able to start school in September 1949 by only five days. The cut off was November 30. So I was able to go with my best friend, Louise Reichard, who was born in March, 1945. The first semester I had a very pleasant young teacher whom I liked very much but the second semester I had Mrs. Fandwich, a very old, stern worn out teacher. The first semester I went in the morning, the second semester in the afternoon. Louise and I were split up. I never made any friends in kindergarten and never knew any of the other kids. I remember story time and scooting around on the floor playing with large wooden trucks.

The only other memory I have in Kindergarten was at Easter time. They took us into the other Kindergarten classroom and there was Easter baskets which they told us that the Easter bunny had just delivered. By this time I knew there was no Easter bunny as “know it all” Josephine Ligotti told me there was no Santa Claus.



Elizabeth Bender

In 1950 my grandma Elizabeth Bender became ill with stomach cancer. She had been at Norman and Evelyn's house but when she weakened she was sent to her daughter Mildred Neff's house. She remained there for 6 weeks until she died. Every day Grandma Bender said the rosary over and over. Toward the end grandma told God that she was all prayed out and she would just have to trust in him now. In the last few weeks Grandma laid in a bed in Mildred Neff's dining room. Every day toward the end grandma Bender would talk to her husband Hank all day long and Mildred said that Hank would talk to his Lizzie every day too. Because I was only 5 years old mom did not take me to see my grandma in her last days and I also was not allowed to go to her funeral at Verheyden Funeral home in Grosse Pointe. Grandma died on September 24, 1950 and was buried in Mt. Olivet cemetery next to her beloved husband Hank. Grandma Bender had

purchased 2 cemetery lots side by side so she could be buried next to her Hank when her time came.



When I was 6 years old Nancy's friends were all talking about the presidential race between Dwight Eisenhower and Adlai Stevenson.. Jack Jackson was especially animated over the race and he was rooting for Eisenhower. He gave to Sandy a button that said "I like Ike". She had no idea who Ike was, she just wore the button because it was given to her. I wonder how many people have no idea who the candidate is and what he stands for.

Louise and I often played together in her or my back yard or house. One time I brought my metal doll house into the back yard. Neither one of us had any interest in playing with a doll house, I just brought it out in the back yard and in a few minutes Louise walked right into a sharp edge and put a permanent scar on her leg.

The Reichard's most impressive toy was Richard's train set which on Christmas day was laid out all over the living room floor. There were two engines, two sets of transformers and miles of track. The train whistled and smoked and one had to keep switching to keep the trains from running into one another. After Christmas the parents put the train and its paraphernalia in Richard's bedroom upstairs. Richard had a wonderful huge bedroom which was very unusual in layout and design at the front of the house. The train ran under the bed and the dressers in his room. He played with that for a number of years and when he out grew it Mr. Reichard graciously gave it to Leonard Ligotti who never got toys except one cheap fire truck.

Leonard Ligotti was one of the least favorite kids in the neighborhood. One time Leonard struck my brother Bill, who ran home crying. Bill was a frail young boy who never started anything with any of the other kids in the neighborhood so him being hit enraged me and I immediately went outside and Leonard was standing in

front of the Meeseman property. I went over to him and started hitting Leonard on his back. He fell to the ground and crawled home as I kept hitting him. He went crying to his mother.

Another time I was walking home from Louise's to my house and was passing Leonard's house when I saw him and Ronald LoGrand sitting between the houses. Leonard had aggravated me that day so I picked up a coal clunker and hurled it at Leonard. It grazed Ronny's forehead, causing it to bleed, then the clinker hit Leonard in the side of his head. Leonard was wearing a leather aviator's hat and blood started dripping down from under the hat. Leonard went running crying to his mother. I did not mean to hit Ronny as he was a real cool kid and a good friend. So as he started walking home I put my arm around him and told him if we told the truth I would be in a lot of trouble so let's tell your mom that Leonard did it. Ronny went home and had his mother do first aid on his forehead. No sooner did she repair his head when Mrs. Ligotti came down the alley and told Ronny's mother the true story. Mrs. LoGrand, a very intelligent, friendly low key young woman told Mrs. Ligotti that that's not at all as she heard it, that Ronny told her Leonard threw the clunker. Mrs. Ligotti believed Mrs. LoGrand. She turned on Leonard, hollering at him and hitting him. Oh boy! What a rotten day that was for poor Leonard.

We had no flowers in our yard, only mud. So one day I walked down to the Ligotti back yard and admired all of her beautiful flowers. After admiring them I pulled up a clump and put them on top of the mud in our back yard. It didn't take her long to figure out who stole them. She marched right down to our yard, looked me in the eye and said, "Those are my pansies".. Yup, I told her and she took them home. That ended my back yard beautification project.

Mom and Mike planted rhubarb in our back yard and harvested them for a year or two. Mom then made rhubarb sauce which Mike and mom enjoyed.

When Grandma Nellie was babysitting us she asked me to go into the back yard. She scooted down the 5 stairs from the kitchen to the back yard, sitting on the second from the last step had me get the broom and sweep the mud clean! Mom thought the full grown cherry trees was what kept grass from growing in the back yard so she had the two cherry trees cut down by professional tree cutters. Mr. Schneck then came down and seeded the back yard and then brought his heavy roller down. The grass grew nice and full after that but we sure missed our beautiful cherry trees.

When I was in Kindergarten mom used to sing this song to me "Way up high in the cherry tree, if you would look, you would see, Mother robin and babies three, way up high in the cherry tree". She also sang "cherup, cherup, cheerie, will you listen to me".

Mom tried making cherry pies out of the tart cherries that grew on our trees, but when she pitted the cherries she found lots of worms growing in them, so that was the end of the cherry pie idea. (Mom didn't know that you had to spray the trees to prevent worms from infesting them).

1951



Mickey & Sandy on Halloween



Billy, Sandy and Marie on Halloween

Mom always dressed us up nice on Halloween. The first year I went out on Halloween mom dressed me up as an elf. Mike dressed up as a hobo. The next Halloween mom dressed me up as a china girl and Bill was dressed up as a ghost. Around his eyes were blackened circles and he wore a sheet over his head. Mom used to take a small share of the candy. Mom always looked over all the candy for safety and threw away any home made apples or opened packages. There was a house further down on Alter that all of us called a haunted house. Even though her porch light was on we never went to he door. I think she gave out home made candy apples. Mrs. McCubbin never put her porch light on but the next day she would ask us why we never came to her door. Louise and I would go with her dad when we were younger but as we got older we would run the length of Alter and Ashland together without parental supervision. Bill would tag along with us but would give in early as he got too tired to run along for over an hour and a half. One time a smart

aleck teenager on Ashland threw a \$5 in Bill's basket. Bill's eyes lit up and then he ran down the stairs to rejoin Louise and I. The teenager ran after Bill to retrieve his 5 dollar bill. The Krasnik family on Ashland and Forest were the ones we always made sure we went to as he worked for New Era and gave out bags of potato chips. We used to sneak back for a second bag. He gave it to us even though he recognized us as repeaters. As we got older we used to run back home and dump out our bags as we got so much stuff that the bags were too heavy.



Nancy on phone, Sandy and Bill on couch, mom's knees

Nancy, being a teenager at the time, would often spend lots of time on the phone. The phone sat on a phone stand in the dining room just outside the living room so everyone could hear the conversation. Other than Nancy few of us ever used the phone. Mom would use the phone to call her sister Elenore and chat for a while as they lived clear across town and neither had a car. It was a whole day's affair to get there by bus, having to change buses several times to get from the east side to the west side. Dad would use the phone strictly for business. He had to call the phone company once and have his party line changed because Mrs. Ligotti would talk for hours with her sister Totsie Mary.

When Nancy first married, mom and dad took me over to the Stephens' quonset hut on Algonquin in Detroit. That was a very poor, poverty stricken living situation erected by the government during the war. Shortly afterwards Don and Nancy rented their first abode, an upstairs flat across the street from us on Alter Rd, rented out by a severe Belgium lady called Mrs Van Heuson. Nancy called her Van Doozy due to how she treated Nancy and Mr Van Heusen. Nancy said the landlady used to bang her husband's head against the wall making the ugly cow picture in Nancy's flat dance on the wall. Warren was conceived and born in this house. Nancy brought Warren over to our house and rested in the back bedroom as

she was scared and wanted mom near by in case something went wrong. Nancy was scared about the heavy bleeding and then a day or two later started having lots of problems with trying to breast feed the new baby Warren. The doctor, Doctor Mc Call, made frequent home visits to Nancy at our house as she was getting one infected cyst after another trying to breast feed Warren. She lost a considerable amount of breast tissue from the doctor having to cut out the cysts time and time again. It was decided that Nancy should not breast feed so the bottle was instituted instead.



Mike Bender 8th grade

Bob Barr was one wild kid, but a lot of fun to be around. Mike hung out with all the Barr boys throughout high school. Mike also liked Mrs. Barr as she was intelligent, friendly and treated him nice. Mr. Barr was also a nice fellow. He put hardwood flooring on the upstairs floor on Alter. He did a very nice job. All the while he was laying the floor he was complaining about his only daughter, Cubby, saying she was staying out late at night.

The Meesemans lived right next door to us, to the north, at 4657 Alter Rd. They were nice, quiet considerate neighbors. Their daughter Juliette was 16 years old when I was an infant and the rest of their children were grown and out of the house and married so it was a very quiet house most of the time. But once in a while the grown kids and in laws would come over and start a very lively poker game which would last long into the wee hours of the night. The beer would flow freely so the later it got the louder it got. They would laugh and shout, making a most joyful noise. As a very little kid, no more than 3 or 4 years old, I would stand at our dining room window watching the merry making.

Once in a while as a small child I would walk over to her porch and sit there and talk to her in the mild days of summer. She was somewhat aloof but tolerated me when I came over. Once in a while mom & I would stand at our porch rail and talk to her a while.

I loved Mrs. Meeseman's violet colored morning glories on her back fence. Year after year those morning glories returned and stayed all summer.

Mr. Meeseman spoke only broken English at best. One day he saw Doug in the space in between the two houses as Victor was pulling a plug of tobacco from his pouch to put in his cheek. When he saw little Doug in between the houses Victor asked Doug if he would like a plug of tobacco to put in his cheek. Doug said yes, Mr. Meeseman gave Doug a plug which he put against his cheek and within a few minutes Doug started feeling decidedly sick, spit out the plug and soon started feeling better.

Another time Mr. Meeseman came over and asked mom to testify for him in an accident trial. Marie could hardly make out what he was saying as he was mixing up Belgium with English. But mom knew enough to never give false testimony so mom said no and went back into the house.

The Meeseman's relative came and visited them in winter. At the end of their visit the guests got into the car and started for home. Sandy was standing just out of the way when the old visitor lost control of his car, flew across the lawn right in front of Sandy and his wife went flying out of the passenger side of the car and landed on our lawn. The husband put her back in the car and drove off.

Sandy watched Mr. Meeseman drive his car into his back yard and park it just out of the way so dad could get through on his side if he needed to get in to our back yard. Mr. Meeseman then went to the hardware store and bought medium brown flat paint and proceeded to get on a ladder and brush this flat paint meant for inside a house onto his car. Sandy could not believe her eyes, that he was putting that flat paint on his car. But Sandy kept her mouth shut, just stood there and observed. 2 days later Mr. Meeseman decided that the paint was dry and he could move his car back on to the curbside. Sandy watched with utter disbelief as he backed that car out from between the two houses, a very narrow space. First he scraped his car against our house, then his house then ours again. By the time he got his car out of the driveway considerable paint had been scraped off the side of the car.

Another source of entertainment for Sandy is the day Mr. Meeseman decided he was going to uproot and remove his spirea bush. First he dug all around the outside of the bush and tried to pry the roots loose, to no avail. So he dug some more as Sandy sat on the porch and observed. No matter how deep and wide he dug that bush just was not going to budge. By this time his relative comes over with a small 2 seater car and offers to help. He grabs a thick rope, puts it around

the bush at the bottom, then hooks the other end of the rope to his bumper. He checks the rope for tightness then starts driving away, intending to pull the bush out with the rope. He pulls and pulls and pulls. Surely this bush is going to break loose, thinks Sandy, who is anticipating that bush flying out of there. Suddenly it breaks loose and the car goes speeding toward the road. Good, thinks Sandy, he finally got that bush out of there. Then she notices the dumb looks on the men's faces so she stands up and looks the whole situation over. With a dumfounded look on her face she sees the bush firmly ensconced in its place and the rope lying free on the lawn with the bumper ripped free from the car.

Mrs. Meeseman and our family shared the same common driveway and our two garages were connected. When coming home for lunch or after school I would come in through her gate and walk across her back yard. I always admired her light violet morning glories which came up year after year for as long as I lived there. One beautiful day in May I was walking home from school to go to lunch. Mom was out in our yard hanging up wash on this first warm day as I was coming in for lunch. Mom and I made eye contact right after we both looked at what was hanging on the very outside of the line and burst out laughing! Nellie's size 44 underpants with the huge leg holes was hanging out there for all the world to see. Marie looked again at Sandy and said, I guess in the future when I hang wash I'll put ma's bloomers on the inside of the wash lines!

A neighbor moved in 3 houses away from Canfield on Alter Rd with a big beautiful German Shepherd when I was about 5 years old. I would go down there and put my arms around the dog. he was very placid and would just sit there being held. But every time they let him out to pee he would return not to where he lived, but every time he would show up at the side door of the house where he used to live. The new owner would call the old owner and tell him to come pick up his dog.

One summer soon after they moved to Alter Rd they took the dog with them on a vacation to Houghton Lake. The dog took off from the rented cottage and much later showed up again at the side door of his old house. Talk about homing instinct!

When I was in the second grade going to school in the morning a big black strange German Shepherd kept pace with me. He seemed friendly, just wanting to tag along beside me, but I was getting nervous as this dog was bigger than me. So when I came to an open gate on Forest I swung it open more and the dog walked in the yard. I promptly shut the gate and continued on my way to school.

When I was in the 3rd grade there was some excited talk about the boy who lived only 3 blocks away from me on Manistique St. He was in the second grade and stepped out into the street without looking both ways. He ran between 2 parked cars. A passing car hit and killed him. I thought he was a dumb little kid and I felt sorry for him. But I sure looked both ways before crossing the street. Especially being mom told me her sister Dorothy ran out into the street on Kercheval and was killed by a passing car.

Bill sure messed up poor Mr. Meeseman when Bill was about 3 years old. Mr. Meeseman spent hours pouring and smoothing out new cement on the sidewalk in front of his house. When he was done he went back into his house to rest. Billy walked out of our house and down the street toward Warren Ave and walked right through all that freshly laid cement. Bill's shoes were full of fresh cement and Mr. Meeseman had lots of foot holes in his cement. He got back out to the sidewalk and once again smoothed out the cement.

Sandy had a best friend Louise Reichard who lived down the street on Alter Rd near Forest. They played together every day from about age 2 to about age 10. They used to go to each other's house, stand outside the door and call out their friend's name. Sandy would stand outside Louise's side door and call out "La – we-eze!"

Dad had deep indentations in the soles of his shoes. I used to love putting stones right next to dad's shoes so he would step on them. That was a source of fun for me for the whole week. I doubt if dad noticed what I was doing.



Edward Bender and Billy Bender

Dad had a special feeling in his heart for Bill as he knew Bill was going to have a more difficult life than the rest of us. Bill resembles dad's side of the family much more than the rest of us do.

When dad moved in the Warren and Courville store there was a U.S. stamp machine. Dad kept it in the store waiting for the post office to come pick it up. When no one picked it up he had his delivery man put it in the warehouse which was our garage on Alter Rd. That was too much temptation for Sandy. Every time the deliverymen came to load up the truck Sandy would sneak over to the stamp machine and bang it several times with her fist. As a result several dimes would come dropping out of the machine. Being I only had 10 cents as a weekly allowance, these dimes were manna from heaven. It turned out that the stamp machine did not belong to the post office but rather the last renter of dad's store.

Dr Walter W Hassig MD was our family physician, first when he had an upstairs office on Mack Ave. and later when he moved to Ego Street in East Detroit. The Mack Ave office was much easier to get to. Mom and I and the kids walked over there. I had to ride my bike several miles to get to the East Detroit office. He was a very kindly doctor, but not very knowledgeable. He said to mom that he was good at curing the common cold but no good at curing serious health problems. One time mom got a bad sliver in her hand and went to Dr Hassig to have it removed. She cried out in pain as he was digging the sliver out, and when he heard her crying, tears came to his eyes too.

Aunts and Uncles used to visit all of us in those days on a regular basis, especially at Christmas time. Marie had 3 kids in those days and dragging them around on Christmas Eve or Christmas day was just too much so Mildred & George Stocker, Mildred & Harold Neff and Elenore and Herman Mc Kinin would drop by our house on Alter on Christmas Eve. Ed would buy and put the Christmas tree up on Christmas Eve. One time Aunt Elenore brought me some play money for a Christmas present and then said she gave Sharon Dahl play money and a nice cash register because she said Bill didn't have much money for Christmas presents and Marie and Ed were much better off financially. In my heart, I wanted a cash register too. What good was play money without a cash register, I felt.

Aunt Mildred Neff always hand sewed beautiful dresses for me till I was about 6 years old. The only dress I liked was my dopey dockey sneezy dress. When it came time to open my Christmas presents I would feel the package and if it was soft I would just toss it over my shoulder without even opening it. Mom made me retrieve the soft present, pretend to like it and thank the giver. My heart was not in it.

Mr. Barker who rented the cottages to us had a 12 year old son. I was 6 years old at the time. The boy invited me to come into the boat house. I went. He dropped

his pants. I left. Told mom. The boy then came with a blanket in front of our cottage and told me to climb under it with him. I told mom again. She gave the owner of the cottage a real dressing down over the actions of his son.

When I was about 7 years old we used to play “Release the dungeon”. There would be 3 kids on each side. One side would be the jailers and one side would be the prisoners. The prisoners would run and hide and then the jailers would run after them, finding them and then dragging the person back to the “jail”. The jailed person had to stay in the jail unless a fellow bad guy would sneak in and release the prisoner while no one was there to catch both of them. The game ended when all the prisoners were captured or until they all escaped.

The other game we loved to play was “What time is it, Mr. Fox”! One person would stand at the finish line with his back to all the other kids. All the other kids would line up at the starting line and would all call out, “What time is it, Mr. Fox!” in a very loud voice, with anxiety in their voices. The fox would call out a number from 1 to 11 and the kids would take that many steps toward the fox, some kids taking baby steps, other kids taking giant steps. The fox was not allowed to look where the kids were, he was supposed to guess. When the kids had taken the called out number of steps and were getting closer to the fox, one of those times when the kids would holler out “what time is it Mr. Fox!” The fox would holler out MIDNIGHT!! and would turn around and chase after the kids until the kids would run back to the safety of the starting line or he would catch one of the kids. The kid who was caught would be the one who would become the fox.

Louise and I went down to the vacant field at Alter Rd and Canfield and played there, watching the butterflies, which in those days was much more abundant and colorful, having many more species than they have today. While playing there Bill came along and came over to us. As we were leaving the field we noticed an abandoned refrigerator. Bill stepped in and shut the door. Louise and I thought nothing of it and walked away. Fortunately Mrs. Ligotti came along and decided to open the refrigerator and thankfully found Bill and got him out of there before he suffocated. Louise and I had no idea of the danger Bill was in.

When Sandy was 7 years old her front teeth started to loosen. She pulled one of her front teeth, put it under her pillow and collected 10 cents from the tooth fairy.

In September 1951 I was transferred to St. John Berchman’s school and started first grade there even though I already had 6 months of first grade in Hosmer. Sister Mary Winifred was my first grade teacher. She was well over 60 when she

taught me. She was tired, worn out from teaching for many years. I am sure she was a competent teacher and had the best interests of her pupils. She got mad at me once because as we were leaving the classroom to go to the restroom, I saw two buttons sticking out on the side of the door and pushed one button in. When Sister went to open the door to let us back in the classroom the door was locked. That button locked the door. Someone squealed on me that I did it so she whacked my hands with a ruler. That was the only time I got in trouble that year.



Edward, Donald, Nancy and Marie



Hunter, Donald, Nancy and Christine



Red, Donald, Nancy & Josephine

In October, 1951 my sister eloped to Angola, Indiana and married Donald Stephens. The first time they went to Angola they were unable to get married as they had to each have a parent present as Nancy was under 18 and Donald was just 18. Marie and Edward were shocked because they both had no idea that Nancy

was intending to get married. But Nancy convinced mom and dad to let her get married so mom took Sandy to Mildred Neff's house as she was sick with the flu and then rode with Nancy, Don, Christine and Hunter Stephens back to Angola. Nancy was remarried one year later in Detroit and had a wedding reception in December, 1952.

I was not invited to Nancy's wedding reception. I was only 6 years old, was sick to my stomach that day and mom did not feel like having a small child tagging around the wedding reception hall. Aunt Mildred Neff baby sat me that day at her home in Grosse Point Park on St. Clair Street. Mildred tied a towel around my abdomen and gave me an apple to eat to settle my stomach.

Mildred Neff was always kind to me and shortly after the wedding reception she may have saved my life. Mildred & Harold Neff, Beatrice Gamache, mom and dad, Nancy and Michael and me went on a one week vacation to Barker's cottage up by Lexington. That was definitely a real slam bang cottage. That's all you heard all day long – slam, bang as everyone of the visitors continually went in and out of their cottage doors, slamming them shut behind them. There were about 6 or 7 cottages on a row facing sideways away from the lake. Mildred was the 3rd cottage down and we were about the 6th. We all went swimming in the lake together. I was too short to get out to the sand bar Nancy was standing on so Nancy picked me up and carried me over the deeper water and set me down on the sand bar. Somewhat later all of the adults left the water leaving me behind on the sand bar. I could not get back into shore as the water was over my head behind the sand bar. I started hollering for help. Evidently Mildred Neff heard me for she went back into the water and carried me to safety.

1952



Sandy,
Age 8

Mom and dad played Christmas songs around the holidays. Some were 78 records, others came through the radio. The ones I remember the best were “Here comes Santa Claus” by Gene Autrey, “Santa Claus is coming to town”, “Jingle Bells”, “Rudolf the red nosed Reindeer”. A non Christmas song that I loved and played over and over was “Red Wing”. The other 78 I loved was the life story of Bernadette and her devotion to the Blessed Mother after her own mother died. I got up in front of the class and recited that entire story by heart.

When I was quite young Mickey got some really cool Christmas presents. When the Christmas tree was on the north wall of the living room Mike got a really cool garage and vehicles. When the Christmas tree was in the south west corner of the living room another year Mickey got a really neat erector set. He built a bridge with an electric motor that opened and closed the bridge.



Billy Bender

Once I outgrew my tricycle mom and dad gave it to Billy. He seldom if ever rode it. What he did like was to push the bike on its side in the mud and spin its wheels letting the mud sling off the top wheel. Mom had to put a harness on Bill and tie a rope to the harness so he wouldn't run out into the street and get hurt or killed.



Sandy, Louise Reichard & Billy 1952

On a hot summer day Mom used to set up a kid's card table and serve Sandy, Louise and Billy lemonade and cookies. One time Sandy brought out a metal doll house that she got for Christmas and she and Louise started to play with it in the back yard when all of a sudden Louise tripped on the doll house and got a nasty gash on her leg. She was quite upset, saying there should not have been such a sharp edge on that doll house.



Mike tearing down Harold Neff's Grosse Pointe house

Dad used to take me and Betty and later mom in the evenings after work to the soda fountain in the next block. That was such a treat! It had comfortable red stools in front of a counter. Within several years after the war the blacks from the south tore up those lovely seats with switch blades.

When I was a little girl Harold Neff bought a house on the Grosse Pointe school grounds for \$400. As part of the sale agreement he had to agree to tear down the old house and remove all the building materials from the property as they were using the land for expansion. So Harold asked family members to help him raze the house. Mike Bender and Betty Gamache helped out. Mike loved pulling the house down. Betty was also hard at work when as a sudden she stepped on a nail and because she was diabetic she had to stop work and go see a doctor and get treatment for the puncture. Harold pulled the house down in the allotted time but it took Harold Neff 5 years to finish his house on Glenwood St in Clinton Twp with the materials he removed from the home on the school property.

Bill and Dorothy came over to Alter Rd for a visit one Sunday. Dorothy asked Marie when her baby wad due. Mom thought that over for a minute then said to

Dorothy, “Come upstairs with me, I want to show you something. Dorothy followed Marie into the back bedroom and there was Doug soundly sleeping in his crib. Poor Dorothy was so embarrassed and mom was so miffed.

While Mom was pregnant with Doug she developed a new food craving – Faygo rock and rye pop. She put it in ice cube trays and when it started to freeze she would put tooth picks in each one to be able to hold it like a popsicle. Sandy always wondered where the rock and rye pop went as she saw it come into the house but none of us kids ever got a taste of the stuff.



Marie holding Doug Bender

Mom was 38 years old when Doug was born, which the doctor said was far too old to be having a 5th child. She was miserable all during that pregnancy, much more so than when she carried the other children. Doug’s 9 lb, 2 oz weight was a nasty surprise after carrying Bill 4 years earlier as Bill was much smaller, weighing barely 6 lbs and came 2 weeks early. So Marie was not prepared for having to birth a 9 lb 2 oz baby. The labor was long and very painful and distressing. She was only 4’ 11” tall so the doctor had grave misgivings as to whether she was going to be able to deliver such a large baby naturally, considering that Nancy and Mike were each 7 lbs and Marie was much younger then. The doctor decided to use caudle to ease the pain, and Marie was very distressed to hear the doctor say “she’s a very poor subject for caudle”. But after a long labor Doug was delivered naturally. But when he was born he did not breathe on his own so the doctor turned him upside down and smacked his bottom to startle him into breathing. That did the job, in fact over did it. Doug screamed so long and so loud that he started turning blue from lack of oxygen so the doctor had to put Doug in an incubator to get oxygen into his lungs. Every body remarked how odd it looked to have a 9 lb baby in an incubator next to very tiny premies less than 4 lbs on either side of him.

Mom had all new clothes for Doug and had a satchel packed up for him to be taken home from the hospital. But 3 days later when Doug was being released from the hospital dad forgot to bring the satchel with him so Doug went home in very worn out baby clothes and a tattered baby blanket, the hospital's oldest baby things.

Marie was totally exhausted and sat with the baby in her arms, but at the end of the day Marie was so upset when it suddenly dawned on her that this was Ed's 48th birthday and she had forgotten all about it. She celebrated his birthday the next day.



Douglas Bender Sr.

The summer that Doug was born was the hottest summer that any of us could remember. It was a sizzler, day after day. Mom and grandma and Sandy often sat on the front porch in the afternoon and evening to catch a breeze. Doug was in Sandy's doll buggy so some of the breezes may have escaped cooling him off.

When we were in the house Nellie would sit in her wooden rocker by the front window with the huge green fan in front of her, with the fan set on high speed.

Mom weighed her heaviest after Doug was born. The excess weight really bothered her but at the same time she developed a severe skin problem on her hands. They turned red, then cracked open and started bleeding. Marie was in such distress that she bent over the stove, crying in pain. She went to a dermatologist who gave her a salve which made her hands even worse. So then she went to Dr Simich, a chiropractor who not only manipulated her spine but also gave her a diet and other medical suggestions. He also scrutinized what new chemicals she had in her house. He figured that the huge barrel of ALL detergent for the wash was the culprit. He had her change to Tide and that cleared up her hands.

He also told her to reduce her weight back to the pre baby days she should eat a huge chunk of watermelon a half an hour before she ate a meal. That caused her to eat less and the weight dropped.



Nellie Dahl

Nellie ate very little the last 5 years of her life. All she had for breakfast at our house was an orange which she peeled with her bottom teeth. She didn't have any upper teeth. After she finished eating she would get up, go to the sink and wash all our dishes, putting them in the drainer. She would then proceed to her bedroom and make her bed. She would then open up her wardrobe and separately pat down each one of her dresses, lightly separating one from the other. One time I sat on the bed watching her pat her dresses. When I got up Nellie noticed that I had left an indentation in her bed so she remade the bed again to remove the indentation.



Nellie with newborn baby

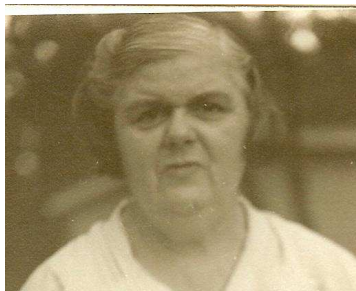
Her mom Nellie Dahl was put in charge of watching the kids including the new baby Doug while she took the buses to the doctor's office downtown Detroit. That

was a strain on Nellie due to her physical disabilities, especially picking up and carrying a new born while shaking terribly but she managed without any accidents.



Nellie Dahl

When Doris Stocker saw this picture she put numbers under Grandma Dahl's picture to make it look like it was a mug shot.



Nellie Dahl

Sandy scared the devil out of her in the dining room. Nellie said something to Sandy that upset her so she walked away from Nellie and went to the other side of the large dark dining room table and slid under the home made crocheted table cloth that hung quite a ways over the sides of the table. When Sandy got tired of sitting under the table she crawled to the spot where Nellie was sitting and popped up from under the table cloth. Nellie had no idea Sandy was under there so she jumped a mile out of fright. She told Sandy never to do that again.



Billy Bender, Nellie Dahl & Doug Bender 1952

I loved to sit outside evenings after dark in the summer and just talk to mom and Nellie. I was always so sad that Nellie always had to go inside early because she was always being eaten alive by mosquitoes. It may well have been that they were attracted to her because she had diabetes.



Nellie Dahl & Sandy Bender

Most of the time when Nellie lived with us mom was always home, but once in a while dad would take mom out to the show leaving Nellie behind as the only adult to watch us small kids. Grandma was perfectly content and secure feeling when an adult was home, but it never failed – when all the other adults would leave our house and grandma would be left alone with the kids, then the bogeyman would come and scare her to death. One time when I was about 6 years old mom and dad went to the show leaving Nellie to watch us kids. Bill and Doug were put to bed

before mom left so they were sound asleep for the night and Nellie wouldn't have to deal with them. Nancy was married and out of the house and Mike was at dad's store which left Nellie and me as the only ones home alone. We had a huge coal burning octopus armed furnace in our basement. It was a huge thing taking up most of the center of the basement. It was very old and when it was running in the cold weather it made a lot of groaning and creaking noises. If you used your imagination it sounded like someone was walking along the basement cement downstairs. Creak! Groan! you'd hear from the furnace. I was the first one to get kind of scared with all that creaking and groaning in the basement with mom and dad not there. What's that? I asked Grandma somewhat fearfully. It sounds like someone is walking around in the basement! Listen! It sounds like footsteps! Grandma, it sounds like who's ever down there is walking toward the back stairs! At this point Nellie is near hysteria and Sandy seems mighty scared herself. Oh Oh! the footsteps sound awfully close to the basement stairs which leads to upstairs where we were sitting. Grandma Dahl was sitting in her rocking chair in the front room which faced the kitchen door to the basement. We both just stared at that door waiting for the bogeyman to come slinking through that rear door. Finally Nellie could no longer stand the suspense so she went into action. She got up from the rocker, bent over, scared, and started walking pigeon toed, with purposeful intent to the kitchen. I really got scared when she purposely with determination built out of fear, she got up out of that rocker, stooping forward and shaking badly Nellie then went slowly towards the kitchen, taking pigeon toed steps while out in the open, and then hanging on to the dining room table with one hand as she took baby steps toward the kitchen. She lunged from the dining room table to the china cabinet and then from there to the kitchen door frame, then to the stove. At this point Nellie turned the corner into the interior of the kitchen taking her out of the field of my vision. I kept staring at the back door, waiting any minute for the bogeyman to come. Then a few minutes later Nellie re appears, heading back to her rocking chair with a wicked looking large butcher knife in her shaky hand. And did her hand shake! (The more nervous Nellie got through the years the more she shook.) Her return journey to her rocking chair was equally perilous, with that butcher knife waving wildly through the air, but miraculously Nellie landed back into the rocking chair with nothing untold happening. Then there she sat, butcher knife waving wildly in the air, intently staring at the kitchen door almost daring the bogeyman to try and show himself now that she had a weapon handy. The creaking and groaning noises continued off and on, but no one showed his ugly head through the kitchen door.

Now Sandy had a big problem with that wildly gyrating knife, not wanting anybody to get slashed or stabbed. She was used to sitting right at Nellie's knees

but she wasn't about to go anywhere near that floating butcher knife; so she backed a bit away and said to Nellie that she was tired and wished to go to bed. Nellie got panic stricken – no way did she wish to sit in that living room all alone with a genuine bogeyman close at hand, so she begged Sandy to stay up and play cards or checkers with her. She was willing to play checkers with Sandy, which she normally would not do as the checker board made her dizzy, or she said she would play rummy with her even allowing Sandy to pick up the whole discard pile which normally she would only allow the other player to just pick up the top card and seeing all those cards being picked up was too hard on her heart. Sandy stayed and played with her to keep her company. At a little after 11 pm Nellie heard Ed's car pull up in front of the house. Knowing that Marie wanted Sandy in bed by 9 pm Nellie panicked and told Sandy, "Your mom's hone, quick, get in bed cover yourself up and pretend to be sleeping so your mom wouldn't know that you stayed up all these hours past your bed time. So I ran upstairs as fast as my legs would carry me, jumped into bed, pulled the covers up to my chin and closed my eyes, laying real still. I was in the first bedroom at th top of the stairs so I heard every word Mom and Nellie were saying to each other. "Well, Ma, how were the kids?" Grandma replied, "That darn Sandy, she just wouldn't get to bed on time!!" Marie smiled to herself, knowing full well whose idea it was for Sandy to stay up right until the car pulled up in front of the house.

Mom put Doug to bed for his afternoon nap. An hour or so later mom and I heard a big crash from Doug's room upstairs and he started screaming loudly, obviously very frightened. So mom and I ran up to his bedroom to see what was going on. Doug had climbed out of his crib and had climbed into a dresser drawer near the top of the dresser and the dresser had toppled over, but Doug was saved from serious injury when the dresser caught on the side of the crib and nothing landed on Doug. He was one lucky little 18 month old that day!

Until I got my Schwinn Panther I had horrible luck with bike tires. I was constantly getting flat tires on my rotten tubes. In the beginning I constantly pushed my bike to the small gas station that sat catty corner on the corner of Ashland and Warren. After I watched him over and over patch my inner tube I bought my own patch kit and started repairing my own tubes.



Marie Bender & Doug Bender 1952

Doug got all new furniture and baby paraphernalia because just a month before mom figured Bill was the last child in the family so she threw away all his furniture, including his crib and his high chair so when Doug came along Marie had to buy all new.



Sandy Bender

When I was in the 3rd grade I suddenly got sick to my stomach in the early afternoon and went home from school early. I got really sick by the time I got home. Mom and I guessed I might have gotten sick on hot dogs. Mom put a cloth around my abdomen that afternoon. (Aunt Mildred did the same thing when I was at her house and got sick on Nancy's wedding day. Why did both of them put a cloth around my abdomen? What were they trying to accomplish in the way of comfort?) I was so sure that spoiled hot dogs caused the problem that I would not eat another hot dog for years.



Arthur Bender

One beautiful Summer afternoon Uncle Art pulled up in his DSR bus in front of our house on Alter Rd. I was so proud to tell my play mates that that was my Uncle Art who drove that huge DSR bus. He climbed out of that bus and visited mom and new baby Doug. He gave Doug a handful of old coins as a gift which mom put safely away for Doug. Doug took the coins and spent them which he is so upset now that he disposed of those valuable coins for mere face value.



Katherine Klein Bender



Katherine Klein Bender

When Uncle Art stepped out of his DSR bus in front of our house, he pointed south down Alter Rd and told me that my great grandmother Katherine Bender used to live on Wayburn in Grosse Pointe city. I did not understand what he was telling me at the time but when I went to the house which now belonged to John Wittenberg I now understood and felt in my heart the importance of walking in the steps that my great grandmother trod.

When Doug was born Uncle Bill Dahl came to Alter Rd with his family, Dorothy, Sharon and Debbie in order to be the godfather to Doug. We took home movies that day that shows Debbie on a bike with a cigar in her mouth, Bill was behind her, pushing her tricycle and Sharon walking along side.



Dorothy Dolato Dahl pushing Sharon Dahl Smith

Bill and Dorothy came to the park with Ed and Marie and their kids. Our parents pushed us on the swings. Sandy and Sharon played together that day. Debra, Bill and Doug weren't born yet.



Sharon Dahl & William Frederick Dahl Jr.

Uncle Bill watched over Sharon on the teeter totter. Sandy was at the other end of the teeter totter.

Dorothy filled a swimming pool with water and Sharon and I sat in it. It wasn't very deep at all. I went over to Sharon's house several times when I was younger. Aunt Dorothy asked me if I would like goulash for dinner. I said yes. When she put it on my plate I was so disappointed. I was macaroni noodles with spaghetti sauce, not kidney beans and stewed tomatoes. Come bed time I got really scared so Uncle Bill drove me back home late at night. He didn't need to do that, I would have settled down.



Sonny, Doris and Mildred Stocker

Sonny, Mildred and Doris Stocker used to come and visit us on Alter Rd frequently. Mildred used to have many funny stories to relate to us, such as when Uncle Sunny was stranded on the roof on their old house and he had to be carried off the roof by the fire department. Aunt Mildred was sitting in her living room listening to the police scanner when she heard, "Man stranded on roof, man stranded on roof, 3898 Crane." Mildred, puffing on her cigarette, said "Ain't that rich!" Then she heard a repeat of "Man stranded on roof, man stranded on roof, 3898 Crane." My Lord, that's Sonny, Mildred cried. So she ran out side and saw Sonny hugging the chimney. And she saw her next door neighbor hanging over the fence hollering to Sonny, "Hey Sonny, that's a damn good place for you! I hope you never get down from there!"



Doug & Sandy Bender

We went many times to Rochester State Park located at the end of John R road in Rochester. They had very long steps going down to the Clinton River. It was polluted in those days and it stank. It was a very pretty walk if you didn't mind the smell. Later the government cleaned up the river and it lost most of it's smell. On this day in the enclosed picture we all took turns carrying baby Doug. When it was my turn on the way back to the car I had to sit down and rest. He was just too heavy to carry any further!

Mom was approached by a man as we were walking along and he asked her, "Aren't you Marie Dahl!" The man speaking to her turned out to be Willy Bartell, an old friend of Marie's brother Bill. Mom was amazed that Willy recognized her after 25 years. But that is understandable as mom's appearance hardly changed at all through the years.

I used to go with mom to the C.F. Smith store at Canfield and Manistique. She used to do her weekly grocery shopping there. Neil, the owner of the store, was a really nice guy. Mom and I would walk into the store, which was quite small and mom would read off her grocery list to Neil. He would walk around the store and grab whatever mom read off her list. Many of the items were up high so he would grab a tall hook and use it to flip a box off the high shelf. The box would come flying off the shelf, which he would catch and place on the counter. When all the groceries were placed on the check out counter Neil would box them up, mom would pay and Neil would have a delivery boy bring the groceries on a wagon to mom's back door on Alter Rd. She would tip him a quarter.

One day Neil told mom that the C.F. Smith store chain had a contest in which contestants should write a letter as to why they shopped at the C.F. Smith store. Neil urged mom to enter the contest which she did. Mom won! The C.F. Smith

store on Warren tried to claim mom for their customer but Neil immediately claimed mom as his. Mom won a nice watch.



Michael Bender in black at the back of the classroom

Michael Bender graduated from St. John Berchman's in 1952.

In September, 1952 I went into 2nd grade and was taught by Sister Mary Barbara. She was young and pretty and nice. The classroom was terrible. When you looked out the window the only sight was a huge brick chimney that completely blocked the view of the outside. In the second grade we had an air raid drill. The siren sounded and immediately we were told to line up single file and follow sister. All the other kids in grades 1 through 8 also followed us. We went down a 30 foot incline to the boiler room and stayed there until an all clear was sounded. In those days they were more afraid of being attacked by the Russians than a tornado.

While in the 2nd grade dad brought home a 78 rpm record telling the story of Bernadette of Lourdes. I listened to that record a number of times and I loved that story so much that I memorized it word for word. Then one day I went up to the nun and told her I would like to recount that beautiful story to the class. She

agreed and putting a great deal of feeling into the story I stood in front of the class and retelling that story word for word, putting my heart into that story. Everyone was very impressed with my delivery of a very emotional story. The whole class and the nun got emotional when I retold the part where Bernadette lost her mother, was so emotional that she took down the statue of the Blessed Mother and said to our Lady, 'I lost my own mother, so dear Blessed Mother, now you will be my mother'.

1953



Sandy Bender

I made my first Holy Communion in May of 1953. Mom, dad and Aunt Mildred were there in Church for the ceremony. The children sat together up front and the parents behind the children. When it was time to go up to the communion rail I turned and looked back at mom, dad and Aunt Mildred. The nun turned my head back around to the altar. In those days you knelt at the communion rail and received the host on your tongue. Everyone knelt the whole length of the communion rail and the priest walked along and gave the host to each recipient as the altar boy held the paten under one's chin to prevent the possibility of the host dropping. Afterwards we went back home and mom made a nice roast beef dinner. Sara Simms, Mrs. Meeseman's oldest daughter came over to our house and gave me a ball point pen as a first communion present. I treasured it as it was my first ball point pen. We were only allowed to use fountain pens in school. Each desk had an ink bottle in a well. You dipped your ink pen into the well whenever your pen went dry. Aunt Mildred made my first communion dress. Mom bought the veil. For the rest of the summer I wore my communion dress to church on Sundays.



Marie inside Pacey's cottage #3

Our family went to Lion's Head many times between 1953 and present. The first time mom and dad went there was by accident. They went with Art and Agnes to Look A Bout Isle in 1949 and stayed at the Rutherford cabins on Sandy Beach on Lake Huron. They stayed in 2 very small cabins and ate their meals at the lodge. After the first meal they learned that you had better eat all of the appetizers as well as the meal as the portions were skimpy. The lodge was impressive and sat right off Lake Huron. There were no bathing accommodations so mom used to put on her bathing suit and go down to the lake with a towel, wash cloth and a bar of soap.

Driving around the area Ed drove to the Georgian Bay and saw Wilbur T Pacey up on a roof building new cottages. The next time they went to the area and were horrified at what Mom had reserved a old hotel on the Colpoy Bay they then went on to Pacey's who was able to rent them cottages, one week a 3 bedroom. one week a small 1 bedroom.



Mickey Bender

When we got home from Pacey's the next door neighbor, Mrs. McCubbin told mom that Mickey had thrown a wild party while we were gone. Mom looked around the house, shrugged her shoulders and said "Mike cleaned up this house

much better than I left it. You'd never know they had a party here". Mom knew Mike would never have thrown a party on his own, it had to be Bob Barr's idea.

The last 2 weeks of July, 1953 we all went to Pacey's for a wonderful two week vacation. Mom, Dad, Bill, baby Doug and I stayed in cottage #3 for the first week and the very small one bedroom cottage for the second week. Grandma Dahl went with us after we coaxed her repeatedly to come. She had a very good time there and was very nice to me and Bill. She sat outside at the 3 bedroom cottage and watched the large fishing boats trawl in the afternoon. Nellie, Bill & I had to sleep in one bed as we had more than a full house, with Norman and his 2 sons, Gary and Richard with us. It was so miserable for me because the first night Bill kicked and thrashed so much that he kept hitting Grandma Nellie and keeping her awake and so she put me in the middle between her and Bill. And then during the day she would take a nap all by herself in bed to make up for the sleep she lost sharing the bed with us.



Sandy Bender

At only 8 years old mom allowed me to walk to Lion's Head town alone. The first time I walked it I realized that I had on the wrong kind of shoes so I went into the upstairs of the food market and found only one pair of shoes that I could wear. They were high top basketball shoes and too big for my feet but being they were high top the shoes did not fall off my feet. They were black, chintzy and had no padding on the bottom. But I wore these shoes only at the cottage for 2 years. They served the purpose.

Every time we walked to town that summer we had to walk past a dead skunk, and phew! did he ever stink! He was right at the top of the first hill, close to the entrance of Carter Lane. I walked into Lion's Head by myself. Dad gave me a nickel so I went into the barber shop and the barber stopped cutting hair long enough to scoop me up a double dipper vanilla ice cream cone for that nickel, believe it or not.

Mom bought me a wonderful strong punching type ball to play with at the small cottage while she hung out a huge wash for the family. Nellie was so happy watching me play with the punching ball and suddenly the ball hit a sharp blade of grass and disintegrated. I was so upset but so was Nellie too. She really felt for me that I lost that neat ball.



Doug Bender at age 1 year

Doug learned to walk at the small cottage at Pacey's. First the wood floors were too hard so he walked on the sole's of his feet and his hands. Then outside the same thing. The blades of grass were far too prickly on his legs so again he walked on hands and feet. Somewhere along the way he got the idea to stand upright and walk around on his feet.

Mom got sick of watching all the kids while dad, Norm, Gary and Richard went galavanting off fishing, so she told dad he had to take Bill and me with him. Norman had a fit, saying we would scare off all the fish so when we parked at Miller Lake and dad rented the boat he left Bill and me on the shore, telling us to stay in the car. It was hot and boring in the car so Bill and I got out and walked to the edge of the lake where we found there was one wooden row boat left. So I pushed the boat into the water, put Bill in the boat and jumped in myself. I rowed it out to about chest deep in water when I saw that the boat was leaking badly. So I jumped out, saw the water was up to my chest so I realized it was over Bill's head so I pulled him out of the boat and carried him to shore. The boat sunk. Much later dad came back to see if he still had kids and saw that the row boat was under water but the kids were safe on shore. Dad figured he had pressed his luck so he asked Richard Bender, age 15, to drive us home. They went back out fishing as Bill and I jumped into Norman's car. Richard, too young for a driver's license had a ball driving us home at top speed, flying around curves in the road on Hwy 6. He cut one curve too close and skinned the side of Norm's car against the side of the rocky face. When Norman started yelling asking who had dented his car Sandy

was eager to give her Uncle Norman all the details of how Richard cut that corner too close for comfort. He sure hollered at and smacked Richard around.



Richard & Gary Bender

Richard and Gary had far more excitement that night. They were sleeping in Norm's car after dark because there was no room for them in that small cottage when all of a sudden sometime after 1 am they came storming into the cottage - there was a big brown bear right outside of the car! They slept on the hard floor of that small cottage that night.



Edward, Marie & Sandy on lake Huron



Edward, Marie and Bill on lake Huron

Marie did not like being in a boat at all. She was very frightened to be over her head in water as she never learned how to swim. She almost drowned in Cranberry Lake shortly after she and dad were married so she never got over her fear of drowning. Dad once in a while would talk her into going into a wooden row boat with us by promising to stay close to shore. We would fish for perch in the weeds. But mom still did not want to be in the boat and she is showing us here what she thought of dad talking her into going in a boat!



Pacey's at Lion's Head

When we got home from Pacey's it was about 7 pm and mom as well as the rest of us was thoroughly worn out from the long 5 hour car ride. We were only home a few minutes when Nancy called and said she was in labor with Warren and could mom come over and be with her. Mom said flat out that she was exhausted and was going to bed, that Nancy had a husband and he could stay with her. Nancy's feelings were hurt for years afterwards at mom going to bed and sleeping instead of being with Nancy for the birth of her first child.



Marie, Warren & Edward- Baptismal day – August 1953

MARIE - ED
1ST.
+ GOD + GRAND CHILD
WARREN
ST. JOHN BERCHMANS
CHURCH, 1953

Written by Marie on the back of the picture on August 30, 1953

When I went into the 2nd grade we had a meeting in the church and for the first time Joseph Cotton sat right next to me. I had never seen him before but I instantly had a very strong attraction to him, something that never happened to me before or since. And then within a week he moved out of the neighborhood and I never saw him again except one time when I saw him in 6th grade and then he disappeared again never to be seen again.

Just before Christmas the nuns taught us a new song, “Hark the Herald Angels Sing”. I loved that new song and sang it all the way home. For some reason that song was really important to me and I sang it continually.

We had some neighbors 2 doors down that came from Tennessee, who had 2 sons, Larry and Johnny. Larry was a quiet soul who played at times with my younger brothers. Johnny, on the other hand, was a pistol, a real live wire. Doug would sometimes play with Johnny. One day Johnny came into our house and while he was there he went into mom's buffet drawer and stole my Indian Rubber ball, the greatest treasure of my childhood aside from my Schwinn Panther bike. I played a version of handball every night after school with that high bouncing ball. That was the only such a high bouncing ball at that time so I guarded it with my life as another could never be obtained until much later when others like it began to be manufactured. Several times that ball went clear over the top of the school building and we had to scout it out. That is probably why I found it in the first place as it was down the street on Lakeview near Warren where I found it sitting in the curb area. At supper time I would put the ball in the dresser drawer to keep it safe. It remained safe till one day Johnny Carmack came along, opened the drawer and stole the ball. Fortunately I figured out who had the ball and retrieved it from him.

One summer the Carmacks had cousins come visit them from Tennessee for a few weeks in the summer. Their names were Dolly and Cookie. They were cool kids and a lot of fun to play with. They ran bare foot everywhere and I was amazed that time after time they ran barefoot through the alley. With all that assorted pebbles, junk and glass pieces Louise and I would have a lot of pain and bleeding feet if we walked over that junk, but not Cookie and Dolly. They said they never wear shoes back in Tennessee so their feet have toughened up.



Brown house belonged to the Reichard family

Louise's house was the brown one on the left. It was a very fine house in its day. Both Michael and I really liked the lay out of the house both down stairs and

upstairs. Louise slept in the rear 1st floor bedroom. Bertie and Howard Reichard slept in the side room on the lower level. Richard had a huge wonderful bedroom on the second floor in the front of the house. His very elaborate train set ran all over the living room when he got it for Christmas. After the Christmas season was over the train set was moved upstairs to his huge bedroom. That train ran under his bed and under his dresser and all over the bedroom. There were 2 locomotives and two switching boxes so Richard had to be careful not to crash the 2 locomotives into each other.



Bill Bender

In 1953 the summer was not so hot but we had a different sort of annoyance which lasted all summer long. The city decided to rip up the Alter Rd. St and lay new down asphalt. So all summer long all we heard day in and day out was the sound of the jack hammer, rat-ta-tat-tat very loud very steady! Sandy, Marie and Nellie sure got very tired of that loud noise, but not Bill. Four year old Bill was fascinated over all that repetitive noise. Bill was really good at sound effects which at times drove Sandy nuts. Bill imitated those jack hammers to perfection.

About that time I had a stomach ache and went to Doctor Mc Kenzie. He said I had worms and gave me liquid worm medicine. I only had one dose. Doug, who was only 1 year old, drank the whole bottle. Mom fed him lunch and he conked out in his new red high chair. Mom saw the empty worm medicine bottle, freaked and called poison control. They said he would sleep it off and be okay. I didn't have worms but the neighbor wouldn't let me play with her kid for fear he'd catch it.

Louise and I used to roller skate up and down Alter Rd. I had several pair of roller skates. My favorite pair was one where the metal was soft and therefore the skates bent in the middle. But the wheels spin much freer and the clamps were much bigger and held onto the shoes much firmer.

We always had to come in in the summer when the street lights come on. Once in a while mom and a neighbor would let us play on the front lawn after dark. The best memory I have is when we took a sheet and put each other in the sheet one by one and the other two kids would throw the kid in the sheet up in the air and catch them on the way down. In the middle of all the fun the parents suddenly remembered about the polio scare and made us stop playing and go to bed.

We were all so grateful that mom was a stay at home mom and was always there when we came home from school or got sick and had to go home early. Almost all of the moms stayed at home in those days which was a comfort to all of us.

Doug and Mom used to get on each others nerves when he was two years old and I felt sorry for Doug so I used to take him to one of our bedrooms and sing him all kinds of Blessed Mother songs. He liked that and used to settle down and listen. I used to sing "Mother dearest, mother fairest", "On this day o beautiful Mother" and "I'll sing a hymn to Mary, the Mother of my God".

When Doug was between 1 and 2 years old he screamed every day, day and night. Mom was totally exhausted from lack of sleep so she told me she would pay me 25 cents a night to get up with him in the middle of the night so she could get some sleep. I told her I gladly would, but then she felt so guilty asking a little kid that she withdrew the offer. Later on several women who had small crying infants felt that Doug probably had colic.

To calm Doug down on a hot summer day mom would give him a bath, put on cool clothing and then sit down with him in front of the black and white TV screen to watch Milky party, a clown that was on every Saturday afternoon.



Margie, Irvin Moran and their 5 children

Mom was very close to her 1st cousin, Margie Rehfeldt Moran. They used to come over once in a while on a nice cool summer day and sit out on the front porch with us. Their boys, who were all older than us used to sit on the front lawn and fling their switch blade type knives into the grass in front of them. I so envied the fact that they could have a knife and I couldn't.

My brother Mike was allowed to have a knife because he was older than me. One time he asked me to hold his Quaker Oats box. I said no, I was afraid he'd cut my hand. He said he was not going to cut me, that I should hold the box, so I did and the knife slipped and he cut my finger. He told me to shut up, took me to the bathroom and ran cold water over my hand until the bleeding stopped.



Billy Bender age 2

As a small child Billy was a very sweet kid. Any problem he may have caused, such as walking through Mr. Meeseman's fresh cement or painting himself with oil based violet paint or catching a whole bunch of fish hooks through his brand new corduroy pants was strictly an accident, he never would have done that on purpose. Bill's problems started when he started Hosmer grade school and then later St. John Berchman's Catholic school. The kids teased him mercilessly at both schools. Bill used to hide in the bushes at lunch time to protect himself from the bullies.

In addition to a doll I always got 4 or 5 other presents under the tree. The doll was always on the bottom of the pile. All my brothers and sisters also got 4 or 5 presents under the tree. Mom said she spent about \$100 per child on toys for Christmas. About 4 weeks before Christmas mom would open an N. Shure catalog to the toy pages and ask us to look over the toys and tell her what we would like

for Christmas. One year my very favorite was a trumpet. It came with instructions and music. The first sheet music was for “Twinkle, twinkle little Star”.

In the winter I used the basement to play in where it was a lot warmer than going outside. Sometimes I rode my bike down there, making tight turns around the octopus furnace. Once I found an abandoned Canadian 27 inch bike in the winter that I took downstairs. First I painted it a bright red, then discovered that it needed two tires and inner tubes. I found out that I could not buy tires and tubes in Detroit, I had to go to Canada to get these. I asked Mike if He would drive me to Canada. He said no. So I had to abandon that bike.

So then I asked dad to buy me a new Schwinn Panther just like Mike had. Dad said Mike now had a car and probably would have no further use for a bike so I could have Mick’s Schwinn Panther. I never had a better or more beoved present than that Schwinn Panther. I rode it for miles every day, winter and summer mostly through the Grosse Pointes. That bike had a spring suspension on the fork and also a hand brake in addition to a foot brake. It was a beautiful red and black color and had a horn built into the fork and a light for night riding. I had that bike until I was 16 years old when I bought one of the 1st 3 speed bikes that Schwinn produced

.

Dad and I used to play basement football in the winter. We had a lot of fun throwing that football low enough to miss the octopus arms of the furnace, but once in a while dad and I would throw the ball too high and would hear a loud WHOMP! as we hit the good old octopus arm. Dad reluctantly stopped playing as he was worried we might break open the octopus arm. We were very sad to give up playing football before we ran out of steam.

In May of that year we had a day off for the feast day of the Ascension into Heaven. I misunderstood, thinking we had the Friday off too so I went to Nancy’s house on Montclair and stayed with her and baby Warren for the day. It was sun shining all day at Nancy’s and mom told me it rained all day on Alter Rd. When I found out that there was school that day mom wrote me an excuse note to keep me out of trouble.

Another time Nancy told me that there was a movie at the movies, “Our Lady of Fatima”. Both she and I wanted to see that movie, so mom wrote me an excuse to keep me out of trouble in school. I told the nun the truth. She expressed mild disapproval but it passed with her.

Grandma used to baby sit for 1 year old Doug in the summertime while mom went to Dr Simich to have him heal her badly cracked and bleeding hands. Nellie would rock baby Doug in her arms in the dining room until he fell asleep, and then she would stand up stooped over and gently walk with him to the front bedroom. She would lay him down in the bed and as soon as he hit the bed he would wake up and start crying. Nellie would pick him up again and once again rock him to sleep. This went on till mom got back home.

Nellie used to eat an orange for breakfast, gumming it with her lower teeth (she had no upper teeth or dentures). After finishing her cup of coffee she would do all of our dishes, washing them and putting them away. Then Nellie would make her bed, which she was very particular on how it looked. A couple of times I sat down on her bed after she made it, I was watching her open her wardrobe and pat down her clothes, which was a daily event. When I got back up from sitting on Nellie's bed she was upset because there was a dent in the sheet. She would insist on making the bed all over again to remove the indentation caused by me sitting there.

Grandma Nellie also used to rock Doug on the front porch in the summertime. Bill and Sandy used to stand next to Nellie on the front porch. Mom and Nellie used to put Doug in Sandy's doll buggy when he got too heavy to hold. He filled the entire buggy and ended up breaking the supports by the time the summer was over.

Sandy was cold in the winter so she took a red plaid Indian blanket, put it underneath her and then wrapped herself up completely in that blanket, folding the 3 flaps over her.



Sandy wearing Lion's Head hat 1953

I bought a hat in Lion's head and when I went back home I wore that hat to bed. When dad saw the hat on my head he went and took a picture of it.



Marie & Ed Bender

Ed and Marie Bender spent many a happy hour driving around all the back dirt roads of the Bruce Peninsula, happily exploring every inch of that peninsula. In the picture above they drove to a light house on the Georgian Bay in the area of Winfield basin.

Two of the Belgian neighbors raised pigeons in the loft over their garages. It was interesting to see the birds come and go but the mess made by the birds in the alley and all over adjacent properties was upsetting to some of the neighbors.

Before we bought Alter Rd home, someone had planted tiger lilies on both sides of the front porch. When we decided to jump off the top of the stairs we always sprung as far away as we could to avoid landing in the lilies. Most times we did not damage the lilies and they continued to grow thicker and thicker as the years came and went.

In between our and McCubbin's house someone planted lilies of the valley which also lasted year after year. I believe Michael might have said he was the one who planted those perennials.

1954



Nancy & Don's 1st house on Alter Rd

Nancy soon had enough of all the hollering and head banging going on downstairs at her flat so she found a nice one at Montclair close to Harper. Doug threw Nancy's hand held mixer out the second story window where it smashed onto the pavement and broke. Dad had to pay for a new mixer.

The Catholic school tried to get us kids to make money for them by selling Christmas wrapping paper and Christmas cards. It was a hard sell because most of the neighbors wouldn't buy the stuff. So I remembered how kindly Mrs. Stephens was when she came and visited us so I walked all the way over to her house, a quanset hut on Algonquin St, about a mile away from Alter Rd. As I suspected she was most gracious to me and bought a good amount of both paper and cards. When I went back home and told mom about my sale she was sad, saying Mrs. Stephens didn't have enough money to buy those items.



Christine Young Stephens

Mrs. Stephens was a kind, wonderfully warm person. Always smiling, always friendly so it was a total shock when one day Mrs. Stephens had a nervous breakdown and had to be hospitalized. She had been working full time in the school cafeteria and was well respected as a worker so when she was hospitalized she continued to get sick pay for quite a number of weeks later.

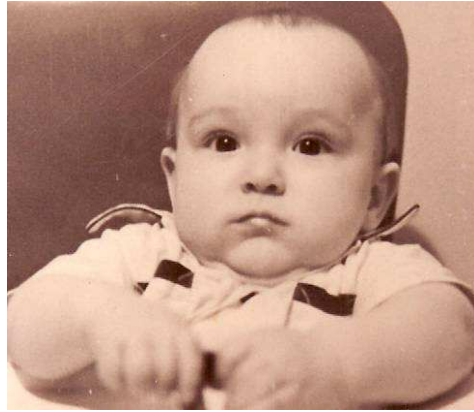


Hunter Coyle (Red) Stephens

Her husband Hunter Coyle (Red) was a serious alcoholic all of his life and he was a nasty, selfish person. He verbally abused his wife Christine and even struck her when provoked. While she was in the hospital he cashed all of her checks and used them for alcohol.

I babysat a few times for Warren while Nancy and Don went to the show even though I was only 9 years old, but Warren was asleep when I got there and stayed asleep the whole evening I was there. Nancy used me as she trusted me and she had no money to pay a bona fide baby sitter. Nancy would bring me home a malt as a reward for sitting. That was fine with me. When they would go to a later show I would scare myself silly by watching shock theatre at 11 pm.

Warren learned to walk the fastest of any of us kids. Nancy encouraged him by standing him up and propelling him forward. He started walking at 7 months which made Nancy so proud. She brought Warren over to our house and stood him up on the front lawn and held her hands out for him to toddle to. I stood behind him and picked him up the many times he plopped down. We have a video of this.



Doug Bender



Warren Stephens



Doug Bender & Warren Stephens

Doug and Warren were at loggerheads every time Warren would be brought over to our house. They soon would start hitting each other. Mom felt that there was a certain amount of jealousy involved. Nancy would bring her wash over to mom's house and naturally Warren came too. One of the women would have to stay with the kids to keep them apart while the other woman would move the wash. Marie often let Nancy referee the kids, she thought doing the wash was less tiring.



Marie, Nellie, Warren & Nancy

This is a 4 generation picture taken on August 1, 1954 Warren's 1st birthday.

Nellie had one other great grandchild who was born on the 24 December, 1954, Laurie De Maria Rotary. Nellie died 7 month's later, on the 25 March, 1955.



Sandy & Edward

Dad never repaired tubes for me as he worked very long hours, from 9 am to 9 pm. But he did love me and was often affectionate. He often gave me a nice hug and talked nice to me, especially when I was really young. I didn't have much time to spend with dad as he left for work after I went to school and he did not come home until I was in bed so I only got to see him on Sunday and his day off after I came home from school.

My favorite kitchen curtains when I was under 10 years old was the Dutch boy curtains that had a swag on the upper and a half curtain on the bottom.

At about the same time mom decided to buy some bright yellow curtains for the living room and dining room. They were 84 inches long. She bought them at downtown Hudsons and had them delivered to our house on Alter Rd. The yellow curtains were delivered and mom hung them on the windows in both living room and dining room. When the bill came one month later it showed a credit, not a debit. Mom called the billing department at Hudsons and told them about their billing mistake. They thanked her profusely and told her they would be sending her a corrected bill. The corrected bill came a few weeks later. In stead of sending her a debit amount for her curtains it showed a double credit! Mom said the heck with it and bought some more stuff to eat up the double credit. We had those yellow curtains for years afterward.

One dark morning in the dead of winter mom opened the front door for me to go to school and when the door was opened mom stood right in front of the door and a homeless type man stood about 3 inches away from her on the other side of the door. Both mom and the bum were greatly startled and were frozen in place for

several seconds as they stood face to face. Then the bum put the paper on the door knob and left the porch. I shook with fright the rest of the day at school.



Mike sitting at the dark brown dining room table and chairs

About the same time I came home from school one afternoon and found the dark brown elaborate dining room set was gone and in its place was a light blond new dining room set. I loved that old dark brown set and was heartsick to see that it was gone. I asked mom why the dark brown set was gone and she said she felt like changing over to a new look. The new set was much softer wood. When Mike and I did our homework on the brand new blond dining room table we left pen markings in the wood. It was only a few years later when mom and dad moved to Sterling Heights and did not take it with her.



Mildred Neff

Mildred Neff called me up one afternoon and asked me to go to the blind ship on the corner of Warren and Alter and pick up her curtain rods and bring them to her on St. Clair in Grosse Pointe City. So I got on my bike, rode over to the blinds store on the corner of Warren and Alter Rd., picked up the curtain rods and tucking them under my arm rode them to her house on St. Clair. She took the curtain rods from me, took them into the house and said goodbye to me without paying me a penny for my work. Being Mildred had money I thought her having me ride all that way carrying those heavy curtain rods and not giving me money for my trouble. (I had been expecting 50 cents for my effort.)



Mildred Bender Neff

Mildred Neff lived in Grosse Pointe Park so she had access to the park on the lake. One time Mildred invited mom and me to have a picnic in the Grosse Pointe Park. So mom and I packed a picnic lunch and we took the Mack bus to St. Clair Ave. We walked to Mildred's house, met her there and then we all walked up to the park with Mildred's grand child Keith in a stroller. We sat on park bench and ate our lunch. I was surprised to see how fragile Keith was. Keith and I went into the wading pool for a while.



Nancy Bender Stephens

Nancy did something hilarious that Christmas afternoon. Marie asked Nancy to make root beer floats for all the guests, so Nancy went into the kitchen on Alter and set to work making the floats. One by one she brought the floats to the relatives. The last one she brought out she gave to Aunt Elenore.



Aunt Elenore Mc Kinin

Nancy frowned, looked around the room and said, “Aunt Elenore, I think you got the last one. The ice cream started melting and when I did the last float the ice cream slid all around the table, off the carton and as I was about to push it back it fell off the table and onto the floor. So I picked up the ice cream from off the floor and with my hands plunked it into the glass. I think that’s the one you got.” Elenore frowned, but drank it.

Louise Reichard’s mother invited me to the Sunday school picnic in June. Louise and I had a wonderful time at the camp. We always joined in the foot race. Every year Louise always came in first and I came in second. We both got minor presents.

We always sang many Christian songs, the more famous was “Onward Christian Soldiers”. Afterward they put on a nice picnic. In the 5th grade the overzealous nuns in St. John Berchmans told me that I was not to sing the protestant songs so I should go sit in the car until the singing was over. As a result I insulted Mrs. Reichard and was never again invited to go to the Sunday school picnic.

A nice family lived right next door to Louise. They had a 9 month old son. One day the man was digging up earth worms to go fishing. He kept putting them in a tin can. He had his boy sitting right next to him while he dug. After having dug up a dozen or so worms he looked into the can. He saw his son pull out a worm for the can and stick it in his mouth and swallow it! Louise and I were so grossed out watching that! The boy’s mother sure did not want to kiss that kid that afternoon.



Bill & Sandy Bender in front of St. John Berchman's

Louise was a half grade ahead of me in the 4th grade due to my losing ½ grade transferring from Hosmer to St. John Berchman's. One day sitting in my backyard on Alter Louise and I compared what we had learned in math classes. I was shocked to learn that I was way ahead of her in learning fractions. She hadn't even started them yet.

One time I climbed a garage right next to Meeseman's and another strange kid got up there too and tried to push me off. I grabbed his shirt and we both went over. I landed on the base of my spine right on the top of Meeseman's fence. That took weeks to stop hurting.

Mom & I played ping pong on the kitchen table that Christmas. I wore a fancy dress that mom picked out for me. I was glad to get back into my play clothes.



Last picture of Nellie taken by Elenore

Nellie's last Christmas was so sad for Sandy. All the men were in the living room on Alter telling lively stories. Nellie on the other hand sat at the other side of the room and was totally silent the entire time. No one talked to her or acknowledged her in any way. The women were all in the kitchen finishing last minute touches to the dinner. When we sat down to eat, still Nellie was introverted and totally silent. Looking at her that day one could tell she was sinking into herself. She was no longer her ebullient, joyful self. That was the last time I saw my Grandmother alive.

Our furnace was heated by coal. Dad would buy coal and it would be delivered via the coal chute on the side of the house, on Meeseman's side. One time the coal delivery man offered dad a really good deal if he would order a huge amount of coal that would last the whole winter, so dad took him up on the deal. You couldn't believe the amount of coal that he delivered. He kept pouring it into the basement coal bin via the coal chute. It filled the coal bin and just came on coming. It filled the coal bin, the middle section of the basement between the coal bin and the fruit cellar and then filled the fruit bin as well. It was a dangerous condition because the loose coal was too close to the furnace. We kept shoveling back away from the furnace. That was the last time dad ordered that much coal. We could have burned the house down if the furnace had caught the loose coal on fire.



top: Jack Jackson, Don, Warren and Hunter Stephens
 middle: Shirley, Christine, Marie and Nellie Dahl
 bottom: Bill, Sandy, Douglas and Nancy Aug 1, 1954

On August 1, 1954 Nancy gave a first birthday party for her son, Warren. She invited both the Bender and the Stephens side of the family. It would have been a very well posed professional picture if I had kept my tongue in my mouth and my birthday hat securely on my head.

In the third grade I had Sister Mary Jeanne. She was really nice. And the view from the window was much better too. Every teacher in every grade told us at the beginning of the school year that there were 60 kids in our classroom so in order for us to learn what we were being taught we were to sit up straight, pay attention, and remain silent, listening to what the teacher had to say. And if you didn't do that, you were gonna get clobbered!



Sandy Bender, 4th grade

In the 4th grade it was a totally different experience with my teachers. Fortunately Sister Mary Adreas was not my home room teacher or things would have got really ugly real fast. The first day of school she was calling roll and when she got to my name she looked at me and said, “Are you related to Nancy and Michael?” I said yes, they are my sister and brother. Her reply was “I didn’t like Nancy, I didn’t like Michael and I am not going to like you”. O boy, what a way to start the first day of a new year. Sister Andreas was about 4’10” tall, Italian and she undoubtedly had a screw loose. When we had a spelling contest she would skip up and down the isles singing “Oh, Susanna, don’t you cry for me” while we were trying to concentrate. One time a boy was acting up. Sister Andreas warned him to stop. He did not. So when we were listening to her spelling words, she went skipping up the aisle behind the boy and when she got to his desk she took her hand and with considerable force smashed his face into the desk. He came back up with a very bloody nose. He stopped clowning around.

Sister Mary Gemma was my home room teacher. She was a lot of fun and liked my teasing her. She had a pyramid of marbles. As I was leaving the classroom for the day I reached out and grabbed a bottom marble. She spent some time picking up all those marbles scattered all over the classroom. I started keeping a journal. I brought it to school one day and when Sister Gemma saw it she wanted to read it. I had personal stuff about her so I said no, she couldn’t read it. We were standing at the middle stairway of the third floor when she grabbed for my journal as I pulled and she pulled and suddenly the journal came flying out of my hands and into hers and I flew backwards and almost went down the flight of stairs as Sister looked on horrified. But she kept and read the journal and was embarrassed by what she read. After that I learned my lesson and devised a code and wrote all my entries in that code. The pages in the journal were dad’s orange topped stationery.

One day in September mom mentioned to me that this day, Sept 6 was grandma Dahl's wedding anniversary. When I heard this I went down to Marseilles beer Store on Warren and Ashland and bought Grandma Nellie 6 pieces of her favorite candy, called "squirrels". She was so pleased to get that candy. Years later, the night before she died in Plymouth General hospital, Grandma Dahl told her visitors the story about how I bought her the squirrels for her anniversary. I was so touched to hear this story, that grandma remembered after all these years.

One time I had to give Mrs. Ligotti credit for not being a busy body and keeping her big fat mouth shut. Bill was standing in front of her house on Alter Rd with four spark plugs in his hand that he dug out of the garbage. Bill was always fascinated with all things army so when he looked at those spark plugs in his fantasy they became hand grenades. So he threw all 4 spark plugs high up in the air over the street, pretending he was bombing tanks. What was most unfortunate is that a brand new Ford just out of the show room was driving buy as the spark plugs descended from the sky and landed right on the top of her hood, putting several dents in her new car. She jumped out of the car, surveyed the damage and started crying, saying her husband was going to be so upset with her over the damage. She saw Billy run between the houses, past Mrs. Ligotti and high tailed it back home. The lady with the damaged car ran after him but could not find him. She asked Mrs. Ligotti if she knew who that kid was but for the only time in her life she had no idea who Billy was.

Mrs. Ligotti got the short end of the stick on several occasions. One time a bunch of us kids, about 8 years old at the time played baseball in the alley for a number of hours. We quit about 15 minutes before it was time to go home for dinner. We were all hot, tired and happy, just hanging out and making small talk. Suddenly, Mrs. Ligotti appeared in the back bedroom and started unbuttoning her dress. We all stood there and looked. She took the dress off and then started taking her slip off. Off came the slip and then she started to wiggle out of her Playtex rubber girdle. Watching her gyrations trying to get the girdle off made us all peel with laughter. She heard us, suddenly looked out the window and saw us all staring at her. She was furious and dying of embarrassment. She pulled the shade down and instead of coming down it it came right off the window and there she was standing there in her girdle and bra. She ran away from the window and later on came out and screamed at us to go home, which we did.

Mrs. Ligotti often gave poor Leonard a very hard time, and after a while he got very tired of all her nagging and ragging on him. So one day she spent the entire

afternoon working on and weeding her garden. After the weeding she pulled out the garden hose and thoroughly soaked the entire garden. At 4:30 pm she went into the house and changed in to a clean house dress before finishing up dinner. She then came back out and admired her flourishing garden. Standing there and looking over all her rows she discovered that she missed a weed growing toward the back of the garden, so she bent way over to pull it. Leonard, who was normally mild mannered, was so upset with his mother that day, and seeing her bent far over like that, he couldn't resist. He grabbed his baseball bat sitting a few feet away, and stepping forward, swung the bat against her derriere, knocking her face first into the mud filled flower bed. She came up covered in black mud. She ran after him, picking up the baseball bat and chased him all the way down the alley towards Canfield. She almost caught him but he got away, just barely. But he knew he could forget dinner that night. Disconsolate, he returned home after dinner and sat on the back step. His very mild and mannered dad, who was also sick of being hen pecked slipped out the back door and handed Leonard a sandwich.

Bill was always uncoordinated but tried at times to keep up with the rest of us kids. One time we treed Jerry Westingburger in the tree just behind the Ligotti house. We all started throwing water balloons at Jerry, mostly missing him as he was very high in the tree. Bill grabbed 2 water balloons, walked up to the tree and tossed both balloons, but instead of hitting Jerry the balloons hit a side branch and all the water from both balloons came cascading down on Billy instead. It was a good thing it was a warm day!

Jerry Westingburger and his family were very low class neighbors who lived right behind Louise's house. He was 15 years old when I was only 8. He was a bully. He was also a thief, stealing my brother's deluxe red wagon with higher lip in the front. Jerry took the wagon home and painted it to disguise it. I saw through the lousy paint job and took the wagon back home.

Jerry used to throw rocks at me when I was sitting up on Mrs. Meeseman's garage. I had enough of that so I threw rocks up on the garage, piled them up and when he came walking through the alley I would rain down the rocks on him. One time Ronny, who was only 5 years old at the time got up on the garage with me once I taught him how to climb the cherry tree. He was scared about how to get down as that tree was a bit far from the edge of the garage. While we were up there Jerry Westingburger came down the alley, saw us up there and hollered that he was coming up and was going to throw us both off the garage. I told Ronny that we needed to hang down on Meeseman's side, but he was so scared seeing Jerry

coming up the tree that he just jumped onto the cement by our house. Half was down his body flipped forward and he landed right on his forehead. He ran home and his mother took him to the emergency room and he was back home a few hours later with a whopping headache, a hunk of flesh from the bottom of his nose missing. Again, his mother took care of the medical emergency without causing any ruckus.

Dad never bought Bill a bike so when he was 6 years old I borrowed a neighbor's 20 inch bike without their permission. I then tried to teach Billy to ride it. He never got the hang of it. It was a poor choice to teach him on as the pedals kept going around as long as the bike was moving. So I returned the bike and the woman came running out of her house all upset over the loss of the bike for 24 hours. She went to our house and talked to mom and made a big to do over it but in the end it was just a flash in the pan.

On Christmas day 1954 I invited Father Croke over to our house in the morning. Mom did not give him a very good reception as she said the house was a mess from Christmas wrapping paper being all over the living room floor. The mess wouldn't have bothered him but I'm sure the frigid reception by mom did.

Father Croke used to borrow a neighbor's car as he did not own one himself. One time he borrowed the car, started it up, started to pull away from the curb, then suddenly pulled back into the curb because he forgot something. I was riding my bike just then and was between the car and the curb when he started to pull over. He narrowly avoided missing me, so boy was he furious over the thought that he almost ran me over. He blamed it on me, not on himself.

I would visit him in the rectory on a number of occasions after morning mass. We would sit and talk and he would slip me a banana or two, my favorite fruit. He had a temper, that's for sure, a real Irish temper. When I would upset him he would take a swing at me and I would duck. He would show me his 2 fists and say, "This one is 6 weeks in the hospital and this one is 6 feet under!" It was said with great affection, and naturally he meant nothing by it, he was just joking.

The nuns were terrified of him, which humored me to no end as he was totally harmless, he just liked to bellow and carry on a little to blow off some steam when aggravated.

He was born in Portland Oregon and had 5 brothers, all Servite priests. He seldom if ever got to visit with them. Father Croke was the pastor of St. John Berchmans

when it was located at Mack and Chalmers and late also when the church moved to Lakeview and Warren. He was upset when due to his advancing age they removed him as pastor. That was a big let down for him.

One day Father Croke and I were standing on the corner of Forest and Lakeview watching a professional tree removal company cut down a group of elm trees on this corner that were diseased. Shaking his head, he said that it cost him 25 cents a piece to plant those trees and 75 dollars a piece to have them cut down.

I liked surprising him on occasion too just to get his ruffle up. One time I was riding my Schwinn at a pretty good clip when I suddenly realized that he was right in front of me so I drove up right behind him and then slammed on my brakes, making an awful squealing noise within a foot of him. He jumped a mile and I realized I should not have done that due to his bad heart. He sure was angry with me for startling him!

For his birthday, on August 19 a neighbor took him out fishing. They had plenty of liquid refreshment in that row boat. By the end of the afternoon Father Croke through a heart attack in the rectory. A doctor was called and they gave Father the Last Rites as they told me and the others who were standing in front of the rectory that they thought he wasn't going to make it through the day. I was so sad and so upset, figuring he was a goner, but within the week he pulled out of it and was back on his feet.

Father Croke was walking into an apartment building a few blocks from the rectory just as I was coming back from lunch. He was with another priest and they were just coming out of the apartment building, very somber. A young woman had just been stabbed to death in that apartment and cut up.

1955



Nellie Rehfeldt Dahl

The next time I saw Nellie was in her casket at Van Lerberghe's funeral parlor on Lakewood and Warren in Detroit. I was sure that someone stole my grandmother and put a stranger in that casket – she didn't look at all like the grandma I knew and loved. Her face had totally changed, I mean totally changed. When Marie looked at her mother she said, "That is exactly what ma looked like when she was in her early 20s!" And when Nellie's old boyfriend came to view her in the casket he was amazed and pleased to see that she looked just like he remembered her all those years ago when they dated.



Clara Dahl Fredrick

I first met Aunt Clara on March 26, 1955 at my Grandma Nellie Dahl's funeral at Lakeview and Warren in Van Leberghe's funeral parlor. She was introduced to me by Aunt Elenore. Aunt Clara gave Aunt Elenore \$400 for Nellie's funeral expense. She said that Minna Dahl Henkel left that money in Clara's hands when Minna was dying. Aunt Elenore asked Clara where the interest on that money was being it was held from 1944 to 1955. Elenore did not believe that story at all. She felt that her dad William Dahl Sr. was still alive and gave the money to Clara to give to Nellie's kids.

Ten years later, in 1965, Elenore asked Aunt Clara to go with her to Herman Kiefer hospital to the birth certificate records to swear that Elenore's real first name was Elenore, not Wilhelmina as appeared on her original birth certificate.



Clara Dahl Fredrick & Ray Fredrick

3 years later Clara succumbed to pancreatic cancer and passed away in August, 1968 at the relatively young age of 68. Her husband Ray was heart broken losing his wife that young. He said she knew she had something wrong in her abdomen but did not go to the doctor for diagnosis as Ray said Clara was one stubborn Dutch woman. She let it go until it was too late for treatment. Mom, Dad and I went to the funeral parlor off I-96 on the west side of Detroit. Clara was the most gorgeous corpse I had ever seen. Her head was tilted slightly to one side, displaying her face to the best advantage. She was beautiful of face and figure.



William Dahl Sr. after the mastoid operation

Clara's husband Ray married Clara's best girlfriend, Helen, of many years shortly after her death. After Ray's death I spoke to Helen on the phone and she told me that she had met Clara's brother who had a drooped lip from a mastoid operation in 1930. This brother said he met a woman he intended to marry. He was planning to move to Florida to live with her.

I had no luck getting old Bender pictures from Uncle Art's grandson, Art III. These old Bender pictures were given to Art Sr by Evelyn Bender who had these pictures from Grandma Bender when she lived with Norman and Evelyn. When Art died

the home was turned over to Art Jr. The pictures were then given to Art III. I asked Art Jr.'s wife, Beverly Bender La Chat Lesperence if she could get the pictures for me. She said she wanted \$2000 for the pictures. I was willing to pay for them but I lost track of Art III. I asked Arts brother to try to get the pictures but he said Art left his girlfriend and now the girlfriend has the pictures.



Linda & Nancy Stephens

We were at mom and dad's house on Alter Rd on May 15, 1955 having a birthday dinner for Mike in the afternoon. Nancy ate all of her dinner and she was going into labor with Linda by the time she finished eating. She said she planned on having dessert but when mom started serving dessert she started going into a later stage of labor and decided she had better stop eating. She rushed to the hospital and a few hours Linda was born. When Nancy got out of the hospital she went to mom and dad's house before going home to 2324 Franklin St. in Berkley.



Edward & Marie Bender

Mom and dad gave Nancy and Don a down payment of several thousand dollars to buy their first home at 2324 Franklin in Berkley as their second child, Linda was on her way. Mom and dad also completely paid for Nancy's wedding reception. So I was upset a number of years later when I had such a hard time talking mom and dad into helping me with college tuition which never amounted to more than \$100 a year when I didn't earn enough over the summer to make the full tuition of \$312. When I learned that Nancy got \$2000 freely given and I had such a hard time scraping up college tuition I was hurt.



Hunter Stephens



Christine Stephens

Hunter Coyle Stephens would come with Christine to Nancy's house on 2324 Franklin in Berkley for parties. Red was always drunk and totally obnoxious. I was 8 years old at the time and when I would walk near him he would try to grab me as I walked by. I thought he was disgusting so I veered away from him which made him really mad and he would try to spray me with beer from his bottle.

Nancy was pregnant when Christine had her breakdown so she came over to mom very upset as mental illness always greatly frightened Nancy. But the worse was yet to come. A few weeks later when Nancy went over to Shirley's (Don's sister) house Shirley flipped out and threatened to beat up Nancy. Nancy was visibly pregnant at this point in time so she was terrified and once again came running to mom. I was standing there both times listening to what Nancy was saying. I couldn't believe my ears. Shirley ended up in a mental hospital and spent the rest of her life in and out of the hospital. Every time Shirley would have a nervous breakdown she would set her clothes in the middle of the living room carpet and set them on fire.



Shirley Stephens Jackson

Shirley was married to Jack Jackson but they never had any children. They divorced and then they both had children. Shirley lost both of her children due to repeated nervous breakdowns. Nancy refused to adopt them when the welfare dept. asked her to take them. Shirley's boy looked remarkably like Warren, just 4 or so inches shorter. I was in Wil Mar in a meeting when Shirley's boy walked in to the nursing home and right past me. I immediately recognized him as he had such a remarkable resemblance to Warren and Mrs. Stephens was brought to Wil Mar by me a few years before so I knew for sure who he was. I followed behind him and witnessed at a distance a most warm reunion between the boy, his mother and his grand mother. He had just turned 18 so he had the legal right to look up his birth mother and grand mother.



Louise Reichard. Sandy & Leonard Ligotti

Louise, Leonard and I went tobogganing at Rochester State park on a steep hill filled with large trees. Louise told us to do what she told us as we were gliding down the hill. In order to miss a tree she would tell us to all lean one way to make the toboggan turn away from the tree. If leaning did not keep us from hitting a tree we were all to roll off the toboggan. One time Louise told us all to lean to the right. Louise and I leaned but Leonard sat straight up and stared at the

approaching tree. Louise hollered “ROLL OFF!” Louise rolled, I rolled and Leonard sat straight up staring at the fast approaching tree. He smashed head first into the tree and skinned his face many places. He went to school on Monday with a face filled with brown scabs.

Mr. Reichard also put up a very tall foot swing made out of hemp rope. He would then put up a ladder next to the garage so we could climb up on the ladder, put our foot in a loop at the bottom of the rope, grab onto the middle of the rope and swing clear across the yard and even over the next door fence. The first time I got up really high right over the La Poudre’s fence she had a hand full of china, saw a kid come flying over her fence, thought I had been hit by a car in the alley and dropped all of the dishes, busting a few of them,

In the summer he would wedge a red wooden chair in a full size wagon so we could pull each other with the wagon. Mrs. Ligotti forbade Leonoard to ride in the wagon chair so that poor guy was so miserable.

In the summer he would fill a large rubber boat full of water so Louise and I would wade in it.

Mom used to fill a metal coal tub with water for us to wade in but that was not near as comfortable as the raft.

In the winter Mr. Reichard would take us skiing at the Bald Mountain recreation area. We would ski down a steep road or the side of a hill near a friend’s house. He would stay inside the house and watch us from the window.

He would take us tobogganing at Rochester State Park at the end of John Road. That was a little dangerous as there were trees on the hill so you had to steer the toboggan clear of the trees by shifting your weight. Louise told us how to do it, hollering lean right or lean left. If that didn’t work she told us to all roll off the toboggan before it hit the tree. One time we took Leonard Ligotti with us. He was the first one on, then me, then Louise. Louise hollered lean right, she and I leaned, Leonard didn’t. Roll off, Louise hollered. She and I rolled off, Leonard just sat there staring at the tree. Naturally he smashed head first into the tree, scraping up his face. He had scabs on his face for weeks.

Mr. Reichard also took Louise, Richard, me and their dog Freckles ice skating at the docks at 9 Mile and Jefferson. He told us to stay on the first row as the ice was safe there. He then skated over to the next row to test if it was safe. It wasn’t – he

fell through the ice! He hollered for Richard to throw him a rope and to have the dog pull him out, which the dog did. He then drove home as fast as he could to prevent hypothermia.

We were all afraid of Freckles, who was a Springer Spaniel. Mr. Reichard kept him on a leash attached to an over head line but we had to squeeze right against the garage and run through quick to keep the dog from biting you. He did bite Bruce right in the crotch. Bruce had it coming as he teased the dog.

Louise and I found some sheet music in her garage which we loved. It was called "Old Black Joe". We memorized it and sang it together. We made it sound like a funeral dirge. Much later we learned the proper way to sing it.

Her brother Richard was very talented on the Piano. He took lessons, but could also play anything by ear. We envied him.

The Reichards got a black Cocker Spaniel, Pepper, which had puppies. Mr. Reichard said I could have a puppy so I ran right home all excited telling mom that I could have one of Reichard's puppies. Mom said no, no puppy. "But Louise has a puppy!" I said. Mom replied that Louise had a puppy, I had brothers. I told mom I would rather have a puppy. Mom smacked me one right across the face.

Grandma Dahl was staying with Mildred and Sonny Stocker when she fell ill. Dr. Bumgartner, Mildred's doctor, said Nellie was an old lady who had the flu, so just let her go to bed and rest. The rest of the family had no respect for this doctor, feeling that he was no good. In a few more days Nellie slept around the clock. They couldn't wake her up. Mildred called Elenore and asked Elenore to take Nellie to her house that she didn't know what to do to wake Nellie up. Elenore and Herman drove over to 12012 Gunston on the east side of Detroit and picked up Nellie and took her to their house on San Jose in Redford. In the next several hours Elenore felt that there was something more wrong with Nellie than the flu so she called her family doctor. He made a house call, looked at Nellie, tested her urine and told Elenore that Nellie had sugar diabetes, was in a coma and had to go to the hospital. Elenore cleaned up Nellie, cut her hair and her chin hair growing out of her mole and then called an ambulance and had her transported to Plymouth General Hospital in Plymouth, Michigan. Nellie was dead set against going to a hospital, she had never been to a hospital in her life, not even to have her 6 babies. Nellie said hospitals are the place to die. Elenore's doctor started Nellie on insulin which in a few days brought her out of the coma. The family was very grateful. But the doctor told the family that there was not time for rejoicing yet, that Nellie's

heart was weak and that the diabetic coma may cause her heart to stop. But the family went to visit Nellie every night after work. Nellie was in fine spirits on Thursday afternoon at visiting time. She shook her arms in the air and said she wanted them to take the IVs out of her arms. Nellie was very happy that night, laughing and joking with her kids, saying she wanted to go home. Nellie even remembered the squirrel candy Sandy had given her a few years back for her anniversary.

Nellie was the only jolly one in the crowd that night. Mildred did not want her back, she feared the responsibility of caring for a diabetic, especially having to give her daily insulin injections. Elenore and Herman were the next in line to take Nellie but they said they had a vacation planned so someone else would have to take her for the next 2 weeks. Marie was scared to take Nellie, saying she was terrified to give Nellie daily injections of insulin. Nellie was oblivious to how scared her kids were to take her. She was in high spirits that night. The kids said goodbye and went home. Nellie went to bed at the end of a very happy day. The nurse came in to Nellie's hospital room at 4 am and took her vital signs. The nurse went back to the nurse's station and suddenly remembered that she left her blood pressure cuff in Nellie's room so she went back to retrieve the cuff and was surprised to find Nellie dead. She had quietly slipped away in her sleep.

Elenore got the call at 4:30 am that her mom had passed away. At 4:38 am Elenore called her sister Marie with the sad news. When Marie heard her phone ring at 4:38 am she knew it was bad news. She went down the stairs to the only phone which was on the dining room stand, answered the phone. Elenore told Marie that Nellie had just passed. Marie went back upstairs, woke up Edward and told him Nellie was gone. Marie then cried softly all day that day. I overheard mom telling dad that Nellie was gone. That sure hurt as I loved Grandma Dahl. When Edward came home and saw Marie still crying he told her to stop crying, that her mom had a good life and was residing in a far better place. Marie got a grip on herself and stopped crying.

Sandy heard the phone ringing and feared the worst. Sandy then heard her mom come back upstairs and tell Ed that Nellie had died. Sandy laid there in her bed and could not believe that her grandmother Nellie was dead, after all Nellie was only 69 years old.

Marie made the funeral arrangements at Van Leberghe funeral home, which was right next door to St. John Berchman's Church. Nellie was laid out on March 26, 1955 one day after she died. Grandma would have been so upset if she could see

how the morticians had made her up. They curled her hair, which she would have hated as she always loved that short haircut Elenore had given her. They put lots of make up on her face which would have also upset her as she never wore makeup. And every one was shocked at Nellie's appearance, as they made her appear as she was when she was a much younger woman. No one recognized her at first, her appearance had so changed.

Sharon and Sandy stood in front of Nellie's casket together. We were both scared to look at our dead grandmother. Sandy suggested to Sharon that she touch Nellie and tell her how she felt. After a scared back and forth discussion, Sharon got up the courage to touch Nellie. She was shocked, saying Nellie was very cold and her skin very hard. Sandy did not have the courage to feel for herself. Sandy felt that they put the wrong body in this casket because the woman in the casket didn't look anything like Grandma Dahl. This is the only body that Sandy felt did not look like the person when she was alive. Her nose was much thinner like it was when she was in early twenties and her hair was curled, which she would have hated. Marie and her sister Elenore both said how upset Nellie would be with those curls. Grandma hated curls and always wore her hair straight. So after a lifetime of straight hair Nellie will now spend eternity with curly hair.

Nellie had often said that she hoped she would receive lots of flowers at her funeral. She certainly got her wish, there were 25 bouquets of flowers. She had many relatives and friends at her wake. Aunt Clara Fredrick and Anna Galvin came and gave Elenore an envelope with \$400 in it, saying that Minna Dahl, her mother in law, had left it for Nellie's funeral. Elenore did not believe it, she felt that the money most likely came from Nellie's husband Bill Dahl. When Clara insisted that it came from Minna, Elenore asked where was the interest on the money if it had been in the bank from 1944 to 1955. Clara replied in a snippy voice that she and Anna withdrew the money as they needed it and now replaced it in time for the funeral.

Nellie had her funeral mass at St. John Berchman's Church right next door to the funeral parlor. Michael, our brother was one of the pall bearers. Grandma and her casket weighed probably close to 300 lbs, so Mike's knees almost buckled carrying that casket up a whole flight of stairs. He said the body shifted as it was carried up the stairs, he could hear it go THUD! Mike was the shortest and thinnest pall bearer so he bore a major share of the weight.

Afterwards the casket was placed into the hearse and was driven to Mt. Olivet cemetery to be placed between her mother in law Minna Dahl and her sister in law

Celia Chapp Dahl. Nellie was given this grave by her brother in law Frank Dahl who said he was going to live in Florida and would someday be buried there so he had no need for the grave. Nellie gratefully accepted. Nellie had been standing exactly on top of her future grave in August, 1944 when she stood there for Minna Dahl's burial. Only 4 short years later Frank's health deteriorated when he was in Florida so he contacted his sister Clara to fly him back to Michigan. He now wanted to be buried in the Dahl family plot near his mom and dad and wife but his place was taken by Nellie's body. So Clara buried him at his wife Celia's feet.

On the way to the cemetery we drove down Conner Ave. There was a big sign there advertising the health benefits of the Ojibway herbs. Sandy and Marie asked one another if Nellie might have lived longer if she had taken those herbs as religiously as our next door neighbor Mrs. Meeseman who lived well into her 80s.

Mom gave Mrs. Meeseman all of Nellie's dresses. Mrs. Meeseman was very grateful to receive them and Sandy and Marie used to feel really good every time we saw her wearing them.

When we went back home on Alter Rd that afternoon it began to snow hard. Later in the afternoon Sandy went outside and built a snow horse which was about 3 feet high with well packed snow. Sandy then sat on the horse and thought about Nellie. It was now the 28th of March so the snow horse soon melted.

Nellie's jewelry was soon divided up by Elenore. Sandy got a very inexpensive bird pen and a very nice emerald ring. Sandy was hoping to get the ruby ring as that was Nellie's and Sandy's favorite. A short time later Doris asked to see the two pieces of jewelry so Sandy took her up to her bedroom, opened the dresser drawer and showed her the two items. From that day forward Sandy never again saw the emerald ring. Doris had said to someone that the ring was given to Nellie by a Stocker uncle and should therefore remain in the Stocker family.

We all stood there by Nellie's grave as Father Verweil, O.S.M. recited the final commendation and farewell for Nellie. Then after the prayers were said we all stepped forward and placed a rose on Nellie's casket. Nancy, who was over 7 month's pregnant also stepped forward but when she was next to the casket she lost her footing and could have slid in the grave under the casket had someone grabbed her.

I bought a wonderfully warm coat that year. I loved that coat. It was a dark green with black fur trim. I was toasty warm in that coat. For some reason I will never

understand, even to this day, is why mom took such a intense dislike to that coat. I loved it. Mom made me take that coat back and buy a cold like blue vinyl one. I froze in that coat all winter. I still miss that coat and look for a suitable replacement to this very day.

The fifth grade was the most important year of my life. Sister Mary Esther just graduated from the convent and we were the first class she taught. She was 33 years old, quite old for a first time teacher as she was 30 years old when she joined the Servite order. She was always very serous and meticulous in every thing she did and her teaching us was no exception. She spent hours every day preparing her lesson plans. She was by far the best teacher I ever had. I learned so much more from her than from any other teacher. She was sincere in everything she taught us, her thoughts came from her heart. She believed in all of her teachings. I hung on every word she said the entire school year and was so sad that come June I was going to lose her as a teacher.

When Aunt Agnes visited us on Altar Rd she told me that Sister Mary Esther was in the same class in the Mother House as Sister Mary Esther. She said that when she went to Omaha to watch the installation of Carol as a novice that she felt so bad for Sister Esther because her mother was so mad at her for joining the convent that she refused to come to the ceremony and Sister Esther was there all by herself, so Art and Agnes took her under their wing that day. So she had pictures taken of Carol and Sister Mary Esther. I treasured those pictures.



Bill, Doug, Sandy & Warren at Vale cottage in Algonac

Later our family went to Vale's cottage. Mom, Dad, Mike, Nancy, Doug, Bill and Warren went there for a week. Edward and Don drove us there and then went back

to work. We were there for a week. Doug was 3 and Warren was 2 in 1955. We had no transportation so Mike and mom went on foot to the local grocery store and Mike carried back a large bag of food. The cottage was a dump, old, damp and full of spiders. Nancy was continually screaming every time she met a spider which was often as the place was full of them. The beach, if you can call it that, was mushy and full of tall weeds. Needless to say, we never went back there again.

I owned an Indian rubber ball which bounced very high and traveled very fast. One day I played catch with another kid in the alley with that ball. If you didn't catch the ball then you would have to run after it and pick it up and throw it back. The kid I was playing ball with kept missing the ball and had to run down the alley after the ball. Soon that kid was at the Canfield end of the alley because he kept missing the ball. So he ran across the street and was in the alley on the other side of Canfield. I heaved the ball in a line drive straight ahead going across Canfield. One problem with that maneuver – a police car was coming down Canfield and just as it was crossing over the alley the ball went flying into the open window and beamed one of the cops in the head. One look at what I had just done and I jumped over a backyard fence and took off onto Alter Rd, running close to the shrubbery. I had hollered at the kid I was playing with to jump the fence and hide. The stupid kid just stood there waiting for the cop to back up, which he did. The kid I was playing with acted so stupidly innocent, having no idea who heaved that ball, that the cops figured he was innocent and let him go. I never threw the ball across the alley ever again. Once was enough.



Sandy, Nancy, Donald, Marie and Edward

We went on many picnics through the years from the mid 1930s to the early 1950s. This was the last of the picnics we went on as mom and dad lost interest in going to State Parks, preferring to stay in their own back yard. On this picnic Nancy and mom noticed that Doug was looking rather peaked. By the end of the day it was obvious that Doug was coming down with the measles. Before the week was out Warren came down with the measles too. Linda, who was in the buggy, did not come down with the measles.

Every year the kids knocked over the Christmas tree without fail. It would land in the middle of the living room floor, breaking a bunch of bulbs with every fall. Sometimes it would fall twice despite the fact that mom and dad would tie the tree up to the curtain rod. The tree typically would fall while mom and dad were at church on Sunday.

Mom put up much of the same tree decorations year after year. There was a plastic Santa Claus on sled and skis with ski poles. There were cloth Santa Claus's heads with white beards and Santa hats. The bulbs were large and colorful, blue, green, yellow, red, both round and tapered. Mom topped off the top of the tree with an Angel and put the manger with Jesus, Mary and Joseph in the big hole in the middle of the tree. The manger also had lambs and cows.

Dad put the tree up on Christmas Eve after tramping from Christmas tree lot to lot trying to find the best tree for \$1.00. He'd bring it home on his car and lay it down in the back yard in order to put it in the tree stand, which was made of metal and was always red and green in color. But more often than not, the trunk of the tree was too fat and would not fit into the base. Dad had to saw or hack the base down to size and then try to get the tree to stand straight, which was no small feat. We'd then put the tree in the living room that night and dress it all up with colorful bulbs and various ornaments. My favorite ornaments were the ones that were see through with colorful stripes going around the bulb. The tree always came down on January 3rd, the day after Bill's birthday. Bill wanted the tree to stay up for his birthday. So on January 3rd when I got home from school the tree and all its trimmings were gone and all that remained in the living room was a bunch of dried out pine needles.



Billy & Sandy Bender

We were always so tired on Bill's birthday, all worn out from the holidays. Bill felt that he was being short changed as he could sense how tired we all were and how unenthusiastic we were at his birthday dinner. But mom never short changed Bill or Sandy on Birthday presents even though our birthdays were so close to the holidays. Bill always asked for Chop Suey and chow mein for his birthday dinner and mom always made it for him.

1956

When Ed and Mare took Sandy and Bill and Doug for a car ride we had to listen to all his sound effects as he imitated war sounds that he had heard on TV, watching war movies. Sandy always liked doing her homework in the car so all that noise was highly irritating, but Bill refused to stop making all those sounds, just living in a world of his own listening to war movies.

I had to be careful not to read in the car as it made me car sick. As long as I looked straight ahead I was okay. Doing homework in the car was also okay as I did not read continually.

Louise invited me to her 11th birthday on March 22, 1956. That afternoon after school I told mom that I didn't think I should go to the party as I had a pain in my right side and didn't feel good. Mom immediately said if I didn't feel well enough to go to a birthday party, it was serious so she took me to Dr Hassig's office at Mack and Chalmers. It was a 2nd story office, one had to walk up a steep stair case. The doctor took a blood test and found my white blood cells greatly elevated and sent me to St John hospital at Mack and Moross and called Dr Matthews a general surgeon. Dr Matthews felt it was appendicitis and did an evening surgery

to remove the appendix. This was a wise move as a number of Dahl children got appendicitis and some of them died.

The incision was small as Dr Matthews was a very fine surgeon. Mom and dad came to visit me regularly. Sister Mary Esther and a few of the other nuns came to visit me in the hospital. I was very honored that they visited me.

The incision soon healed without incident. But I was warned no strenuous activity for 6 to 8 weeks, but I knew better. So as the weather got much better I decided to roller skate with my new skates. I could feel the incision seem to stretch so I stopped skating for a few more weeks. Dr. Hassig had a fit! He said if I fell I could have ripped the incision open.

I then played some sand lot baseball over Easter and again felt my incision stretch when I swung the bat so I stopped doing that for a few more weeks.

I did ride my Schwinn panther bike with no adverse affects. By May I was back to full sports with no incision problems. I used to ride my Schwinn all through Grosse Pointe almost every night after school. One time it was a beautiful summer night after dark when I was riding my bike through Grosse Pointe Farms just south of Cottage hospital when an elderly woman slammed on her brakes and told me I should have a light on the rear of my bike, that she didn't see me till the last minute and might have hit me. I was more careful of looking for cars behind me after dark.



Aunt Elenore Mc Kinin

One time Elenore came to visit mom on a fine summer day and they sat out on the front porch and visited. While they were talking I jumped up on the porch rail and started walking the length of the porch rail by holding on to the roof joist of the porch. I swayed back and forth as I walked along the rail. Suddenly mom noticed that I was walking along and said to me in a stern voice "Get down from there before you fall on your head and break a leg". Elenore burst out laughing. Marie

said to Elenore, “Why are you laughing?” Elenore replied, “Do you know what you just said?” You just said she might fall on her head and break a leg. How can you break a leg if you fall on your head?

When our parents when on their Caribbean vacations they had first Agnes Bender and then Elenore as baby sitters. Aunt Agnes had to sleep with me the first night until mom and dad left for the airport. As Agnes was getting ready for bed that first night, she suddenly spotted my science project and freaked. I was growing lima bean plants. They were very tall and had an odor to them. When Agnes walked into the plants she got a real shock.

We would play softball in the summer until it got so dark out that we could not see the ball any longer. When the person catching the ball got hit 3 times because we could no longer see the ball, then we very reluctantly quit for the night. Dad had what we called “Fish belly white” shins as his legs were always stark white but had a whole lot of dents in the shins from getting hit with the ball. Mom always said with sarcasm that if dad was injured working at the house he would complain about the pain, but if he was injured on the ball field he wouldn’t even notice the pain.

A sad story in our neighborhood was George Palsynski. He was 15 years old but due to serious life long neglect he was no taller than us 9 year olds. He was a good kid but was being raised by two very serious alcoholics. He lived in a very dingy small flat above the Johnson’s Milk Depot. His parents were on welfare and were literally passed out drunk more than they were awake. They spent the welfare check on booze and not on food. George used to go down to the milk depot and beg the women for bread and milk for himself and his younger sister. Those kindly old ladies running the store used to pass him food on the QT. George just got out of reform school which he was put there for neglect. He really missed being there and begged us if we ever got into any trouble please tell the police that George did it so he could go back to the reform school. I walked into the upper flat one Saturday and saw both parents out cold laying half on and half off the couch. Dirty clothes were laying all over. There was no washing machine. One day George showed up to play sand lot baseball wearing his sister’s dress. All the clothes were far too filthy to wear. George warned all of us that they were going to get beat up if anyone laughed at him. No one did. They felt bad about his home life. Some one did pin the blame on him for what they did and George got to go back to reform school which made him very happy. He said you got 3 meals a day, clean clothes, decent schooling, a nice library and there was always a baseball game being played in the yard.

George was very strong for his age in spite of his diminutive size. One day George, Louise and I decided to climb our garage. Bill was so sad because he could not climb the garage. So George told Bill he could get him on and off the garage if we put mom's 4 foot All drum on the alley, and then Bill could get on top of the All drum. We put Bill on the All drum, then had him step into the rake, George told Bill to hang on tight to the rake handle as he pulled him up. Half way up Bill let go of the rake handle, fell backwards and hit his head on the pavement. He got a concussion, which Dr. Hassig said was in vernacular called being punch drunk.

Bill had a number of concussions due to the fact that his reflexes were very poor. (Marie had the same problem, but to a lesser extent as she did not fall as often.) When mom or Bill fell, they could not get their hands up in time and would fall flat on their face. The first of his falls resulting in a concussion happened when he was 3 years old. He was running in front of the Meeseman's house when he tripped and fell, could not get his hands up to protect him and fell flat on his face. He came home totally confused. Mom called Dr. Hassig who said Bill was punch drunk, as he called it and that mom should watch Bill carefully and if he worsened take him to the hospital. He was disoriented for the better part of the day then got better.

Another time Bill could not ride a bike due to his balance problems so I told Bill I would ride him on the back carrier of my Schwinn but that he had to promise to hang on tight, hold his feet away from the spokes and to lean with the bike when we went around corners. I then rode him down Alter Rd, around the corner onto Forest and then around the corner again onto the alley. I had to holler at him to keep his legs out and away from the spokes as he was getting his feet awfully close to the wheel. We made the first turn without incident but on the second turn into the alley he leaned far out instead of into the turn and lost his balance and fell off the bike and onto his head. Another punch drunk concussion.

Then the other two teachers in the fifth grade were a joke compared to Sister Mary Esther. Sister Mary Stanislaus was 90 years old and way way too old to teach. She passed the entire year by having the entire class memorize one sentence and every one of the 60 students had to recite the same sentence. If you remembered it all you got an A. I was in the back of the class so by the time I heard it over and over I always got it right. It was a geography class. It would have been interesting

but we never got to read any of the chapters, she was intent on us saying one lousy sentence over and over, 60 times every day.

The other 5th grade teacher was also beyond belief. She was a mean nasty old soul who loved putting kids down. She was a piano teacher so she told the class if any one wanted piano lessons, to see her after class. I wanted to learn the piano so I showed up after class. She looked at me and scoffed: you learn piano? get out of here. I took piano lessons years later when I was over 40 years old and cussed her out because if you learn to play piano before age 13 it is stored in one part of your brain. If you learn to play after age 13 it is stored in a completely different part of your brain so you can never be as talented as you would be if you learned piano before age 13.

I was put in the back of the classroom as I was the tallest kid in the 5th grade that year. I liked talking to John Conforti who sat in front of me so Sr. Esther got upset and put me in a seat with no desk for the remainder of the year.



Sandy & Bill Bender



Sandy Bender

Sister Esther said she thought of not letting me make my confirmation that year because I was a wild and free spirit, challenging the boys in my class to fisticuffs, playing scrimmage football with the boys on the playground and playing handball against the school 3 story wall every day after school with whoever hung around. She thought that was most unladylike. One of the nuns tried to teach me how to knit toward the end of the school year and I told her I had no interest in that, that I'd prefer to color in religious pictures instead. That met with major disapproval.

Years later I asked Sister Mary Esther what she thought of me and the boys I hung around with and she replied that at the time she felt that we were all a bunch of juvenile delinquents who would come to no good. Then years later as she followed us on our life paths, she was shocked to find out that all the juvenile delinquents, as she labeled us, became upstanding citizens with good educations and good

professions, whereas all the kids she labeled as good turned out to be of no accord. That shocked her.

I had a lot of spunk that year, no doubt aggravating all 3 nuns. They tried to institute a safety program for the kids to prevent them from being accosted by strangers and to keep them safe crossing streets. So they told us we were to walk to Canfield and make use of the public school's safety boys who stood at the corners through Chalmers. In first through 3rd grade we were not allowed to ride our bikes to and from school so starting in fourth grade I flew back and forth at lunch time on my bike, allowing myself more time for sitting down for lunch. Mom used to make me hot tea and two sandwiches, usually braunschweiger, bologna, tuna fish salad, egg salad or peanut Butter and jelly. Some times mom even made sardine sandwiches covered in mustard. That was okay with me then but I don't think I could stomach sardine sandwiches today. So when they instituted their safety program that would have been nonsense to me as it would have greatly slowed me down and ate time out of my lunch break. So as usual I jumped on my Schwinn bike and sped home. When I got back to school after lunch someone told on me that I didn't follow their new safety guidelines. The 3 nuns pulled me into the hall and told me that I was to use their new guidelines so no one would ever kidnap me. My reply – "Someone kidnap me? You gotta be kidding!" I then walked away from the 3 of them and back into Sr Esther's classroom. I heard the nuns talking to one another as I walked away. They said "If someone tried to kidnap her, I'm sure they'd get the worst of it!"

1957

I had a nice Bulova watch at the same time. Mom, Doug and I were having lunch one day when Doug started monkeying around and got mom mad. She had just made the 3 of us nice tuna fish sandwiches which were sitting on our plates. Mom took her butter knife, intending to strike Doug on the hand but instead over reached and hit my arm, with a direct hit on my nice new Bulova watch, smashing the crystal, destroying both the crystal on my watch as well as my tuna sandwich which now had shards of glass in it.

At the end of August mom would get new school clothes for all of us. Mom let me go to Hudson's by myself to get a few play clothes. So I found a beautiful red plaid flannel shirt for \$10.00 That was a bit expensive in those days but it was of very good quality, lasted in very good shape the entire year and mom had no objection to me buying it.

Dad used our garage as his warehouse. On a regular basis dad used to take inventory to see what was still there to be sold and to make sure that none of the stuff was stolen. Don did not want to help dad with inventory as there were mice in the garage and Don did not want any of the mice crawling up his pant leg which is what happened to him in his garage on Montclair. Sandy however loved helping dad with the inventory. It was a lot of fun climbing up and over all those boxes and with a flashlight in hand, read off to dad the serial numbers and model numbers of each box.

I loved the big washer and refrigerator boxes. When the delivery men would come to the garage they would take the appliances out of the box before loading it on the truck. So I had the empty boxes to play with. Louise and I and Leonard and Billy and Ronny used to love putting the boxes together end on end, pulling the flaps shut. Then one of us would be the “victim” sitting in the very end of the last box and wait for the attacker to come after you. It was best when there were at least 3 to 4 boxes jammed together. It was so scary to hear the bad guy crawl through all the boxes one by one, with the flaps making a lot of noise every time the bad guy got closer and closer. We would take turns being the scared person or the scary guy.

One job which dad had no stomach for was shoveling snow off the flat roof of the garage. Dad was afraid of heights so he dreaded climbing up on the top of the garage to shovel off snow. Dad and I climbed up to the roof on a ladder. Once up there dad did not want to stand anywhere near the edge so he would shovel the snow from the middle to closer to me. I in turn would shovel that snow right over the edge.



Sandy Wilhelm

Aunt Elenore completed the tom boy look by asking Sandy if she would like a haircut just like what Elenore just got done giving to Nellie. Of course Sandy wanted that short hair cut, but let's do it real fast before Marie comes up from doing the wash and puts a kibosh on it. Sandy was thrilled with her new shorter haircut which she sported through the end of the eighth grade. Marie was not the least bit happy with the new haircut but did not dare say a word about it in front of Aunt Elenore, the barber or Nellie who just got the same haircut.

When Bill was 9 years old I again tried to teach him how to ride a bike. He leaned greatly to one side and I kept telling him to sit up straight. I ran for blocks hanging on to the seat and shouting directions. For the longest time he just leaned to one side but then as he picked up a little more speed the bike started righting itself. By the time we got close to Canfield he got the hang of it. But when he looked backwards and saw that I had let go of the seat he was hollering his head off at me for letting go of the seat. But he was riding!

I guess I didn't eat a good enough breakfast because every day I would get so hungry by 11 am that I could not concentrate in the last class of the morning. I usually had breakfast cereal with whole milk. Sometimes I would also have a piece of toast. In the summer time when I was going to school in the morning I would have 2 pieces of toast with butter and jelly. That gave me diarrhea for 6 weeks straight. At the end of the 6 weeks Dr. Hassig was ready to send me to a specialist. But when I ended classes and changed my diet I became regular again. It must have been either the butter or the jelly.

This was the year that the kidney infections began. They might have begun in the third grade because in that year every month I had a stomach ache. Anyway on the 29th of February I made my confirmation. Nancy was my sponsor. Mom and dad were there for the evening. I had to pee before we even went into the church so I asked the nun to unlock the toilet. She said she did not have a key. I told her I really had to go. She ignored me, again saying no one had a key. That ruined the whole ceremony for me, all I could think of is that I had to go. After we left church mom, dad, Nancy and I were standing in front of Van Lerberghe's and I simply couldn't hold it anymore, urinating on the sidewalk. It was at this point that mom realized I had a kidney problem.

Once the kidney infection problem began I had to go to the bathroom every 2 hours or so. I used to have to hold up my hand in class and ask to go to the bathroom. The nuns would get mad at me and told me to wait and go between classes but I told them I could not wait that long.

Mom and I used to go downtown to Hudsons shopping and as soon as we got off the bus I was in urgent need of a toilet. I also walked slower due to kidney pain. Mom used to call me her little old lady because she could walk and mover much faster than me when the kidney got infected.

The serious kidney infections started one year to the month after grandma Nellie Dahl died. I was in school on a Friday and novena was just about to begin when suddenly I was in horrible pain and my temperature rose to 104 degrees before the day was over. The nuns called home. Mom called dad and dad left work and picked up mom and headed to the school. I was sitting in a chair, in severe pain all by myself. Dad took me to the car and right over to St. John hospital at Moross and Mack in Detroit. Dad drove through Chandler Park Drive on his way there. It was a beautiful drive but I couldn't enjoy the ride as I was delirious with pain. They put me in an exam room but then told Dad that being he had no health insurance on me that he would have to pay them \$100 before they would care for me. Dad had to leave me with mom while he ran over to the Warren and Courville store to get \$100 out of the cash register (there were no credit cards in those days). They then treated me with penicillin and admitted me to the children's ward. Mom and dad were exhausted and went home. I was all alone in the children's ward, hovering between life and death, everyone hoping the penicillin would work against the kidney infection. As I lay there Dr. Walter Hassig Sr, a most kind general physician came to my room, stood at the foot of my bed and tears started flowing from his eyes as he realized the seriousness of the situation. . The penicillin brought the fever down but did not stop the infection.

The kidney infections came every month. They tried chloromycitin another new antibiotic. They also tried sulfa but that didn't stop the infection, only calmed it down, only to flare up every month. The druggist at Dave's Drugs at Warren & Maryland refused to fill the chloromycitin saying that in a child that antibiotic could cause leukemia. But dad had no choice – he had to take a chance.

1958



Linda, Warren & newborn Donna Stephens

Donna Christine Stephens was born on the 16 of January, 1958. She was the 3rd child of Nancy Bender & Donald Stephens. Nancy went on a diet when she was carrying Donna and was proud that she had lost 8 lbs. during the pregnancy. This little family now lived in Berkley. Nancy used to take the 3 kids up to Kelley's store to meet Don after work each night at 9 pm. In the summer time they used to stop at the Dairy Queen on the way home. One day Nancy got the kids ready to go and Warren messed his pants. Then Linda peed her pants. So buy the time she got them all cleaned up she knew she was going to be late meeting Don. When she got up to 12 Mile Rd there was big excitements there. She found out that a car had jumped the curb and mowed down pedestrians on 12 Mile where Nancy and the kids would have been had they been there at the usual time. Their Guardian Angel sure was with them that day!



Linda, Doug and Warren

Mom, Nancy and I took Warren, Doug and Linda to see Santa Claus.

Christine Stephens, Don's mom came over to our house on Alter Rd one day and brought her cat with her. He was an older cat, and very well fed. The cat started exploring our house and soon ended up in the kitchen. Bill, who was about 4 years old, ran after the cat and crawling under the table and chair leg grabbed the cat in his arms. The cat retaliated by scratching him hard, putting a number of cuts on his arm. Billy hollered and let go of that cat really fast. The rest of us stayed far away from that cat.

Dad I used to go to Balduck park and throw the football back and forth. This one day it was really cold outside. After throwing the ball back and forth for over a ½ hour suddenly Dad threw a fast spiral which I caught with my thumb. Due to the severe cold the football shattered my right thumb. We wrapped up my thumb for several days but it got worse instead of better. The thumb got very red and really swollen so we went to Dr. Hassig who sent us to a bone surgeon. I went to see Dr. Posch, a surgeon. He said that the bone in the thumb was shattered and needed surgery. He operated on the thumb, putting the bone back together with mesh. The skin of the thumb was then stitched back together with the incision being down in the inner side of the thumb where the scar would not show once it healed. But for the time being the thumb was wrapped with heavy ace bandage. Two days after the surgery Dr. Posch's partner, a very young physician came and checked my incision. As he was talking to me he had his hand on my knee as he thought I was a boy because of my short hair cut and boy's pajamas. When a nurse came in she was shocked to see his hand on my knee as she knew I was a girl. I liked that young doctor and I certainly did not feel that his behavior was out of order. My thumb healed within 4 weeks. I had problems with bathing and dressing as I could not use my right hand. For years I ended up using my left hand for combing, bathing and brushing my teeth. After a few weeks it seemed natural to do all of those things left handed.

My roommate in the semi private room in the hospital was Janine. She was really low class as were her parents. We were both 14 years old at the time. I felt sorry for Janine as her behavior was going to lead her down the wrong path. Two years later I was once again in the same semi private room as Janine. At 16 years old she was single and 7 months pregnant and dressed in rags, while I was in my last year of high school and on my way to college. I wonder how her life turned out.

We used to play alley softball. It was hard to keep the ball in the alley as it was very narrow. Louise, Bill, Leonard, Ronny and I were the usual players. One guy

would bat and run, the others would try to catch the ball and put the runner out. Bill would get into a lot of trouble with Louise as every time Bill would hit the ball he would get so excited that he would sling the bat backward, hitting Louise hard in the shins. When he did that more than once Louise threatened to slug him back.

Aunt Elenore was the best baby sitter. The one thing that drove her nuts was Mike and I throwing a ball up and down the stairs with as much force as we could muster. Just as we were having a really good time, she said to cut it out, she was afraid we would break something or hurt each other. Thus ended one of the most fun times Mike and I had playing with one another.

Aunt Elenore was not used to caring for 4 kids, she only had one well behaved quiet daughter, Marianne. So when she was faced with 4 very lively kids for a whole week she was totally overwhelmed, especially dealing with 3 year old very lively Doug. He was just being a normally boisterous little kid. The day before mom and dad came home from vacation, Elenore was sitting on the comfortable chair in the living room, totally spread out flat, totally worn out. Boy, was she ever glad to be picked up by Uncle Herman and driven home to her nice quiet childless home on San Jose in Redford!



Uncle Herman McKinin

Herman came on Sunday that week in order to visit with Elenore and get a good Sunday dinner. Doug brought him his teddy bear and asked him to sew the eye back on. Herman gladly did so. He did a really good job but the eye flopped out a bit because it was impossible to secure it from the middle of the head. Doug was very pleased to have the eye put back in but was a little disappointed that the eye was not tightly secured to the head like it used to be.

Sandy had a moment of holding her breath when we all sat down at the kitchen table to eat a wonderful roast beef dinner. Herman had a habit in those days of

chewing rather loudly with his mouth open. Doug was sitting right next to Herman and when Herman started loudly chewing. Doug stopped eating, and stared at Herman. Oh, boy!, thought Sandy. But Herman evidently either did not notice or chose to ignore it, so the crisis was averted.

Herman was a wonderful guy. He had a very regal bearing about him. The men in the family called Herman “The Duke” because of his demeanor. Some of us truly believed that Herman was a member of royalty in a previous life.

Barbara LoGrand was a beautiful intelligent blue eyed blond, the sister of Ronald. One day in the alley behind the McCubbin garage Doug pushed Barbara and walked away with a smart aleck look on his face. That infuriated the mostly placid girl. She walked over to Doug and pushed his head a few times right into the McCubbin garage door. Doug was very upset at this sudden head banging, and said to Barbara, who was a few years older than Doug “Barbara, you brat!”.

There was a scary story having to do with the heavy set older woman who ran the Johnson’s Milk depot. There was a serial killer in the area and when they caught him he said that one of his intended victims was the woman who ran the Milk Depot as she wore low cut dresses and when she leaned over the counter resting on her elbows her breasts would hang half out of her dress which he thought was obscene. He hated his mother and wanted to get even with any woman who reminded him of his mother.

Mom then decided that this room was not being used at all and she decided she would love to have a bathroom upstairs. Mom said it was ironic that a bathroom was not put in until after she had 5 children. So Mom hired Mr. Hyatt to turn the dark room into an upstairs bathroom. The first thing Hyatt did was to put a window into the south wall. It was a small window which Hyatt bought and started carrying in the front door and up the stairs. Teenage Mike came in just then and offered to carry the window as Hyatt was only about 100 lbs and over 80 years old, but his pride was ruffled and he was affronted by someone wanting to do his work. So he struggled up the stairs with the window over his shoulder and hanging on to the hand rail. After installing the new window he then put in a bath tub, a sink and a toilet. He then built a whole wall of cabinet and shelves against the north wall. We were so happy to have our new bathroom upstairs!

Mom and dad then decided that they needed the house re roofed so they hired a roofer to do the job. I saw the roofer get up on the roof so I was interested in what he was doing so I climbed out mom and dad’s bedroom window and walked

around on the side of the roof to see what he was doing. He thought I was a boy so he was friendly until he found out I was a girl walking all over the roof. He was shocked. I was comfortable walking over the front and side of the roof but I was a bit squeamish about walking to the edge of the back of the roof.

One time Don drove the family over to our house on Alter Rd. and parked his Plymouth car in our driveway, pulling on the parking brake. We all were all in the house when Linda and Warren decided to go outside to play. After a while they took it in their heads to jump into Don's car and play around in it. Warren told Linda to pull the parking brake loose which she did. The car suddenly started rolling down the driveway and then clear across the street hitting the car parked at the curb on the other side of the street. Warren kept his mouth shut and poor Linda took all the blame. Boy was I ever holding my breath, wondering if Don's car was going to be hit broadside by an oncoming car, but fortunately there were no cars coming at that time.

It was so hard catching up with the missed school work every month. I was too sick to study while suffering from a kidney infection so I had to catch up when the pain eased. The biggest problem occurred while I was off school in the hospital in the 6th grade. They learned fractions when I was in the hospital and I never did fully digest those lessons and to this day I have a problem with fractions.

When I went back to school the end of May the mother superior said I could go to summer school and then skip from the 10th to the 12th grade, which I did, thus allowing me to graduate with my class.

Sister Mary Bonaventure was my 6th grade home room teacher. She was perpetually ailing. She would tell us how much pain she was in and how high her temperature was that day. She begged us to behave and not cause her any trouble as she was so ill.

I skipped from the 6th to the 8th grade so I missed having Sr. Mary Rachel for a teacher. I felt bad about that as she was a wonderful person.

But I was bored with the teaching and went to the Mother Superior and asked her if I could skip from the 6th to the 8th grade to increase the challenge of the teaching. She gave me a form to have my parents fill out giving me permission to do so. Mom and dad readily signed the slip which I returned to the office. I was given an IQ test which greatly impressed the mother superior. So I took the 7th grade in summer school and passed on to the 8th grade in the fall.

We had a party line on Alter Rd. Dad would get so frustrated. Often when he needed to make a business phone call Mrs. Ligotti would be on the phone for a long time talking to Tootsie Mary. They also tended to listen in when dad would be talking. One day he had enough and called the phone company and had them switch the person we shared a party line with. From that time on we seldom had a problem with the party line.

One time Dad called home on a Saturday. Bill and Doug both ran to answer the phone. Both of them hollered, "I'll get it!" They both picked up the phone at the same time, yanking the phone back and forth to get it out of the other guy's hand. They both ended up on the floor and in the scuffle the phone got hung up. Boy, was dad ever mad! Dad said that if it had been a customer on the other end instead of him, would he ever have been embarrassed!

Bill and Doug also got into regular fights over which channels they would watch. Doug would switch to one channel, Bill would switch back. That went on back and forth for a number of times. They really got into some real donnybrooks over the channel changing.

Doug and Bill would often go to the show on a Saturday afternoon. I almost never went to the show. I would rather play softball or ride my bike. Mom or dad would give them a quarter. They most often would go to the Harper at Harper and Chalmers. In the late 1950s they were building the I 94 freeway right behind the show. So Bill and Doug would play in the ditch that would later become the freeway cement, sliding down the sides of the embankment.

They would also go to the show at Mack and Chalmers or occasionally the one at Harper near Outer drive. Dad would give Bill a dime to call to the store for a ride home after the show was finished. Once when the show was over Bill started walking home to Alter, asking passersby which way was it to Alter Rd. Call dad, Doug would tell Bill. When Bill didn't go to a phone, Doug said, "you spent the dime on candy!" Yup, that's what Bill did. And so they walked all the way home.

One day in the middle of summer I had gone to bed before dark as I was in the habit of going to daily mass for the 6:40 am and 7:20 am. One day I went up to the middle bedroom upstairs and laying across the bed had this sudden maudlin thought – that I would never remember this particular day or moment for the rest of my life. This sad thought was so impressed on my mind that to this day I do remember that moment in time.

I loved going to daily mass in the summer. I used to go there by 6:40 am Monday through Friday. Seeing the nuns come in with their shrouds over their habits, and chanting medieval songs was so uplifting to my soul. It gave me such a religious experience that lasted the whole day long, day after day. The days they did not appear in church was a big let down.

Father Croke also held a special place in my heart. I first met him when I was in the 4th grade at St. Johns. It was a driving rain that October day and the rain came down in such buckets that it filled the gutters and overflowed the streets and the side walks. The drains were clogged with twigs and leaves, creating further flooding. As I came to the corner of Lakewood and Forest, Father Croke, using a spate of 4 letter words, hollered at me to go into the garage and bring out more rakes, which I did with the greatest of speed. We took an instant deep and fast friendship with one another from that day forward. When he would say the 6:40 or 7:20 mass he would stand up at the head of the altar smiling at me with shining Irish eyes before starting mass.

He had a hole in his heart for a number of years so he had to be less active than he would prefer. I used to talk him into joining us in sand lot baseball. He said he'd like to join in but he could not run the bases due to his heart. So we made a deal – he went up to bat and when he hit the ball I would run the bases for him. More often than not he would hit the ball out of the parking lot and I could leisurely run his bases for him.

He was worried about my kidney disease and would visit me in the hospital on several occasions, including right after the kidney was removed.

One time I had a bad bout of kidney infection, was in bed for over a week and was ghost white when I returned to school. A few days after I returned to school there was a huge rain storm and the entire parking lot was flooded. I rode my Schwinn over there and delighted in sloshing through all that rain water, seeking out the deepest water. Another kid came long and started riding close by me, splashing me as he rode by. I turned around and rode straight toward him, thrusting my foot out and shoving him over into the water. I then made another pass through and he pulled me off my bike into the water. Father Croke was standing on the rectory porch observing the whole thing. With a loud bellow he came down off the porch, walked over to where I was sitting in the puddle, grabbed me and my bike, put me in his borrowed car and drove me home.

When I got my first driver's license he asked me to come pick him up at the rectory and take him to Joe Muer's on Gratiot just outside of downtown for lunch. I wore a new white shirtwaist dress with a cardinal pattern, cinched at the waist with a red belt with matching red high heels. He had lobster tail and I ordered a hamburger. He was so upset that I didn't order lobster tail too, but I never had it and didn't like fish. He was in pain on the ride home. Every time I hit a pot hole in the parking lot he cried out in pain.

Mom and I used to go shopping together. We would either take the bus to Hudson's downtown or to 7 Mile & Gratiot. And other times we would walk to Sam's Dept store at Conner and Warren. One time we walked all the there and bought a table and chairs. It was so heavy and we had to carry it by ourselves all the way home to Alter Rd, which was about 2 miles away. We almost got hit by a car crossing Conner. The traffic never let up and the cars were right on top of us continually. Mom and I were so afraid that there was no room as there was no middle lane and there was no room for us and the cars traveling both ways. We were so relieved when we finally got across Conner with those heavy boxes. We were exhausted by the time we got those boxes home on Alter Rd.



Al (Elmer) Bender

One time Uncle Al pushed his wife Elsie all the way from the Parkside Projects to Alter Rd. to visit us. That was the first time I had met Al and the only time I had met Elsie. A later came to our house on Alter Rd. after Elsie died. He mostly visited Bill and me, playing with us and being somewhat silly. In about 1956 Al was diagnosed with throat cancer and his voice box was removed. So for the rest of his life he had to talk with the use of a machine that he would press up against his throat. It made a very irritating sound.

1959

In the back of the house on the second floor they had a small apartment that they rented out to newly weds. Louise and I used to sit on the front rails and pretend they were horses. Louise fell off the rail and broke her arm. She also broke a leg that same year. She never had a serious fall so I never could figure out how she managed to break a leg or an arm.

Another time after her father died she and I went tennis playing in a Grosse Pointe Park court. We ran back and forth for over an hour when suddenly Louise ran clear to the back of the court to return a ball when she stepped on jagged glass which penetrated clear through her thin tennis shoe and she started bleeding heavily from that one foot. We jumped on our 10 speed bikes and I pedaled home while she hung on to my bike as she couldn't pedal with the bleeding foot. Her maintenance man rushed her to the hospital and she got a bunch of stitches in that foot.

The last time I saw Louise was shortly after we moved to Diamond in Sterling Heights. We went golfing together. When we said goodbye that was the last time we ever saw one another. It was the end of a long time friendship through many a childhood days. I called her in June, 1982 to tell her that my brother Bill passed away. She was shellacking boards for her new boat and was unable to come. Leonard Ligotti and his mother came to Bills funeral. I learned that Leonard was now married to a pleasant somewhat heavy set blonde woman, was living next door to his mother and had a daughter. A few years back, around 2004 I read in the obituaries that Richard Reichard had passed away and that Louise's last name was Quinlan. As young children Louise and I had planned to live side by side in a house with a white picket fence. That dream has long since faded away.

Mom and Dad invited Art and Agnes to our home in the middle of the winter. The night that they were expected to come it started snowing. We ordered Henny Penny chicken for the night. Art and Agnes did not show up that night at all, they were no show and no call. We were wondering if they did not come because of the snow, but if so, why did they not call and tell us they were not coming? We ended up eating that wonderful tasting chicken that night.

Dad bought Doug a red 26 inch Viking bike for his birthday. I hung on to his seat too but he caught on right away and was off and running in record time. It was a neat looking red bike with a horn in between the bars.

All of us used to have live Christmas trees as there was no artificial ones in those days. So a week or so after Christmas people would throw their trees in the alley. One day I went up and down the alley and collected all the Christmas trees and threw them into McCubbin's side back yard which was fenced in. It made a very cozy cave, which I loved to nest in, feeling like I had a fort. That lasted only a few days until Mrs. McCubbin discovered all those trees in her side yard. Boy, was she mad at me!

In the 8th grade I was given the worst possible home room teacher. Sister Mary Falconieri. To say that she was totally nuts was to do her justice. She had a 6 inch platform built so she could easily oversee the entire classroom. Considering that she was over 6 feet tall that platform was hardly a necessity. She told the boys to keep their hands out of their pockets, that she knew what they were playing with. She had it in for me because I was double promoted. One time I came up to her desk for an explanation and she told me to go sit down, that she didn't help double promoters. Another time she told me to go comb my hair on the other side that the part did not belong on the left side. I had a real problem with that as mom had curled and combed out my hair and I had no idea how to re comb it. I had a strong urge to go to the mother Superior's office and talk this over with her but decided not to do it as she would not want to handle the nut case over such a trivial matter. Mom decided to talk to Falconieri after me telling her story after story about how she was picking on me. So at the end of the day mom came to the classroom and asked to speak to the nun. We were just about to leave when mom arrived. Sister Falconieri grabbed mom by the arm and yanked her about 6 feet into the classroom and slammed her down into a desk. That sure took the wind out of mom's sails! Naturally nothing got accomplished with this visit.

In 8th grade I heard that Mrs. O Keefe was giving Bill grief in his 4th grade class, accusing Bill of having been picking on a little guy who was Mrs. O Keefe's pet. Bill never picked on anyone and I told Sister Falconieri I would have to go around the corner to the 4th grade class and set Mrs O Keefe straight. Sister Falconieri thoroughly disliked Mrs O Keefe so she was delighted to let me go and tell he off. I met her in the hall and told her Billy never picked on anyone. She insisted that Bill did. I told her in no uncertain terms she was dead wrong. Mrs. O Keefe took her index finger and poked me in the chest, telling me Bill did it. I took my index finger and poked her right back in her chest, making my point the same as she was making hers. I saw Sister Falconieri out of the corner of my eye grinning like mad over the altercation.

To me high school was all study and no socializing. I had no interest in going to ball games as I could not get there as dad worked till 9 pm. I avoided the sock hops too as I was as allergic to them as Mike was before me. I was not forced to go to the Senior prom although Mike was. He belonged to the first graduating class of Servite high so they paired him up with a wall flower. I remember Mike taking a book out of the library and practicing in the living room, using the book as a guide to the proper steps to take.



Edward & Marie Bender

Mom and dad celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary on August 25, 1959. Dad took the day off work, which is something he very seldom did. They decided to go to Irish Hills on the other side of the state. Nancy came over to our house on Alter Rd to take care of the kids for the day. Mom and dad left home about 9 am and started out for Irish Hills. Nancy had made a plan in her head of what she wanted to do to celebrate the anniversary. She was the only child old enough to give mom and dad a present and she had it in her heart to give them something very special in spite of having very little money to spend. So she bought them a crystal glass bowl with a silver rim. And she brought with her from home a vanilla cake mix and 3 different size cake pans. We then walked all the way up to the bakery at Chalmers and Mack and bought 25 wedding silver foil decorations and a bride and groom for the top of the cake. She then baked the cake in the 3 cake tins, cooled them off and then stacked them in 3 tiers and did a professional job of icing the wedding cake. And for a finishing touch, Nancy put those 25 anniversary silver foil decorations, bells on the side and the bride and groom on the top of the cake.

But right after Nancy got all the ingredients and decorations laid out all over the kitchen table disaster almost occurred. Ed and Marie walked back in the house

which threatened to spoil the surprise if mom walked into the kitchen and saw the wedding cake in the process of being created. Nancy was so worried that mom would walk in to the kitchen and spoil the surprise. But mom and dad came back into the house to change clothes as it was 100 degrees outside and they were melting in their warmer clothes. So mom changed into a sleeveless blouse and shorts and dad put on a short sleeve shirt and shorts. They then left the house again without coming anywhere near the kitchen. What a relief that was for Nancy, not to have to route them away from her art work in progress. And that wedding cake was truly a work in progress! It was absolutely most professional, as good as the finest bakery shop could have done. Years later Nancy was still upset that she didn't get mom and dad a better wedding present, even though she could not have afford to have spent more. But mom loved that bowl and for many years afterwards she used that bowl over and over as part of her festive dishes.

In the 8th grade one of the home room nuns was Sister Mary Doris. She was close to Carol Bender as she recognized Carol's impressive ability with painting pictures. But Carol refused the compliment, saying she was not a true artist as she could not dream up scenes in her head, she could only copy from a picture. Sister Doris was disappointed in me as I had no artistic talent whatsoever.

One year we had a very nice Thanksgiving dinner on Alter Rd. Mom and Nancy did all of the cooking. When we finished dinner dad and I were so over stuffed we could hardly breathe. So while mom and Nancy were stuck with cleaning up, doing dishes in mom's brand new portable dishwasher and cleaning up, dad and I went for a very long walk down Voigt, finishing up on Cornwall street. We enjoyed that walk more than we did any other that we took. It was such a wonderful thanksgiving stroll over 3 miles long.

1960

I had the great misfortune to have Sister Mary Falconieri again the very next year as I passed into the 9th grade at Servite high. But I was no longer in her home room so I had much less exposure to that mentally unbalanced woman.

In the 9th grade there was a wonderful nun by the name of Sister Mary Donata. She was truly a sweet person. She called me Sandy and we had a close relationship. She taught Latin which I loved and excelled at. I took over 8 years of Latin, between Servite High and Wayne State University.

But there was one time when Sister Donata was not at all pleased with me. Our biology teacher told us to collect grass hoppers for a science lesson. So when I got home I found a glass jar, punched holes in the tin lid and told Doug I would pay him 25 cents if he would collect grasshoppers for me. He agreed, took the jar and went down to the Carmack's yard looking for grasshoppers. He found a few but as he did so he tripped and fell and the glass jar broke and the glass shard wet into his hand. He ran home screaming at the top of his lungs. Dad made a nasty remark about all the noise Doug was making, but when he came running into the house I immediately saw why he was screaming. I took him to the bath room and started holding his hand under water to stop the bleeding. But it wouldn't stop because he had cut an artery in his hand. I had just learned in school that if the blood keeps pumping out of your hand you cut an artery and had to go to the hospital and get it stitched up. So I wrapped up Doug's hand in a towel to try to stop the bleeding. Dad, mom and I went to Cottage hospital to the emergency room to get his hand stitched up. Doug was a nervous wreck and just kept crying. We brought Doug back home and mom spent the night sleeping with Doug to comfort him. He squirmed in pain all night long.

It was my job to handle the blood soaked towel when we got back home. I took the towel to the basement and as a sudden I thought why waste a perfectly good towel full of blood when you can have some fun with it. So I squeezed out the blood into a jar and the next day took the jar to school with me. When I got to Sister Donata's room I had the jar with me. As we were saying the pledge of allegiance I tapped Mary Balduck on the shoulder and showed her the jar full of blood. She let out a blood curdling scream as I was laughing my head off. I got a very disproving look from Sister Donata for that stunt.

In the 9th grade a fellow student by the name of Gary Soulliere went into kidney failure and was placed in the hospital. The idiot doctors removed first one kidney, then the second one. That was insane as there was no dialysis yet and putting that boy through such agony was criminal in my estimation. He was visited by the nuns and he told them he was ready to die, which he did shortly afterwards.

My kidney was almost dead at this point so I stayed home on the day of his funeral as I did not want such a grim reminder of what I might soon go through myself if the left kidney might also fail as it was subject to a number of kidney infections through the years form age 11 to age 16.

1961

One time dad took off work to watch me play sand lot softball in the park at Warren and Alter. I was up to bat at the time when the man standing next to dad said, "Watch that kid. See how he holds that bat. See how he shifts his feet. He's going to send that ball right down the first base line!" And that's what I did, batting a home run and bringing two men in to home plate as well. (The man didn't know I was a girl because I was wearing unisex clothes. And dad wasn't about to tell him. When the game was over dad told me what the guy said, and then dad said to me with great sadness in his voice, "Too bad you are just a girl!")

Dad said the same thing to me when I got a real good report card. One time I had all A's except 2 C's at the bottom of the card. Why the C's, dad asked. Those are for neatness and behavior I told dad, areas I would never excel in. Oh, okay, he said. That didn't matter to him either. (It didn't bother mom either, she had long since given up any thought of making a demure young lady out of me.) Mom and Nancy always made a joke out of my rough and tumble ways. One time I got an autograph book and decided to have dad and Nancy put an entry in. Dad wrote a flattering entry – to my Sandy, better than her dad in baseball, football and tennis (which I wasn't he was flattering me.) Nancy, who was expecting Linda at the time, wrote a masterpiece in my autograph book, "To my delicate horse of a sister, built like a battleship with weak kidneys! Signed Shakespeare, to be or not to be".

Mr. Howard Reichard was a Detroit Police officer. Grandma Nellie Dahl's cousin George Rose worked along side him in the Detroit Police Dept. Mr. Reichard was a wonderful kind man who took Leonard, Billy and me on a number of outings in the winter and the summer. Once or twice a summer he used to take us to Jefferson Beach amusement park on a Tuesday when the rides were 10 cents instead of the usual 25 cents a ride. We also got a strip of ten ride tickets from Wonder Bread on occasion.

He also took us tobogganing at Rochester State park and also to Bald Mountain in winter time. The one time he took Louise, Richard and me and Speckles the 50 lb. red and white Springer spaniel dog ice skating at the canal at 9 Mile and Jefferson in St. Clair Shores. Mr Reichard told us to stay in the beginning part of the canal while he skated on the next part of the canal to see if the ice was safe. It wasn't. Mr. Reichard fell through and was treading ice cold water trying to get out. He told Richard to grab a rope from the car and use Speckles to pull him out back onto the ice. Speckles pulled and walked backward and soon got Mr. Reichard out of

the water and back on the ice on his belly. We all rushed to the car and got back home before Mr. Reichard got hypothermia.

Two months after I had my kidney removed Mr. Reichard invited me for a boat ride. When we got to Peche Island in the Detroit River Mr. Reichard set Louise up to go water skiing around Peche Island. Louise was an expert water skier, having done it many times. I then tried my very first time at water skiing. I was scared of falling as the water was over my head. I got up on the skis on the very first try and skied all around the island. But I did not maintain the proper posture for water skiing and my back really hurt from leaning forward instead of backward and also my kidney operation incision had not completely healed and straining it caused a lot of pain. But poor Mr. Reichard was in far worse shape medically. He was so very weak that he had to have a friend with him to handle the boat. As the summer and winter waned Mr. Reichard became increasingly weaker and on February 14m 1962 he passed away. They assumed it was from cancer.

Louise's mother did catering so as he was dying Mr. Reichard sold the home on Alter Rd and bought his wife a small building on Mack Ave in Grosse Point Park. She had her catering business on the first floor and living quarters on the second floor. Louise invited me over to her new house one day and as I was leaving her black Cocker Spaniel Cricket came onto the back porch. Louise told me that Cricket was the dumbest dog they ever had. Watch this, she said. She put her arms out and said, Cricket jump! He jumped from the second floor! She grabbed him before he hit the pavement.

In Christmas 1960 my beloved Schwinn panther had seen its better days, its spokes were now bent out of shape on front and back wheels from all those years of jumping up curbs there were no curb cuts in those days, just tall curbs so you had a choice of either bumping down the curb, then riding in the street till you came to a drive way. I did both, depending on my mood and how dangerous it might be to ride in the street. Mickey's friend, the Cronin kid rode his bike in the street to get to Dave's drug store to buy lipstick for his babysitter and was struck and killed by a car. That made me wary of riding in the street.



Edward Bender at Pacey's cottage

We went to Lion's Head almost every summer from 1953 to present. Most of the time we went for 2 weeks. From 1953 to 1961 we left for Pacey's cottage on Sunday morning, getting there about 4 to 5 pm. We lived on Alter Rd in Detroit at the time and there were no freeways in those days so we would drive to Gratiot Ave and take Gratiot Ave all the way to the Blue Water bridge. Once in Canada we would take the King's Hwy 7 to Hwy 21. Hwy 21 would go for about 3 ½ hours till we came to Hwy 6 which took us to Ferndale, at Ferndale we would turn on #9 which took us into Lion's Head. We would then drive up and over a series of hills and when we got to the top we would see the Georgian Bay. Pacey's cottage would be a short distance from the bend in the road.

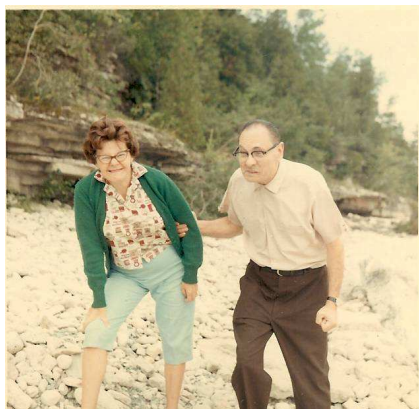


Ed tightening down luggage rack

Dad would unload the car and the luggage rack while mom would start supper. The first year Nellie Dahl came to the cottage with us. We had to beg her over and over to come as she had problems with her bowels and she was so afraid she'd lose control on such a long trip. But dad promised her religiously that he would stop every time she asked him to. So in the end she agreed and loved being at the

cottage and watch all the big fishing boats on the Georgian Bay. On the way home from the cottage Nellie Dahl was very helpful as she kept feeling out the window for the strap that kept the luggage rack securely tied to the roof of the car. When we got to St. Joseph's Catholic Church on Hwy 21 Nellie told Edward who was doing all the driving in those days that the luggage strap was coming loose. So Ed stopped in front of the church and checked the strap, and sure enough it was loose. So dad tightened all 4 straps, securing the luggage rack for the remainder of the trip home.

Dad loved to skip stones across the Georgian Bay. He preferred the light blue flat shale like stones. He often was able to get 12 –14 skips out of a stone. He taught us kids how to hold and fling the stones to get the maximum skip. As a teenager I was soon able to also get 12 –14 skips out of a flat shale stone.



Marie & Edward at Lion's Head



Marie, Sandy and Bill on the cliff



Ed, Marie & Bill in Lion's Head

Mom, dad and us kids took many walks along the shore line, often walking on the stones to town. One time we found a broken down boat house on the stone close to the bay. We stopped and took pictures of us in the broken down structure. We

also like to clown around on the stones and we have some very cute pictures including mom's famous sticking her tongue out at us if she didn't like what we were doing.



Sandy & Marie on Anita's rock



Inside the Glocca Morra

The rock mom and I are sitting on is outside Anita Cunningham's cottage at the end of Carter Rd. Later on Aunt Elenore also sat on that rock. Now it sits much higher and is a lot harder to get onto.



Maeie & Ed Bender at Pacey's #3



Sandy & Marie in Pacey's #2

When I was 14 years old I walked the entire shoreline from Pacey's cottage to the very end of the north bluff, a distance of about 4 miles. I walked along the rocky shoreline, both over rocky pebbles as well as huge flat slabs of stone, singing the song, "I'll sing a hymn to Mary, the Mother of My God". It took several hours to walk there and back, which was no problem as mom never questioned where I was, she knew I would get safely there and back no matter where I wandered either at Pacey's or back home on my bike.

While walking the large flat section of the shoreline I would walk over to the edge of the rock and peer down. It was a big drop off there, going down at least 10 feet straight down. The water is so clear there that you can see down over 10 feet so it is quite deceiving just how deep that water is. I had no intention of stepping off the end of that flat slab.



Marie upset over getting into the wooden boat in Lake Huron

Mom was always scared to get in a row boat or to get anywhere where the water would be over her head. Mom almost drowned when she was first married. She was wading at Cranberry Lake when as a sudden she stepped into a hole and went over her head. She was panic stricken. Dad saved her by pulling her out of the hole. She fought like crazy and could have drowned both of them. She was strangling dad so he swam down out of her tight grasp and then grabbed her from behind and pulled her to shallow water. She remained so panic stricken that she continued to be in danger of drowning even though she was now waist deep in water. Marie never forgot that frightening experience so when dad rented a wooden boat with oars Marie was very frightened to get in the boat. Dad had to promise to stay close to the shore so he would fish for perch along the weeds close to shore.

And when we took a picture of mom in a boat she was sure to stick her tongue out at us.

We went fishing in a rented row boat at either Johnson's Harbor or Pine Tree Harbor. Sometimes dad would bring his Scott Atwater motor and clamp it on to the back of the boat. But often he would not use it as it was undependable – it would take you out as far as you cared to go, but it would never start up again and you would be forced to row back to shore.

One time when I was about 9 years old dad took me fishing at Pine Tree harbor. He had a fine rod and reel. He gave me a piece of string with a hook tied to the end of it. Dad cast his line far out from the boat and waited for a fish to bite. I simply dropped my string on the side of the boat. I caught 6 fish with my makeshift fishing gear while dad caught nothing with his fine rod and reel. At first dad thought it was my side of the boat that the fish were on, so he tried that side. Still no luck. So dad traded fishing gear with me. He caught nothing with my string but I caught another fish with his rod and reel. Just the luck of the draw, I guess.

One time mom, dad and Doug and I went fishing at Johnson's Harbor. You had to drive through Mr Johnson's cow pasture to get to Lake Huron. He told us that we had to open the gate, drive through, then close the gate again. And then when you got to the water side of the pasture you had to open and shut that gate too. So we finished fishing, returned the boat and got in dad's Pontiac Chieftain. Dad opened and closed the water side gate then drove through the pasture to the outside gate. He told 5 year old Doug to open the gate and when the car drove through to shut the gate and jump back into the car and sit in mom's lap. Doug got out of the car, opened the gate and had a marvelous time swinging on the gate by his belly. When the car went through Doug was still having a grand old time swinging on the gate. Dad hollered at him to shut the gate and get into the car. Doug kept blissfully swinging by his belly on the gate. Mom and dad were getting impatient. Dad says I know how to get him off the gate and into the car. So he swung the car hard left and started driving along the hedge where Doug couldn't see the car any longer. Figuring they might be taking off without him he jumped off the gate, shut it and started running full speed for the car. Mom opened the door and Doug jumped on her lap. Mom got a knowing smile on her face and said to Doug, "what's your name?" Douggy. Where from? Douggy from America. Mom said with mirth in her voice, "Darn we could have got away with it!" Naturally she was just joking. Doug was such a handful at that age.

That same vacation mom, dad, Doug and I went into a souvenir shop just to look around. Right away Doug spots a neat metal fire engine, picks it up and says he wants it. The price was just outrageous so dad said no, put it back. Bad mistake. Dad should have put it back himself, not let a 5 year old handle the job. Doug got really upset over not being able to have the fire truck so he flung it clear across the shop, just missing all the crystal items sitting on the table. Mom and dad stopped breathing as the fire truck came close to all that expensive crystal. Fortunately it missed everything and fell to the floor. We didn't stop long enough to see if the

fire truck was damaged, which it probably wasn't. We just left out of that crystal shop just as fast as our legs could carry us.

Doug was so cute in his red and white shirts and his suspenders holding his jeans up. We used to get out drinkable water from a flowing spring right in front of a motel half way between Lion's Head and Wiarton. Doug used to get out of the car with the jugs in his hand and fill the jugs by putting the spout in front of the flowing water. He used to be so cute bending over filling the jugs.

Another time Doug and Bill were both on the rocks while dad and mom and I were by the middle #2 cottage at Pacey's. Suddenly Bill and Doug started yelling really loud at one another. Mom and dad were embarrassed at all that loud noise so dad hollered at Bill to get up to the cottage. Just as Bill was running up Doug fell and injured his hand on the rocks. Bill ran up the stone stairs and headed for the cottage. As Bill neared the cottage he turned his head around and started hollering more insults at Doug. As he had his head turned he ran full speed right into the chimney and injured his eye. Mom and dad took both boys to the local Lion's Head emergency room. The doctor took one look at Doug's injured hand and then at Bill black eye, smiled and said to mom and dad, I can see what happened here (referring to his supposition that Doug popped Bill in the eye with his fist.)

Pacey's cottage was primitive in construction, inside and out. Inside it was unpainted cheap wall board. It only had cold water and no bathtub or shower. We had to bathe at the bathroom or kitchen bowl in cold water. We could heat up water with a kettle and then pour it into a sink. For privacy in washing you had to use the much smaller bathroom sink. Mom used to put he bathing suit on, grab a bar of soap and a towel and wash cloth and sit in the Georgian bay on a large flat stone and bathe in the really cold but clean water of the bay. There were 3 bedrooms in cottage #3, 2 bedrooms in cottage #2 and 2 bedrooms in cottage number #1 which was the deluxe cottage. There was a very small cottage to one side closer to the road which had one bedroom and was quite cramped.

All the beds in all the cottages were damp feeling. There was 2 full size beds in cottage #3 and one very small bedroom with 2 bunk beds, in #2 there was 2 bedrooms and one small room with bunk beds in it. In all the dougle bedrooms the beds bumped right up against the front and back walls and also the side wall. You had to climb on the bed to make it as there was no way to walk around it. Dad always started a fire in the pot belly stove to warm up the cottage and to take the dampness out of the beds. We had to provide our own sheets but Pacey had blankets, albeit thin and older ones.

When you pulled up to the cottage on Saturday afternoon Pacey would with great flourish put his boot on your back bumper, then lean way around and write down your license plate number, telling you that if you steal his blankets he will get you at the border when he reports it to the customs officials.



Lydia Szulc & Marie Bender
Cedar Grove Cottages, Lion's Head

He used to get really mad at “those dumb Americans” who don’t know how to start a fire in the pot belly stove. He showed us how to put sticks and paper in the bottom then logs on top. He showed us how to adjust the damper to keep the fire in the cabin and going for a long time. When the fire first got going, the heat from it would make you sleepy as it was a heavy heat. But in the middle of the night the fire would burn down to an ember and you would have to get out of a cold bed and restart the fire. Being we were on vacation and in a really good mood we didn’t mind at all fooling with the fire. We even had to chop our own cedar wood in Mrs. Szulc’s time. We would have to duck under the cottage #2, take the axe and chop the wood by standing it up on end and splitting it with the axe. It was a fun thing to do on vacation.

The stove was small and electric and burnt the cake mom had baked in it. She cut off the bottom but it still tasted like char. The stove was apt to blow out fuses late on when Mrs. Szulc bought the cottages. The walls were made out of cedar board and you could smell the nice cedar smell in the cottages, especially the bathroom.

Pacey built the cottages and rented them out but they did not belong to him. His daughter hired him to build them. After a number of years as Pacey got older his daughter sold them to Edwin Szulc and his wife Lydia. They bought the cottages

and land for only \$10,000 a real bargain, even in those days. The Szulcs came from Eastern Europe and settled in Toronto in the early 1950s. The Canadian government sent them to school for 6 weeks to learn how to speak and understand English. The Canadian government then sent Edwin Szulc to class to learn to be a baker. He later opened his own business in Toronto and sold baked goods for about 12 years. Once he saved up \$10,000 he saw the ad for Pacey's cottage, went there and bought the land and cottages. He took over the cottages around 1967. In July 1968 we stopped at his cottages, which he now named Cedar Grove cottages and rented cottage #2 for one week. We had Donna, age 14 with us that week. Donna freaked out because Mr. Szulc kept following her everywhere. She had the middle bedroom in the cottage and while she was changing into her bathing suit she saw a pair of eyes peeking through the curtains at her. Szulc turned part of the small cottage into a shower for all of the cottages. He put hot water into the shower room and all of the cottages. When one of our guests took a shower she came and told us that he had a peep hole into the shower from the small cottage.



Sandy, Marie & Donna



Marie in front of cottage # 3 Pacey's

Szulc made a nice home for himself and Lydia out of the small cottage which he added on to. Under Pacey there really was no front yard as the yard in front of the cottages under Pacey was bumpy and slanted sharply downward. Szulc filled that whole area in front of the cottages in with fill dirt and planted grass. So now the front yard was level and very smooth and covered in nice grass. The next year Szulc put in a swimming pool for kids to play in. Donna and I had a fun time splashing each other with water. The water in the pool only came to half way up to our hips but it was cooling on a hot day and we could sit in it. As I was sitting in the pool that first year someone from another cottage came to the pool, looked at me sitting in the water, then turned and walked away. I wondered why she left. I looked down at my own skin and was shocked, now I knew why she walked away. I was covered from head to toe with bright red raised bumps. So we went to the

doctor in Lion's Head. When we went to his office his office help called him in from the field next to his house. He was on a tractor plowing his field. The doctor came in, washed his hands, took a look at my red bumps and declared it was an allergic reaction to the Albamycin antibiotic that I was given to counter act my kidney infection. The needle was fat and long and it seemed like the doctor screwed it into my arm as he appeared to be twisting the needle as he injected it.

The doctor, Dr Hopkinson, died soon after of leukemia. His wife, also a doctor of medicine took over the practice and until retirement was the sole doctor in Lion's Head. She was a kind and considerate doctor, knowledgeable and very reasonable in her charges. I took mom there once for a bladder infection. The doctor checked her out, took a urine test, gave her an injection and antibiotic pills and only charged her \$38. I gave the doctor a \$50 and told her to keep the change. She was shocked, no one ever paid more than her fee.

The health department came and inspected the property the next year and shut down the pool.

Later on when we went to the Cedar Grove cottages Mr. Szulc had passed away and Lydia was running it by herself. He was buried up on the hill in the Lion's Head cemetery just outside Lion's Head. His grave marker had a musical instrument on it. One time when I first got to the cottage Mrs. Szulc hailed me before I even got to the cottage for the first time. You! Come over here! she shouted. She was standing right in front of her 1 car garage.

I walked over to the entrance to the garage. She pointed to her small foreign car and told me to get the car out of the garage and then drive it back in straight. I looked at her car. The front end of the car was shoved sideways right up against the side of the garage. Mrs. Szulc hollered at me really loud, so much so that it sounded like she was blaming me for the car being sideways in the garage when I wasn't even there when it happened. She is the one who did it trying to straighten it out. I really didn't want to get into that car as it was a stick shift and very close to the garage wall. If the car jumped when you put it into gear it would slam into the wall. I hadn't driven a stick shift for a few years and had no idea where the friction point was on the stick shift. But I got into the car, very carefully put the car in gear, slowly letting out the clutch. Four or so times I gently moved that car a very short distance front and reverse and finally I got the car out of the garage and then straight back in. She was pleased but refused to acknowledge it.

Whenever mom rented one of the Cedar Grove cottages she always made a big pot of vegetable beef soup. It would simmer on the stove all day long. Right after

mom put the pot on the burner and put all the ingredients in. Mrs. Szulc comes to the kitchen window and peers in. She sees the huge pot boiling away on the stove and gets really worked up, thinking of the cost of electric and says, What's that!? pointing to the boiling pot. Mom says vegetable beef soup. Mrs. Szulc gets all upset, thinking of her electric bill.

Another time we are again in cottage #2 renting for a week. I have Harrigan, my golden retriever with me. Mrs. Szulc does not like dogs of any kind and very much disapproves of having any dogs on her property. She needs tenants so she allows me to bring my dog even though it really irritates her. So she says if I bring the dog he is not to urinate or defecate on her property. So mom says she will make lunch while I walk the dog, running really fast off her property before he does any business. Mom says she will start lunch while I walk the dog. Right after I leave the premises mom turns the stove on. It doesn't light up. So she turns on another burner it goes on, then goes off. She walks up to Mrs. Szulc's house and tells her the stove is acting up. Mrs. Szulc goes to the cottage. She brings new fuses with her, figuring maybe the fuses have burned out. She puts a new fuse in. The burner works, then later does not work. So she turns on the other burner. It works, then it doesn't work. Then the oven works, then it doesn't work. She changes fuses. One burner on each side works, the other two don't work. Mrs. Szulc is all worked up. This cannot be. Two burners on one side work on one fuse. Either both burners work or neither work. There is no way one burner on each side can work and the other two don't work. Just then Harrigan and I walk back into the cottage and as we walk in suddenly all the burners and the oven all work perfectly fine again. Then Mrs. Szulc really gets emotional. I know what's happening, she says. "It's the SPOOK!" (She heard from Edna how Werner has been visiting her when she was sitting on the half stone wall in the front and talking to her and making a kissing sound) And it probably was Werner with the stove as it worked perfectly for the rest of the 2 weeks after I and Harrigan came back in the cottage.

That night Werner was back again. At the stroke of midnight I was laying on my stomach in the bed when all of a sudden Werner starts tapping out Morse code on the metal headboard. Oh no! I said to myself. Werner is going to be so aggravated with me as I don't understand Morse code. Werner, I says to him, I am very tired. I do not understand Morse code. I desperately need to go to sleep. Please stop doing that. It's after midnight. So he starts doing Morse code very softly underneath my stomach on the mattress. Werner, I tell him, it doesn't matter whether you do Morse code on the metal head board or the mattress. I still do not understand Morse code! He stopped tapping it out and I fell asleep.

I called Mrs. Szulc to see if she had a cottage for rent. She said that she has not been renting the cottages as she had a water problem. She said she could rent me one if we pretended that I was her niece. Okay by me, I said. When I got there I asked her what the problem was. She said when she came back to her house in the spring, a few weeks later she became ill. As the weeks rolled on she got more and more ill. She finally went to the hospital and was close to death. After many tests both by the local health unit and by the one in Toronto she found out that her well water had been poisoned when the local highway department spread a new kind of deicing chemical on the roadway in front of her home and it got into the drinking water which poisoned her. So the government had to drill a new well for her being they are the one who poisoned the old well. They had to drill 3 different wells because the first 2 they drilled were also contaminated by the deicer. They drilled the 3rd one much deeper and told her that the water from that one is safe to drink. We moved in to the cottage and went to Lucky Dollar supermarket to buy our food for the week, including bottled water. “Why you buy water!?” Mrs.. Szulc said. “Our water is safe to drink!” Mom and I had never drank the water at the cottage all through the years since Norman’s boys were running out the front door of cottage #3 and heaving on the front lawn from drinking the water from the bay. From that time on, mom either boiled the water for 3 minutes and/or dropped chlorine tablets in the water. In this instance boiling or chlorinating the water would not make it safe to drink because it had poisonous deicer in it. As Mrs. Szulc, very upset with us, walked away toward her cottage mom and I heard her say ”they bought bottled water. Now I won’t know whether the water is safe to drink or not!” Boy, mom and I had no intention of being guinea pigs!



Marie and Edward Bender

Mom and dad are walking along the shoreline on Carter Rd. We have quite a few pictures of mom and dad standing on this very hill just south of my cottage that I bought from Thelma and Bronson Booth in 1994. The earlier picture was the one

that Marie was wearing an orange dress. Mom and dad had just come home from attending the Catholic church in Wiarton. In the second picture mom and dad are wearing casual clothes and are simply taking a stroll down Carter Lane near the Glencoe cottage.



Dad with tennis racket behind Duster in Lion's Head

Dad and I played tennis at the tennis court in town. I got a deep sliver in my hand and remembered that you should have a tetanus shot whenever you have a deep puncture wound. But I didn't have the money so I didn't get one. So when I was playing tennis my hand started twitching which can be the first sign of tetanus. So that day and the next 10 days I was so worried I'd get tetanus. What a relief when the 10 days past and there was no signs of tetanus!

The shoreline on the Georgian Bay is all rock, both small round rocks and huge flat slabs, all intermingled on the shore. Kids spend hours tossing stones into the bay or skipping flat ones. The first time we went to Pacey's I was 8 years old. I was disappointed that there was no sand on the shore. It was hard on one's feet to walk the shore line or wade in the water. And when you got into the water the stones in the water were slimy green and very slippery. It was best to walk on the stones in tennis shoes. We used to walk into the town of Lion's Head on the stony shoreline. We would come out on a road lined with cottages near the marina. At the corner of the marina there stood a light house. Mom and Aunt Agnes and later Aunt Elenore used to stand in front of the light house and have their picture taken. In later years the light house was moved off the grassy area onto the rocks at the entrance to the marina. The light house was a valuable asset for boaters and fishermen in finding the marina after dark. Sitting on the deck of my cottage when it was pitch black outside we would hear boaters shout to their passenger, "Can you see the lighthouse?" Can you see the entrance to the marina?



Sandy strapping down luggage rack on Diamond

After I started driving when we moved to Diamond Drive in Sterling Heights, I was in charge of putting the luggage rack on the car and clamping it down securely. We never started off for Pacey's before 9:40 pm as dad did not get off work till 9 pm and had to drive home from 12 Mile and Coolidge in Berkley. So as soon as dad got home he would jump into the passenger seat in front and mom would hand him a sandwich and a thermos of coffee. I hopped into the driver's seat and we were finally on our way to Lion's Head. Most of the time I drove all the way, once in a while I would get sleepy by Wiarton and dad would take over.



Sandy Bender

We got to Pacey's usually about 3:30 am. Normally it was pitch black and very cold. I would jump out of the car and go searching for the cottage key. One time I had to call Pacey in the middle of the night to ask where the cottage key was. Generally he put it under the garbage can next to the side door. Dad had to get into the cottage fast as he would get the "shakes" as he called it if he got chilled. The

“shakes” were horribly painful for dad. If he got too cold his insides would have almost like convulsions – his entire body would jump violently, especially his insides. You could just see his muscles contract violently and his whole body would convulse and dad would twist sideways, hollering in pain. When this happened at Pacey’s in the middle of the night that one time mom would cover him completely with a blanket and then keep feeding him hot tea. It would take over ten minutes for the shakes to stop.



Sandy Bender

During the day and early evening dad and I would play badminton up and down the drive at Pacey’s. Dad, Doug and I would play softball up and down #9 in front of the cottage. When we first went there the road was dirt but later they put asphalt on it. When dad first came in 1949 the Hwy 6 was all dirt and was much higher than it is today. As they paved the road they also cut down the very tall cliff at the north end of Hwy 6 going out of Wiarton. Dad’s Opel could not make the huge hill at the north end of Wiarton so he had to go around it on the west side road and come out at the top of the hill.



Sandy Bender



Marie Bender

Sandy and Marie also played badminton on Carter Rd in front of Loch Lomond.



Ed Bender in front of the Loch Lomond



Marie sitting on Loch Lomond

We often rented this cottage from Byron & Tessie Grieg. This cottage was easy to unload the groceries because it was a flat walk in. The Glencoe was a very steep climb and hard to haul the groceries up the steep steps.

The Loch Lomond was a flat drive from the road to the side of the cottage. We walked right in from the car to the kitchen.



Sandy on steps of Loch Lomond



Sandy sitting on stone rail of Loch Lomond



Marie at Loch Lomond



Marie at Loch Lomond

When we first went to Tobermory in the early 1950's there wasn't much there except Craigies fish restaurant and the harbor. Gradually through the years other stores were built and now the entire town is ringed with stores selling sailor type clothing. They now have boat rides around the islands and a steam ship taking people and cars to Manitoulin Island in the summer months.

We often went into Owen Sound for shopping but learned that we should not go there on Wednesdays because in those days all the shops close at noon. We took Nellie Dahl with us there one time and she sat on a bench there while we went through the stores. Dad bought a whole bunch of nice ties for 9 cents each and then sat on a bench outside and rolled them all up and put them in a bag to keep them from rippling.



Marie, Bill & Sandy in front of the Glocca Morra

We found out when I was a teenager that the Tessie and Byron Grieg family had beautiful stone cottages for rent for about \$60 – 65 a week. They were much finer cottages for not that much more money so we started renting them instead. They had 3 for rent, the Glencoe, the Loch Lomond and the Glocca Morra. The Glocca Morra was the finest cottage but was seldom available as it was in high demand. We were able to rent that at one time only and we found it to be by far the best of the 3. We used to rent those cottages by the week or two and often over the Labor Day long weekend. They hated to rent for just the long weekend because they said it would spoil if for them to rent to someone else for a whole week.



Marie & Ed in front of the Glencoe

Dad and I did a stunt that we never told mother about because she would have wanted to crucify me for putting dad in danger. Dad and I were walking along Carter Rd together at around 7 pm when we decided it would be so much fun to climb the cliff behind the cottages on Carter Rd. So we scoped out the cliff and found a section we felt we could safely scale. So he and I climbed straight up the cliff to the top and over the top to the forest on the other side. Dad and I were shocked to see how dark it was in the forest at that hour, as it was light on Carter Rd. Dad's leg fell in up to his knee in what he called a "snake hole" He was afraid at first that his leg was broken, but it proved just to be bruised, not broken. The a little further along my leg sunk into a crevice and it was really hard to get my leg back out without losing my shoe. I had to do a lot of careful wiggling to get my leg back out of that crevice without losing my shoe in the hole. There would be no way I could walk out of that rocky, stony, log filled forest with out both shoes. Boy, was dad and I ever relieved when we got out of that dark, crevice filled forest and back on the main hwy #9 back into daylight. We never did that again! As my Furby would say, "SCARY!!!"

The other dare devil thing dad and I did was to cross the crumbled down dyke in Barrow Bay. It was wide at the top but crumbly in the middle. It was smooth cement at the beginning, then as you walked toward the middle it dipped down and the cement was crumbled and giving way. Dad and I walked very nimbly across that dam and mom got really mad at us and called us damn fools. Looking back, I guess she was right, but dad and I felt it was a really fun thing to do.



Marie, Arthur & Agnes Look A Bout



Marie, Arthur & Agnes (far right) 30,000 Islands

Dad loved exploring the dirt back roads all around the Bruce Peninsula which was only 6 miles wide. Our absolute favorite was the 40 hills road which was the hilliest and curviest road on the peninsula. Dad loved scaring the pants off Agnes as he drove down that road with all its twists and turns at full speed. It was only one lane wide and you couldn't see who was coming the other way so it was scary and dangerous, but that added to the thrill. One interesting thing on that road was the St. Margaret's chapel tucked in among the hills. It was a very small non denominational chapel with a few pews and prayer books inside. It was a nice wayside sacred site.



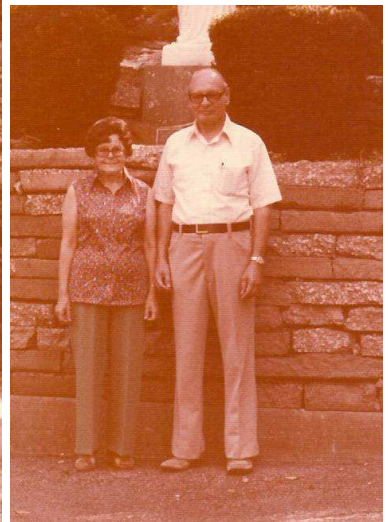
Edward & Marie on the outside of the Martyr's shrine



Marie & Ed Martyr's Shrine



Marie & Sandy



Marie & Edward Bender



The Martyr's Shrine – Midland, Canada 1951



Ed in front of the altar Martyr's shrine

One year in the 1950s we decided to go to Collingwood to visit the Martyr's Shrine, the Ski Resort and then take a 30,000 Isles boat ride. The Martyr's shrine had a very impressive Catholic Church with statues on one side of it and a grotto dedicated to our Blessed Mother. Dad has a picture of mom praying inside that Church. Right after that picture was taken and dad strolled around the grounds a bit they discovered that the priest had locked mom in the church for the night. They found the priest and he unlocked the church and one very scared Marie got out of that locked church!

The first time we went to the ski resort we took Dad's Opel. The Opel had very little power and half way up the steep road the Opel was in first gear but then started to strain and then threatened to stall as the engine did not have enough power to climb to the top of the road. So in the middle of the climb up that steep road I had to turn the Opel around and drive it back down the hill.

The next year we borrowed Mike's Dodge Polaris to go on vacation. We ended up going back to the ski lift in Collingwood. Again we decided to drive up to the top of the ski lift. This time, using Michael's 383 positraction Dodge Polaris we glided to the top of the hill effortlessly. Once on top I drove around in a semi circle on the grass covered dirt road. Once around the corner I could not see the road ahead so I got out of the car and walked forward about 10 feet. Imagine my surprise when I found out that the directly in front of me the road ended in a sheer drop off several hundred feet straight down!

After we drove back down we decided to take a ride on the ski lift, going to the top of the hill and then back down again. As soon as we sat on the seat of the ski lift and started up a cold sleeting rain came down and we were freezing! We were so afraid that dad would get the shakes, but he avoided them. We immediately got back on the ski lift and started back down again. We were so glad to get out of that cold sleeting rain!



A cottage on one of the 30,000 islands

From Collingwood we drove a short way to the 30,000 Islands and bought tickets for the boat ride around the islands. It was a really interesting and pleasant ride around all those small islands in the Georgian Bay. There was one or two spots on the trip where the opening between the 2 islands was really tight. When that occurred the middle aged boat captain would step down and the 80 year old retired captain would step up and maneuver around the tight spot then step down and let the younger man take over again. It was interesting to see that on a number of islands people's houses were on the small island and they would only get to their home by small boat. It was a most pleasurable boat ride, much more so than the one out of Tobermory.



Marie Bender at Niagara Falls

On one 2 week vacation we started out from Sterling Heights, driving through Canada and spending the 1st night at Niagara Falls. I drove to Niagara Falls mostly on Hwy 7 and 2 as there wasn't Hwy 401 in existence at that time. As we were getting closer to Niagara Falls late at night I saw we were getting really low on gas, so I pulled in to a gas station on a small side road and to my disappointment the

station was closed. I sat in the station for a few minutes worried that we might run out of gas before I got to the Falls. Two more cars pulled in behind me, both looking for a fill up. Then a police car pulled in and we asked him where we could get gas as we were quite low. The other 2 cars said the same thing. So the policeman got on his radio and called the gas station owner. The owner came right down to his station and filled all 3 of us up with gas. Then I continued on and as I turned around a curve there was a detour. The road was all torn up, and bumpy with road blocks making the road quite narrow. I slammed on the brakes to keep from hitting a large pot hole with Mike's new Dodge Polaris. As I hit the brakes hard, Dad who was sound asleep in the passenger's seat suddenly slid right off the front seat and landed under the dashboard. He woke up from a sound sleep, calling out in a sleepy voice, "What the hotel!?" Fortunately he wasn't hurt.

We stayed in a cabin like motel on the top of Hwy 7 about 1 mile from the Falls. You had to drive through many motels at a slow speed before you got to the Falls. That first night at the Falls in that motel was dad's birthday, June 23. We unloaded our luggage and then drove down to the Falls to watch the changing colors on the Falls after dark. Next morning we had breakfast at the motel and then drove down to the main street on the Falls and then walked up and down Clifton Hill going in and out of the various museums and attractions. The chamber of horrors was truly a horror. You had to have a strong nervous system to go down to the lower level and see all the horrors man did to his fellow man. I enjoyed the museum showing the kings and queens of England in centuries gone by. It was also interesting to see in another museum all the dare devil feats that were done at the turn of the century, including bike riding over the falls and people going over the Falls in a barrel. A gruesome museum was the one close to the Niagara River here a real Egyptian mummy was on display under a glass case. The mummy sure looked very brown, very dried out, and indeed very dead. It was obvious how very old that mummy was. He was later removed from the Niagara Falls area. That was the last time that we could afford to go into all the museums on the Clifton Hill. After that trip the museums were all so very expensive that we had to decide which ones we wanted to visit as all of them were now so terribly expensive that you would really want to see a museum before you would be willing to spend that kind of money. The only money I was very willing to spend was the hotel right across from the American Falls. The Fox Hotel was a very fine hotel with a very splendid view of the Falls right from your hotel room. You could sit leisurely in your hotel room and watch the Falls by day and the various color changing by night. The restaurant on the first floor had a fine view of the Falls and the food was good and reasonable. Mom, Nancy, Elenore and I really enjoyed our stay there. Especially Elenore who as soon as we dropped our luggage in the room said to me, "Let's

go!” Go where? I said. To the casino Elenore replied. She spotted right away that there was a casino right next door to our hotel. Nancy and mom stayed in their rooms, Elenore and I went to the casino. I had no interest in gambling, Elenore loved to gamble. They unlocked the elevator and took us to the second floor gambling. I watched her gamble. In a hour and a half Elenore won \$218. (She said she is almost always lucky). I am never lucky so I never gamble. We then went to the restaurant on the first floor, had a nice dinner and retired for the night. Once in my room I checked my blood sugar as I was a new diabetic. I almost died when I read the blood glucose meter – it said “hi!” check ketones. That’s the last time I ever let my blood sugar get that high.

Mom, dad and I took a ride on the Maid of the Mist where you got wet as the boat went close to the Horse shoe Falls. Mom told us how dad went close to the American Falls in 1949 taking pictures and how mom held her heart in her mouth when the vibration from the falls started moving dad closer to the edge of the Falls.

The next day we left Niagara Falls, first we took a slow, most pleasant ride in the car down the Niagara River.

Then we headed for upstate New York and the rest of our trip through the Northeastern States and on into Canada. We first traveled through the Old Mohawk trail in the mountains. Mom wasn’t the only one scared. I was driving and that trail wound up and down and around all the mountains. On one side was a beautiful babbling brook that reminded me of the Agger river valley river that traveled through the Gummersbach area of Germany where our Dahl relatives resided in the 1800s. On the other side was the side of the mountain where the side of the mountain went straight down. In one section of the mountain the road twisted and turned so tightly and so steep that I had to stop the car in an area where it was so much at an angle that when you stood on the side of the mountain you could not know for sure which was straight up. It made me dizzy to stand there as I could not feel for sure how to stand up straight.

The next stop was Hyde Park, New York, where FDR lived. It was an awesome feeling to walk through the house where President Roosevelt lived. I could almost feel their ghostly presence in that house. The grounds around the house were equally impressive.

We stayed in motels every night. We never knew where we would wind up every night. We just drove till we felt it was time to stop for the night and find a hotel. And in the morning we would eat breakfast at the motel and then discuss where we

thought we would be for lunch. Then at lunch time we would guess where we might end up for dinner. We would laugh at our talk over food and restaurants. We ate good on that trip. We each gained 6 lbs in those 2 weeks.

It took me 8 hours to drive through upstate New York, doing 80 miles an hour most of the time. It was a nerve wracking ride as most of the cars on both sides of me were passing me by. It was dark outside later in the evening so I had to carefully watch for cars on both sides of me. I was in the middle lane of the freeway so I had to be very careful to stay in my lane



Marie, Ed & Sandy out east

After leaving New York we passed through Massachusetts and Connecticut. From there we drove into Vermont and New Hampshire. New Hampshire was the most awe inspiring of all the states we traveled through. I drove into a deep valley in New Hampshire just as the sun was setting for the evening. The very high mountains were on all 4 sides of the valley and it was so majestic to be in that deep valley and have huge very high mountains on all 4 sides around you as the sun was setting over the mountains. We spent the night in New Hampshire and then the next day we traveled on, heading for Maine.

Maine was very cool and damp. We drove along the Atlantic coastline, enjoying the sight of the Atlantic Ocean as we headed northward. As the day roll on the fog started rolling in and a very cold dampness settled all around us. We decided to stop for the night ahead of time but were shocked to find that there were no vacancies at any of the hotels or motels along the coast of Maine. It turns out that sail boat races were scheduled for the next day. I drove into every motel and every one said no vacancy. I started passing up other cars just to get ahead of them to hopefully get the last vacancy. No luck. On the northern end I pulled on to a motel that did not have a no vacancy sign displayed. An older gentleman dressed like a sailor was standing in front of the motel. He had just turned away other cars

ahead of me. I rolled down the window and asked him if he had a vacancy. He looked in the car and saw we were a middle age family, so he said yes, he had a one room vacancy in his huge mansion across the street, We'll take it, I said, So we drove across the street, parked the car and carried our luggage in. We registered at the front desk. Right behind us in the 100 year old parlor were 3 little old ladies wearing turn of the century dresses and pill box hats. We carried our luggage up the stairs to a large, turn of the century bedroom. All the furniture in that room was over 100 years old and had a classical charm to it. The lamp shade had fringe hanging down from a very old fashioned shade.

We passed by 2 men in the hallway who were dressed like men of the sea. They had nautical hats and blazers on. When we came out into the hallway a little while later, they had disappeared too. Mom swore the house was haunted as people kept disappearing and never showing back up again. The walls in the hall and bathroom appeared to be dark mahogany. There were 2 or 3 bathrooms tucked in in nooks and crannies hidden among the bedrooms though out the 2nd floor. Mom laughed and kept calling it the haunted house. It did indeed look like a haunted house, especially such a big impressive 2 story house tucked in along the shoreline of the Atlantic Ocean.

We left the next morning after taking a few pictures of the outside of that charming old house that time seemed to forget.

We traveled inward across Maine, driving through Augusta. It suddenly got much hotter and drier as we left the area of the Atlantic Ocean. We crossed the border into Canada and headed for Quebec. We ate dinner at a small mom and pop type restaurant in Quebec and were surprised to see that they spoke no English. Mom asked for cottage cheese and got a hamburger. The next day we traveled into Ottawa and spent a day and a half in that charming city. I was especially interested in that city as that was where our family doctor, Dr. James William Finn was born and raised. I was amazed at how modern that city was.

Leaving Ottawa we traveled over upper Canada and ended up in Sudbury where my husband Werner worked for a year in the nickel mines there as they paid the highest wage in Canada in 1951. Dr. Finn's wife grew up there as a child so I was interested in seeing what the area looked like. I was shocked. The whole area was black, it looked like it had been charred. I thought it misght look like the dark side of the moon.

After leaving Sudbury we traveled south taking the narrow 2 lane highway through Parry Sound. We drove south of the Georgian Bay, arriving in Lion's Head at the Cedar Grove cottages on Saturday. We spent the next week in Lion's Head before heading back home on Saturday.

Mom and I had fun counting how many cemeteries we could find from Pennsylvania through the New England states, into Canada and to Lion's Head. We were so disappointed when we could only find 99 cemeteries. No matter where we traveled we never could find that 100th cemetery.

I loved riding my bike through the 3 Grosse Pointes after school and on weekends, often pedaling 3 or 4 miles. I loved that area and made a promise to myself that some day I would live there. But time and tide moves on and things change. We now lived in Sterling Heights and the neighborhood around Grosse Pointe changes. I was afraid of the kind of people that lived on the fringe of Grosse Pointe and could go wandering through there on foot after dark. So I gave up that dream.

So for Christmas mom and dad paid for part of my new 3 speed Schwinn and I paid the balance. Three speeds just came out and Louise had just got one which she let me try out. It was so much fun, being able to pedal backwards and stopping the bike with the 2 hand brakes. It was a much lighter bike than the panther and much easier to pedal and to get up to speed much faster. It had skinny tires as opposed to the large balloon tires on the panther so it coasted easier and farther. But I sure missed my panther. I turned it in to the bike shop for a \$15 trade in against my new bike which cost \$54.00 I took it out for a spin on Christmas day, riding across Alter Rd and down Voigt. Boy, was it ever cold that day and my poor fanny froze to the seat, especially because I was wearing a new corduroy red slacks which did not fit right and were much less insulating than my trusty levis.

I babied that bike to keep it in new condition so when I found out that mom had let Bill ride my new 3 speed to summer school at Utica high while I rode Nedra's 20 inch piece of junk I was furious. I had had major surgery so I was not able to work for 8 weeks so mom told me not to waste the time and use the time to take a typing class, which I did. That bike was very difficult to pedal as it did not sail like the new 3 speed, it had balloon tires which were not properly inflated and so it was painful to ride that bike up hill for 2 miles while Bill sailed along with much less effort. Had Billy had to ride Nedra's bike he never would have gone to summer school which he needed in order to graduate on time. My typing class was just an elective so it was important for Bill to have the better bike, but it sure rankled my hackles.

Mom and dad made a hobby out of looking for a new home whenever dad had a day off work. They started looking around 1958. In the beginning they looked for houses in Madison Heights but felt that the neighborhood was not that good and the noise from the race track turned them off from buying in that area. Next they looked a lot of houses in St. Clair Shores. They really liked a lot of the houses there but decided not to buy as they were only 3 bedroom ranches and they had 4 kids still at home. They almost bought on St. Joan street, but again the house was too small for our family although they really liked the neighborhood, including the park on the water.

They then started looking in the area of Harper and Crocker but they didn't like the area and the big mouth, pushy real estate man turned them off, not wanting to be pushed into something by an overzealous salesman.

Then in 1961 they started looking into the new houses in Sterling Heights just south of Hall Rd east of Van Dyke. They were very impressed at these houses as they were a lot of house for the money. They were two story with 4 bedrooms and a family room, perfect for a 4 kid family. They also looked at some stunning Carriage Hill houses at 23 and Van Dyke but they were less square footage and \$5,000 more, so they were quickly eliminated as a possible choice. So they returned to the Dresden Village and found a number of possible homes, the main choices were the Giant homes and the Gigantic homes. The main living quarters of the giant homes were all one floor with 2 steps down to the family room whereas the Gigantic homes had living space on 2 floors, with the lower floor being in the basement. Dad and mom settled on the Giant home and picked out a lot on Diamond Drive. In 1960 on their 26th wedding anniversary they put a down payment on the house. The base cost of the house was \$12,900. Dad made many modifications on the home which drive the final purchase price of the home to \$16,990. Ed upgraded the brick, put in a half basement and put a picture window in the family room instead of 2 smaller windows.

Ed had one big fight after another with the builder. But in the end dad missed some nasty and expensive mistakes that cost them years of comfort in their upstairs front bedroom. A carpenter put a 2 by 4 through the area where a heating duct was supposed to go to the upstairs so instead of re routing the 2 X 4 support they simply did not put the heating duct in, but rather let the heat flow ductless loose through the ceiling and the upstairs floor. This was not discovered until after dad sold the house. So the upstairs front bedroom was freezing cold every winter.

Sandy was very upset when she heard they were moving to Sterling Heights. She was born in the house on Alter and was heartsick at the thought of having to move in the only house she ever lived in. But Ed knew what he was doing getting out of that neighborhood at that time as lower class people were already moving in and degrading the prices of the houses in our area. A real estate man by the name of Ruzanne asked dad if he knew that the neighborhood was changing for the worse and that the low class people were starting to move across Conner Ave. So that is when dad and mom began their serious house hunting.

As it turned out the people 6 houses down moved out in 1959 and got \$12,000 for their house whereas we were unable to sell ours for \$10,000 so mom and dad were so afraid the deal wouldn't go through on the new house if we couldn't sell the old house. So Ruzanne bought our house on Alter Rd for \$9,900 and resold it to the very low class Morelli family. Mom and dad could not believe what poor appearance this guy had. He was so hairy that dad and mom thought he looked like an ape. As they moved in the house an old lady who was a total stranger to them told them that she was dying of cancer and if they took her in being she had no family that she would leave them her money. So she moved in with them when they moved into our house on Alter Rd in September, 1961. This little old lady visited our next door neighbor who was the same age and told her that she was dying and that it was her wish to die on good Friday. And that is what she did, she died on the next good Friday. The rest of the story, as Paul Harvey would say, was that she didn't have a penny left to her name and the Morelli's ended up losing the house to foreclosure.

The day we had to leave that house was a heart breaker for me. I loved that house, even though it was nothing to write home about. It was not well kept up and very common but it was my house. I stood in that bedroom for the last time taking in every nook and cranny of that room, and even touched the wall for the last time.

We moved our belongings from Alter to Diamond with the use of an open trailer and a truck. Most of the stuff got there in decent shape with the exception of a lamp shade which blew off the back of the trailer and was lost by the side of the road.

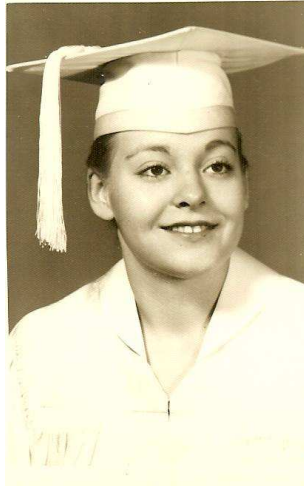
Mom was very efficient in putting all our stuff in the right rooms. In no time at all everything was put in its place. Mom and dad got the upper front corner bedroom for their own – the biggest and airiest with the most windows. I got the second biggest bedroom in the back. I slept there on weekends and Doug slept there during the week and on a cot in the family room when I was home on weekends.

Bill slept in the small front bedroom and Mike got the bedroom downstairs near the back door. There was a full bath upstairs and a half bath downstairs.

The downstairs consisted of the living room, dining room, kitchen, half bath, family room and bedroom. The living room and dining room was painted a warm golden color. The family room was paneled in a light colored paneling. Dad later put up a 2 ½ car detached garage in the back yard. Dad and Mike had the use of the garage. The second year when I started to drive I had to put my car on the driveway as mom said Mike got up really early to go to Dodge Main so he needed the garage.

That first night in the new house on Diamond both mom and I felt very emotional. We both missed Alter Rd and we both realized that there was very little public transportation as there was in Detroit so we both felt stranded without transportation. We both cried that first night, then realized we had to make the best of it. Naturally Dad had made the best choice moving out of Detroit as bad times were coming. Undesirable people were moving in, the prices on Alter Rd were falling while the prices of the homes on Diamond were continually rising. In 1980 the Diamond house was worth \$70,000, Alter Rd at best was worth 10,000.

Mildred and Sonny Stocker stayed on Gunston in Detroit to the bitter end, dying in that house. They were looking at a fine brick home in a subdivision at Garfield and Clinton River Rd costing \$18,000. At that time they could have got about \$12,000 for the house on Gunston. Doris was scared stiff to stay in that house in which she was the only elderly white woman in that neighborhood so when her mother passed away Doris moved in with Marie for over 6 months. Mom took care of Puggy, her dog and also fed Doris for free. After 6 months Marie told Doris if she was to continue to stay on Grant Park in Marie's house that she would have to pay room and board. Doris moved out and soon found a very nice condo at 22 Mile Rd and Hayes in Shelby Township. It was a 4 plex ranch in a very nice neighborhood. She paid about \$72,000 for the condo and fortunately because her house on Gunston was in pristine shape, she got \$18,000 for it from a nice black family.



Sandy Bender 1962

Moving out to Sterling Heights was a big problem for me as I did not drive yet. I did not want to spend my senior year in a new school so mom talked to Art and Agnes Bender and they agreed to let me stay at their house for the 1961 – 1962 school year so I could finish high school at Servite High. Dad drove me to Aunt Agnes and Uncle Art's every Sunday night. Aunt Agnes gave up her bedroom for me as it was a very small house at 4554 Neff Rd and had only 2 small bedrooms downstairs. Agnes moved into the attic and slept that year with Carol, who had just returned home from the Servant of Mary convent in Omaha, Nebraska. I stayed there from Sunday night till Friday afternoon, when I then took several buses and went to the store on Hoover and 8 Mile Rd where dad was working as a furniture and appliance salesman. When he quit work at 9 pm we drove home together.

Louise and three of her friends came to my house on Diamond for a sleep over party. We had three neighbor hood boys over for a party in the basement. We invited Kyle and Lutfy and one other guy. It turned out to be a bust as the girls did not like even remotely any of the guys. So we slept over night in my bed with one of us on the floor and the next morning one of the girls' mothers came and picked up the girls. He adorable 12 year old daughter came with her, but was not able to stay over night as he mother thought she was too young. Nedra had brought her 20 inch bike with her but left it at our house and never asked for it back.

Carol had just left the convent after having been there from 1952 to 1961. She had joined the convent that year with 11 other novitiates. That was the largest number of young women to every join the convent in one year so they called them the 12 star, referring to the 12 star in the Blessed Mother's crown. 7 of the 12 came from Detroit that year. Carol completed her novitiate and started teaching school. Her

new name was Sister Mary Hugh. She taught for several years but was very unhappy with teaching and asked permission to give up teaching and work in the kitchen. The Mother Superior denied her her request saying she was much too young to while away her time in a kitchen. So Carol chose to leave and go back home to her parents home. She had 2 years of college while living in the Motherhouse so she was able to get a decent job fairly soon with Blue Cross downtown Detroit.

I started smoking that year while I was at Agnes's house. It didn't seem to be a problem as Art and Carol smoked too. I smoked Camel cigarettes at first, which were very harsh. Later I smoke Salem menthol, giving up smoking when I had surgery and after 8 days with no cigarettes I felt it would be very foolish to start up again.

Carol was always quite reserved and aloof and this year was no exception. Lou Meyer, the man next door about her age took notice of her and wanted to start up an acquaintance with her, but Carol did everything in the world to avoid meeting up with him. But he was determined as he liked her a lot. So when she was mowing the lawn in the back yard Lou waited until Carol was at the very back of the lot then jumped the fence and started a conversation with her. He was a very fine fellow, very decent and Catholic. So very soon he was able to talk her into dating him. The romance flourished that whole 1961 – 1962 year and they decided to get married in the summer of 1962 as I was graduating and leaving their home. Mom and I were invited to the wedding and wedding breakfast and being Nancy drove me and mom she was invited too.

I loved talking to Uncle Art about the family history and he enjoyed sharing his memories with me. Aunt Agnes and Uncle Art used to buy a coffee cake from the Awry bakery truck that drove up to their house several times per week. We would sit down at the kitchen table every afternoon about 3:30 and have a slice of coffee cake and they would have coffee and me a cup of tea. Then about 5:30 pm we would all sit down at the kitchen table and have dinner. Carol would come home from her job in downtown Detroit by that time and join us for dinner. Agnes never baked, she fried anything. My favorite was her fried pork chops, they were so delicious.

Aunt Agnes' house was located about 2 miles from Servite. Mom and dad only gave Agnes and Art \$5.00 a week for my room and board saying that with moving to a new house that there wasn't much money to spare. Art and Agnes agreed to this amount. Mom gave me \$5.00 as week for lunch and bus fare. I realized that I

would have to save up money to go to Wayne State University so I scrimped and saved by buying a donut and chocolate milk every day for 8 cents and saved the rest. I often saved the bus fare money by riding my 3 speed Schwinn bike over 2 miles there and back in all but the very coldest of winter, saving up the bus fare. By the end of the school year I had \$125 saved up toward my college tuition.

One year we had a very nice Thanksgiving dinner on Alter Rd. Mom and Nancy did all of the cooking. When we finished dinner dad and I were so over stuffed we could hardly breathe. So while mom and Nancy were stuck with cleaning up, doing dishes in mom's brand new portable dishwasher and cleaning up, dad and I went for a very long walk down Voigt, finishing up on Cornwall street. We enjoyed that walk more than we did any other that we took. It was such a wonderful thanksgiving stroll over 3 miles long.

Dad had a 1949 Plymouth. He liked that car with one exception. Every time it rained that car wouldn't start until the weather dried out. After 2 years of walking to work, he had enough of that car and turned it in to a 1951 Pontiac Chieftain. That car was a dream. Everything dad could have ever wanted in a car. He drove that car from 1951 to 1959. One night as we all lay in bed sleeping there was a very loud noise out front of our house. As I awakened I thought at first that all the bricks on our house fell off the chimney. I jumped out of bed, ran down the stairs and out of the house. It was 2 o'clock in the morning and a drunk coming out of Whitey's bar on Warren plowed into dad's car, completely totaling it. It had 100,000 miles on it but was running perfectly still. Dad got only \$100 for his perfectly running car due to its age and mileage. The guy was so drunk he could barely walk and slurred so badly you couldn't understand him. The police brought him into our house to get the information and then to my anger they gave him a ride home, not to jail. His car sat in front of our house for over a week. I stole a few of his tools out of his car to help repay dad for the loss of his car.

Dad was forced to buy another car. He had such good luck with his Pontiac Chieftain and his brother Art also had good luck with the same car so dad decided to buy a used 1954 Pontiac Chieftain. Big mistake. It was an automatic transmission, which dad never drove and it slipped badly. Which dad was glad for one day a kid walked in front of his car just as dad had it in gear and was driving away from the light. Had the transmission worked properly he would have struck the kid. Dad loved the stick shift on his 1951 Pontiac. It was so high geared that he never used 2nd gear, he just put it from 1st gear to 3rd gear very smoothly. One day Juliette Meesemen borrowed dad's car and was frantic because she could not get the car into second gear.

The kidney infections continued every month from age 11 to age 16. Suddenly at age 16 Drs. Sewell and Edwards discovered that the repeated infections had killed the right kidney. My blood pressure started rising as a result of the dead kidney remaining in my body. The doctors said that my blood pressure would continue to rise unless the dead kidney was removed. Dad and mom left the decision up to me as they thought it was a very dangerous operation. I was scared but agreed to the surgery. I left cottage hospital after all the tests confirmed the kidney was dead. The doctors decided that I would have to leave school and go on complete bed rest for several months till my blood pressure went down enough for surgery. Laying around in bed drove me half crazy. Just around Easter as the weather mellowed I went into the alley and played basketball with the Carmack's hoop in the alley. Dad came through and was very upset, threatening me if I did not go back to bed.

I then told Dr Sewell I wanted the surgery now to get it over with, for better or for worse. Dad and mom figured I would be laid up in bed for months and months after such an extensive surgery so they bought me a new mattress and a whole new bedroom set. I loved that set, it was so beautiful, light maple in color.

The surgery was set for April 20, 1961. I was admitted to Cottage hospital in Grosse Point Farms, the same hospital I was born in 16 years earlier. Dad was terrified he might lose his daughter. Mom was concerned but much more stoical than dad. On the 20th of April I was wheeled into the operating theatre. Dr. Sewell was not there. They had to call him to get him to the hospital. He showed up late, looking disheveled, and asked me which kidney it was as he did not want to remove the wrong kidney!

The operation took about 3 hours and all apparently went well. I asked the doctors to remove as much of the ureter as possible as that was causing a lot of discomfort. He apparently was able to remove most of it. It was a horribly painful operation. When I woke up I was unable to bear all that pain. Dad stood at my side, holding my hand for hours and hours. He never left my side that day. Dad asked about blood loss and the doctor said I had lost a lot of blood but I was young and would soon regain my hemoglobin so he did not want to risk a blood transfusion.

That night when mom and dad left the nurses decided to try to get me out of bed. So they pulled me upright and then out of the bed and across the room to a chair. As soon as I reached that chair I started to pass out. I did not want to fall on the floor so I took a flying leap, landing face down on the bed and passing out. The

nurses pulled me back into bed. For 4 days I did not sleep a wink day or night. I was just plain scared and the pain was unbearable.

Mrs. Green, the nurse who took care of me made me very sad. She was very scared, saying she had had breast cancer and survived surgery and treatment. Now a few years later as she was getting off a boat her arm was pulled while hanging onto the pole and her arm greatly swelled. She found out her breast cancer had returned. She was so scared as she was a single mother and the sole support of an 11 year old girl and now she face having to die and leaving the child with no one.

After 4 days I was recovering nicely. When mom and dad came to visit me I was bouncing an Indian rubber ball next to my bed. They were shocked. So much for my being in bed for months and months recovering. But I got a real nice new bedroom and mattress set out of that deal.

The nuns came to visit me in the hospital. They apologized profusely, saying they never realized that I suffered so much with a dying kidney. One nasty nun had said to the others that she was shocked that I was really suffering from kidney disease, she just thought I wanted a few days off school every month.

I was much luckier than poor Gary. Once my right kidney was removed the left kidney was no longer subject to infections for the next 47 years

Mom and dad were sure that my life span was going to be greatly shortened by losing a kidney but Mrs. Meeseman told them that that would not be the case, that her brother had a kidney removed 38 years before and he was still fine with full kidney function. Dr Sewell also told mom and dad that same fact. But I didn't believe it for a number of years, getting scared every time I felt a twitch in my left side, figuring this is it. It took me over 5 years to settle down and get on with my life without worrying about kidney failure.

I was so upset with the thought that I would have to go back to the 11th grade as I had dropped out mid way and had to lay in bed for months waiting for my blood pressure to go down enough to survive the surgery, so I was so pleased when the nuns told me that I could skip the 11th grade and go on to the 12th. That was especially important as mom and dad were selling Alter Rd and moving to Diamond.



Michael Bender 1956

My brother Michael graduated from Servite High School in 1956. The teachers encouraged Mike to go on to college as he had the highest I.Q. in the high school. Mike tried a few classes but he preferred to become an apprentice electrician instead. He was hired by Dodge Main in Hamtramck as an apprentice electrician. After being hired there was a major slump in the auto industry so he was laid off for 3 years. The industry picked back up again in 1961 so he returned to the plant again and became an electrician. When computers came into vogue he transferred over and became their computer expert. He remained as a computer expert when Dodge Main closed down and he had an opportunity to join the Tank Plant in Warren. He remained as a computer expert at the tank Plant until the tank Plant underwent a major change and Mike took the buy out. He was so glad he took the buy out as he would have lost a lot of money and benefits had he remained. When Mike told the office he wanted to take the buy out they were very upset, saying that he was very valuable to them and they did not want him to leave.

My first job at age 16 was the A & W Root beer in Rochester. I was only 16 at the time so most employers would not hire me due to my age and the bad economy. I had a choice between the A & W for 40 cents an hour or the Big Boy in Utica for 25 cents an hour. I chose the A & W. What a wild place that was! But I worked there for the summer quitting work in September to start Wayne State. I did not realize that I could have applied for unemployment as the A & W closed down for the winter. I used to have to borrow Mike's car on occasion when I didn't have one. I was scared to drive Mike's 56 Ford as I was a new driver. One time I was so tired leaving work at 1 am that I couldn't stay awake so for the first time in my life I drank a cup of coffee to keep me alert. That didn't work. I dozed on and off all the way home. I was so glad to get home safely. I immediately went to bed and just as I laid my head down the coffee kicked in and I was awake for hours, staring at the 54 walls.

1962

In spring of 1962 I needed one more surgery so I was out of school for about a week. The nuns were amazed that I was back in school so fast but after all the time off school due to the kidney problem I went back to school as fast as I could. They were upset over my donut and chocolate milk lunch so they gave me some free lunches which I appreciated. (Their sloppy joes were so good. You could smell them all through the school and they tasted even better than they smelled. Those Italian cooks were so good!)

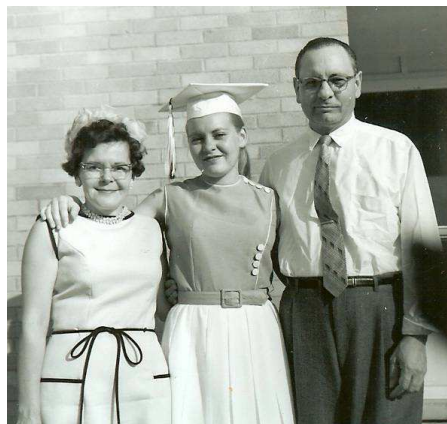
In grade school I went home for lunch ever noon time but once in high school you were not allowed to leave school for lunch. In grade school you were supposed to be at mass every day by 8 am but I always got there about 8:45 am when the mass was just about over. In high school it was mandatory that you be there by 8 am. In grade school I loved going to novena every Friday from 2:30 to 3 pm but in high school you could no longer attend. I missed going to the novena of Our Sorrowful Mother. (Mike on the other hand, hated novena and used to duck in the toilet and then slip out of school early and go home. Somehow he always got away with doing that.)

In grade school we wore dark blue jumpers and white peter pan color blouses and white and dark blue saddle shoes. We got our uniforms from a parishioner whose shop was on Mack and Chalmers. He also sold us the high school uniforms which consisted of a blue double pleated skirt, a white blouse and a dark blue jacket.



Sandy Bender 1962

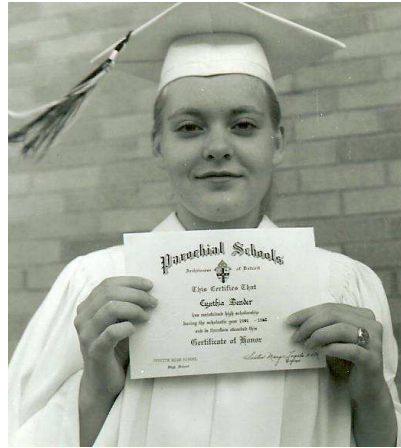
I graduated from Servite High School in June of 1962 with high honors. I had earned highest honors but Sr. Mary Angela was very sour over the fact that I was allowed to go from the beginning of 11th grade right into 12th after my kidney surgery so she put a high honor sticker on my diploma instead of a highest honor one. I hated her guts at the time but in looking back after all these years, in the grand theme of life, what does it really matter whether you got high vs. highest honors? It was just the principal of the matter at the time. After all the pain and distress I had been through with the death of my kidney, the surgery, the loss of all those months from school and forced bed rest and the pain of that major surgery she certainly was not in the least bit Christian. It was a crisis point in my life because mom and dad were moving to Utica and if I was not allowed to double promote I would have had 2 more years to complete instead of one at a time I would not have been living in the Alter Rd. neighborhood any more. St. Lawrence High School said there was no openings for a transferring school even though mom tried to talk Monsignor De Keyser into letting me enroll. So as a result I was able to complete my last year of high school at Servite by living with Art & Agnes. I was unable to participate in softball or basketball in my senior year because I was not available to practice on Saturdays as I wanted to go home and be with my family.



Marie, Sandy & Edward Bender 1962

I graduated from Servite High School in June, 1962. It was a major transition in my life. I finished high school, I intended to go to Wayne State University in the fall of 1962, I had never driven a car, didn't own a car, and Wayne State was a long ways from Utica. In the summer of 1962 I took a driver's training course at Utica High School. The driver's training instructor was very uncomfortable with teaching me to drive, but was very comfortable with the boy as the boy had been driving around with his father and was very comfortable behind the wheel. I was very uncomfortable as I had never been behind a wheel of a car and I was very

afraid of side swiping a car as I drove through the subdivisions. Dad drove with me and said that I had good perception for staying away from parked cars so that made me comfortable.



Sandy Bender High School Graduation 1962

In the fall of 1961 I applied to attend Wayne State University. I received an acceptance in the spring of 1962. Several of my classmates were rejected which surprised me. I was in the 11th grade before I had even heard of college/ Prior to 1961 I didn't know that college even existed. I heard about college listening to other kids in my class talk about it. As soon as I heard about college I knew that was what I definitely wanted to do.

Right afterwards mom and dad gave Aunt Agnes a nice TV in thanksgiving for them letting me stay at their house for my last year of high school.

It would have been much easier for me if mom and dad had moved us into St Clair Shores as I could have taken a bus to Wayne State. But those homes were too small for our 4 child family.

I looked around the neighborhood on Alter Rd and later in Sterling Heights and I knew without a doubt that I never wanted to be a stay at home wife or mother. So going on to college and work was definitely the path I wanted to take.

When Don and Nancy saw the house that Dad and mom were building, Don wanted to move too as it was a very good deal. So Don bought the basic model with no frills, paying \$12, 990. They moved into their home on 11151 Saar shortly after we moved into 11284 Diamond. From 1961 to 1969 we lived right around the corner from one another. So both families were very close to one another.

A very embarrassing happened to me a few days after Nancy and Don moved into their new home on Saar. Mom sent me over the Nancy's house to give her something she needed. I grabbed that item and ran full speed ahead all around the corner from Diamond to Saar. When I got on Saar I ran right into what I thought was Nancy's house but instead I ran into the house right next door to hers which had almost the same brick and the same appearance. I ran right into their kitchen where they were all sitting down eating supper. They and I were both shocked by my appearing at their kitchen table. I apologized and ran right back out of their house even faster than I ran in. I then ran into Nancy's house and told her what I had just done.

Doug and Warren attended the same school, Dresden, in the same grade. Warren used to walk to our house on his way home. He was very confused as to who mom was as he was told it was his grandmother but at the same time he was told she was Doug's mother. So to minimize the confusion Warren called mom "Douggie's mama".

Donna had a big wheel so she used to ride it over to our house to visit us. Linda also walked over to visit us on her way home.

Nancy moving in around the corner was a great boon to mom as she didn't drive so now Nancy drove mom grocery shopping. Nancy was very frugal with her money so she drove to 4 different super markets every week taking advantage of their sales. Mom was not interested in going to all those supermarkets but she had to go along for the ride.

Mom and I went walking to town into Utica every Saturday when we first moved out there. We would walk down Delvin and onto Strom and then down Clinton River Rd to town/ Many Saturdays it rained hard and mom and I would get drenched, and mom would be cold and wet and say she was not going to walk to town any more but then the next Saturday we'd be off to town. We continued that routine until I finally got a driver's license.

In the summer of 1962 I took driver's training at Utica High school and got my driver's license. I sorely needed that as I was scheduled to start Wayne State in September of 1962. Dad and I went out car hunting. I loved the 1955 Chevy but dad favored the 1954 Chevy. I hated the 1954 one as it was unbelievably ugly whereas I thought the 1955 was much sharper looking. But dad won out. He was probably right as the 1955 Chevy's engine sounded rough. But the 1954 Chevy was a disaster of another sort. The car would always start when it was cold but

refused to start if it was warm. I was scared being in a real bad neighborhood in the Wayne State area in the dead of winter on a side street all alone on a deserted street and my car wouldn't start. I was often quite scared all by myself in the bad area. The other problem with the 1954 Chevy was the steering. The rocker arm was defective so when you tried to steer the car the steering would not catch on one side until you turned the steering wheel all the way to that side. I had no idea how dangerous that was as I had never driven a car before so I was not aware that that was not how the steering was supposed to behave. Another problem with the 1954 Chevy – it used a quart of oil every day.

One good thing came out of me driving the 54 Chevy. I was driving down Outer Drive in Detroit doing an errand for dad when an old man side swiped my car. We stopped, me intending to exchange insurance information. The old man said for me to not report the accident. Instead the old man pulled out a \$100 bill, saying that would cover the damages. It sure would! The car was a piece of junk and the damage was minimal.

One night dad had a meeting he had to attend in the Grand Blvd area so he suggested that mom and I go with him. He decided we should take my car instead of his. He was shocked and very upset over the steering, saying how dangerous that was. So we went used car shopping. Doug went with me to one used car lot. I told the salesman I wanted a small car. He had none on the lot so he steered me to a huge car and told me I should buy this behemoth. Doug and I gave him a look, shaking our heads and walking away. He kept following us trying to convince us I should buy the car.

Dad bought an Opel Cadet in 1959. Dad took us for a ride in the new car on a cold snowy day after dark. The whole interior of the car fogged over because the defroster could not keep up with our breath. Mike and dad said it was like driving a kiddy car. It was fun to manouver as it turned on a dime. But it wasn't too steady on the ice

Dad and I looked at used Opels and we decided on a grey one with a lot of rust on the fenders. It was a bad choice as it had mechanical problems. But the steering worked and it started in all but the coldest weather.

After that dad bought me a 1960 Ford Falcon, gray in color. The first winter I had it it over heated. I found out that it had no antifreeze, so we took it to a gas station and remedied that problem. That car drove okay for a couple of years.

The Opel was several years old by the time we moved to Diamond. In the winter time that car was very hard to start. You had one chance before it conked out. You had to pull the choke out just a certain way, then you had to pump the gas pedal just so and then turn the key. If you didn't do all of the above just right, the car wouldn't start. So in really cold weather dad would put one of his service blankets over the engine and then hang a trouble light between the blanket and the engine being careful not to let the blanket touch the light. One very cold night dad asked Bill to put the blanket and light in the hood. He did but in the middle of the night a neighbor was ringing our door bell and hollering that our car was on fire! Dad put his top coat on and ran out to the car to put the fire out. I called the fire dept and then ran out and helped dad put the fire out. Dad had the fire extinguished before the fire dept got there, but then I had to drive dad to the hospital as several of his finger tips were black from 3rd degree burns. The car had to have everything under the hood replaced.

There was another problem with trying to start that darn Opel in the winter. Dad would pull the choke, pump the gas and in the pitch black of the early morning try to start his car. One time he almost got a heart attack when Rose Lutfy's bold cat Casey took a flying leap over the gate and skidded onto dad's hood with a 30 mile an hour slam into dad's windshield just as Dad's face was near it. Dad had no idea what that flying projectile was as it slammed into the windshield inches from dad's face!

Another time dad was again in the Opel trying to start it. He had left his door open as he reached forward and was turning the key in the lock. Out of no where Casey jumped up on dad's shoulder and started crawling down his arm onto the dashboard.

Other times when Casey felt amorous he would walk out back fence yowling at this girlfriends. Dad got so frustrated trying to sleep through all that catterwalling that he threw an old shoe at that darn bold cat.

We never had a cat so we were unfamiliar with being around them. One morning very early, still dark outside, Doug woke up and couldn't see or breathe – Casey was on his face. He freaked out.

The doors on the Opel Cadet were rather flimsy. On time in a high wind Bill opened up the passenger door and the door flew out of his hand and actually bent backward and buckled. It had to be sent to the body shop to be put back in shape.

The Opel did not stand up well at all so in 1962 dad bought a Ford Falcon from Jerome Duncan in Utica. Dad and I loved that car. Dad then bought me a grey Ford Falcon and when dad bought his next car he let me have his Falcon. It was a dependable car for both of us.

1963



Sharon Dahl Smith



Debra Dahl Tymczak

Sharon was my closest cousin. She graduated from high school in 1963. Shortly after graduation she met and married William Smith and the next year she gave birth to her first child Lori Smith. She had 2 more children after that, Jill and Amy.

Debra Dahl married Kenneth Tymczak and had two children, Heather and Amber. Sharon and Debra inherited money from their grandmother Katherine Dolato and were able to buy homes with the inheritance.

I got a job with Dr J. F. Sternberg at the 33rd floor of the David Stott building in downtown Detroit on Griswold street. The doctor was there only 2 days a week and I was there 5 days, seeing patients in his absence. Looking back I think he was not a real doctor, that he was using his older brother's medical degree. The girl that worked for him before me was black mailing him and I bet that was the reason why. I met his brother Franklin J Sternberg, the true doctor of medicine. He was very old, very debilitated and could definitely not practice medicine.

I used to go to the J.L. Hudson company right next store on my lunch hour. I went to the bargain section of Hudson's and loved a few expensive outfits I saw there. but I was saving up my money for college so I couldn't justify buying them. So

when the paper said they went on sale I ran right over there on my lunch hour and was shocked to see that they raised the prices, not lowered them. What a shock!

One day as the doctor was walking to the David Stott Bldg a man jumped from the 5th floor of the building and was laying there in horrible pain. I brought that man's plight to the attention of the doctor. He replied, that poor sucker and kept on walking into the building.

Another time I was there all alone sitting in the doctor's chair when as a sudden a high rise worker who was walking on a girder 4 stories up in the air stepped off the girder and fell to his death. I watched as the ambulance came and took him away.

Another time I was sitting in the doctor's chair when suddenly something fell right in front of my huge window. After being shocked I realized it was the window washer who was suspended right outside my window on a platform held fast by burlap cords. I asked him why he was working such a high risk job. He replied that he had 5 kids and this job paid decent wages.

Doug came with me to the David Stott Bldg. He entertained himself by running up and down the 33 flight of stairs several times. He sure was a bit out of breath by the time he sat down in the doctor's office.

The doctor used to have me walk to my car after work and come back and pick him up and drive him to his car, especially in cold weather.

I bought a red 1965 Mustang while I was still at Wayne State. Boy, did I love that car! But right after I bought it I found an oil sticker on it that said it had 30,000 miles more on it than he declared when he sold it to me. After a while the car started misfiring and Mike put a hot spark plug in it to keep it running. At the same time the 3 speed gear shift broke off the console and I had to drive home in 2nd and third gear because it was impossible to shift it into 1s or reverse. I kept praying that I did not have to back up on the rush hour freeway on my way home. We fixed the problems and sold the car. When I was putting it up for sale I polished the hood of my car and found out that the big stain that had always been on the hood rubbed right off. I could have had a sharp looking paint job if I had only rubbed it out sooner!

1964

When I moved out to Utica and was in Wayne State I heard that Father Croke had had a major stroke and was in the Catholic nursing home in downtown Detroit. They said he was paralyzed and could no longer talk. I seriously thought about visiting him but I felt that he would really be upset if I were to see him in this condition. He died shortly after that, in 1965. I planted delphiniums in his honor in our back yard on Diamond. A very great and beloved man passed out of my life that day.

One time we had a nasty ice storm on Diamond. All the streets were covered in a thick sheet of ice. When Nancy saw all that ice she called me and told me to put on my ice skates and she and I went skating all through Dresden Village that morning. But the fun was soon over as the ice soon melted.

In the summertime Nancy suggested that she and I go bike riding from our house to Mt Clemens and back. It was a fun bike ride. We went down Clinton River Rd and back up Canal road. The only mishap occurred when we were chased by a big dog but managed to escape being bit. Those two times were the fondest memories Nancy had of our times together in Sterling Heights.

1965



Don Remsing, Sandy Bender & Craig Stephens

The above picture was taken on Christening day, January 1965. Don Remsing, Nancy's neighbor across the street on Saar and Sandy Bender, Nancy's sister were the god parents.

Nancy, mom and I celebrated my 21st birthday on Diamond. Nancy drove that night. As I was getting out of the car Nancy said to me, “Happy last birthday” She immediately put her hand over her mouth with a feeling of horror over what she had just said and then said to me that she will not be content until I reach my next birthday safely.



Sharon, Marie, Doris, Sandy, Mildred upper,
Debra, Mrs. Dolato and Dorothy Dahl lower

Mom invited our relatives over at least twice a year. She mostly invited the Dahl side of the family as she was most comfortable with her side but on occasion she did invite Mildred and Harold Neff over as she was very comfortable with them. The picture above is mom's side of the family.

1966

Mike did get hurt later on when he took his bike for a spin coming back on Canal Rd from Mt. Clemens. He had a few beers and got really sleepy driving the motorcycle. He fell asleep and rode straight into a large clump of bushes, flying off the cycle. A very nice older lady came out, called an ambulance and promised Mike she would guard his bike till he could come back and get it. I went to the hospital and stayed with Mike till they admitted him. I then went back to the lady's house with Doug to pick up the bike and take it home. That poor older lady was so worried about giving Mike's bike to us for fear we didn't have the

permission to take the bike. We showed her our driver's licenses to prove we were related to him. Mike had a concussion but no broken bones.



Sandy & Edward Bender

Dad and I were always very close. We played baseball, football, tennis, golf and badminton together. In this picture Dad and I had just finished playing softball together on Dresden's ball field. Most Sundays in good weather Dad, Doug, Mike and I would go out on the playground and hit the ball around. As we got older Warren and Linda would also join us on the back playing field. Dad often played softball in a white shirt and a tie.



Bill, Sandy & Doug on Easter Sunday

Marie and Sandy built a Blessed Mother shrine in the back of the yard on Diamond. We built the base with blocks and bricks and then filled it with sand. We then planted a locust tree in the base and then put Our Blessed Mother in the middle.

Sandy also made a very elaborate Blessed Mother shrine in her bedroom when she was in 5th grade. Sister Mary Esther made a fine Blessed Mother shrine in our classroom and suggested that we children make a shrine in our homes. I made an arch type background using aluminum foil to cover a cardboard arch that I cut out. I then pinned the arch to the window curtain. I then cut out pictures of pretty spring flowers and attached them to the curtain. I then placed a Blessed Mother shrine that I bought from St John Berchman's religious supply store in the center of the table. I put a vase with flowers in front of her. I placed lilacs and lily of the valley in the vase. I kept the flowers in the shrine well tended to throughout the month of May.

1967

Other summers we visited Elenore McKinin at her house on San Jose in Redford. She kept an immaculate house and was an excellent cook and hostess. She made the most delicious pork chops and set such an elegant table. Elenore had a standard Schnauzer at that time. He was a hand full. One time Nancy brought her son Craig over and the dog nipped at his hand.

Mike bought a dirt bike and rode it up and down the unfinished Van Dyke freeway near Clinton River Rd and 19 Mile road. He took a number of spills on the motorcycle but never got hurt because the dirt was so soft, it was an under layment for the coming freeway.

When mom was 54 years old I taught her how to drive. That sure was a scary experience! Mom does not have any natural ability when it comes to driving. She was down right scary to watch in fact. I took her up to 26 mile road by the Stony Creek entrance as the road was brand new and there was hardly any traffic on it. So I had her drive east for a while and then I told her to turn around on one of the turn arounds as we were getting closer to Van Dyke. So she pulled into the turn around, pulled on to 26 mile and then instead of driving straight she again turned the wheel and jumped up onto the grassy berm between the east and west bound lanes. An 18 wheeler was coming straight for us and mom kept gunning the gas which would have put us directly in the path of the 18 wheeler, but fortunately the wheels ground into the mud and stopped dead! Whew! That was too much

excitement for my dear little heart! We again did some more driving lessons and she then drove on her own to near by places like the super market or the hair dresser. Mom never had an accident.

1968



Sandy, Patty, Marie, Mildred, Judy & Laurie

Mom, Aunt Mildred and I went to Marianne's house on Mullane Drive in Farmington Hills. I called Aunt Mildred and asked her if she wanted to go with mom and I. She did, so I drove to Gunston St. in Detroit and picked her up. Mom and Mildred had a most enjoyable conversation on the way over to Marianne's. For the fun of it I asked Mildred if I dropped her off here could she tell Doris where she was? Mildred looked around very scared, not having a clue where she was. And then a minute later we were passing by the Shrine of the Little Flower on Woodward and Mildred perked right up when she recognized the Shrine!

Dad was not only a superb ball player, but was also very nimble, even after he turned 60, he would spring over a 6 foot tall fence to capture the ball and then hop back over to the ball field and start playing again. One time dad just jumped back over a 6 foot fence on the Dresden ball field when his nephew Dave Gamache, who lived in the neighborhood, jumped out of his car and walked to the fence saying he knew that was his uncle Ed by the way he hitched up his pants. Ed had his hip broken when he was 9 years old and was hit by a car and ever since then Ed had a hard time keeping his pants up as the injured side of his hip slanted inward giving his pants no place to rest on.

One time when mom, dad, Bill and I went to Pacey's cottage Uncle Shorty and Aunt Jean came up and stayed with us for almost a week. We were so glad that they came and we had a wonderful time together. I gave up my double bed in

cottage #3 and slept in a bunk bed on top and Bill on the bottom so Jean and Shorty could have the double bed. We loved playing cards together in the evenings. Bill liked playing with us too. Every time Bill would win he'd get so excited that he jumped up off his chair, flapped his arms like a chicken and ran around the chair whooping with joy. Shorty got the biggest kick out of watching Bill with his antics.

Jean, Shorty, Mom, Dad, Bill and I went to the Sandy Beach on Lake Huron and went swimming in the warmer water on that side of the peninsula. We also played ball, throwing the ball around to all of us. Mom had the hardest time of all catching it. I later found out the reason for mom not being able to catch the ball. Marie had significant astigmatism so when the ball got within 18 inches of her face she would lose sight of it and get hit. It was due to the astigmatism that she lost the ball.

Shorty, dad and I and Bill went to the Sauble Beach falls. The falls were about as deep as your knees and were quite swift running. We would all wear tennis shoes and carefully walk across the falls, being careful to maintain one's balance. For the first time I lost my balance and fell. The swift current began to move me downstream. It was deep at the end of the falls so I was desperate not to be carried over the edge. So as I drifted into Shorty I grabbed his calf to keep from going over. He hollered for me to let go as he was not too steady on his feet. I let go and was able to get back on my feet.

I sure was sorry when Shorty and Jean left before we did. We all wanted them to stay till the end of the week. They said they did not want to interfere with our vacation, but to the contrary we felt so lonely after they left.

I attended Wayne State during the day and worked at various banks summers and evenings. I worked at Bank of the Commonwealth at 23 Mile and Mound for several years in the summer and later full time during the year, working from 9 to 5, 5 or 6 days a week and then immediately jumping in my car and driving to Wayne State University evenings, attending Wayne full time 4 days a week, 4 hours a night for a full time load of 16 credit hours per quarter. I also worked for Manufacturer's bank at 15 and Van Dyke and Square Lake and Woodward. I refused to work at Square Lake and Woodward when the riots broke out in 1968 as I would have had to drive near Pontiac. I stayed home until the riots were over. Mike however drove every midnight to his job at the Dodge Main plant in Highland Park. The police stopped him at 8 mile rd and told him he was crazy to go down there in the middle of the riots. But he did, taking his lunch with him and

eating on the roof of the plant while watching gunfire and fires going off in his area.



Beatrice Bender Gamache

On September 10, 1968 just as I was getting up Aunt Beatrice Gamache came to me very agitated, saying she was looking for my dad, Edward, her brother. I realized that she must have just passed over into eternity. I went to my dad who was in the next bedroom painting his bedroom walls. I told him that I had just seen his sister and that she was looking for him. Mom, who was standing in the room with dad said I must have seen her Aunt Clara who had just passed over in May of that year. Within one hour or so our phone rang and it was Dave Gamache, Beatrice's son, who told me that his mom had just died.

We had the nicest Christmas ever about 1968 at Nancy's house on Saar. Our whole family went to Nancy's in the early evening, with presents for all in hand. Nancy put beautiful Christmas music on the radio, which became more sacred and soft as the night wore on. Opening presents around 9 pm was so much fun because of what Nancy did with Warren's present. She hid it, giving him a clue as to where it was. He finally figured out where to find it and opened it up. Lo and behold, inside the box was a clue telling him where the next hiding place was. Warren ran all over Nancy's house tracking down one clue after another until finally he found the last box with the present in it. We were all excited watching him track down box after box. I don't remember what the gift was, just the excitement of finding it.



Sandy

We also had some very nice Christmases on Diamond. We bought an artificial green tree and had all new bulbs on it. I missed the old decorations such as the Santa on skis, felt Santa faces and the angel on the top of the tree. Nancy and her family would come over to our house on Diamond and mom would play Christmas music on the radio and serve up a fine turkey dinner.

Mike had to go to Lordstown Ohio for training. Mom, dad and I decided to go there and meet him after school during the week. We had a wonderful time having dinner with Mike and going to the Geagia Lake Amusement park during the day. That amusement park had the rickiest roller coaster I have ever been on and also the scariest one. When you are traveling downhill on the other side the track crossing your track was so low that you would swear you would be decapitated while passing underneath it.

On the way back home mom pulled a doozy. The 3 of us were running out of money so when we parked the car mom asked a local where the best place to eat at a modest priced restaurant. They recommended one just down the street. We went in the restaurant, went to the back and sat down. The waiter came and handed us menus. We were all sitting there relaxed, reading the menu when suddenly mom put her head down, moaned and said she wasn't feeling well. Dad and I were really scared. Where do you get medical attention in a strange town? We all walked to the front of the restaurant and then out onto the sidewalk. Just like a jack in the box mom springs to life and says lets find another restaurant, this one was way to expensive! She scared the dickens out of us. She put on that big show just to get out of the restaurant without saying that the restaurant was way too expensive. Dad and my hear skipped a beat when she pulled that stunt!

Looking back I am ashamed of myself. On the way home driving through Ohio on the turnpike dad asked me if I would take over the driving. For the only time in my life I said no because I was engrossed in reading a book. Poor dad, had to keep driving when he was tired because I was too selfish to take over at the wheel.

Nancy dropped a bombshell on us in the fall of 1968. Don went to California in 1968 and called Nancy back home and told her he just bought a home in Cypress, California. Nancy was a nervous wreck. What was the house like? What was the neighborhood like? Nancy had no choice in the matter. Don was determined that the family was moving to Cypress. So their home on Saar went up for sale and they sold their furniture to neighbors and through want ads. Nancy sewed full length draperies for her new home. Then the final day came. We all went to the Chuck Wagon restaurant for our farewell dinner. Craig was the star of the show that night. He was 4 years old and very handsome. He started out by singing "Hey Jude" all the way through. Then he went up to the meat counter and held his plate up high and asked for a second helping of beef. But he was so short the chef could not see him. The chef's boss bawled him out telling him that when he didn't have a customer he should clean off the counters. "But I do have a customer!" the chef said. "There's this little shrimp there underneath the counter." Then I saw Craig off his seat and figured he needed to go to the bathroom so I offered to walk him there. "I've been there already" Craig said as he slipped back in the chair.



Sandy, Bill & Edward T Niagara Falls



Marie, Bill and Ed at Niagara Falls

Mom, Dad, Bill and I went to Niagara Falls in June. We got to the motel in Niagara Falls on the eve of Dad's birthday. We stayed in one of the older motels on Lindy Lane on Hwy 7. The next day we strolled through the foot of the Falls, taking in the various museums on Clifton Hill. After dark we enjoyed the multi light show on the American Falls.



Norman John Bender

In November, 1968 I asked dad if he would buy mattresses for Norman and for Al for Christmas as they were sleeping on very old, very lumpy mattresses. Dad bought the mattresses from his store and Doug and I tied the mattresses down on the top of the car and drove them over to Al's apartment at the Parkside Projects. Doug carried the mattresses in and put them on both beds while pulling the old lumpy ones off and carrying them outside. As soon as they were carried outside 2 teenage Negro boys asked if they could have the mattresses. Naturally we said yes, although we had no idea why they would want them. But they must have not had any as they were delighted to get those old ones.

We drove over a number of times to Norm and Al's house both with mom and dad and also with Mildred Neff. Mom and dad and Mildred gave them food including a whole turkey dinner which Mildred said they had to cook themselves, which they did do. Mom would slip Al some money when Norman wasn't looking as Al was very careful about spending money and he was their only source of income as they both lived off Al's old age check.

Norman told Edward that he could no longer see at all in bright sunlight, that he had to wait until it was a cloudy day before he left the house. He especially had to be careful to stay away from Warren and Conner Sts. as he was so blinded by the sun that he could not see the cars coming. So mom and dad made an appointment with Admiral Optical Company in downtown Detroit to have Norman's eyes examined and proper eye glasses made for him to correct his vision. We picked up Norman at lunch time and our first stop was White Castle hamburgers on Warren. Norman was embarrassed and at first tried to not order any hamburgers as he didn't have any money. When Dad told him he was paying for hamburgers for all of us then Norman was very grateful and ordered several hamburgers as we all did. We then proceeded to Admiral Optical Company downtown and had Norman's

eyes examined. We were anxiously awaiting for him to get eyeglasses. Admiral was the most reasonable in the area, a pair of eyeglasses was only \$19.95. The optician came out of the exam room with really bad news – glasses would not help Norman, he had severe cataracts. So we drove Norman back home very saddened. He had no medical insurance to pay for cataract surgery and in those days it was a much more complicated surgical procedure than it is today. After surgery you had to lay perfectly still with supports on both sides of your head so you wouldn't move your head and then when it healed there was no implants in those days so you were fitted with beer bottle glasses which really made your eyes look awful as they magnified the size of your eyes. And when you took the glasses off you couldn't see anything.

And Norman knew that his sister Beatrice had the cataract surgery done and her sight was destroyed in her operated eye as her husband Ed Gamache left her in the backyard and when the place where she was sitting turned sunny she called and called for him but he never came to help her out of the sun so she got up by herself and while she was walking by herself back to the house she tripped over a pipe, hit her head and destroyed the vision in the newly operated eye. So Norman was well aware of all the pitfalls to cataract surgery.



Mildred & Harold Neff

Mildred and Harold Neff had a nice 50th wedding anniversary party in November, 1967. Her children and Mildred prepared a beautiful turkey dinner which they served in the basement on long tables. Everything was set up very nicely but there was a lot of empty chairs as Mildred's kids were all coming down with something and went home before we arrived. We had a very pleasant afternoon with Harold and Mildred, eating a nice thanksgiving dinner and then watching them open their 50th anniversary gifts. Harold was funny when he saw all those vases and assorted

knickknacks that Mildred was unwrapping. Harold said, "Now I'm going to have to build a bunch of shelves to store all this junk!"

The biggest surprise for all of us was yet to come a few days later. Mildred's children were coming down with a very nasty flu and a few days later Ed, Marie and all of us kids came down with the worst flu we have ever had. It got into the bones in my back and the bones hurt so bad I thought my back would break. I kept moving into different positions to lessen the severe pain. Mom was really sick with the flu also but knowing Nancy had prepared and paid for a whole thanksgiving dinner mom went to Nancy's. But the rest of us stayed home as we were in pain and due to the stomach flu would not have been able to eat anything even if we wanted to.

1969

Harold and Mildred Neff would come and visit us in Sterling Heights from their home in Clinton Township. But when they would stay at our house until after dark Harold would get scared as he could not see well enough to drive on mile roads with no street lights. So every time he would come to visit us he would drive south on Van Dyke to 8 Mile Road, then across 8 Mile Rd to Gratiot then north on Gratiot to his street, Glenwood. He chose this route, which is way out of the way, because those streets had street lights.

Don and Mike packed up all the furniture and possessions into a van Don bought. He also crammed the rest of his possessions into his Vista Cruiser. Mike and Don then drove the Vista Cruiser attached to the van from Utica to California in 5 hard days. Don & Mike could have been killed on that trip. Driving across upper Texas. It was a solid sheet of ice. They could not dare to put on the brakes for fear of going over the cliff.

Nancy and the 4 kids flew to California. Nancy was so exhausted that she slept all the way to California while the stewardess took care of 4 year old Craig on the trip in the plane.

A few days after Nancy moved into her new home on Santa Elise in Cypress I flew out there to join here in getting settled. I at first decided to take the train to California as I was scared to fly. Mom and dad saw me off on the train in downtown Detroit. The train was over 2 hours late in departing from the terminal and once the train left the station they said they did not know if the train was going

to connect up with the over land train to California. Once we got to Chicago where there was going to be a change of trains, the train for California had already taken off. There would be no other train to leave for California till the next day. I had no idea where to stay over night or where to catch the overland train the next day. The conductor, an older man, said he would accompany me to a hotel and see that I got on the other train the next day. When I got to the hotel the conductor booked him and I in the same room. I went to the counter of the hotel and told him what was happening. He called the police. I took a bus home to Detroit and mom and dad picked me up from the bus station. I flew out the next day on American Airlines. When I boarded the plane the next day they never even asked me for my plane ticket. I could have got on that plane without buying a ticket!

Nancy and I spent two wonderful weeks at their home. She and I went to Disneyland. The entire day Craig looked for Mickey Mouse but we never ran into him. We ran in to every other character imaginable, just not Mickey Mouse. At the end of the day Craig fell sound asleep and Nancy carried him through the park and to the exit. Just as we were about to leave the park Mickey Mouse shows up at the exit. Just then Craig wakes up out of a dead sleep, turns around and sees Mickey Mouse, jumps out of Nancy's arms, runs to Mickey and hugs him.



Don & Craig Stephens & Mike Bender

Later we went to Knotts Berry Farm. I bought Craig a plastic monkey bank which the store put in a cardboard box. When Craig bought the monkey home he refused to take it out of the box until his dad came home. When Don and Mike walked into the house Craig immediately ran up to his bedroom and took the monkey out of the box.

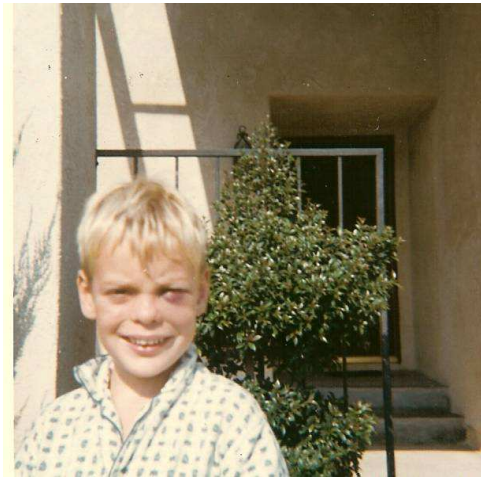
Soon after I arrived at Nancy and Don's I was sweeping out the garage when a neighbor, Betty, comes walking up to me and asks to see my mother. With tongue

in cheek I went into the house and told Nancy Betty was looking for my mother. Nancy got so mad that she never wanted to speak to the neighbor again.

Nancy and I took her clothes to the cleaners several streets away from her house. I bought a map of the area so I could get around town. I had a hard time knowing which was north and south. When I got back home Nancy called me and asked where the cleaners was located.



Nancy after the severe car accident



Craig after mountain accident

Shortly after Nancy moved to Cypress we got a shocking phone call. Nancy had been taking 12 kids in her Vista Cruiser to Sea World in San Diego when at the top of the mountain her brakes gave out. Warren shouted to her to pull the emergency brake. She did. The brake did not work. The cable was broken. Warren then told her to put the car in lower gear. She did but it did not slow down the car very much. She slammed into a brand new large station wagon at the bottom of the hill. The doctor had just picked up the wagon from the dealership and was taking his family for a joy ride when Nancy hit him. The doctor was so mad that he refused to give medical help to Nancy. Nancy was severely injured. Her heart stopped 7 times that day in the hospital. A young intern saved her life by repeatedly shocking her heart back into normal rhythm. Nancy said she left her body and was watching what they were doing from the top of the emergency room. She was floating up by the ceiling looking down on her body.

Craig was saved by a teenage girl who threw Craig's body behind hers when she saw that they were going to crash. All he got was a black eye and a sliver of glass in his lip. Craig proudly said that he pulled the glass out of his lip by himself. Donna who was also in the front seat got 2 broken ankles as she sat back in the seat

thinking that the car was going to stop when Nancy pulled the emergency brake. Surprisingly none of the parents of those kids sued Nancy for the accident.



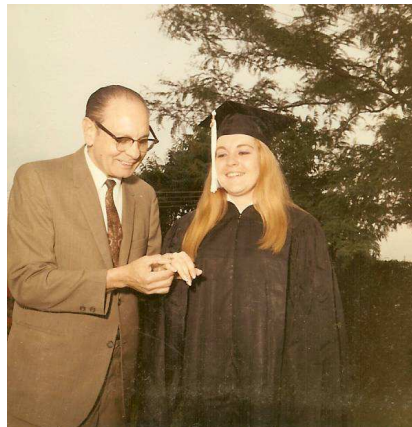
Marie & Edward Bender playing golf

Mom, Dad and I enjoyed playing golf together, either at Metropolitan Beach 3 par course or at one of the regular courses around the area. Mom couldn't drive very far so we played "Kangaroo golf" where dad and mom would play against me. That evened out the scores pretty good. You sure could tell from the sad expression on mom's face when she flubbed a drive. But mom was pretty good at putting.

1970



Sandy Bender 1970



Edward & Sandy Bender



Sandy & Marie Bender

I graduated from Wayne State University in 1970 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology and chemistry. I was 25 years old at the time While walking with dad

in New Baltimore I said to dad that at age 25 one third of my life was over, which gave me food for thought.

After Norman died mom and dad put Al into a nursing home as he was no longer able to live alone and care for himself. I went with mom and to take Al to the doctor to have the medical paperwork filled out for admission to a nursing home. The doctor asked Al if he wanted to go into a nursing home. Al had no objection to going. He lived in Wil Mar and Clintonaire nursing homes till his death in 1977. We buried him next to his wife Elsie Rhodes Dalton in Forest lawn cemetery at Mc Nichols and Van Dyke.



Wil Mar Nursing Home



Blue House & Wil Mar on Cass Ave

I then bought a Plymouth from a sick older man who owned a rental car place. He was selling that car for a very good price. But when the back wheel bearing went bad the shop told me that the car had a lot more miles on it than the speedometer showed as seen on the back wheel odometer. The man who sold the car to me was stuck with egg on his face as the car had too many miles on it to be covered under warranty, but he called the dealership where he buys all his rental cars from and forced them to repair the back wheel under warranty.



Sandy exiting the totaled car

That poor car came to a bad end. For the first time I was between semesters at Wayne State so I decided to go golfing after work. As I passed by Rammler Golf Course on Utica Rd something told me to turn in there but I decided to go to the small 3 par golf course at Metropolitan Beach at 16 Mile and Jefferson. That was a real bad decision. I was driving east on Metro parkway, and as I approached Groesbeck the light had turned green so I proceeded to cross Groesbeck. I could not see the intersection as I approached it and going through it as there was a huge pile of dirt in the middle of the divided highway. As I got into the middle of Groesbeck, Mrs. Snay turned left smashing head on into my car. My car spun around completely 3 times before stopping facing the wrong way. My head went through the windshield as there were no seat belts in those days. A fireman was on the scene and stayed with me till the ambulance came and took me to Mt Clemens General hospital. I found out that Mrs. Snay was rushing her kid to the same hospital as he had appendicitis and she was supposed to turn right and in her panic and confusion she turned left right into my car.

I had quite a concussion. My face was so swollen up that mom and dad did not recognize me. I was really scared, hoping I wouldn't die of a brain hemorrhage. I had the nurse call home to tell mom and dad what happened. They weren't home so I asked them to call Nancy. They called her. She said she could not come as she was feeding her kids dinner. I was really scared and wanted someone there with me. Nancy saw mom and dad drive by so she told them and they drove right to the hospital. I was laying on a gurney in the hallway. My face was so swollen that mom and dad walked right past me and didn't recognize me. When mom walked past me again she recognized my clothes laying under the gurney. They took me home that night. By morning I was in so much pain that they called out family doctor and he told them to admit me to St Joseph's hospital to see if there were any broken bones. I laid in the hall as all the beds were full. I had head to toe x rays which showed nothing was broken.

We called the attorneys, William and Raines and they came down and took a number of pictures of my swollen head and multiple bruises. They then sued Mrs. Snay's insurance and ended up settling for \$3,000.



Sandy in front of the blue Duster



Marie & Sandy in front of the Blue Duster

I was now without a car. I borrowed dad's car, driving him to and from work. I then ordered a Plymouth Duster which had just come on the market but was not yet at the dealership. I ordered a rust colored one with a black interior. They said it would come out in August. At the end of August the Plymouth dealership called and said they just got one in – light blue with blue interior. I took it to finally have transportation again. Mom took a picture of me outside of my first new car. A few weeks later the car I specially ordered came in and dad liked it and decided to take it.



Sandy & Edward Bender

I was hired by the State of Michigan as a Social Worker in April, 1970. While working for the State I used to find used clothing for the clients. The Detroit News decided to write a feature article about my finding clothing so I went to the hair dresser to have my hair done up for the newspaper picture.



I immediately applied for a job as a Social Worker working for the State of Michigan. I got a very good score on my entrance exam testing and had my first interview in Oakland County. I did not like the supervisor and I didn't like the area so I was glad when I got a second interview with Macomb County with Doris Earl as a supervisor. I really liked her and she liked me and hired me right on the spot. I started work there in April in the old poor house gray building on Elizabeth and Groesbeck. During the interview and for the first 3 weeks on the job I wore a natural hair wig which was really attractive. When I removed that wig and let my

natural long blonde hair cascade Doris was shocked. From the look on her face I wasn't sure she would have hired me if I had not worn that attractive, conservative appearing wig.

Doris was a kindly friendly understanding 65 year old woman. But there was another supervisor on that 12 worker unit, Clement Corcoran. He was an alcoholic, mean spirited man. He kept inviting all the workers out for a drink after work, which I refused to go as I never drink and I don't like drunks. So he knew I didn't like him so the feelings became mutual. So I went to Doris whenever I had a problem.

I held several positions as a social worker for the State of Michigan. At first I was a welfare worker, later I transferred over to a day care worker and later a protective service worker for about a year. I had to get out of the protective service division as it was just too dangerous and way too wild. Later I took over Harry Bojarski's support worker position. That was the easiest position I ever had. All I had to do was talk to the client, find out as much information as I could about her missing ex spouse and turn it over to the court who in many cases found the guy and made up a support order against him. Harry was so incompetent in working this position that when I did just an ordinary job of tracking down these men, Lois Smith, the supervisor thought I was a super worker. I would have liked continuing to work under her as we had such a good rapport.

The first dangerous episode was when I went to the Village Road complex at 15 Mile between Gratiot and Harper. I went to visit a black woman with 11 kids in order to renew her welfare payments. It was 11 am in the morning and she had already consumed a whole pint of whiskey. She smelled like a brewery and said she drank to liquor to make all the wash easier to do. I left her house and on the way back a very angry black woman came at me with a knife in her hand hollering that her welfare check did not get an update like the others got. I asked who her worker was. She said Judy Christianson. I said she was on vacation. The woman came closer, brandishing her knife closer and closer to me. I told her I would go back to the office and update her check. She was madder than ever saying she wanted the money now, not in 2 weeks. I could not get away from that knife as I was completely surrounded by black women who were thoroughly enjoying my discomfiture. I kept my eye on the knife. Suddenly my drunken client opened up her door brandishing a shot gun in her hand. She pointed it at the women with the knife, hollering at her "Bessie Mae, Bessie Mae, if yo touch that white girl I'll blow your haid off!" Bessie Mae replied, "Eula Mae, Eula Mae, tell me true, would yo blow my haid off!?" Bessie Mae replied, "I sho would!"

While everyone was talking back and forth the women surrounding me created an opening behind me. I slowly backed up and walked toward my car. When I got to my car there were 3 black teenage boys sitting on my hood. I quietly and calmly asked them to please get off my car. One by one they slowly slid off my hood, grinning at me as they moved. I got in the car and to my horror I realized I was facing a dead end on a very narrow street. I slowly backed out of the road and got onto 15 Mile Rd. I pulled off onto the shoulder and just shook like a leaf. I then drove home and laid down for an hours before finishing my home calls for the day.

Another time I went on a home call at Hall Rd and Mound in Shelby Township. There were so many cars coming and going from that house that I was afraid to go in, figuring it was a drug house. Finally there was a lull in the traffic so I went in to get the paperwork signed and to look in on the 2 children a 6 year old boy and a 3 year old girl as there was a complaint about the care of the children. As I sat there the 6 year old said, "I can pop a beer can top and I can fill a needle". Then some what sure looked like drug addicts started coming in that house again. I wanted out of there, it looked much too dangerous to me. I left there and immediately called the Shelby Township police department and told the they should watch this house and take license numbers as this looked like a very active drug house.

I then went to the probate judge and asked for permission to remove the children from the house as they had said they were going to have a really big drug party on Christmas Eve. The Judge refused to give a removal order, saying that Peggy's mother would get an attorney and get the kids back home. I called the mother and the sister and discussed what was going on there. The mother and the sister were clean, decent living people and they were very worried about the children's safety remaining in that house with all the drug addicts coming and going. They gave their consent so I went back to the judge who gave the order for removal which I then took to the police dept for execution. So on Christmas Eve day the kids were removed from their home and placed in the youth home to spend the Christmas season. We all felt very bad about the kids staying there over the holidays. Shortly after the New Year I went into St Joseph hospital for surgery. I was in horrible pain when I hear a whole bunch of sirens coming into this hospital. Before the sirens stopped my phone rings. It is my office saying that Peggy and all the drug addicts in her home was shot through the head.

No one survived so if the kids had been in that home they would have perished too. Peggy's mother and sister went into probate court and got permission for Peggy's sister to adopt Peggy's children.

I was out of work recuperating for 8 weeks. My first day back I made a home call to a home in Shelby Township. When I walked into that home I was shocked and very scared when I saw that all the drug addicts I saw in Peggy's house are now there in this house. They recognized me right away, saying, "You're the one who took Peggy's children away". I really thought I was not going to get out of that house alive. But somehow I did. And this time my car was facing in the right direction.

Later on I was sent to a home where the mother was retarded and the father was mentally disturbed. The 4 year old girl was totally wild. She tried to attack me so to protect myself I sat the kid in my lap facing away from me. I pinned her arms and legs with my arms and legs. As I was talking to the mother and trying to keep the girl from harming me, the boy needs to go to the bathroom. As the mother walks him to the bathroom he starts screaming in true abject terror. I asked the mother why he is acting so frightened. She laughs and says that her husband holds his head under the water in the toilet and also holds the boy's head down under the bath tub so the boy gets hysterical when he gets near the bathroom. I requested that the kids be removed from the home but the judge and my supervisor refused saying that the youth home could not deal with these greatly disturbed kids. The father and mother turned against me so I was very fearful for my safety and I was wondering if they were going to go after me. I went back out to that home and the mother informed me there would be no further trouble from her husband. She said he left their home in a blind rage, jumped into his truck with his dog and took off, driving wildly. He went over the Ambassador bridge heading for Canada and in the middle of the bridge he ran out of gas. He checked his wallet and found he had no money. He totally lost it, jumped out of the car, ran across to the edge of the bridge and jumped over, drowning himself. The dog looked out of the window, not believing what his master just did. The dog was not stupid enough to follow after him.

The first office I was in when I was first hired was a rough place to work. They all had rotten personalities and were very unfriendly. They spent the better part of an hour every day at break. Being new, I wanted to get some work done. That made me very unliked by those workers. The rest of the next changes in work force resulted in much friendlier co workers.

While working at the office at 13 Mile and Mound I celebrated by 30th birthday as did 2 other workers. We went out to lunch together but we all were a little worried about reaching a new milestone in life.



Sandy with her new Dairy Queen bike

I was a social worker for the State of Michigan and made home calls 2 or 3 times a week. One time in the summer I stopped in the Dairy Queen on Van Dyke and Hahn and grabbed a burger and a drink. They had a contest going so I filled out the form and threw it into the box. At the end of the summer I came home in the late afternoon after work and mom said for me to look in the basement. I ran down the stairs and there was a brand new 10 speed bike – I had won the Dairy Queen contest after putting in only one entry months ago! Then mom got smart and said it was her bike because she was the one who answered the door when the bike was delivered. I could just see mom riding a boy's bike with the dropped handle and the bar across!

I also taught mom to ride a bike that year. We went to the Schwinn dealership and got mom a 26 inch short frame bike. That was she could put her feet on the ground when she stopped. I held her seat until she got the hang of balancing herself. Then we both rode around the block, down Delvin and around Saar and back again to Diamond. When we got back in front of our house on Diamond it was obvious I forgot to show her how to get off the bike, so mom drove the bike up onto the Healeys nice soft lawn and did a 4 point landing on her hands and knees. After that mom coasted next to a curb and put her foot down on the curb then got off the bike.

One time mom and I rode down Canal and then through the other Dresden village by St Matthias church and then back home down 19 Mile Rd.. When we were riding under the x way underpass we had to follow the sidewalk around the guard rails. Mom went around the first turn and then trying to make the second turn she scraped her leg hard against the guard rail. She jumped down from her bike bent over the handle bars, crying out in pain, saying it hurt so bad she might pass out.

Just then a car full of teenagers roared to a stop, hollering at mom, “Lady, ya got the time?” Mom says to me, “I’m dying of pain and they ask me if I’ve got the time!”

Dad got a bike and rode with us for a while but he soon gave up bike riding, saying the seat on the bike hurt his hemorrhoids.



Doug and Taffy

On September 8, 1970 I was near the dining room at Diamond when the phone rang and it was Bill on the line. He was at the Trendal’s residence and he said they had a really cute 8 week old cocka poo puppy for sale. I got all excited but mom heard the gist of the conversation and said, “NO!! no dog!” But she’s so cute, Bill says and I repeat. “No, no dog!” But she is little and white and fluffy and oh, so cute! “She’ll be on 6 weeks probation!” Mom said. I was out that front door in a flash before mom could change her mind.



Steve Trendal holding Taffy and her 6 siblings

I drove over to the Trendal's house at Auburn and Ryan. Bill was there. Where's the puppy, I ask. Bill says behind Hopey Dokey, the mother. Hope is so big my heart sunk. Mom will never accept a dog that large, I say to myself. I walk around beyond Hope and see the most gorgeous little 8 lb cockapoo. I scoop her up into my arms, thank the Trendals and head for my car. I see the other dogs teasing the Siamese cat, biting on her tail as she is trying to hide in the hose bib. (The Siamese cat is in the left background of the above picture).



Mike & Taffy on Diamond 1970

I drive Taffy home in dad's Dodge Aspen. As I pull up in front of our house on Diamond I see Taffy is green in the gills from the car ride home. I very carefully try to lift her out of the front seat of dad's car, and just as I get her almost out of the car she barfs all over dad's driver's seat, horse meat no less! What a stinky disgusting mess that was! Taffy is shaking like mad as I pick her up out of the car. I carry her in the house and see Mike sitting on the couch. I deposit Taffy in his arms and return to the car to clean up that awful mess. By the time I get the car cleaned up and return to the living room I see that Taffy has calmed down and is sitting peacefully in Mike's arms.



Doug Bender

Doug and I took mom's threat seriously that she might evict Taffy if she did not behave as mom had evicted Savage, a mixed breed dog that I had brought into the house the year before. That dog was messy and yappy. We put her in the half bath with papers on the floor nights and the next morning she tore up the papers all over the bathroom. So mom looked through the pet want ads, found a lost dog ad, called the people up and told them she found their dog. They came over and discovered it was not their dog. Mom asked them to take the dog. The woman asked her small boy if he wanted that dog and he said yes. So out the door that dog went. So Doug and I loved Taffy too much to lose her due to bad behavior so we were very careful about cleaning up after her and training her to go outside. Doug and I laughed and said that we caught Taffy's pee and poop before it even hit the ground. She was soon dependably housebroken within a few weeks.



Sandy Bender 1970

Mom fell in love with Taffy soon after we got her. Dad was disappointed in her, saying he would rather have had a German Shepherd like brown Sport of his childhood days. But dad was the one who named Taffy. Her body was mostly white but her ears were Taffy colored so dad named her after her ears. Dad walked her often on weekends and once he retired, he walked her every day. Once she was a few years old she was so dependable off leash that we seldom put one on her. At every curb we would give her the firm command to stay and she would stay.

The first snow storm was hilarious. She jumped like a bunny rabbit through the high snow. We have a home video of her in the snow. Taffy had a very cute gray boyfriend named moon dog (he was born just as the shuttle to the moon was launched). Taffy and moon dog had a ball together. They ran for hours until they were both exhausted in our back yard. He would walk to our fence and we would let him in. They would play, drink the water bowl dry and moon dog would eat all of Taffy's food. She didn't care. She knew there was more food where that came from. That wonderful friendship ended when the police started picking moon dog up as a stray for walking down the block by himself without a leash.

Several times dad and Mike got so upset with Taffy as when they would open the gate to let their car out of the garage Taffy would run out of the yard and around the block to the school yard behind us. Dad and Mike would have to run after her, chasing her first out of the yard and then back in again. Mike was so angry with Taffy one time for making him late for work that he picked her up, hollered real loud at her, smacked her a few good times and let her down. She never ran away from him again.

Taffy lived with Mom and dad and when they moved Taffy lived for a while with Mike and Doug. One time Taffy got mad at Mike and walked from Diamond to mom and dad's apartment in Dresden Village. We found her just as she was outside the apartment.

One day when I went over there Norman was wondering what had happened to his arm as he was repairing a TV set when as a sudden Norm's right arm went floating through the air by itself. Norman had no control over the arm, he just watched it float free in mid air. A little while later Norman went to the hospital as he was losing more control over his arm. At the hospital they injected dye into his spine and diagnosed his problem as a stroke. The dye blocked his spinal column and he started not knowing who he was or where he was. I called his ex wife Evelyn Bender and asked her if she would sit with him and calm him back down by telling

him a lot of stories of their earlier life. Evelyn sat with him every day in the hospital till he died on the 9th of December, 1970. Norman was laid out at a funeral parlor at Lakepointe and Harper, a few blocks from Art and Agnes' house.

I helped Gary and Richard with the arrangements for Norman's funeral. Agnes picked the funeral parlor which was more expensive than the one she picked for her own husband the next year. Both boys had to go to a bank and take out a loan for \$750 each to bury Norman with as they did not have any savings. Richard asked me to stay close by him for the duration of the funeral as he did not remember most of his relatives. At the end of the second evening Richard said to me that only he, Bill and I have blond hair and only he has blue eyes and he was wondering why. I was not about to tell him that his biological father was not Norman, but was rather the plumber who stuck around until Evelyn was pregnant.



I arranged for dad to buy the cemetery plot right below his sister Beatrice Gamache in Mt Olivet cemetery in the new section by Outer Drive. I also arranged to have the priest do the final commendation and farewell at the cemetery. But Richard wanted the Jehovah's Witness preacher give the speech in the funeral parlor. Boy did that ever upset the old Catholics. The Jehovah Witness preacher made a very upsetting homily for all those old Catholics. He told them that Norman's soul was dead and would stay dead till the end of the world.

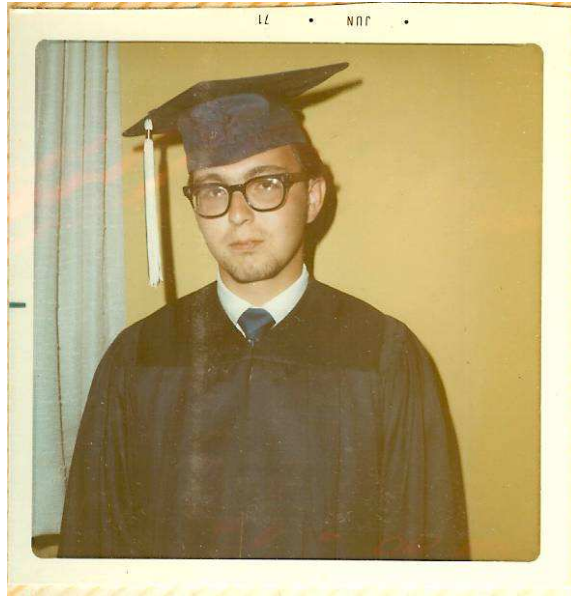


Mildred & Harold Neff

I called Mildred and Harold Neff and told them that Norman had died and I asked Harold if he would like me to give him a ride to the funeral parlor as it was winter and Harold was afraid to drive after dark. Harold was so very grateful that I picked him up. When I dropped both of them off in front of their house on Glenwood in Clinton Township they invited me to come into their house and sit with them for a while. I was very glad to sit with them after driving them home as I was very fond of both of them. Mildred would make me tea and fix me home made apple pie she would take out of the freezer. Mom would tell me not to bother those people but I told her that for sure they wanted me in their kitchen and we had such lovely conversations. I would reluctantly leave their home around 10:30 p.m. as I had to work the next day. I took some very nice pictures of them with my new camera.

The next year Uncle Art passed away just before his birthday. He was laid out in a more frugal funeral parlor on Chalmers in Detroit. Again, I picked up Uncle Harold and Aunt Mildred Neff. Again he was very grateful I picked him up. While mom, dad and I were in the funeral parlor, Carol and Lou Meyer came in with their two very small boys. When they took the boys up to the casket the boys started singing "Happy Birthday" to Uncle Art as that day was his birthday. Carol and Lou whisked away the two boys to the back of the room.

1971



Doug Bender Sr. Graduation, June 1971

Doug graduated from Henry Ford High School in June of 1971. Mr Crowl, his shop teacher helped him out a great deal in getting through high school. Right after graduation day Frohreip called Doug and invited him to a graduation party. Doug was upstairs on Diamond very upset because no one invited him to a graduation party. So when I answered the phone and Frohreip invited him to a party I told Frohreip that Doug was not home as Frohreip was a very serious drunk and I was afraid if Doug went with him he would get into a car accident. I hung up the phone and was feeling very guilty hearing Doug hollering upstairs and pacing back and forth. At 2:30 am that next morning Frohreip was driving north on Dodge Park Rd approaching 16 Mile Rd when a 50 year old man was driving drunk west on 16 mile heading for home. The police were chasing the 50 year old man who was now doing over 80 miles an hour trying to out run the police. Frohreip, being extremely drunk was driving 20 miles an hour going north on Dodge Park. He never saw the 50 year old man and drove right into his path. The boy who was sitting in the front passenger seat, James Guitar, where my brother Doug would have been sitting had his head totally crushed to the point where he was unrecognizable. The sister in the back seat had her head crushed into the hood of the car and died instantly. Her brother was in a deep coma in the hospital. The parents of the brother and sister did not know whether to go to their daughter's funeral or sit with their son in ICU. They buried their daughter in her cap and gown. The mother of Jim Guitar demanded that the funeral director reconstruct Jim's face. She had thrown him out of her house 3 weeks prior and wanted to see him once more. The funeral director fought against doing it but in the end he did a reconstruction. Doug asked me to go to the funeral parlor with him to see Jim

Guitar, which I did. When Doug and I got up to the casket we both felt like passing out. The funeral director made Jim Guitar look just like my brother Doug!



Doug Bender in California at Christmas

Doug moved out to Cypress, California where he stayed for one year attending the first year of college. He was very fortunate because at that time junior college was free and Nancy and Don were very gracious and allowed him to stay with them that entire year for free. Doug finished the first year getting very good grades, mostly all Bs. Warren also went to college that year attending the same community college. Don was furious with Warren because he got an A in softball and flunked every other class. But after that year Warren was diligent in his studies and received good grades all through college and graduated with honors from American University.



Doug with his red Ford Falcon



Craig, Sandy & Bill

Nancy came back to Michigan to visit us about every other year. In this picture Bill was playing Old Maid with Craig. In the beginning Craig won about $\frac{1}{2}$ the time, but as the games progressed he lost every game. Craig was very down hearted by the time I came home. I looked at the cards and figured right away why he was losing – Bill had bent the ear of the Old Maid!



up: Elenore, Mildred, Doris and Marie
down: Marianne & Sandy St Hgts 6-71 :

In the summer time we on the Dahl side of the family used to visit back and forth at lunch time. Mom used to make a hot lunch for the relatives and after eating and cleaning up the kitchen we used to go outside and enjoy the sunshine and the warm air. At mom's house on Diamond the women shot basketball hoops for the fun of it.



Edward, Shirley & David Gamache Mildred Neff, Ed Gamache, Marie & Ed Bender

Dave Gamache threw a 80th birthday party for his father, Edward at his home in Sterling Heights. Mom and dad were there to help celebrate. Poor Bea could not be there for the occasion as she had died at 68 years of age from the complications of a long term battle with diabetes.



Sandy

I had my hair done up by a professional hairdresser because I had my picture in the Detroit News. They featured me in the newspaper because I was instrumental in finding clothing for the poor kids.



Sandy

I had my photo taken several times by a professional photographer as I had 2 new dresses and wanted to have my picture taken as a young woman just like Marie had when she was 20 years old.



Craig using the Challenger convertible as a monkey bar

Craig and I loved tooling around town in the yellow Challenger. Naturally, he was not allowed to do monkey shines when I was driving. There were no seat belts in those days and he was allowed to ride in the front seat. Our home on 11284 Diamond Drive is in the background in this picture.

When my accident settlement came in for the car crash I turned my Duster in for a yellow convertible Dodge Challenger. That car only lasted for 11,000 miles till the

timing chain jumped and the dealership said they could not fix it and there was no warranty coverage on it. What a waste of money that car turned out to be.

In 1971 I was a 5th grade catechism teacher for 2 years at St Matthias church. At the end of the school year the 5th grade students begged me to take them for a ride in my convertible, which I did. But several of the kids climbed up and sat on the back of the boot. I carefully drove them back to the church parking lot, vowing never to take some one else's kids in my car again.

I later taught the 7th grade at St Matthias but that was a fiasco. Everybody hated the catechism book, including me. It was all about people from the Orient and the kids in the 7th grade had no interest in anything in that book and to tell the truth neither did I. The only thing that book had to do with the Catholic religion was sympathy for others who were less fortunate than us.

In 1978 I also taught the 5th grade in the Catholic Church in New Baltimore. That had a much better catechism book, something in it to instruct the children in their faith. The children in that classroom were interested in learning their religion and it was a pleasure to teach them.

1972

The next time I visited Nancy there was a huge improvement in their home. The swimming pool and Jacuzzi was now installed. All the landscaping was in front and back. The cement block fences were erected. At night the melodious sound of the water falling into the pool could be heard all night long. They now had a terriopoo dog named Tuffy. He was only 5 lbs. When I got there he was full of fleas so I put him in the kitchen sink and totally deflead him. It was 61 degrees in February but it felt so warm to me after Micigan that I was walking barefoot around the neighborhood. I walked Tuffy on a leash. He was all over the place walking as he was not used to being on a leash. As I walked through the subdivision Tuffy almost got tangled up around my ankles as he was constantly under my legs. When I took him around the block he was very friendly with all the neighbors except on black man. Tuffy was so vicious he acted like he wanted to bite him. Then when we got past the black guy Tuffy became really friendly to all the other neighbors.

On Mom's birthday we were all at their apartment in Dresden Manor. After we all ate we played ping pong on their dining room table. All of a sudden we received a call that Mike's garage was on fire. We drove over there and found the garage

ablaze. Doug had run to the garage and was about to jump in to save his red Ford Falcon he bought from Don's brother Jack. But Mr. Russel Clayton hollered at him not to go into the flaming garage. Right after Doug stopped the garage suddenly did a huge flare up and Doug would have been burned to death. Bill lost his new motorcycle in the conflagration. Taffy was in the house and was terrified of the flames, smoke and sounds of the fire trucks. When I went in to the house it was pitch black as the fire burned the electrical line going into the house. I called and called for Taffy but she remained hidden and would not show herself. But all of a sudden I heard her dog tag tinkle against the end table so I rushed in on my hands and knees and pulled her out from under the table and put her safely into my car.



Sandy at Metro beach golf course

Mom, dad and I often went golfing together at Metro Beach, Rammler and other golf courses. Mom could not drive very far so we played kangaroo golf where dad and mom would take turns striking the golf ball and I would play against them. That worked out pretty good score wise as dad was a long distance hitter so his and mom's drive would pretty much equal mine.



Moondog & Taffy

Moondog lived down the street on Diamond. He belonged to the Hagadorn family. He used to break free from their fenced in yard and walk down the street and visit Taffy. When we saw Moondog standing at our gate we would open the gate and let her in our back yard. Taffy loved Moondog. As soon as those two got together they would scramble with one another until they got so hot they could not get their breath. They would then go to Taffy's water bowl and drink it dry. They would rest a while and then go to it once again. When Moondog was totally spent we would open up our gate and he would saunter off home. He got his name Moondog as he was born just as the moon shuttle was launched.

1973



Ed, Sandy and Taffy Bender

Dad was so terrible exhausted from working at Krazy Kellys 5 days per week from 9 am to 9 pm. So first dad dropped down to part time, working 3 days per week. When he got even more exhausted he needed to quit but he was afraid that he could make his bills. So dad, mom and I sat down and figured out the finances and

dad and mom decided that if they sold the home on Diamond and lived on the interest they could make it if they were frugal.



Mike Bender

Mike did not want to move so he bought the house from mom and dad on land contract.

I moved into the Dresden Manor apartments on Canal Rd and mom and dad moved into a 2nd story apartment in the same complex. I loved that first apartment and furnished it very nicely. But the only problem was that I spent about \$3000 on the furniture which scared me as for a time I could only make the minimum payment. The apartment was sweet but the neighbors were a problem. The people downstairs on both sides caused problems with their complaints. So when I had a chance to move to a 2 story 2 bedroom apartment, I took advantage of it. At the same time mom and dad had a chance to move into the end unit apartment which was equivalent to a ranch so they grabbed it up. They were very happy in that unit as it was very much like not being in an apartment complex. The only problem dad had was people stealing his parking place.



Sandy standing next to the Grandfather clock

When I was living in the 2 story apartment in Dresden Manor I purchased a grandfather clock and a cuckoo clock. That clock was moved to Dino Circle, then to Base St in New Baltimore. It ended up in mom and dad's house on Grant Park where it remains to this day. The cuckoo clock did not survive the moves from house to house as it is a more delicate piece.

Mom and I walked all around the neighborhood on Diamond, Dresden Manor, Dino Circle, New Baltimore and Grant Park many a time with Taffy. Taffy was a very lively, happy dog and loved to go for walks. She was well behaved and a number of times she could walk without a leash and stay near us and not wander off the sidewalk. One time when she was walking off leash with Dad and me on Hahn St. in Utica she was barking furiously and growling at a big German Shepherd which was very close by her on the other side of the see through fence. When she, dad and I got to the end of the property line, there was no fence on the back of the property line, the Shepherd was free to step right up to Taffy. Taffy freaked! She ran right to dad and climbed right up his chest and landed on top of his head, hanging right over his head, completely covering his face. Dad hollered at her, saying "You dumb dog, with you hanging right over my face I can't see where the Shepherd is or what he is about to do." But fortunately he went back behind the fence and did not threaten Dad, me or Taffy.



Taffy



Taffy & Sandy on Diamond 1971

Taffy used to love to open Christmas presents. While we were in Mass on Christmas day Taffy would open up her own presents but no one elses. We would then put Taffy up on the chair with us and offer to let her unwrap our presents. She gleefully ripped all our presents apart.



Ed & Marie in front of the Dresden village ranch



Marie & Edward in front of Dresden Manor

1974



Edward Bender

Edward Bender went to St. Joseph hospital in Mt. Clemens because he had a gall bladder attack in Lion's Head and had to be admitted to the hospital. While in the hospital he ran up and down the stairs in the stairwell for exercise. While running the stairs he had a heart attack at age 64. The staff realized that it was a heart attack and gave him emergency care which saved his life by their quick action. When dad got back home to his second story apartment his neighbor, Carl put that message on dad's door. Carl was very friendly but a serious drinker.

Mom and Dad later moved into a ranch type unit on the end which they really enjoyed. I moved into a 2 story apartment right behind them. Taffy walked back and forth from our one apartment to the other. She slept with me at night and lived with mom and dad during the day.



Sandy playing softball

I joined a softball team first in Sterling Heights and then later in Chesterfield Township. The Sterling Heights team was coached by a labor class big mouth know it all. One season was enough being on that team even though the girls were good players and decent people.



Nicole White and Nancy Stephens



Nancy, Nicole, Linda & Marie 1974
4 generations

Nicole was the first born grandchild of Nancy & Don Stephens. She was the daughter of Linda Stephens White. Nicole was adopted by Greg White when she was 2 years old.

1975



Michelle Pacheco, Don, Nancy and Donna Pacheco



Mrs. Pacheco, Fred, Donna, Nancy & Don

Donna married Alfred Pacheco in 1975. They had a daughter, Michelle Pacheco shortly afterward.

There is a funny story attached to the grandfather clock and the cuckoo clock. Craig visited me in the 2 story apartment and slept in the front bedroom. I went to work every weekday before Craig woke up and every night when we went back to my apartment the clocks were still, so I wound each of them up. For three days in a row the clocks were still in the evening. Suddenly it dawned on me. Craig, I said, are you silencing my clocks? Yes, he replied. Why, I asked? Because the grandfather clock sounds like a grave yard and the cuckoo clock sounds like a frantic lady!



Sandy & Edward in Dino family room

Dad and mom loved their ranch apartment in Dresden Manor apartments and I liked my 2 story apartment but we were having problems with the manager of the apartment who didn't like that we had a dog and other tenants were stealing our parking places. So mom, dad and I went looking at new houses and condos. We liked the condos on Cotton Rd near Sugarbush and we liked the friendly sales lady Vicki Klaasen. Mom dad and I decided to by a condo at 28558 Dino Circle, Chesterfield Township. Bill decided to also buy a condo on Dino Circle and live next door to us as he did not drive.

Mom, dad and I moved in in July and Billy a few months later as his condo wasn't quite ready. We only had to have \$2,000 down but the interest rate was 8½ percent, which by today's standards was quite high. In the first Easter we lived there Werner bought me a white Pugh moped and brought it out in his trunk. I was thrilled with my new moped and drove it around the circle even though I had my best clothes on. Werner also took a few spins around the circle with great glee. I rode that moped almost every day, often going to New Baltimore and even north from there and even on farm roads.

One time I took Bill with me, I on the white moped, he on the maroon one. When we got to Foss Rd Bill started losing control of his moped and skinned the side of my elbow. That made me nervous so we turned around and went back home.

When we moved to Chesterfield Township Taffy adjusted very well to the move. Poor mom! Taffy loved to roll in horse poop from the horse farm right behind our condo. She would have to bathe Taffy every time she did that. One time Taffy got embroiled with a skunk so mom had to take her down to the laundry tub for a thorough scrub job. But worst thing Taffy got into on Dino Circle is when, on a real hot day, we all went swimming in Anchor Bay at the foot of Cotton Rd. I put taffy in the water and found out she could swim very well. She swam out to a German Shepherd and when she got close to him she thought better of it and turned around and swam back to shore. When she got back to shore she found a big pile of rotten fish and rolled in that pile with glee. We all could have died when we smelled her! Mom had a big scrub job that day!

Dad opened the garage door and a cat ran in. Taffy chased that cat and cornered it in the door wall. That cat raked Taffy's eye with her claw, ripping her eye lid and putting an actually gouge out of her eyeball.

The 4 year old kid next door threw fire crackers at Taffy and that scared her so badly that for the rest of her life she was terrified of loud noises.



Sandy and Dad on Dino Circle Marie & Taffy in front of Dino Circle

We went house hunting in 1975 and met Vicki Klaasen, a real estate woman. She showed us through the houses on Dino Circle and we were interested in these condos as the price was right and it was a ranch style home and it was sound proof between the houses. We chose a unit that backed up to a horse farm so we had a really nice view in the back and no neighbors on that side of the house. The negative side of that location is that Taffy loved rolling in the horse manure.

Bill moved first to an apartment complex a mile away as his condo was not ready. A few weeks later he moved in to a condo right next to ours. It was a nice looking pink brick and Bill got it for \$1000 cheaper because the garage was set at a wrong angle and would be hard to get a car in. But being Bill did not own a car it was of no concern to him.

Dad and I used to like walking through the complex. We were especially fascinated by the fireflies that flickered on and off behind our condos at night. That is the first time I had ever seen fireflies so it seemed almost magical.



Datsun B210

I traded in the Datsun 210 for a Honda hatchback. I drove that for 92,000 miles and traded it in for another Honda hatchback. I paid \$3000 for the Datsun 210 and sold it at 92,000 miles for \$1800.



Honda Hatchback

The Honda hatchback I bought for \$4200 and sold it for \$3000. The second Honda hatchback I bought for \$5,000 and sold it for \$4,000. Both Hondas got about 45 miles per gallon. Werner said those cars paid for themselves.

1976



Linda & Donald Stephens on her wedding day

The above picture was taken on Linda's wedding day in 1976.

Doug came to our house on Dino Circle with his new fiancée Karen Otter. We were all so pleased to meet her. She lived on a farm in Huron Township near the pleasant village of Waltz. She was very well educated with a bachelor's degree in Social Work and worked for the Department of Social Services in Detroit. Doug had met her while watching the Social Service women play softball. Karen was a very attractive, very friendly girl with a nice figure. Doug brought her over to our house on Dino Circle to meet all of us. We were all impressed, feeling that Doug made a wonderful choice in a future spouse.

In February, 1976 Mr. and Mrs. Otter invited us over to their home on Otter Rd. to meet the Otter family. We arrived at Willow Rd on a very snowy day. We were afraid that we might not be able to get in to Otter Rd as it was a very snowy day. Mr. Otter offered to use his tractor to pull us in to Otter Rd and back out again if we got stuck in the snow. But the snow was not that bad and we were able to get in and get out without assistance.

It was a very pleasant visit that afternoon. We came away from the Otters feeling very comfortable with expecting the Otter family to soon be joined to ours.

A few days later we went back out to Waltz and visited with dear Grandma Alvira Neumann in her own very modest little home right around the corner from the Fairground. Grandma Neumann invited us very warmly into her home, but once we were in her home she suddenly became frightened asking us who we were. When we told her we were Doug's family she immediately became very friendly again. She had problems remembering who Doug was as she was very advanced

in age. She remembered the other spouses names but being Doug was the new comer she couldn't remember his name. She called Doug "What's his name".

She had a very hard life. She lived on a farm with her 23 year old husband. She was expecting her 3rd child Louise Otter when her husband was harvesting in the fall and got black mold on his face. Within a week Alvira's husband passed away, leaving her with two small daughters and one baby on the way. Alvira made a modest living sewing for others.

In February, 1976 Karen invited me to go to a bridal show. We were given tickets and told to put our name on them and drop them into a bin. Karen won one of the prizes. It was an interesting afternoon seeing what all they had to offer to the prospective brides.

In the spring Karen invited me to be one of her bridesmaids. We went to several bridal shops and Karen tried on Bridal gowns and veils. The first bridal gown was pure white and it did not match with her complexion. Next, she tried on a candle light colored bridal gown and that was absolutely perfect, it matched her complexion very well. She looked so nice in that gown and veil. Next she chose the bridal gowns for her bridesmaids. Linda, who went with us, was oohing and aahing over the pink gown Karen had chosen for us. I thought Linda Otter was part of the bridal party. Later on Karen told me that she did not choose Linda as Linda did not choose her for a bridesmaid and therefore had hurt Karen's feelings. My gown had to be hand sewn as the gown off the rack did not fit me. But when it came time for the final fitting the gown off the rack would have fit me as I had lost over 32 lbs.

On the wedding day I changed into the gown in Mrs. Otter's big roomy bathroom. Karen and her family also changed in the Otter house. Mom and dad changed in Doug's house that he just bought on Waltz Rd in Waltz. Mom had on a beautiful yellow gown. Dad and Punch Otter had on white suits which I felt did not match their complexions at all. Doug had a light blue suit which looked very nice but one leg is too short. Craig Stephens flew in from California and was in the wedding party. Don refused to let Nancy go to the wedding because none of us went to Donna or Linda's wedding.

We all entered St. John's Lutheran Church about ½ hour before the wedding was set to begin. We were all getting more and more nervous as the time for the wedding approached as Michael, who was best man, had not arrived. As the bells

began to ring suddenly Mike walks into church. There wasn't enough time to take a breath before the wedding party had to walk down the aisle.



Marie, Craig, Karen, Bill, Doug, Mike, Edward & Sandy

The 2 flower girls were Natalie, age 6 and Mahrya age 2. Natalie was perfectly behaved throughout the entire ceremony. On the other hand Mahrya kept walking off to the side of the altar. Natalie would quietly step to the side and bring Mahrya back to her place in the wedding party.

After the ceremony we all went outside and took pictures. The most impressive picture in my estimation was the group shot taken in the field just to the south of Doug and Karen's house on Waltz Rd.

After the picture taking we all got in our cars which we had lined up in front of the church and north of the church. Mom had to go back into Doug's house so she told us not to leave until dad placed his car at the end of the line. About 5 minutes later we saw a bronze colored car pull in at the end of the line, so we figured dad and mom was in line so we all took off. When we got to the hall mom and dad were not in the parking lot. Mike looked all around, no mom and dad. Mom and dad had no idea where the hall was so Mike jumped back in his car and drove back to Doug's house. Here was mom, standing outside Doug's locked door with her dress firmly stuck in the door. No amount of tugging would release mom's dress from the door and mom and dad did not have a key for the door. There was steam coming from mom's ears she was so mad! Mike got the door open and mom's dress released. But was mom ever mad at each and every one of us!

We had a nice dinner and then we had a band. Karen started a square dance, the country folk knew how to square dance, but us city folks did not know how. Karen talked me into joining in on the square dancing but I had never did any square dancing in my whole life, so when I started to try to square dance I made a big mess out of it. As I was going in and out and around I would end up grabbing a

woman's hand, not a man's and even ended up now and again being totally outside the circle. I was thoroughly confused and had no idea what I should be doing the entire dance.

Later on the band reverted to slow dancing. Mom and dad danced a few dances together. Dad was a totally free spirited dancer, moving freely over the dance floor. Mom was a very dainty dancer and a lot of men liked to dance with her. Dad then danced with me and I pretty much followed his steps as we had danced a lot of times before. After dad Uncle Herman asked me to dance with him. He was a formal dancer, with a stiffness of movement. I was not a good dancer so I just could not follow him.

Doug and Karen went on a honeymoon driving to California. On the way back home they stopped in the Sequoia National park and then bought a resort package in which they planned to use for one or two weeks every year. But things didn't work out the way they planned. Shelley was born the very next year and they spent their time and money on the baby, not on a vacation. They lent us that vacation package that year because they had no use for it. Werner and I used it for a vacation in Fort Lauderdale.

When Doug and Karen came to our house on Dino Circle Karen had some happy news for us – she was expecting a baby. We were all thrilled! This was the first baby in a long, long time as Craig, the last grand child, was 11 years old.



Ed, Mike, Craig & Bill on Doug's porch on Waltz

While Doug and Karen were on vacation dad, mom and I went to Doug's house and I painted the bottom half of the porch an attractive burgundy color. Doug completely gutted the inside of the house and rebuilt it. It was one dusty mess that year.



Karen, skeleton & Doug

Mom gave wonderful Halloween parties all through the years. She gave a wonderful Halloween party in Dino Circle the first year Doug and Karen were married. She decorated the basement on Dino with Halloween decorations. Karen and Doug had very artistic and spiffy Halloween Costumes. Karen was an oriental woman and Doug was a cool pirate.



4 Generations – Nancy, Linda, Nicole & Marie

The next time I went out there was for Mother's day. It was a very rough visit because Nancy was very upset the entire time I was there. Linda said she almost called ma and told me not to come as Nancy was so upset. On Mother's Day Nancy locked herself in the bedroom and wouldn't come out. The fire department came to get the door open and to get her to come out of the bedroom. She finally came out but the fire department came back twice more that day to make sure

Nancy was okay. Don gave a grin and said that the fires department came back to make sure Don wasn't beating her.

Several days before I was scheduled to go back home Nancy suddenly realized that we had not gone anywhere since I'd been there so she took me to see San Juan Capistrano. I was awestruck over that structure.

I had a very nice office partner in 1976. Her husband was also a social worker and went to nursing homes as part of his work. His car kept breaking down and so his wife kept slipping out and picking him up and I covered for him. Then one day at the end of November his car again broke down and his wife was on a long house call and would not be available to pick him up and it was now almost closing time. So I told Paul Brunson I would pick him up. He said he was stuck at Wil Mar nursing home. I went to pick him up. He was sitting talking to the owner, Werner Wilhelm. Paul introduced me to Werner but Werner didn't pay much attention to me as he said most social workers were communists.



Werner Wilhelm 1976

A week later I was very late for lunch and was in the Utica area so I decided to stop into the Shelby Inn for a late lunch. It was December 4th and Werner was sitting in a corner next to a string of Christmas lights. He saw me and invited me to sit with and have lunch with him. We got along very well and he invited me to his home afterwards. We had a most pleasant visit and I was totally enamored with him as he told me about his life under the communists and his escape to the west under gunfire.

A week later Werner asked me for another date. He decided that I was not a communist so he felt safe dating me. I later found Werner's notes on the women he had dated and his notes were the most complimentary that he wrote about me.

For years and years life with Werner was very rough. Werner trusted no one. He was so hurt by his family and the system and never got over this deep hurt.

When I first met Werner I was driving a Datsun B 210 as I liked small cars and it was cheap. Werner made fun of my car. Mom called it my tomato soup can as it was a small orange car. Werner made fun of the car until he heard the gas mileage. He then did some calculation, then said to me that the gas mileage would pay for the car.

Shortly after I met Werner he invited me to go to Florida over Christmas. I was very reluctant as I just met him but in the end I said yes. But we never went as he got a severe bladder infection, had a very high fever and a lot of pain. So I called Aunt Elenore and Uncle Herman and told them I would not be coming due to Werner's illness. We were all disappointed.

Werner went to a urologist in Boston that he trusted and had gone to in Detroit before the doctor moved out east. The doctor gave him some good news so Werner went on vacation for a week to the islands before returning home. I wanted to strangle him when I found out he was okay. He was so sick when he left that I thought he was in a hospital, not laying out on a beach somewhere.



Werner Wilhelm & Sandy Bender 1976

Every year since I first met Werner in December, 1976 I made up a sled filled with Christmas presents for him. I would wrap them up at my mother's house and then I would drag the sled into Werner's living room.



Werner in front of St. Anne's



Werner & Sandy

Werner Wilhelm came into my life on December 4, 1976. We met at the Shelby Inn in Shelby Township on Mound and West Utica Rd. at 1 pm. We had a leisurely lunch in a corner next to a small colorful Christmas tree. Werner spent hours telling me of his young years in Germany under the Nazis and the communists. I was fascinated from the first day forward and within 2 weeks we were dating on a regular basis. That first year we were together was a very rough one for a number of reasons. From mid November, 1976 into the middle of January 1977 the temperature never rose even one day above zero degrees Fahrenheit. We had a red alert one day when our boss told us not to leave the house as it was below zero and all ice and when I tried to get to work there was a slight rise in the road and the car could not get over the icy rise so I had to turn around, slide back down the incline and slowly drive back home to Dino Circle. I told Werner I was getting cabin fever so he drove in spite of the red alert and came to Dino Circle and drove me to a nearby restaurant (the Riviera).

The second reason we had a very rough first year was due to the health department. Werner had bought Wil Mar recently with no knowledge of the problems he inherited from the previous owner. The health department came in to the nursing home repeatedly and threatened them with closure papers. Werner had to hire the law firm of Dykema, Gossett at a cost of \$10,000 for one week. Dykema Gossett got the relatives of many of the patients to write letters of praise over the good care that the patients were receiving at Wil Mar and then the law firm hired a bus and bused the families to Lansing to confront the top health department officials. That strategy worked. The health department backed down and life went back to normal at Wil Mar. And once more Werner would open the door and answer his phone.



Werner at Grand Cayman island holding turtle

One month after I met Werner he invited me to go to Florida with him. I agreed to go for a one week vacation. I called Aunt Elenore and told her we were planning to visit her when we came to Florida. But just before we were about to go Werner got a severe prostate infection. He had a high fever and a tremendous amount of pain. So we had to cancel our trip. Instead Werner flew to Boston to visit a urologist he had met the last time he had a bladder infection. After visiting the doctor Werner went to the Grand Cayman Island for a vacation. I had no idea that he went on vacation so I feared that he was in a hospital. I was really peeved at him when I found out he went on vacation and didn't tell me that he was well.

When I first dated Werner he drove a tan Eldorado with 235,000 miles on it. Werner was worried about driving that car around town as it was a front wheel drive and the front suspension was just about gone. The owner of the Sunoco gas station on Auburn Rd told Werner that one of these days when he turned a corner his car was going to go one way and his front end suspension the other. That worried Werner so he bought another used Cadillac, a baby blue Deville. Another reason Werner got rid of the Eldorado was because he woke up one morning and found out that the seat in this car had caught on fire, totally destroying the front seat and his prized bathing suit. The car reeked of smoke. After breathing that

smoky interior for a while we needed a newer car. Werner was always attached to his cars so that Eldorado remained in the blue house back yard for 5 years until the city told Werner to get that car out of the yard, it was an eye sore.

1977

Werner bought a light blue Cadillac at auction. It was a good looking car and seemed to run well. We rode around town for a number of years in that car. When in the upper peninsula heading in the direction of Drummond Island I noticed that the car rode sideways as we were driving forward. I looked at Werner, he looked at me and we both laughed. The glass belts on the tires had shifted and as the car drove forward it also rode sideways. Werner bought new tires when we got back home.



Sandy

When I met him he had greatly swollen ankles to the point where he would wear sandals because his feet would no longer fit in shoes. I loved playing many sports when I first met Werner, softball, tennis and handball among others. Werner was unable and unwilling to participate in any kind of exercise so it was a big sacrifice for me to give up sports to please Werner.



Werner with Easter basket



Werner's Easter basket

Every year I made Werner an Easter basket with candy and boiled colored eggs.



Datsun B210, Bill's house & Sandy



Sandy & white Puch



Werner on white Puch on Easter

Werner did buy me a Puch moped for our first Easter together as he knew how pleased I would be to get that motor bike. He rode it around Dino Circle because he used to ride full size motorcycles and he now wanted the pleasure of taking it for a short spin. I loved that Moped and rode it for thousands of miles from Chesterfield to New Baltimore and into the farm roads north and west of New Baltimore.



Werner on burgundy Puch

Werner and I ended up buying a second Pugh moped and riding it on the back side of his 1600 acres in the Upper Peninsula. Werner bought the 1600 acres near Barbeau in the Upper Peninsula because he lost a 1600 acre estate in Zschippach Germany so he wanted to once again own a 1600 acre piece of property. This 1600 acre piece of land doesn't hold a candle to Zschippach but it was a lot of fun for Werner and I to explore on both the front and back sides and it also has 2 lakes entirely belonging to the property on it.



Sandy in sailboat on Deer Lake

One time Werner bought a small sailboat and put it on Deer Lake. He then got into the prow of the boat and had me climb in the back. He raised the sail and off we went, sailing west ward on Deer lake. I got very worried that we would not be able to stop the sail boat and it would slam into the bank. Suddenly the water came pouring over the brow and I was afraid the sail boat would sink. I hollered at him to get off the prow quick! He slid down and the water stopped coming in. I then took the paddles and paddled back to the starting point. That was the end of the sail boat as it started to sink. I knew I would be safe as I had on a decent life jacket but Werner didn't have one on. He was an excellent swimmer but I was afraid if he fell in the water he could get all tangled up in the lilly pads . We did have one casualty that day. My new expensive camera got drowned and would not work any

more. The pictures that I took with that camera looked like it was taken underwater.



Sandy & Werner at log cabin gate house



Werner posting no hunting at gate house

This was the entrance to the 1600 acre property at Barbeau, Upper Michigan. It was originally the small cabin at the entrance for the grounds keeper.



Werner walking in 1600 acres

Werner was walking with Sandy and Forbes Mac Donald in the interior of his property on the 1600 acres in the upper peninsula of Michigan in Barbeau. Werner and I had boots on that Forbes lent us as the ground was very wet and marshy. Werner's boot got stuck in the muck and he fell over onto his face. He feets came out of the boots as he tried to get back up. Forbes asked me very quietly was he permitted to laugh.



Werner doing his business in a duck blind

Soon afterwards we came upon a duck blind. We asked what that was. Forbes said it was for the hunter to hide in until a deer or a bear came along. Werner told us to continue on to Roach Lake, he would catch up with us. Werner sat in the blind, took a poop, covered it with evergreen branches and continued on. The hunter who sat in the poop was bound to have an unpleasant surprise, that's for sure!



Werner getting into small plane

Werner decided that he wanted to fly over his 1600 acres to see the property from over head and to take some pictures. Werner and I and the real estate man Forbes Mac Donald got into a very small plane. I got sick to my stomach before we even took off. As the engine revved up the vibration was making me sick. And when we were air borne I was even sicker. Werner asked me if I was sick and I told him no even though I was as I didn't want to admit that the only girl in the plane was air sick. But the reason Werner asked me that question was because he was sick to

his stomach and he wanted to know if it was air sickness or if he was having a heart attack.

When I met Werner mom, dad and I were living together in a condo on 28558 Dino Circle in Chesterfield township. We really liked the condo but not the neighbors. They were low class and the one across the street was always causing problems. Especially Ed Takas who was a fat ugly slob.



Sandy in front of Bill's condo



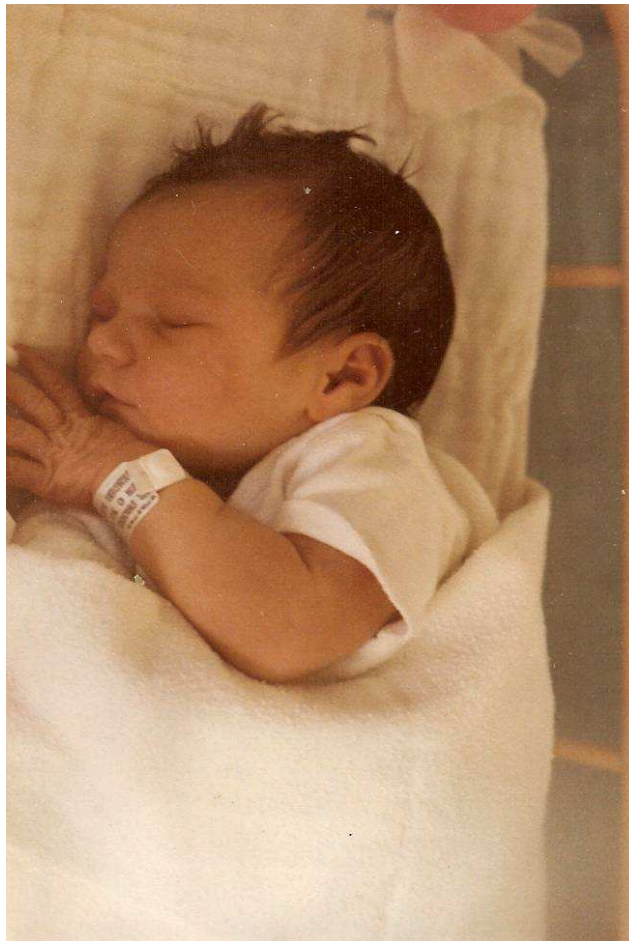
Sandy Bender & Edward Gamache

Ed Gamache came to visit me in my apartment in Dresden Village one Sunday afternoon. He had not seen me since I was a child so he referred to me as little Sandy. He was shocked when he saw me to find out I wasn't a kid any longer.



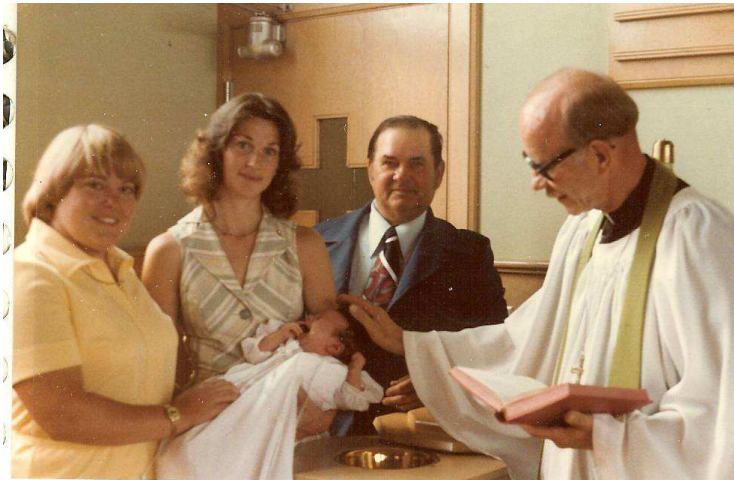
Marie Bender, Mildred Stocker & Elenore Mc Kinin

The Dahl sisters visited regularly and had such a wonderful time spending the afternoon together. Sandy drove Marie, Doris or Sandy drove Mildred and Marianne drove Elenore. There was always much laughing and joking when we got together. We made wonderful lunches and played cards.



Michelle Marie Bender 7-28-77

Within 2 weeks Shelley was on her way! We were all so excited for Doug and Karen to have their first child. There were no ultra sound in those days so we were kept in the dark as to whether it was a boy or girl until the actual birth. On July 28, 1977 we got a call from Doug that Karen was in labor. We kept calling Doug and we were distressed that hour after hour the baby still had not arrived. Finally after 30 hours the doctor decided to do a caesarean (which he should have done 22 hours earlier). Shelley arrived in the world at the end of the day. We were all so pleased and relieved that she was safely in the world. But we were very upset with the obstetrician that he did not deliver her much earlier. Linda Otter, a nurse, was concerned because Karen's pelvis was too narrow to deliver Shelley's large head and was unable to be delivered naturally and had to come by C section. She said that we would not know whether there had been any brain damage until Shelley started school. Shelley was an adorable little girl. When she was born Doug was for a minute surprised that it was not a son, but then with wonder in his voice, said "I have a daughter!"



Sandy, Linda Otter, Shelley, Clarence and Pastor

Shelley, the first born of Douglas and Karen Bender was baptized in August, 1977. Her sponsors were Sandy Wilhelm, Linda Otter and Clarence Otter.



Sandy Wilhelm, Marie Bender,
Mildred Neff & Shelley Bender

Mildred Bender Neff is holding Shelley Bender on her Christening day. Mildred came along for the baptism because she had hand sewn Shelley's christening gown. Mildred was a wonderful seamstress and had made many christening dresses for babies.

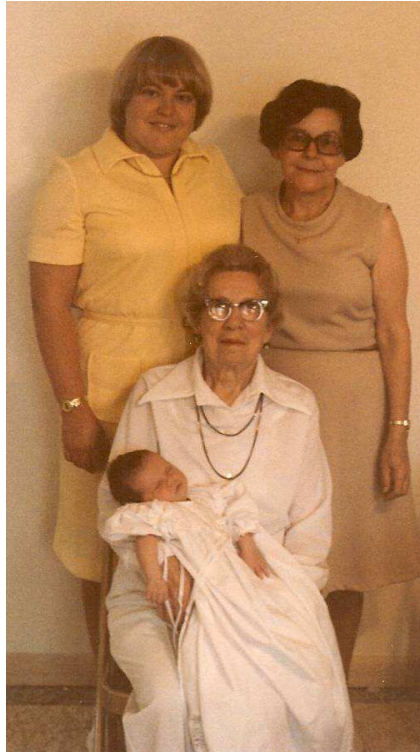
Waltz had some very nice parades in the summer time through those early years. When Doug lived on Waltz Rd. we had a premium seat for watching the parade on Doug's porch. After Doug sold the house we would sit on the curb across the street in front of the bank. Linda and Al Otter would pass by in their high wheelers and then Punch Otter would barbeque chickens in the park on an open grate.

In the middle of that construction Shelley was born on the 28 of July, 1977. Karen was in labor for 30 hours and yet Shelley would not come. It turned out that her head was too big to pass through Karen's pelvic bone and a caesarean was found to be needed. So Shelley was born on the evening of the 28th of July, 1977. Marie, Ed and Sandy were sitting home on Dino Circle, making frequent calls to the hospital to follow the progress of the delivery. We were so relieved that it was all over and the baby was born at last.

The next morning Marie, Ed and I went to Seaway Hospital in Trenton and viewed Doug's first born child in the nursery. At first Doug was momentarily taken aback

that it was not a son, but after a moment's reflection, he suddenly smiled and said, "I've got a daughter".

Karen and Shelley moved into Mike's house on Diamond for several months while Doug finished the inside of the house. Shelley was a perfect baby until suppertime every night. As dinner was put on the table Shelley would start crying really loud, like a siren. When the supper was over she calmed right down again.



Sandy & Marie Bender
Mildred Bender Neff & Michelle Bender

Shelley was baptized at St. John Lutheran Church in Waltz. Ed's sister, Mildred Bender Neff, sewed Shelley's baptismal gown by hand. Mildred was very proud to have made that elaborate christening gown and came to Waltz to St. John Lutheran Church to observe the baptism. We have pictures of all of us, including Mildred Neff, and Grandma Alvira Neuman as well as Dad, mom, Doug, Karen, Mike, Sandy and Mr. and Mrs. Otter and their family.

We had a really fun Halloween party that year in the basement on Dino Circle. Karen had a very classy Chinese costume. Mom was a fortune teller and did a

really good job of it. Karen had some wonderful news for us – she was expecting another baby. We were all thrilled to have another baby on the way.

The Chesterfield Township coach was a decent man who was friendly to all of us and was a fairly decent coach. We played mostly at the park right on the lake, a most pleasant park with the wind blowing in our hair. Werner and his friend Tom Armbruster came out to watch us play. Tom was a drunkard who liked running at the mouth which he did profusely that night. He made such a fool of himself that I was hoping for Werner to take him away.

1978

Werner had two large nursing home construction projects going when I met him. On St. Anne he was adding a 3rd story and 3 dayrooms. On Wil Mar he was adding 2 bedrooms on the first floor. Werner hired Marvin Stadler and his sons who normally don't do this type of work but there was a recession so Marvin was very grateful to keep working for Werner when his finished carpentry work dried up.

The construction project at St. Anne's was a massive undertaking. Werner decided to be his own contractor, supervising the entire project entirely on his own and as a result he saved a tremendous amount of money. Werner called St. Anne's nursing home his crown jewel because he finished that project at a cost of only \$9,000 per bed when the average cost was over \$18,000. So for the next 3 years after the project was completed his reimbursement more than tripled, making him several million dollars in profit.

Lee Seymour did the plumbing evenings as the union came around to see if Werner was using union workers, which he wasn't. Andy Vermuellen did the cement and block work. He was a very good company and his men put the whole 3rd story on St. Anne's as well as the 3 day rooms. Andy wondered why the job was taking so long so he came by and found that Werner was supplying the men with a case of beer every day.



Sandy Wilhelm

Mutti gave me the money to buy the Bavarian skirt suit that I am wearing here. Werner gave me the heavy gold bracelet that I am displaying on my arm.

On Thanksgiving Day I put all the white wash on the 3rd story block. It was a dirty job but I liked doing it and got paid well.



Sandy at the family room at Dino Circle



Werner Wilhelm holding old Bear

We had a German Shepherd that we called truly Bear which we bought in 1984 at Whistle down Kennel in Algonac.. He was born on February 29th. A nurse from Wil Mar babysat him while Werner and I were in Germany and when we came back home the dog had lost a huge amount of weight and soon after that got leukemia and died on August 10. I went back to Whistledown and bought old Bear and gave it to Werner at Rudi and Dinora's house as a surprise as Werner was so depressed for the whole week over losing truly bear.



Michael Douglas Bender 7-20-78

October, 1977 brought another delightful surprise – Doug and Karen’s second child was on its way! 2 babies in 2 years – what a wonderful gift from God! The caesarean section was scheduled for July 20, 1978 and in the morning Doug and Karen’s 1st born son arrived. They named him Michael Douglas Bender. Karen said she had seriously considered naming him Henry Bender after her grandfather but she decided to please Doug by using the name he had chosen. Every year Mike’s birthday comes before Shelley’s even though she is the older one as they were born less than a year apart. Grandma Marie bender year after year kept insisting that Shelley’s birthday had to come first as she was the oldest child!



Shelley Bender 1978

When Karen went into the hospital to have Mikey, Marie and Edward took Shelley home with them for the week. As soon as Karen got home from the hospital she asked Marie and Edward to bring Shelley back home. We arrived back home to Karen's house at lunch time. Sandy put Shelley in her high chair in the kitchen. As soon as she sat down in her high chair Mikey started crying in the bedroom behind Shelley. With wonderment in her face, Shelley turned around trying to stare at what was making all that noise in the bedroom.

After lunch Ed decided to vacuum the carpet in the living room and bedroom. He tried to open the bedroom door but was unable to open the door. When he finally got the door open he was shocked to see that Shelley was able to keep the door shut and prevent him from opening it. Ed could not believe how strong Shelley was!



Shelley Bender

Marie and I were invited to a Otter shower in the VFW hall. Karen brought Shelley with her to the hall. Shelley was so adorable in the red and white check dress. Shelley was just learning to walk. She started walking by herself around the hall but fell several times when a slightly bigger boy kept repeatedly knocking her back down.



Our house on 52324 Base St. New Baltimore

Mom, dad and I bought this house in New Baltimore in 1978. It was a nice looking house inside and out but there was something uncomfortable about the feeling in the house.



Shelley & Marie Bender in New Baltimore



Sandy Bender



Edward Bender

Marie, Edward and Sandy bought a home in New Baltimore, Michigan in 1978. Right after we moved in we noticed that there were quite a number of huge cement chunks laying around the yard from where the previous owner had chopped them out of the basement wall of the house in order to put in a door wall. So Edward and Sandy dug over a half dozen deep holes next to the cement chunks and slid the cement chunks into the holes. We placed dirt over the cement chunks so we could mow the grass which we planted over the dirt.

The doorwall in the basement was a disaster. The previous owner did not dig the foundation down the required 42 inches so when the frost came the door wall heaved up and cracked the walls.



Craig Stephens & Shelley Bender

When Craig would come to Michigan to visit us he would play with Shelley in the parks.

Mike Bender II was born on the 20 of July, 1978. We baptized him in August, 1978. He was baptized in a boy's christening dress as she felt that a christening gown was too sissified for a boy. Again, most of the relatives from both sides of the family were there for the christening.



Michael Bender, Sue Otter, Michael Bender II, Louise & Pastor

Michael Bender II was baptized in August, 1978. His sponsors were Michael Bender I, Sue Otter, and Louise Otter. Michael did not wear the christening gown Aunt Mildred Neff made as Karen felt that a boy should not wear a dress.



Karen, Doug, Shelley, Sue, Mikey, Mahrya, Mike I, Marie & Louise

This picture was taken on Mikey's christening day in 1978 in front of St. John Lutheran Church in Waltz.

Mom, dad & I lived in New Baltimore for 3 years. We loved the area and used to take a lot of walks together. The park on Lake St. Clair was only 1 mile from our home so we used to walk there with Taffy and sit on a bench and watch the water. There were a number of festivals in New Baltimore and we attended all of them while we lived there.



Edward, Shelley, Marie, Mikey & Karen

Every June they had the fish fly festival in downtown New Baltimore, complete with amusement park rides, music and lots of good food and drink. The Catholic Church, Our Lady Queen of Creation used to sponsor Thanksgiving turkey dinners in November.



Shelley & Sandy Bender

This picture was taken in 1978 when we were attending a shower for one of the Otters at the VFW hall in Waltz. Shelley had just learned to walk and every time she would take a few uncertain steps some other little kid would run over to her and shove her down.

I rode my Puch moped all around New Baltimore and surrounding areas. Often I stayed close to New Baltimore and Chesterfield Twp. Occasionally I would wander off into the dirt roads north of New Baltimore, mostly into the rural areas such as Foss Rd. One time Billy rode along side and behind me on the burgundy Puch. Bill did not have good balance and he ended up steering right into my side and almost knocking me off the white Puch.

Don had bought a vacant lot about 1 mile from his home in California and he built a furniture store. It was a beautiful store almost a block long and was filled with the most exquisite furniture and knickknacks. Don ran the store and Nancy handled the knickknack section of the store. Cecil kept the books for Don and Nancy. The beginning of the end of the marriage occurred when Don hired Marge to work in the store. Marge bragged to the other help in the store that she was going to own the store and all its contents. Don and Margie started playing around on the side behind Nancy's back. Nancy spent many an hour on the phone with Mike and me telling us all the horrible things that were going on behind her back.



Marie, Nancy, Donna & Michelle – 4 generation

Marie flew out to California and wanted to have a 4 generation picture taken with her two oldest great grandchildren, Nicole & Michelle.



Michael Pacheco



Freddie & Michael Pacheco

A few years later Michael Pacheco, the son of Donna and Freddie was born.



Michael Pacheco

Donna baked Michael a birthday cake which said “welcome to our world”.

1979



Edward, Taffy Bender & Jessie Neff

Ed’s sister Mildred Neff lost her husband Harold Neff so she decided to visit her daughter Sally Neff Kujat over the Christmas holiday. Ed and Marie agreed to take care of Jessie for the month of December. Mildred told Ed that she fed Jessie 2ce a day. So mom and dad put the 2 dogs food bowls far apart to keep them from fighting over food. That worked out well. Then Ed took both dogs off leash for a walk in the snow several times a day. At first Jessie was very slow and out of breath but as the month wore on he sped up and walked at a normal pace without losing his breath. When Mildred returned home from Texas she saw that Jessie was 10 lbs lighter from walking and eating twice a day. Instead of being happy over his new trim body she felt guilty because she told mom she fed him 2ce a day when in fact she fed him 3 times a day.



Mildred & George Stocker

On the 5th of June, 1979 Mildred and George stocker celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary at a restaurant on the St Clair River.



Bill Dahl, Elenore Mc Kinin, Mildred Stocker, Marie Bender & Dahl

Present were all 5 of the Dahl children (Mildred, Elenore, Marie, Bill and Harold). This is one of the few times that we took a picture of all of them together. On many occasions Elenore would be in Florida or one of the men would be ill and unable to come. I took the majority of the pictures that day. Uncle Herman was dying of cancer but he came up for the 50th anniversary as his wife Elenore was the maid of honor at Mildred's wedding. And Herman also said that he came to Michigan so he could tell the family members that he loved them as he said all

through the years he never expressed his warm feelings for some of the family and now he wanted to take the time to do so.

Herman later at Shorty's house asked me to hand him my camera because I was always the one taking pictures so now he wanted to take one of me. When I developed that picture I was so touched as that is one of the best pictures taken of me. I am sure that the picture turned out so well because the expression on my face expressed my love for Uncle Herman.



Sandy at Deer Lake



Craig at Deer Lake



Craig in sail boat at Deer Lake

Craig and I went boating in Werner's small sailboat on Deer Lake. We picked the boat up off the swampy area and dragged it into Deer Lake. We then went fishing in the lake. Craig caught 2 rainbow trout with his fishing rod and reel but both fish jumped off his line. We were forced to go in before we intended to because bees started buzzing around Craig and I and would not leave us alone. I was afraid of being stung in the middle of the lake.



Mom, Craig & Taffy at Deer Lake

Taffy went on vacations with us and she was a wonderful traveler. She went to the upper peninsula with us to Werner's 1600 acres. She was with mom and Craig and I when all of a sudden she started shaking and whimpering like crazy. I stopped, trying to figure out what was making her so upset and suddenly I realized that she

had more sense than we humans. There was a bear really near by snorting so loud it sounded like he had asthma. I had mom and Craig jump into the car without telling them why we were cutting short our excursion around Deer Lake.



Sandy at Houghton- Hancock looking at Traverse Island

Werner and I flew to Houghton Hancock in the upper peninsula close to the Wisconsin border. We flew in a small plane and had to land 7 times between Detroit and Houghton Hancock. Upon disembarking from the plane we met with Harold Bakkala, the owner of a 90 acre island in Lake Superior. Werner wrote a contract out on the back of a wine list. He agreed to pay Harold and his wife \$45,000 in installments. We were set to go on a boat ride to see the island close up but the waves were rough that day and the captain refused to take us to the island saying the rolling waves might make us sick to our stomach and mess up the boat. So we could only see the island through the spy glass.



Doug Bender Sr.

Doug had finished up the Waltz house and started on a new house on the Otter farm land on Otter Rd. Doug was seriously thinking of buying a lot on Lake St. Clair, but Mr. Otter did not Karen so far from them so he offered Doug a lot on Otter Rd which was a valuable piece of property so Doug accepted the land and began building. Once Doug got the house roughed in and the plumbing and electricity in he sold the house on Waltz Rd and moved the family in to the unfinished first home on Otter Rd.. Mrs. Otter felt really bad that now for the second time poor Karen had to put up with all that dust living for over a year in an unfinished home. But Doug worked very hard on that house and was able to make money for the family by his hard work.



Sandy Bender

Uncle Herman McKinin came up to Michigan in June, 1979 to attend Sonny and Mildred's 50th wedding anniversary. Herman was very sick with cancer and when he went to a doctor up her the doctor told him he was so sick that he should go right back home. But Herman said he wanted to attend the 50th wedding anniversary and he also wanted to tell the people he loved how much they meant to him as he never told them that before. I was taking pictures all over Shorty's house and yard when Herman asked me to hand him my camera, that I always took every one's pictures and no one ever took my picture, so that's what he wanted to do. He took one of the nicest pictures I ever had taken. I cherish that picture. Herman passed away in September, 1979.



Karen, Mikey, Marie & Aunt Mildred Neff



Shelley, Douggie, Karen and Shelley

Aunt Mildred Neff visited with us on a regular basis. She went shopping with Ed and Marie weekly and also went to many family gatherings with us, including going to Karen and Doug's house. She was a very generous and friendly person.

Aunt Mildred Neff lost her husband Harold and asked mom and dad to take care of her Dachshund for a month while she went to visit her daughter Sally in Texas. Mom and dad lived in their ranch apartment at the end of Dresden Manor. She told mom that she fed Jessie 2 times a day, so that is what mom did for that month. Daddy took Taffy and Jessie for a walk around Dresden Village every day, Jessie on a leash, Taffy off leash. Jessie was so short legged that he had to climb up on and over the snow banks while Taffy just sailed over them. Jessie had to have his bowl far away from Taffy's or they would fight.

When Mildred got back from Sally's she was shocked to see how trim Jessie got over that month what with eating 2 times a day and going for long daily walks. Instead of being happy with the weight he lost she felt guilty because she fed him 3 times a day and was too embarrassed to tell mom how much she fed him every day.



Shelley and Sandy Bender

Shelley is 2 years old in this picture. Edward, Marie and Sandy took Shelley to a Christmas fair in a neighboring town. We had almost new born Mike with us.

1980

Sonny Stocker decided to shovel the snow off his walk on Gunston on January 5, 1980. He just finished shoveling and then went into the house to rest. All of a sudden he turned a deep blue and passed away without warning. Dad and I were sick at the time and we were both in the hospital so we were unable to attend the funeral.



Marie & Ed's house on Grant Park



Marie & Ed's house on 45430 Grant Park



the back of 45430 Grant Park



vacant land on which Doug
built mom's house

unfinished living room on
Grant Park

Doug built mom and dad's house on Grant Park. Mike paid for the house. Doug did a first class work building that house. When the house was finished dad jumped up and down on the floors to see if it was solid. Doug said he put tons of extra nails in the floor to make double sure it was solid. Dad found one spot in the living room where it squeaked a little. Doug couldn't believe that Dad could find one small spot that squeaked!

One time I swung a ball ping hammer in the driveway and hit my shin with it. Boy, did that ever hurt!

Doug Jr. was conceived in that home on Waltz Rd. but was born in the house that was being built on Otter Rd. He was also baptized in St. John Church in Waltz. Karen heard that the Sumpter Township health unit was giving infants and young children physicals and blood work at no charge to the families so Karen made an appointment and had all the kids checked over. The health unit said that Mikie was anemic so the doctor gave Karen a diet for him to follow and said for her to bring him back in a week and they would re check his blood work. Karen took him back and when they checked out his red blood cells they told Karen to take him right away to the Children's Hospital in Ann Arbor for an immediate blood transfusion. They said he had leukemia and without immediate treatment he could die in one week. Karen took him there and a blood transfusion and chemotherapy was immediately begun.

He had to take chemo therapy pills which he really resisted taking. Doug used to beg him to take his pills, saying that without the pills he would die. Mikie had to have regular spinal taps to see if the treatment was working or not. One time Karen asked Ed to come with her to UM to help hold Mikie down for the spinal tap. Ed went with Karen but he said it almost broke his heart seeing Mikie go through that spinal tap. When they got back in the car Mikie asked his grandpa Ed if he could have some Mac Donald's French fries. "Of course you can!" said Ed with feeling in his voice. Dad would have bought the kid a bucket full of food if that's what he would have wanted.



Mikey & Sandy Bender

Mikie lost all of his hair from the treatment but after the treatment was completed his hair grew back. The doctor told the parents that if the treatment was to be successful his blood values had to revert back to normal within 20 days or the treatment would not be successful. It reverted back in only 14 days which the doctor said was an excellent sign.

Karen and Doug had to make a serious decision regarding Mikie's treatment. Did they want the doctor to radiate Mikie's head or not? If leukemia came back it was almost always because the head was not radiated. But on the other hand radiating a child's head was not without long term risks. Karen and Doug made the decision to radiate the head. This turned out to be a good decision as Mikie has been leukemia free for over 27 years.

Mikie was so cute with his home made cape and his red boots on. His hair was just beginning to grow back. He made a full recovery after treatment was completed.



Douglas Paul Bender 8-27-80

Douglas Paul Bender was born on August 27, 1980 the 3rd child of Douglas & Karen Bender. As often happens with the 3rd child we do not have near the number of baby pictures as we have with Shelley and Doug. I was out of town when Doug was born so we do not have any pictures of him in the hospital bassinet as we do with the other 2 children.

We lived close by Lake St Clair when we moved in the house on Base St in New Baltimore. We often walked down to the water and enjoyed the sun and the warm summer breezes. Mom fed Shelley on the boardwalk in the park.



Sandy & Shelley in New Baltimore



Sandy, Shelley and Mikey played in the lake.

In the 1940s and 1950s there was a 3 foot drop off at the beginning of the beach. Once we enter the beach in the 1980s the drop off has been eliminated and we can sit in the shallow water



Karen, Mikey, Mike, Marie, Doug, Sandy



Louise & Clarence Otter with Dougie



Kevin, Edward, Marie, Dougie, Joan & Pastor

These pictures were taken on Christening day, September, 1980.



Mikie & Shelley Bender at the Waltz Fair

The Fair Ground in Waltz had rides for adults and kids. Mikie and Shelley were enjoying a ride on a car in the fair.



Doug, Shelley, & Mikey Bender

Mom labeled this picture "This is just too much responsibility for a 3 year old!!"



Shelley, Doug, Mike, Karen, Marie, Ed, Mildred, Nancy & Bill

Mom invited Karen, Doug and the kids over to her house on Grant Park for dinner to celebrate Karen's birthday on 23 May, 1980. Nancy was visiting mom and dad and dad picked up his sister Mildred Neff to spend the day with us.



Marie Dahl Bender in front of St. Charles Borromeo school.

One Sunday Dad, mom and I decided to visit the old neighborhoods in Detroit and reminisce over the olden days. First we visited mom's childhood home at 1763 Baldwin in Detroit. The first time we went past that house on Baldwin it was still standing. The second time we returned to that neighborhood the house was razed. The first time we went to that neighborhood we also went by the school and Church that mom attended from 1st to 8th grade. Mom walked around that church and school and she showed us which door she used to enter the school on a daily basis. Marie told us that when she started 1st grade she was so much tinier than all

the other children that the principal contacted Nellie and Bill and told them they would be giving Marie graham crackers and milk every morning before class.



Mikey, Douggie & Shelley Bender



Shelley & Mikey

This picture was taken for Douggie's first Christmas, December, 1980. Douggie almost looks like the Christ Child in the manger. This was the year that Mikey came down with leukemia. It was a very frightening time in our lives, but due to excellent care by Children's hospital in Ann Arbor. Mikey fully recovered and has been leukemia free for almost 30 years now.



Edward, Mikey, Karen, Marie & Shelley

Karen invited Ed, Marie and Sandy to the Christmas Bazaar close to her house. It was a winter Wonderland.



Werner & Sandy at Christmas at St. Anne's 1980



Christmas at St. Anne's 1980

Werner played Santa Claus for the patients and staff at St. Anne's from 1974 onward. The first year I met him he drank a bottle of Kalhual to get up his courage to play Santa Claus. On his way home he had a large trailer full of chairs and because he was drunk he bounced that trailer over the curb and back and when he got home to the brown garage he brought the garage overhead door down on the trunk, crunching the lid of the trunk on his brown Cadillac Eldorado.



Werner Wilhelm, Karen, Doug & Michael Bender

Mom, dad and I lived in a house at 52324 Base St. in New Baltimore from 1978 to 1980. It was fun to go for walks in town, to go to carnivals or to the beach. Mom and Dad used to love walking down Base St with Mikey in the stroller and Taffy

walking along beside. We would walk into the park on the lake and on a nice day we would walk to the Dairy Queen close to the lake. But the inside of the house on Base Street Mom, Dad and I felt very uneasy for no apparent reason. It was just a very bad feeling in the house. We lived there only 2 years. We sold the house and Mike built a house for mom and dad and I moved in with Werner in the brown house in Utica. The people who sold us that house also had a very bad feeling living there and they sold the house also after only 2 short years.



Werner and Kurt Wilhelm in East Berlin



Sandy & Kurt Wilhelm in East Berlin

East Berlin is the beginning of our journey into East Germany and our visitation with our East German relatives. Kurt often accompanied us on our trips through East Germany. The first time we crossed over into East Germany we had to leave the country within 24 hours. So Kurt gave us a 100 Mark piece, which was equivalent to 12 dollars US. The prices were so cheap in East Germany that we were never able to eat up that 100 Marks in 24 hours. On the East German train Kurt's thermos bottle rocked out of the overhead rack and landed on an East German teenager. When the thermos fell on him he hollered "It's a rocket out of Vienna!" On the train Werner kept trying to use up the 100 Mark piece by buying food. He made many trips to the food bar, buying milk, wurst, and lemonade that they called bremse. The young men in the front of the food bar started getting louder and louder every time Werner went up for more food. On one of his later trips up, a loud, but happy fellow handed Werner a 20 Mark piece saying he had made too much money on betting what Werner would buy next.



Sandy on a plane

After an exhausting 9 hour plane ride from Detroit, Werner and I finally landed in Frankfurt, Germany around 10 pm. I was very hungry and got a wiener Schnitzel from a food stand in the Frankfurt train station. Werner went to a kiosk to find us a room for the night.

Our first night in Germany was a potential disaster as Werner could not find a vacant hotel room for the night so Werner tried a ruse that worked. He told the desk clerk that he was a foreigner who had made a reservation for the night. So we signed in, paid for it and in the morning the desk clerk was mad as a wet hen. At 2 in the morning the people who had the reservation that Werner absconded with came to the desk to find out that we had taken their reservation.



Werner in absconded with room

Here is Werner calmly combing his hair before he gets screamed at by the desk clerk for stealing some one else's room.



Herbert Eschenbach with
Werner Wilhelm



Herbert Eschenbach & Sandy Wilhelm

Our first stop in East Germany is in Berlin Wittenau where we visited Uncle Herbert Eschenbach in his apartment building. He served us white wine for breakfast. I was starving and I don't drink alcohol so I was afraid of getting drunk on an empty stomach. Herbert owned a Rittergut in Ols near Breslau but he lost it in 1945 when the Russians came into Ols. He had to flee with his possessions stacked up on his farm wagons with his parents in the middle covered with down comforters. They got frost bite before they left Breslau and had to be hospitalized. The Russians came and killed every patient in the hospital.



inner city Berlin – at the Drei Baren



Sandy in a suit standing in front of the Drei Baren



Werner in Berlin

After visiting Uncle Herbert Eschenbach we went in the main section of Berlin and had something to eat at the Drei Baren (3 Bears) a very famous and expensive restaurant.



Werner at his Mama Martha's crypt



Arch where Martha is entombed

Werner and I always traveled to Frankfurt to visit his mother's crypt at the Frankfort main cemetery (Friedhof). She was underground sitting on cement. An 8 year old American child was set on top of his mother's casket. I moved Martha's casket to the Holy Sepulchre cemetery in Southfield and had her entombed in the Divine Word Family room just under her son, Werner.



Werner & Kurt in front of the Wilhelm home



Werner on his way to train station



Anna Rosa, Susanna, Werner, Martha & Kurt

Our next visit was to the Wilhelm ancestral home in Naumburg. Werner's grandfather and great grandfather built that home in the mid 1800s. The Wilhelm family lived in that home until about the year 2000 when Astrid threw Kurt Bamberg and his belongings into the street and renovated the home, making 5 apartments out of 3. In the 2nd picture Werner is walking from the Wilhelm home to the train station which was only 3 blocks away. In the 3rd picture Werner is visiting with the inhabitants of the Werner home. Aunt Martha lived in that home all of her life, dying there around age 80.



Uncle Kurt and Werner in the Naumburg cemetery



Aunt Martha & Werner in Naumburg cemetery

Every time Werner and I went to Naumburg we visited the cemetery. We have gone there with Aunt Martha, with 14 year old Susanne and with Kurt Wilhelm. Werner's grand parents and great grandparents are buried 3 deep in this cemetery.



Werner standing at the Naumburg train station

I couldn't tell you how many times that Werner came and went from this train station visiting Anne Rose Hahn, Aunt Martha Bamberg, Susanne Hahn & Kurt Bamberg.



Sandy sitting in front of the Rat Haus in Kassel

The first time Werner and I went to Kassel he needed to go to the Court House in order to put in his claim for compensation for the confiscation of his property in East Germany. I walked around the city while Werner was inside. I got lost, not knowing my way back to the court house. I could barely speak any German in those days so I had a hard time asking a passerby where the court house was. "Wo ist das Rathaus?" I asked the stranger. He understood me and pointed me in the right direction. I went back to the courthouse and sat on the outside. When Werner came out we had lunch there. The Ratskeller (restaurant) was in the basement of the court house.



Sandy in green in Kassel train station

Werrner and I stopped off in Kassel to visit Fritz and Irmgard Wilhelm who live in neighboring Bau Natal. The first time we met Fritz he did not invite us to his home but rather we met him at the train station because Astrid was so nasty to Fritz and his wife telling a bunch of mistruths about Wilhelm and the family. So Fritz was very hesitant about meeting Werrner lest he be the same thing. When Fritz determined that Werrner and I were entirely different kind of people he made the remark "Astrid sows the seeds of hatred wherever she goes". We had a wonderful visit with Fritz and his wife, staying over night at his house.



Werner at his father's grave site

We went to the Stadt Friedhof in Kassel to visit Dr. Werner Wilhelm's grave and also Gerti's grave across the way. We then visited the grave of Gerti's son and then the mass grave of the people died in the bombing of Kassel by the Americans. We then found out we were locked in the cemetery for the night when the groundskeeper who passed by us on his bike and knew we were there, locked the main gate. We went to the main gate, found it was locked so we hollered to some

kids playing right outside the gate to call to the grounds keeper to open the gate. The kids pointed to us like we were animals locked in a zoo and burst out laughing, pointing to us. I said we could sleep on the soft, luscious grass for the night. Fritz and Irmgard became totally shocked at that thought. We found a revolving gate at the far end of the cemetery and had to walk the long way around to our car. Irmgard had to be totally in pain in 3 inch heels.



Aunt Martha Bamberg & Werner Wilhelm

We went to Aunt Martha Bamberg's house at Rossbacher Str. 2A to visit her, and her children and grandchildren, Anne Rose Hahn, Kurt Bamberg, & Andrea Bamberg. Martha fed us a nice dinner consisting of egg drop soup, steak tartare and assorted lunch meats and buns. Werner then slept in the couch in the living room and I slept in the adjoining bed room. I had a very thick warm down comforter as it was very cold in that room.



Kurt & Werner Wilhelm at train station

Kurt accompanied us all over Germany and helped us handle the luggage on and off the train.



Werner, Dr. Kurt, Charlotte & Sandy

We stopped at Astrid and Kurts house several times every time we went to Germany. Every visit was far from peaceful- they hollered and screamed the whole time we were there and argued incessantly.



Werner, Kurt & Wernerli in background

Werner, Astrid, Dr. Kurt, Wernerli and I went to some of the famous resorts in the area.



Werner & Wernerli on St. Bartholomae



Sandy & Dr. Kurt on St. Bartholoma in Schiff

A number of times the Diebl's had taken us to the most prestigious resorts in the area.



Werner in bed at Astrid's house

Astrid always kept her house quite cold, too cold for Werner and me. So he went to bed in his cot with a warm flannel shirt and a coon skin cap. Werner and Kurt Dieble used to joke about how cold it was for Werner, so the two of them sang a song from their childhood, "Wenn meine Mutter wuste, dass ich so verloren bin, hemd and hosen sind zerrissen, mein Ohren sind gefrohren, und durch die Jacke pfeifft der Wind" (If my mother only knew, that I'm so lost and alone, my pants and shirt are torn, my ears are frozen, and the wind whistles through my jacket.



Marie & Edward with the witch



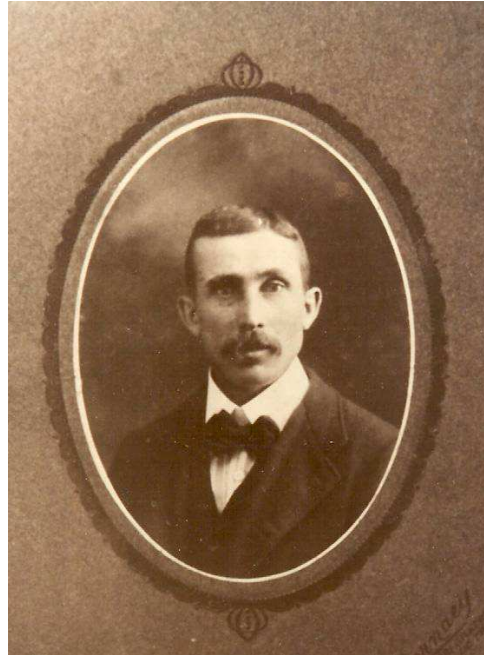
Sandy, Taffy & the Witch

Mom always made up a full sized scary witch every Halloween. She dressed her ironing board with a black plastic raincoat. She had a full size witches face put on top of the ironing board. Her legs were 2 baseball bats which mom covered with men's long black socks. She put the baseball bats into Dad's shoes. It was a very impressive witch which scared so many little kids that they refused to come near the porch, Mom started making that witch on Diamond in Sterling Heights. When Taffy walked out the front door she jumped a foot that witch scared her so much!

In 1980 I started a serious gathering of family history stories. I went to many of the older relatives and asked them to tell me stories about our family. I then went right home and immediately wrote down everything they told me. I then asked the relatives I knew who else was related to us that could tell me stories and provide me with pictures of our ancestors. Mildred Neff was the best provider of stories and pictures and names of distant relatives on the Bender side of the family. One of the most important leads was the Becker relative who lived in Livonia. I went to her house and she provided me with wonderful pictures of our great great grandparents Johannes Becker and Elizabeth Friedrichs Becker. This relative was only 53 years old and said she had a bad heart. She died 3 years later.



Katherine Klein Bender



Henry Joseph Bender

Mildred also told me to talk to Great grandma Bender's grandson, John Wittenberg who lived in Grosse Pointe Park. He gave me pictures of Great Grandmother Katherine Klein Bender and her husband Henry Joseph Bender and his son Joseph Bender and daughters Ann Bender Fox and Elizabeth Bender Wittenberg. John Wittenberg also told me a number of stories about the Bender ancestors.

Aunt Jean Dahl suggested that I visit Anna Dahl Galvin's daughters who lived in Warren. Aunt Jean went along with me to their house. I set up a TV table in their front yard and put their old Dahl pictures on the tray, set up a camera stand onto which I was able to attach a camera to the pole where I could push it up and down until I got the picture in sharp focus. I got the wedding picture of Minna Kaiser and Friedrich Johann Dahl. I got an 18 year old picture of Minna Kaiser Dahl before she left Germany. Doris and Lois Galvin also provided me with pictures of William F. Dahl Sr., Nellie Dahl, Frank Dahl, Anna Dahl Galvin and Clara Dahl Fredrick.

Marie Dahl Bender also suggested that we visit her Canadian cousin Beatrice Kelly who lived in downtown Windsor, Ontario, Canada. Mom's cousin was very gracious to mom and me and gave us quite a number of pictures of the Dahls in Canada. The most valuable of the Dahl pictures were the ones of William Dahl Sr. of Oberboinghausen and Woodslee, Canada. She also let us copy pictures of William Dahl Jr. of Woodslee, his brothers and sister.



Jenny & Bill Dahl of Canada daughters Bill, Bertha, Isabelle, Walter, Beatrice & Ida & Jenny

We also have pictures of William Dahl Jr. of Canada's 4 daughters Bertha, Ida, Isabelle & Beatrice and son Walter. She also let me copy pictures of the Dahl tombstones in Woodslee and the paperwork from the cemetery giving the rules and regulations. We also copied some of her pictures of the Canadian Dahls picnics at their farm during the depression days when our Dahl family went regularly to the Dahl farm in Woodslee because there was no prohibition on buying or consuming liquor in Canada. They also let us copy pictures of downtown Woodslee and of their children.



George Dahl Sr. & George Dahl Jr.

We went to Marie Dahl Bender's cousin Virginia Dahl Bohlen on the west side of Detroit. She gave us pictures of her dad George Dahl Sr. and her brother George Dahl Jr.



With a twinkle in her eye she also brought out a picture of Ruth Dahl Galvin being arrested by the government for impersonating a WAC.



George Dahl Sr & granddaughter

George Dahl Sr. is William Dahl Sr.'s brother. This picture was given to me by George Dahl Jr. when I visited him at the Vocational Rehabilitation office where he was the Office Manager. He told me some very interesting stories about Minna Dahl Henkel when he was a boy.



Werner in front of “No Hunting” sign

This picture shows Werner in front of the entrance to the 1600 acres showing the No Hunting sign he posted to keep hunters off his property. Sandy nailed up No Hunting and No Trespassing signs on the front and back of the 1600 acres. Three college professors from a local college tore down our signs and went hunting on our property. Werner was very upset and had the air let out of the tires of the 3 college professors who were hunting on his property. The hunters called Werner up at the Pickford motel and threatened to come there and shoot him. Werner called up the Dean of the college and told him that was no way for a college professor to act. The 3 college professors got into trouble for threatening Werner.



Werner sitting on Neebish channel

Werner's 1600 acres extended from inward right to the edge of the Neebish channel in Barbeau. The Neebish channel is part of the St. Mary's river in the Upper Peninsula. Aunt Elenore and Uncle Herman used to go camping with young Mickey less than a mile up river from Werner's property. The Mc Kinin's used to camp right next to the Cozy Corners restaurant less than a mile from Werner's property. Werner and I often ate at the Cozy Corners. They had wonderful fried chicken and gave a wonderful view of the Neebish channel.



Werner crapping in the duck blind

Werner loved teasing Taffy, especially when we were driving together. Werner would pull her beard and also hold her schnoot shut. She would retaliate by snapping and biting at him. When Uncle Kurt visited us for the first time he went to mom's house for dinner. I had Taffy in my arms as Kurt approached her to pet her. But when he got close to her she snapped at him, thinking he was Werner. Kurt jumped backwards, saying "Sie Beisst!", meaning she bites!

In about 1980 I had bought Werner a Schwinn bike to ride, hoping he would lose weight and get some exercise. I taped a Bear bank onto the front of the bike, telling him I would put a dollar coin in the bank for every mile he rode. I even put an odometer on the bike so Werner would know how far he had ridden. He had a total of 4 miles on the bike by the time he gave up riding it.



Sandy finding the engagement ring



Werner placing engagement ring
on Sandy's finger

In 1980 Werner drove Kurt and me from Utica to his 1600 acre property up north. It was a very warm day so we did not need a coat. When we got to the entrance to the front of the 1600 acres in Barbeau Werner presented me with an engagement ring. Werner gave me the ring at the gate so I would always remember where I received the engagement ring. Uncle Kurt knew Werner was going to present me with the ring so when I got back to the Cadillac he felt my hand for the ring.



Sandy & Werner dancing

We went to the Robin's Nest in Sault Ste Marie for dinner to celebrate the occasion

1981



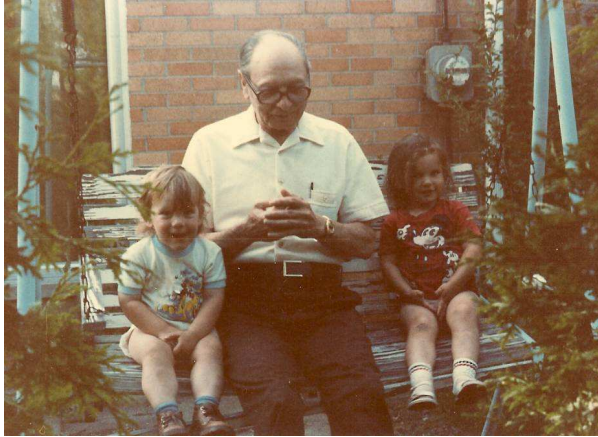
Werner & Sandy spreading barbed wire

Werner and Sandy put up NO TRESPASSING signs on the front and back of the property but still people came onto our property so Werner bought a roll of barbed wire and strung it across the entrances to our property. The motorcycle guys got mad when they trespassed on our property and ran into our barbed wire. They called the police who told them they had no business going onto our property when we had no trespassing signs posted.



Werner in Fair Haven

Werner bought an older house in Fair Haven right on the water. He paid only \$18,000.00 for it. He intended to enlarge the land on the water side by putting cement into the water. The highway department asked Werner if they could dump cement in the water on the water side of his property and Werner readily agreed. But then the highway department came along and stopped the cement dumping. We had intended to put up a sea wall to hold the cement in. There was a restaurant right across the highway from Werner's house.



Mikey, Edward & Shelley Bender



Douggie & Marie Bender

Mom, Dad and I visited back and forth at their house and ours. When Shelley was a small baby Karen and Shelley and Doug lived in Mike's house on Diamond in Sterling Heights while Doug was building their house in Waltz.

In November, 1981 Werner hired me to be the Administrator at St. Anne's. He provided me with all the manuals that enabled me to study for the Administrator's State and Federal Exam. I also attended a State class in which they taught us most of the information we needed to pass the exam. I stayed overnight in Lansing and took both exams the next day. I discussed my answers to the exam afterwards with others who took the exam and I was nervous as my answers did not match theirs. But I got the exam results back and I passed and some of them didn't. So I got my Administrator's license through the mail.

I could not work full time as an administrator at St. Anne's as I had to get my 11 years in the State of Michigan so I could qualify for a pension when I turned 60. Werner did not think the pension was important but I surely did and held out till I had my 11 years in. It turned out to be a huge blessing as I not only got a \$268 a month pension, but much more important the State of Michigan is paying for my \$508 per month Blue Cross Blue Shield.

I started work at St. Anne's on January 11, 1981 which oddly enough was the day Werner died in 1993. Werner told me that it was an easy job and that I would hardly be working at all. What a misstatement! I ended up working 12 or more hours a day for years.

The first month at St. Anne's was a busy one. I understudied Werner a lot and also I plastered the holes on the second floor bathrooms and then painted them. It was pleasant work and I enjoyed it. One night I was painting a bathroom on the second

floor and time got away from me. It was 10 pm and I had to be at work at 8 am the next morning so I tried to speed up and get the job done in time to get to bed at a decent hour as the nursing home was an half an hour away from my home. As I was painting the ceiling, reaching up high, the paint tray moved and fell upside down in the sink and on the floor. I stood there on the ladder and said, “Aw #\$\$%^”. A patient who was in the fetal position and totally unalert in that room said to me, “That is no way for a young lady to talk!” I ran into the bedroom figuring a new patient was in that room, but no, it was the patient who was so far gone that she couldn’t eat by herself. The aides had to get food into her mouth by startling her and when she opened her mouth in surprise the aide would shovel food into her mouth, repeating this process until she got enough to eat. The patient could not feed herself, could not speak and could not respond to us in any way and yet she came up with that statement. It was beyond amazement.



Sandy & her social worker comrades

I put whitewash on the 3 floor walls most days after I got through working as a social worker for the State of Michigan. It was a really messy job but I enjoyed doing it. One day I was dunking the roller on a long pole into a bucket of white wash and when I pulled the roller out I slung it around quickly to get from the bucket to the wall when Joyce, a really elegant dressed secretary came up behind me without warning and I missed hitting her with that roller full of white wash by inches. That suit of hers had to have cost over \$250.00. She lived in Grosse Pointe in an expensive house, and came from a very fine family. Her husband was very well educated. Joyce never worked a day in her life and now that she was in her 50s she just wanted to prove to herself that she could hold a secretarial job. Werner hired her in a heart beat as he immediately saw she was a quality woman. Joyce stayed with Werner for 5 years and we were very sorry when she quit.

When Joyce left, Werner asked Paul Kosnick for his recommendation for a decent secretary. Paul recommended Gail Hill. Werner hired her and she started work with me at St. Anne’s. The first day I was showing her how to add up time cards and put them on a time sheet. She was not able to do them correctly and when

Werner came in to St. Anne's I told him that Gail had liquor on her breath at 9 o'clock in the morning. He was very upset over this news. Later Werner and I went out of the nursing home for a meeting and when we got back we found her taking important recent records into the incinerator room and started burning them. We saved most of the records and fired her on the spot.

We later found out that Gail was Paul's girlfriend. Paul married a Catholic nun. They had 4 children together and then he divorced her and hooked up with Gail. Werner and I attended a group of meetings with Paul and Gail. Werner thought Gail was a wild one and a drinker to boot and wondered why Paul was living with her. Paul got a job as an administrator at the Connor nursing home. It was a good job with benefits but located in a very bad neighborhood, at Warren and Conner in Detroit. One night Paul got off work at 7 pm and went to Gail's house. He ate dinner with Gail's daughter and her black girlfriend. Then the girlfriend asked Paul if he wanted to go to her house in a bad neighborhood to have some fun with her. He agreed and they set off in his car. When they got to her block she told him to pull up in the alley behind her house, then she got out of the car, pulled out a gun and shot Paul. He immediately drove his car down the alley and before he got to the end of the street he passed out and died. The black girl pushed Paul's body back in the seat, then jumped on top of him and rode off driving his car by sitting on top of his dead body.

We all had the feeling that Gail may have orchestrated his death as she knew that his new job provided life insurance. She applied for his life insurance a few weeks after his death and was shocked to find that his life insurance was going to come into force 5 and ½ hours after he died! We never could understand why the police did not look into the possibility of Gail being involved in Paul's death.

After Gail, Werner hired Marilyn Angelovski, a very fat, but friendly woman. I could not believe it when I saw who Werner hired. Marilyn was on my caseload when I worked as a social worker for the State of Michigan. I went out to her house to investigate an allegation against her husband, a Rumanian. I was told that he had gotten violent and broke two of Marilyn's arms. Marilyn would not answer the front door and shortly after she and her husband moved to Rumania and built a large home there. Sometime before Werner hired her she returned to the U.S. and settled in the Detroit area.

Marilyn was the greatest aggravation in all my nursing home experiences. She followed me around, spying on me, then reported everything to Werner. When I told Bonnie, our book keeper, what I planned to implement as a new Administrator,

Marilyn listened in standing around the corner. She then came out of hiding, sashaying to the elevator saying, "I'm telling Mr. Wilhelm". I was so upset with her I pulled back my hand and was about to give her a good slap when I woke up and asked myself "What are you doing?"

Marilyn used to aggravate Werner too. When he got mad at her she would call her uncle who was in the mafia and tell on Werner. The mafia Uncle would call Werner and say to him, "Werner, you will treat my niece kindly, will you not?" Yes, sir Werner would tell the mafia uncle. They got along very well and Werner never took his threats seriously as they were meant in jest.



Hari Mali

When Werner sold St. Anne's to Mali, Marilyn would call Werner repeatedly and clue him in as to what was going on at St. Anne's. Mali caught on to the fact that they were communicating back and forth so he fired Marilyn.



Werner checking his oil tank in Logan



Werner by his oil rig in Logan

Werner and I went on many working trips together over the next 15 years. Werner drilled for oil in Logan, Ohio and I often went with him in the oil fields. It was muddy and in the winter time quite slippery. I was the one who chose all 4 sites where Werner drilled for oil. I studied the maps from the turn of the century showing how much oil they got out of each location. I chose the best one for our first well and I was right, it also produced the best oil for us too, 6 barrels a day in the beginning. We have many pictures of Werner and me in cowboy type clothing

standing on the top of the hill where we just drilled. My favorite picture of Werner is the one where he is crossing the stream in southern Kentucky.



Werner at the entrance to Bear Run



Sandy at the entrance to Bear Run

We drilled all 4 oil wells on the same guy's property. You needed 30 acres per oil well and he had 79 acres so for the last well we approached Fannie, a 63 year old spinster and got her signature. The owner of the 79 acres got a check for his share of the oil and he got free gas off our well to heat his house. He borrowed \$18,000 from Werner, promising to pay it back in monthly increments. Once he got the money he reneged and didn't pay. Smugly, he thought Werner is in Detroit so what can he do. After Werner died this guy, who was a lifer in the service decided to sell his property and he was shocked to find out that Werner's lawyer, Steve Feldman, had put a lien on his property. With accumulated interest on his unpaid loan he had to pay \$38,000 to me in order to complete the sale on his property. Mr. smarty pants was shocked to see that his loan had to be paid off in the end at a greatly increased accumulated interest.



Werner leaving Halliburton truck

One time Werner went to Logan without me and later decided he wanted me there for a week so he said that I should take a bus to Columbus and he would pick me up there. I got to Columbus and was nervous as he was not there. Not too much later Werner showed up with his battered baby blue Cadillac. I was always nervous about Werner getting me back to Utica in a timely fashion so I would not lose my job. One time he got me back at 7 am in the morning and I had been up for 24 hours and now needed to go to work in an hour. I went there for about an hour and a half and then left work and went to Mike's house on Diamond as I was so tired I felt sick.



For the oil well the bull dozer was creating a water pond



Werner in oil country

After the well was drilled, then you had to dig a big pond to pump water into for fracing by Halliburton.



Sandy in front of the drilling rig



I chose the first site for drilling and it was the best one. Werner is checking his watch, which he often did in just this pose. The driller is to his right and the old rusty tool shed is behind him.



Werner with the Halliburton man who was about to frac the oil well.

We always used Halliburton to frac a well as the oil field people trusted Halliburton more than the competitors.



Werner with the highway inspector

When you fraced in the winter time before the spring thaw there was a possibility that the heavy Halliburton truck would break down the asphalt on the road. So you had to sign a statement that you had to pay for any damage to the road. So Werner had me take a picture of every inch of the road before Halliburton drove over it to prove that the road was in the same condition before and after they drove over it.



Werner talking to Keith Krisher in Logan

Werner is talking to Keith Krisher who sold Werner the first oil well. Keith was quite a scammer and he knew it. He called Logan “Crooksville”. (There is an adjacent city called Crooksville).

The first night we stayed in a dumpy motel in Logan as we were too tired to drive to Lancaster. The dumpy motel said no dogs allowed so I walked Bear to the far end of the motel away from the front office, then Werner and I opened up a window and lifted Bear through. It was at that motel where I discovered my first gray hairs. That was a shock to me as I was only 31 years old.



Werner in southern Kentucky

The most fun I ever had in the oil fields was when we went to southern Kentucky in the middle of winter to get some oil well pipes. It was 20 degrees in Michigan and 66 degrees in southern Kentucky. Werner and I walked across a water filled stream and Werner was so cute walking across that stream. On the way back it was about 4 pm and we had to drive all the way back to Michigan that night. So Werner said we had no time to stop for supper. So I insisted that we stop at a country store to pick up bread and lunch meat and something to drink. Werner was very agitated thinking of the long drive ahead so he was insisting that we get in and out of that store right away. So I grabbed a pack of lunchmeat and a loaf of bread and headed for the front counter. Werner came to the front counter with me to pay for the groceries. A cute hillbilly girl sat shoeless on that counter swinging her legs looking at Werner. She said to Werner, "Wanna fly a kite?" What!?!? Werner said. She repeated it in her deep hill billy accent. What!?!? Again asked Werner. Never mind, I told him, let's get back to the car and back on the road. I dare not repeat to him in plain English what said to me, he would have went ballistic. He's so busy he can't see straight and she spends her afternoon sitting on a counter wanting to fly a kite. Nope, that's not what Werner wanted to hear at that time. We made it from southern Kentucky and 66 degrees to Utica and 22 degrees by midnight. I sure missed Kentucky with all that warmth and sunshine!



Werner in phone booth in Lancaster

Normally we drove back to Lancaster and stayed in the Holiday Inn. They had a very nice restaurant overlooking a very fine swimming pool. We would eat a leisurely dinner while watching the youngsters dive in the pool. On occasion Werner would also dive in the pool and swim the length of it as he was an excellent diver and swimmer. But mostly we preferred to relax in the dining room over looking the pool. We would always ask for a room at the back of the hotel so we could sneak Bear in. He as a very well behaved dog and was very clean. The

few times I was forced to take Bear to a second story room was a real challenge. He was scared to death to walk up grated stairs where he could look through the grate and down. I had to push him to one side and pull him fast up the stairs as he was terrified.



Werner & Uncle Kurt Wilhelm in Logan

Uncle Kurt used to come and visit us from the end of November till April. So when we went to the oil wells we took him with us. Kurt loved to travel with Werner and me, locally in the Detroit area, to the oil wells in Ohio and even traveling to the Upper Peninsula in Michigan or to Florida.



Werner in the oil well field

Werner gets so unhappy when things are not going so well in the oil drilling business.



Werner, Sandy & the driller

In the winter time it was very cold in the oil well field, especially since Werner and I were standing on the top of the hill with the wind whipping around us. I wore a down winter coat, Werner, having a “Natural” overcoat due to his weight, walked around in shirtsleeves.



Werner's Cadillac

The last car Werner bought was a beautiful medium blue Cadillac which he bought from a want ad in the Detroit News from a private owner who worked for G.M. Werner got a really good price on that car. The owner of that car bought a new car every year making good money by selling his old car for about what it cost him to buy it. When the man brought the new car to Werner and saw what a demolition derby St. Anne's dirt road full of deep chuck holes he almost cried. He did not want to subject his beautiful Cadillac to those awful conditions. This car was taken to Sebring Florida when we moved down there. Just before we moved there Werner was bragging that he was a much better driver than I am. I replied to that statement – if you are the better driver then why does your car have dents on it on all four sides while my car has no dents? The next day Werner took his car to Collex collision and had all the bumps removed.



Old Bear 1st birthday

Bear did not fit in the Honda hatchback. His ears were squashed down flat against the ceiling of the car. I really wanted a mini van as they had just come out and I figured it was right for Bear and I. I went to the GMC dealership in Sterling Heights and told him I wanted a stripped down version. I told him I wanted 2 bench seats, vinyl floor mats, and windows all around. I did not want air conditioning or automatic. The dealership quoted me \$10,000. That sounded much better to me than the vans advertised in the paper for \$14,500. I went home and told Werner what I was about to buy. He wanted air and automatic. I told him I was not going to pay for either one. He said he needed it. I said no I wasn't paying for either. He pulled out his checkbook and wrote me a check for \$3000 and told me to include air and auto, which I did. That stripped down van was perfect for us. Bear did not get his hair on the seats which were vinyl or on the floor mats. We took the middle seat out and put 2 lounge chair mats in and then put a mattress pad over that and a sheet and pillow over that. It was a very comfortable bed for whoever was not driving as we headed to Florida and back.

1982



Werner at the truck auction in Ohio

Werner and I went to a truck auction in Ohio. There was a whole row of trucks on auction, as seen behind Werner. Werner went up to one truck, opened the door, reached in and turned the key to the ignition. The truck started right up and started rolling forward heading right to a whole line up of cars for auction. I was about to jump into the truck to get it out of gear when a strange man jumped in just ahead of me and put the truck out of gear, backed it up and turned it off. Werner then said to the man, “That dumb girl had no business turning on the truck!” I just stood there and shook my head.



Edward, Sandy, Werner & Kurt Wilhelm

Werner took Dad, Kurt, and I for Sunday dinner in the middle of the winter. I was shocked when I looked over at dad as his lips were a very deep purple, telling me that dad’s heart was not very good. Dad died 6 months later of heart failure.



Mildred & Doris Stocker & Sandy Wilhelm

Mom and I used to visit Mildred and Doris in their home on 12012 Gunston in Detroit. We ate a dinner at their home and then we played canasta afterward. We had a lot of fun and laughter visiting them. One time Dad, mom and I went to the Stockers on Halloween. Mildred was dressed as a fancy dancer and when Dad came in he grabbed Mildred's pink boa and started dancing around with fancy steps while twirling the boa around his neck.

Mildred lived in a very bad neighborhood so we were scared coming and going from their house on Gunston. It was an all black neighborhood and frightening looking black men roamed the neighborhood so when we left I told mom to say her goodbyes inside the house and then walk very fast to the car. When mom stood outside the door and kept talking I was so scared standing out there on the pavement with a group of black guys strolling toward us.

One time while we were playing cards we heard some noises coming from the basement. So Doris got her dad's gun and sneaked down to the basement. Fortunately no one was in the house. Mom and I sure were scared watching Doris with that gun!

Mildred came down with colon cancer. She was in pain and spent many an hour on the couch. Doris took care of her mother. She got permission to work only till 1 pm at her job in the IRS so she could stay home with her mother most of the day. We played Canasta with Mildred after she came down with cancer. She was in a lot of pain but when we asked if she wanted to play canasta she was off that couch in a flash. She loved canasta.

One time Mildred talked Doris into driving her to our house in Sterling Heights in order to visit me on my birthday. The ride caused Mildred Stocker a lot of pain,

but she was bound and determined to visit me on my birthday. I was honored that he would come to visit me in spite of suffering all that pain.

Bill started having many health problems which made him very unhappy. His legs began giving him problems walking and causing pain. He started having cataracts probably from the drug stellazine. He had diabetes for over 14 years, he liked to eat and he was sick of shooting insulin. Then on top of everything else President Reagan demanded that all disabled veterans disability payments be reevaluated. Bill's blood sugar was already over 600 and the stress of the reevaluation sent him over the edge. He went into the hospital, he went into insulin shock the next day which caused convulsions. He lost consciousness and was in St. Joseph Hospital in Mt. Clemens for about 25 days. From the first day Bill went into convulsions he had severely abnormal brain waves to the point where they knew he would never regain consciousness. Mom and dad visited Bill in the hospital almost every day. Mom would check to see that Bill was clean and call a nurse for assistance if he was not clean and changed regularly. I visited Bill after leaving St. Anne's on a night when the weather was very bad and by the time I got into the hospital and up to Bill's room there were tornado warnings for that area and the sky outside Bill's window looked very ominous. There had been tornados that touched down in the area before and it sure looked like another tornado was imminent. I wanted to stay with Bill for a while longer but my fear of a tornado in the area got the best of me and I left, saying goodbye to Bill who probably did not hear me. That was the last time I saw Bill alive.

About 5 days before Bill died St. Joseph's hospital transferred Bill to the V.A. hospital in Allen Park because they were partially responsible for his death and they did not want him to die in their hospital because they did not want to have to fill out a report detailing why he died. Bill was in the V.A. hospital for a short time as he was near death when they transferred him.

Mom and Dad visited Bill every other day. Mom was especially insistent to visit Bill as he was getting very poor care in that hospital. Two days before Bill died mom was horrified at his condition. He no one had attended to his needs for hours. Mom blew up and the nurses were quick to remedy the condition. I flew in the evening before he died and wanted to visit him but by the time I got off the plane I was exhausted so I intended to go see him the next day.

I dropped in at mom and dad's when I got back to Utica. Dad was devastated by Bill's condition. When mom told dad that Bill was dying he was horrified and said "OH NO!"



Bill Bender

Bill died the next day on June 15, 1982. The V.A. hospital called mom and dad and told them Bill had passed away that morning. Dad totally collapsed emotionally. He was so devastated that he was almost paralyzed. The hospital told mom that she had to come there in person this morning to claim Bill's body. Dad couldn't move. He was frozen in anguish. So I drove mom to the hospital while dad stayed home. Mom and I filled out the necessary paperwork and then drove back home. We felt like robots whose batteries were run down. Putting a simple meal on the table for lunch seemed almost beyond our capabilities. Dad said very sadly that he didn't need to eat lunch. After lunch mom and I went to Sullivan funeral home and made final arrangements. We told Ray Lope that Bill was very proud of having been in the service and he would have wanted a military funeral. Ray arranged for the Disabled American Veterans to conduct a military service in the funeral parlor in the evening. They said their prayers and each retired soldier put a poppy on Bill's breast.

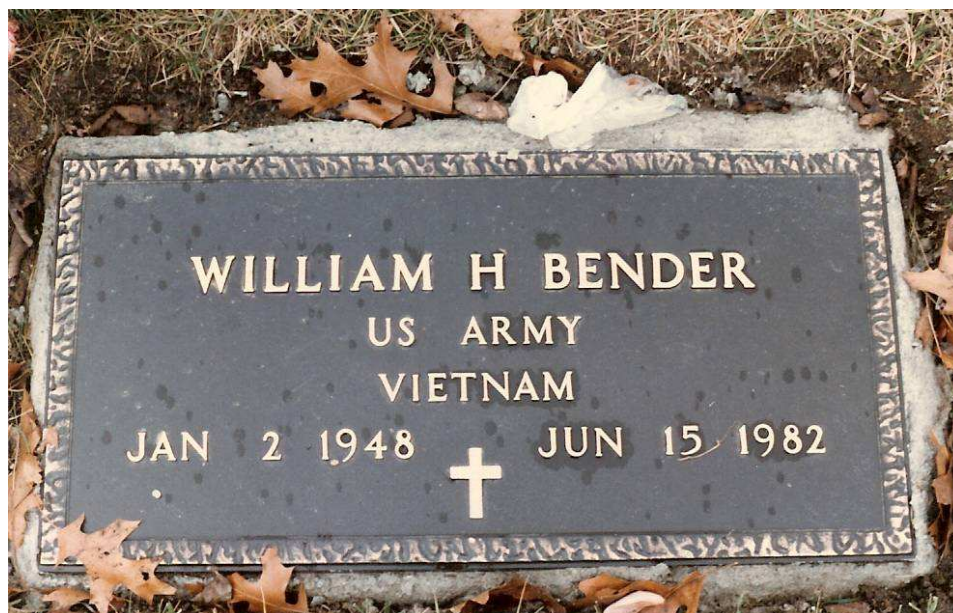
Afterwards Mom, dad and I went to Mike's house and mom went through Mike's closet and picked out one of Mike's suits for Bill to be laid out in. I don't think Mike knew mom would be doing that, but I feel that Mike didn't mind. He had a lot of very nice expensive suits from the times he went to the Yacht Club with the Doctor of Finance. Mike spent over \$200 for each suit and also bought very fine shirts and ties to match. Mom used to help Mike out in matching the 3 pieces as Mike as well as Doug is color blind, a DNA trait they have inherited from Marie's father William Dahl Sr. (Mom made out charts stating which shirts and which ties went with which suits..)

Mom and I then went to the St. Lawrence rectory and purchased 16 cemetery lots for our entire family to use for Bill now and for the rest of our family in the future.

We wanted to purchase lots in a Catholic cemetery because if your family member is buried in a Catholic cemetery they will receive 7 years indulgence to have their sins forgiven every time someone goes to the cemetery and says an "Our Father" and asks for a 7 year indulgence for the deceased loved one. We received a deed for these cemetery lots which mom put in her strong box.

We all went to Sullivan's funeral parlor at 1 pm on June 17 to view Bill. When Ray Lope opened the closed doors and I saw Bill for the first time I had to turn my head away and give a very audible gasp of pain. I never expected to see my 34 year old young brother in a casket. It took me a few minutes to get over my shock. Mom told the family to order flowers in red, white and blue in honor of Bill having enlisted in the military service as he was very proud of serving his country.

Many relatives and friends attended Bill's wake. Mildred & Doris Stocker came. Bill Dahl Jr came as did Shorty and Jean Dahl. Warren & Jackie Stephens came from Maryland. (I remember Jackie talking to Warren in mom's driveway, saying she would like to have children. Warren was somewhat worried about starting a family this early.) Clyde and Olive Bender came as did Laurie Rotary and our Aunt Elenore Mc Kinin. Rose Lutfy and her son, our next door neighbors on Diamond came. Tom and Jan Dahl came, also Debra Tymczak (Dahl) was also there. Bob Mc Donald and his sister were also there. Bob's sister was very emotionally upset as she had a long phone conversation with Bill the day before he went into a coma. She really liked Bill. Clarence, Louise, Karen Bender, Joan and Alan Otter came. Edward Bender, Bill's father, was devastated. For almost all of the wake he sat in the very back corner of the room. The mourners came to him, especially our relatives who had been close to him through the years.



Bill's head stone to the right of Ed & Marie's headstone in St. Lawrence cemetery

Bill was buried in St. Lawrence cemetery and the Veterans of Foreign Wars did a military salute with a 21 gun salute at the cemetery. Afterwards mom and dad had a luncheon for Bill at the VFW hall on Auburn Rd. The hall was a very basic structure but that was what Bill would have wanted as that is where Bill used to attend meetings. Once Bill could no longer drive other VFW members used to offer to pick Bill up and drive him to the meetings.



Edward Bender

We went to the Otters for Father's Day. We took pictures of Dad and Punch Otter holding a watermelon in Doug's back yard. We all gathered together to celebrate Father's day. Marilyn Giles met dad for the first time at Doug's house that day.

Dad did talk to Marilyn at Mike's house in the spring of 1982. Mom, dad and I were at Mike's house when the phone rang. Dad answered the phone. Marilyn was at the other end of the line. Dad told her that Mike was not home. When dad hung up the phone he said "I do believe Mike has a girlfriend and I do believe she's Jewish".

Aunt Elenore stayed with us at mom and dad's house for about a week and then on June 28 I drove Aunt Elenore back to her De Maria relatives in Redford. They invited us to stay for dinner but mom and I told them we had to get back to Ed as he had been having chest pains for the past 5 days and so we didn't want to leave him home alone. So we said goodbye to Elenore and the De Marias and started for home. When we got back to Grant Park I started to mow the front lawn as it was threatening to rain imminently. Mom went immediately inside the house. She came running right back out saying dad was having a heart attack.

I walked back into the living room and saw Dad sitting in his favorite chair, head down, shoulders stooped, white, sweaty, conscious, but very far away in his thoughts. He was probably praying to our Lord and Our Blessed Mother for their help and guidance in the long journey homeward that Dad was now facing this day. I asked Dad if he could walk to the car, I could drive him to the hospital. Dad said that this was the end of his life and there was no need to go to the hospital. This statement shocked Mom and I as whenever Dad got sick before, he was the first one to the hospital. He said very quietly that he was in a lot of pain, as his chest was very, very raw. Had I known that Dad's death was inescapable this day, I would have had him stay at home in the company of those of us who loved him and had a doctor come and give him pain relievers to make his last hours comfortable.

I asked Dad if he could stand up and I grasped his arm and he stood up. He was afraid to stand as when the heart attack first came on, the whole room spun and he felt so wobbly and woozy that he was not sure which end was up. When Mom came into the living room, Dad asked her to put him in the chair as he could not find his chair. When he sat down, he went with a lunge and he struck his head against the back of the chair. He was complaining about the back of his head hurting and was rubbing at the base of his skull in the middle of his head. He was able to stand without any appreciable increase in his wooziness and we started walking toward the front door. Little did I know at this point that I was leading Dad out of the house he had loved so dearly, never to return to it again.

I walked him down the front stairs and past the orange Dahlia that he had admired earlier that day and_ past the colorful moss roses that had given him some measure of joy in the past month. Dad was too sick to be able to take one last look at his beloved house as he was walking past it. All he could concentrate on was the crushing pain and his communion in prayer with his God and the Mother of God in whom he had trusted all of his life. Dad was so tall standing there that I was afraid I might have trouble getting him into the car, but all went fairly smoothly. Mom jumped into the back seat, I shut Dad's door and we were off. It was raining miserably all the way to the hospital. I kept silent except to tell Dad that we would soon be at the hospital. Mom put her hands on his shoulders the entire trip, telling him that we would soon have him to the hospital. Mom patted him on the shoulders with her hands to show him a sign of her love and affection. I kept praying fervently to God not to take him just now, as we needed him desperately at this time. But I guess Bill had more desperation for Dad than we did.

We drove up to the emergency room entrance and they took Dad inside in a wheelchair, put him on a gurney and started working on him. The doctor told us it would be several hours before they could stabilize Dad and tell us much. I went to Vern's house as he had company over and was putting a dinner on the table. Mom sat with Dad and Mick was alerted to come to the hospital as soon as he had finished eating supper. I ate at Vern's in 5 minutes and returned to the hospital. Dad was no longer in the emergency room, but had been transferred to the cardiac care unit. I went up the elevator and the lab technicians got on the elevator with me. One technician said to the other, "this man's blood, the one who had the heart attack, it's the thickest blood I have ever seen!" She was playing with the vial, twirling it and looking at it as she spoke. I tried hard to see if it was Dad's blood, but could not read the name on the vial.

Mom and Mike were sitting in the cardiac care unit lounge waiting to see Dad again. Mom felt good at this point because when was standing with Dad in the emergency room he had said to her, "I love you, Marie." Right now we were all very worried as the doctor in the emergency room had told Mick that Dad had come through the heart attack better than anyone ever hoped he would and that Dad just might be okay as he had stabilized so remarkably well and so fast. He now had a regular heart beat and if all went well in the next 72 hours, which were the most critical, he might be okay. But then the doctor dropped the bomb. He said that 75% of Dad's heart was now dead. The question that kept going through all of our heads was how could someone live when 75% of his heart dead.

We were then told that we could see him now, but only two of us could go in. Michael volunteered to stay behind and let Mom and I go in. Mom and I went in and were amazed at how well Dad looked. Dad was more alert than he had been in over a year and was very happy to see us again. I told him everything that the doctor had said, leaving out the part about 75% of his heart being dead. But the look in Dad's eyes told me he knew better. He still knew that this was the last day of his life on earth. I talked to Dad, stroked his hair and stroked his shoulder. And for the rest of my life, I will wish that I had added the words, "I love you, Dad". But I did not want to get mushy for fear that I would frighten him. But if Dad was frightened at this point, he sure didn't show it. His eyes held much expression as I stroked his hair and I wished he would have vocalized his feelings.

Our 10 minutes were up and the nurse asked us to leave. Mom and I said our goodbyes to Dad and Dad had heard from us that Mike was here but they wouldn't let him in. As we were leaving Dad lifted his head up and asked us and the nurse, "Can I see Mike?". I was walking away from Dad and toward the nurse's station, when Dad then raised up on his elbow, and again said, "Can I see Mike?". The nurse, now becoming concerned for Dad's health, said an immediate "yes" and told us to bring Mike back.

Mom told Mike that Dad wanted to see him. I offered to stay behind so Mom could see Dad again, but Mom said no, that I should go with Mike to see Dad. Dad looked rested and alert and was at peace now that Mike was by his side. Mike and I again told Dad what the doctor had said, but again Dad had a look in his eye that said, don't believe it. Dad then said to Mike and I, "I'm so glad I got to see Nancy again. And the others, too." And then Dad closed his eyes and went peacefully to sleep. We stayed a few minutes longer, then tiptoed out of Dad's room. Dad had indicated that he did not want Dr. Alnajjar as he felt that this doctor had contributed to Bill's untimely death, so Mike and I went to the nurses desk and asked for the name of an Anglo Saxon doctor. The nurses replied that there were no Anglo Saxon doctors in the whole hospital except for two bone doctors. We finally settled on a very half-bred heart specialist, and the general practitioner would be decided upon tomorrow. With Dad soundly asleep under the effects of the morphine, Mike and I left the cardiac care unit.

On the 29th of June, 1982 Mom got a call from the hospital saying that Dad had taken a turn for the worst and that we should come to the hospital. Mom and I got dressed real quick and we went to St. Joseph's West, getting there about 7:50 AM. When we got to the cardiac care unit, we were approached by a nun

who took us into a room next to the room where we sat the night before waiting to see Dad and she told us that Dad had been put on life saving machines at about 6:15 AM when he suddenly woke up and started vomiting, with diarrhea, then just as sudden he went into profound shock and all his vital signs ceased. The doctors worked on Dad for over an hour, keeping him on a life support machine, until they knew that they could not restart his heart and make it beat on its own. Around 7:25 AM, the doctors unplugged the life support machine and declared Dad clinically and biologically dead.

When we were told first by the nun and then by the doctor that Dad had just passed away, I requested that Mom and I be allowed to view Dad for the last time before he went to the funeral parlor. There was almost a hour delay before we could see him, so I suspect that they had already wrapped him in a shroud and had taken him to the morgue and when I requested to see him they had to unwrap him and bring him back to the room. We were then told we could see Dad. At this point Vern came to the hospital and he accompanied Mom and I to Dad's room in the cardiac care unit. There Dad lay, the I.V.'s pulled out, his tanned masculine arms laying out flat, with the signs of the deep rolling veins still apparent despite death, but so sadly, his eyes were partially open and his jaw hung down, exposing all his silver and gold work, including his capped tooth, that had caused him so much consternation through the years. We told Dad that we loved him, said a few prayers for the repose of his soul and because Mom was upset at seeing Dad in this stages we left before I would have wanted to.

Seventy Four years of life, snuffed out by one major heart attack. Dad's heart, which had been one of the warmest and biggest in our family, now lay still. Father, we loved you.

Mom and I were in shock when we left the hospital. First we called Karen and because Doug had already left home, we later called Doug at work. I wanted to call Nancy later as it is 3 hours earlier in California and she needed her sleep as she would be traveling all night again to get here the next morning. Unfortunately Vern had already called her before coming to the hospital, thus getting her out of bed at 4:30 AM. Mom said when she first heard that Dad had died, "Oh, I'll never be able to speak to him again!".

When we left the cardiac care unit we were numb with shock. We knew that Dad was dead, but yet we could not imagine a world without Dad being a part of it. We walked to the parking lot and were not sure if we would make it to the car

as we were totally numb. Vern offered to drive us home, but I felt that by driving slow I could make it home okay. I said a few words to Vern, Vern and Mom exchanged words and then we got into the car. It was all so unreal. Today Dad might be dead, but tomorrow he would be with us again, going for walks and maybe even playing baseball.

We called Mike at work and soon after we came home Mike and Doug were there with us. Doug was as numb with shock as Mom and I were or as Dad was when Bill died. Doug, sort of in a repeat performance of what Dad had done two short weeks to the day earlier, turned to the lawnmower as a means of steadiness. He took the mower out of the garage and finished mowing the lawn, glad to have something concrete to do.

We all sat together and tried to put a lunch down. Nancy called, very upset and asked what was going on. I numb with grief, simply blurted out, Daddy is dead! Nancy was upset that we had told her over the phone last night that Dad looked like he might make it. I told her that we were not lying to her, that last night it did look like Dad might make it.

Doug was as much in a quandary over the discrepancy between Dad's condition last night and his abrupt death this morning. Doug was in agony over first not having had a chance to have paid more attention to Bill, then forgetting to call Dad on his birthday and not calling him till the day after and then not coming to the hospital last night to say goodbye to Dad. This certainly was a summer that had the potential of filling us full of remorse and grief over what we could have done for Bill and Dad. But everyone I talk to tells me the same story, that they remembered every little thing they had done wrong or could have done better for their Loved one after that person has passed away. For those of you still fortunate enough to still have your father upon this earth, I wish to share with you the following poem so that you may reflect on it and hopefully spare yourself the grief that so many have experienced when a father is suddenly called from our midst without a chance to say a proper goodbye to him.

After lunch we all went to the same funeral parlor to make arrangements for Dad. We had to return at 4 PM as Ray was not there. So we went to the flower shop and all picked out matching flower arrangements in Dad's favorite colors, orange and yellow. We then returned to the funeral parlor and met Ray. He was shocked to see us again and was afraid to ask who died. When we told him it was Dad, he said, "oh, no, I was so taken by him. Few men touch me as much as your father had done at Bill's funeral. Your father had come into my office and

had expressed a quiet and sincere appreciation for all of our efforts. I was so touched by his discussion."

We then have the information for the death certificate and what we wanted the death notice in the paper to read. We then went through the process of picking out Mass cards, etc. Mom cried and said it was a rerun of Bill's funeral. The one mistake we made was in not choosing a different verse for the back of Dad's card as "The Master's Way" was not the most appropriate verse for Dad. We then went into the casket room and looked at caskets again. They did not have a casket like Bill's as they had reordered it but with only 10 days having gone by they did not have a replacement in yet. But we decided that we wanted the same casket as Bill's so Ray got it from another funeral parlor and brought it to Sullivan's for us.

We agreed to start the wake at 2 PM the next day. Mom and I then went into Dad's closet and looked through his clothes to pick out the nicest for him to be buried in. We decided upon the rust suit, with the shirt I had bought him for his birthday and was about to give him when he had his heart attack and the other tie from Bill, the one that the funeral director decided not to use for Bill, but which went so nice with Dad's clothes. We brought the clothes to Sullivan's and then went out to eat as we were too stunned to be able to put a dinner on the table.

At 2 PM the next day, Mom, Karen, Aunt Elenore, Doug and I, along with Craig and Donna sat in the front parlor of the funeral home waiting for Nancy, Mike, Don, Linda and Greg to come so we could all go in to see Dad together. The doors to the room that Dad was in remained closed pending our entrance to that room. We had our choice of rooms, but decided on another room than Bill's for two reasons, because of the memories, and because we expected a bigger turnout for Dad's funeral.

Finally the rest of the family came and taking Mom by the hand, we all went down the hall, ready to view Dad in his casket, a most dreaded Moment for all of us. The doors were opened for us and we entered and saw Dad lying peacefully in his casket.

Dad looked different in death than he had in life to me. I never remember him being quite that bald in life and in the casket Dad had no discernible eyelashes. I suppose that is why in the last year of his life Dad had so much trouble with a dry feeling to his eyes and why he had such frequent need for "artificial tears".

His face had the same asymmetry in death as it had in life, but somehow with the animation gone Dad was not as handsome in death as he was in life. He was dressed fine and maintained his tall, robust appearance after death. I missed not being able to see his lanky, sinewy arms and his hands were turning blue and looked different than when I first saw him in death in the hospital.



Edward Bender

This was one of the last pictures taken of Edward by his grandson, Warren Stephens

Everybody who knew and loved Dad with the exception of those on vacation, came to pay their last respects to Dad. All of his grandchildren came, from California and from Washington, D.C. All his surviving children were there with their spouses. All the Otter family came. All his nieces and nephews came, all telling stories of their young years and playing ball with Dad as a youngster and how Dad would get them out of bed every Sunday morning to play ball. Uncle Ed Gamache was there, too. Other than Ed, none of the brothers and sisters were present in earthly form at Dad's funeral. Dad was the last of the Bender children and Ed, Evelyn and Mom were the last of the spouses of the Bender children, Aunt Agnes having died the previous July and Harold Neff having passed away the 1 April, 1974. So as we the living were gathering together here on earth, I am sure Dad was having the same joyous reunion in the next life with his Mom and Dad, brothers and sisters, and the many other friends and relatives that had gone before him into the next life.

The morning of the funeral we all gathered together in the funeral parlor. Most of the mourners who had come the last two nights returned for the day of the funeral. Dad would have been proud of his funeral and of the many people who showed up to say that they too had loved him in life and had now come to say a

fond farewell to Edward Bender. Even Bob Barr showed up. The funeral director said some prayers over Dad and then asked the people to come up and pay their last respects, starting with the last row. Mom started to cry again and said again, "It's just like a rerun of Bill's funeral!"

Finally, we the wife and children of Edward stood at Edward's casket to gaze a last time upon his lifeless form and to realize that we would never again see Edward in this world. I had had the funeral director put a rosary in Dad's hands in death, as he had always had a rosary in his hands in life. Dad still had his two scapulars and medal around his neck, as he had died wearing the scapular, now secure in the belief that those who die wearing the scapular never suffer the pains of eternal fire. But I wanted to give him something extra to keep next to his heart. Dad had a burning love for the Mother of God, so I took a small statue of her and placed it over his breast. I then took my "Daily Office Prayer Book the Blessed Virgin Mary" and placed it in his breast pocket next to his stilled heart. Two days later I found my other Office prayer book. Dad had taken it and had used it almost daily and when I had first discovered it missing several years ago, I asked him if he had it and he disclaimed all knowledge of its whereabouts. It was never like Dad to tell a fib, so I believe what happened was that Dad fell in love with the prayers contained in that book and was fearful that I would take it back if he told me he had it. Dad knew I would buy another one when I couldn't find my original one, which is exactly what I did. So now Dad has my copy and I have the original copy, which is now well stained by Dad's fingering of the pages through the years.

The casket was then closed and we proceeded to the church. I now sat in the family limousine with Mom, Nancy, and Mike. At the church the bell tolled as we approached. It was a deep, sonorous tone. We all got out of the car, following Dad's casket into church. I held Mom's hand as she softly wept for Dad. The organ played "I will raise him up on the last day". The usher distributed the mass books we had made up for Dad, which contained the complete mass and a short biography. Mom, Nancy and I put the baptismal pall over the casket as the priest sprinkled the pall and recalled the day of Dad's baptism some 74 years ago when Dad became a child of God and a heir to heaven.

The mass then commenced. Karen read the first reading and I read the second. The priest gave a meaningful homily based on Dad's biography. The mass continued on to completion, final commendation prayers were said, and the recessional procession began. Mom and I chose the songs "Ave Maria" and

"Gentle Woman" because Dad had so loved the Mother of God and prayed to her many times every day, interceding on all of our behalves as our needs and wants became known to Dad. We chose the recessional song "God's Blessing Sends Us Forth" as this was always one of Dad's favorite songs and he always sang that song with gusto and such feeling whenever the organist would play it. Dad would try to sing that song at home during the week as he so loved the words and the lilting melody.

The procession then proceeded to the cemetery, where Dad's casket was placed upon the same catafalque that Bill's was placed on two weeks ago to the day, in the same spot. Mom again mentioned that this was a rerun of Bill's funeral. Mike and Doug stood at each side of Mom and gave her emotional comfort as the final prayers for Dad were read at the grave side. We kept Mom away from the open hole, as half of Bill's cement vault was exposed as Dad and Bill were to soon lay side by side in our family plot. After the prayers, Mom went on the side away from Bill's casket and placed an American flag on Bill's grave. The family then got into their cars and proceeded on to the Sweden house, where we were having a lunch for the mourners. Craig and I remained behind to supervise the burial of Dad's casket. The crane came over and picked up the casket and swung it into the cement vault. Straps were then placed at the four corners of the vault and the vault was eased into place abutted right up against Bill's vault. The backhoe then proceeded to fill up the grave with a sandy soil. This completed, they smoothed it out by hand. Warren then came back, reflected a few moments upon his beloved Grandfather and then we went to Mom's house to pickup his camera to take to the Sweden house.



Those who were nearest and dearest to Dad left the cemetery with a very heavy heart and joined with us, Dad's family, to give to us some measure of consolation in the loss of our beloved Dad. And Dad did so love those who were his own in the world, even though he often did not show it as demonstrably as we would have liked. But we each have a story in our hearts of how Dad said some special soothing words to us when life weighed heavy upon our shoulders or how he prayed so fervently for us or for our children and grandchildren when he felt we needed special prayers. Doug knows how Dad stormed the gates of heaven in Mikey's behalf when we discovered leukemia, we all know how Dad prayed 3 or more times every day that God might spare his young life. I am sure that Donna and Nancy know how Dad prayed every day for little Mike Pacheco, that life might be smooth and happy for him and how he prayed daily for all his children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren, as well as for our Mom, that we might have God's blessings showered upon all of us. Dad prayed every day for Warren when he was in law school that he might see a successful completion of his studies and land a good position with a first class law firm. Dad had a special place in his heart for his grand daughters Linda and Donna and often spoke very fondly of them. Dad loved Craig and often retold his two favorite stories about Craig, the "You've got company!" story, and the "Chuck Wagon" story where Craig sang all his favorite songs to us at the tender age of 4 years. Dad enjoyed watching Shelley, Mikie, and Douggie and all their exuberance when they came over. But Dad would get a heavy heart when he would think of Bill taking the kids to the candy store or

the park and how Bill would always horse around with the kids till he ended up aggravating all of them.

Dad had a poem which he kept on his mirror and read every day. It said that when a person is burdened by the tribulations of the world and knows not where to turn, when he is so dejected that he cannot himself pray, that suddenly the burden becomes lighter and life suddenly takes on meaning and direction because unknown to that hapless soul, someone has prayed for him this day. That unknown someone in our lives was almost always Dad. Now that Dad is gone, it is up to us who are left behind to pray for one another that God may enlighten our minds and guide us in His proper paths.

Within a month of the time Dad died, Mom and I were going through a drawer in Dad's old dresser that he had purchased in about 1941, towering the few earthly goods that Dad had left behind. One of the things most prominent in the dresser drawer is the small pile of prayer books that his mother left us when she passed from this world in September, 1950. Dad fingered those prayer books in the last 6 months of his life and enjoyed saying some of the prayers contained therein. But what immediately caught my eye as I examined Grandma Bender's little cove of treasured prayer books was the pages explaining the different indulgences that can be earned by saying the various prayers contained in these books. I fingered through the books and soon discovered in her novena book that if one says the Servite dolor rosary every day for a month, that one can gain a plenary indulgence for so doing and that this plenary indulgence can be given to a soul in Purgatory. A plenary indulgence means that Jesus forgives all of a person's sins and all punishment due for those sins and that the person can go straight up to heaven. I started the rosary on Dad's anniversary, August 25th and finished it on September 23, 3 months after Dad's birthday. Mom then did the same thing for Dad, finishing her rosary on the 24th of September, 1982. Mom and I then each said the rosary for a whole month for Bill.

Mom and I continue to say the rosary for Dad, for Bill, and for all our beloved ancestors who have gone before us, marked with the sign of faith as children of God in baptism. For we have loved them all in life and now we will not abandon them in death until we have conducted them by our prayers into the house of the Lord.

If you loved someone in life, then forget them not in the after life, but storm the gates of heaven with your prayers until your God hears and answers your prayers. Dad has prayed for all of us in life, we owe him no less in death.

Edward and Bill were laid side by side in St. Lawrence cemetery in Utica. I bought 16 grave sites there for our extended family, 6 in one row, 6 in another row and 2 in the next row and 2 more in the row below that. I bought those many grave sites as that is what Minna Kaiser Dahl, my great grandmother bought in the Dahl family plot and within 40 years family members were fighting over the last few remaining plots. So I thought it would be nice to have our family close together.



Marie Bender n front of Ed's monument

The day we buried Dad Werner told me that I was to stay by the grave until dad was buried to make sure he was buried in the right plot and that nothing was removed from his casket. So Craig and I stayed at the grave side and now I know the reason why Werner told me to stay there. One of the grave diggers asked me if there was anything I wanted to remove from the casket. There was no doubt in my mind that if no one stayed behind they would have opened the casket and helped themselves. The only thing I put in the casket with Dad was a Blessed Mother statue and a statue of Jesus, but I bet lots of other families had left rings and other jewelry on. (Imagine how a widow would feel if she left a wedding ring on her husband and later on found it in one of her children's possession.)



Marie standing outside of St. Lawrence Church

The next Sunday mom, Elenore and I went to St. Lawrence Church for mass. In this picture Marie is standing just outside the door in which Edward's body was carried a few days ago.



Marie Dahl Bender & and Elenore Dahl McKinin

After 11 am mass Marie and Elenore left St. Lawrence Church and walked to the car. We then drove to Ernie's King's Mill and had an elaborate Sunday chicken dinner. Mom and Elenore always dressed so elegantly.

Mildred Neff gave me her Ott picture album and all of Grandmother Elizabeth Ott's religious prayer books and prayer cards shortly before she died as she knew I was the only one who would treasure them. So right after Dad died I went through Mildred's religious stuff that was stored in mom and dad's dresser drawer in mom's front bedroom. Among other things I discovered a prayer book that said if you prayed the rosary for a deceased person every day faithfully for 30 days, that person would go to heaven on the 30th day once the 30 days rosary was complete. So every day faithfully I prayed the rosary for dad. On what I thought was a 30th

day dad appeared to me in glorious shining just like they describe what a saint appears, like a halo around them. Dad was just beaming with joy, looking at me with luminosity on his face. He just smiled and smiled, like I had never seen him in life he was so overjoyed, As I got up for the day I thought that I had not said the rosary yet for this 30th day, so why was he beaming at me so intensely – what if I forgot to say the last rosary. So before I went to work that day I sat down in mom and dad's swing in their yard and said the last rosary. All day long I was puzzled as to why dad would appear to me before I finished the 30 days of rosaries? I thought of that all day long. And then on my drive home back from work I began counting the days from the time I started to say the rosary. All of a sudden I realized, I did complete the whole 30 days – I forgot that July had 31 days in it.



Brandon Rotary, John Dahl Dale & Virginia

When I was about 9 years old mom told me that Elenore had a son when she was only 12 years old when she was attacked on her way home from the corner grocery store. She told me never to mention that to anyone and so I kept it to myself. Then years and years later Elenore called mom and told her that her son John had found her and she wanted to come to mom's house and introduce John to all of us. We were really excited to meet him! Shorty's family carried him in a wheelchair up mom's front steps and placed him in his wheelchair in the living room in such a spot that he could see John. Shorty was totally flabbergasted when he met John as he had no idea that John existed. Shorty never heard the story about Elenore having a son who was adopted out to the St. Vincent de Paul at birth. This was the first day Shorty learned of John's existence. Shorty spent the entire afternoon just staring at John. The rest of us were thrilled to meet John for the first time. And we were so happy for Elenore and John that after all these years they finally met one another. Elenore was so thrilled to be able to introduce her most handsome,

friendly and intelligent son to all her family. All of us received John with open, loving arms.



Dr jur Horst Fenge, Christa and Werner Wilhelm

We were invited to Christa and Dr. Horst Fenge's house for an overnight stay and to meet their daughter Heidrun and her husband and 6 year old daughter. Christa told us to take a taxi from the airport to her house because she would not recognize Werner after so many years. So we took a taxi and arrived at Christa and Hordt's house in Wachtberg – Pech in western Germany. We had a delightful visit and I was happy that Heidrun and her husband spoke perfect English. Christa does not speak English but Horst does. So conversing with Christa could only be accomplished through Werner. My luggage was lost so I had to sleep in my street clothes. My luggage finally arrived the next afternoon. Several years later, in 1985 Horst and his son Holger arrived in the blue house, which was not yet renovated. After a visit in Utica we then traveled by Werner's Cadillac to Florida. The Cadillac broke down in Palm Beach so we had to take a Holiday Inn and call Werner who was flying to Fort Lauderdale. We told the airline that when Werner arrived in Tampa he was to get on a plane to West Palm Beach instead of Fort Lauderdale. The next day Werner, Bear and I had a ride in the tow truck to the

dealership where we got the car repaired and were once more on our way to Fort Lauderdale. In Fort Lauderdale Horst rented a car to go to Key West and he was purchasing collision insurance. Werner told him not to but Horst said he was a grown man and he would purchase collision insurance if he wanted to. So as a frustrated Werner saw him pay for insurance he then said to Horst, "Now you can run into every telephone pole from here to Key West".

Toward the end of Taffy's life dad was walking Taffy without a leash on. As Dad was walking down Hahn with her Taffy suddenly went running due north heading for a field on Messmore. Dad started running after her, hollering at her to come back. She just kept running away. Dad finally caught up with her in the field. Dad figured the dog was getting senile as she appeared confused when he finally put her on a leash.

Right after Dad died mom and I were taking Taffy for a walk off leash when the same thing happened. Taffy appeared to me to be thoroughly confused as she suddenly started walking in a different direction. I leashed her to make sure she stayed safe and didn't wander off.

Marie went to California once again posed for a 4 generation picture with her daughter Nancy, Grand daughter Linda and great grandchild Nicole.

Werner and I went to visit Nancy and Don in California. Bill was dying when we went to California. We borrowed Don's 198,000 mile van and went to San Diego and to Mexico for the day. Later on we went to Encino to visit a doctor. We stayed at Nancy's for the entire visit because Werner liked it so well there.



Mildred Bender Neff

Mildred Bender Neff was Edward's sister. Ed and Marie used to take her grocery shopping and to doctor's visits after Harold Neff died in 1979. I often visited Harold and Mildred Neff in their home on Glenwood in Clinton Township. In the fall Ed, Marie and I used to wash her windows and rake up her leaves. On her 80th birthday (September 21, 1981) I took Mildred out to dinner at Riviera Restaurant in Chesterfield Township as that was where she wanted to go. I then sat with her in her home the rest of the evening. At 11 pm I started to say goodbye. She begged me to stay longer. I had to defer as I had to be at work at 8 am the next morning. She was so sad to see me go on her birthday.

A few short weeks later Mildred called up Mom and begged her to call an ambulance as she was about to pass out. Marie told her to immediately go to the front door and unlock it so the ambulance drivers could get in. They took her to the hospital. From the hospital they took her to her son Robert's house in Grosse Pointe. Mildred begged to be taken back home. Every time Robert went to her home to get her new clothes she again asked to be taken home. As she got worse they took her to St. Anne's Nursing home. I went to visit her there just before Christmas, 1981. Mildred had gangrene of her foot so she kept saying that Sophie Ott's home was on fire. I don't know if there ever was a fire in that home or if she imagined it because of the burning in her foot. Dr. Timban transferred her to Saratoga hospital saying it was better for a family member to pass away in a hospital. Mildred Neff passed away on January 4, 1982. I was a cold and snowy night when she passed away. She had so desperately wanted to return home so when she passed Bob and Shirley got the fright of their lives. Bob and Shirley

were told by the doctor that there was no way Mildred could survive, that she was very close to the end. So they went over to her house and started throwing away much of the stuff she had saved in the basement. When they saw how late it was and looked outside and saw how hard it was snowing they decided to spend the night at Mildred's and go home in the morning. So Bob went to sleep in Mildred's twin bed and Shirley went to sleep in the living room couch. Suddenly Shirley woke up and saw Mildred walking slowly through the living room, carefully looking over her possessions. Mildred stopped at her china cabinet, admiring her nicknacks and treasures stored there. When Shirley saw Mildred's ghost walking through the house she freaked and ran to the bedroom and woke Bob up. They got out of that house as fast as their legs could carry them and went back to their own house. A few days later I was sitting on a couch in the funeral parlor when Mildred's neighbor in back of her sat near me and had another ghost story to tell. The neighbor, her husband and her children were all in bed when the sound of footsteps came up the stairs and then into their bedroom. Mildred then crossed through their bedroom and walked to the bedroom window which looked over the vegetable garden in her back yard. She looked over all of her back yard and the back of her house, then disappeared. Mildred, who loved a good ghost story, would have been very pleased to have generated one of her own. Mildred was buried in Forestlawn cemetery in Detroit next to her husband Harold Neff. Her brother Elmer Bender and his wife Elsie Rhodes Dalton Bender are buried in the same cemetery.



Mikey, Douggie & Shelley Bender

Christmas 1982. Mikey has been cured of leukemia. He has all of his hair back. This picture was taken at Doug and Karen's house.

When Taffy was 12 years old I was roller skating by mom's house and Taffy was with me walking freely near me. When we got to the home behind Weingartz Taffy wandered on the lawn behind and a really ugly tempered guy came out and kicked Taffy really hard in her back leg. In a very short period of time a soft lump began to grow and within a month the lump got so large that I took her to the vet. The vet operated but said it was a hemangiopericytoma and would soon grow back. She suggested amputating Taffy's leg, but I said no way. The blood tumor grew back and by September it was quite large. In October Nancy came to visit and she insisted on putting Taffy to sleep because she was dribbling a little. I was sick at that suggestion as taffy looked awful but she was very lively and went walking with me long distances every day with no pain or distress. Nancy was so insistent that mom made an appointment for Taffy to be put down. Don did not agree with the decision as he saw how happy and lively Taffy was. But Taffy was driven to the vet for euthanasia. Taffy knew she was about to be killed and she shook uncontrollably all the way to the vet and at the vet. On October 10, 1982 we lost our beloved Taffy.



Sandy & "Bear"

I was hoping someone would love me enough to buy me a new dog, but no one did. It was over 2 years later when Werner and I decided to buy our first German Shepherd which we named Bear. We went to the Whistledown Kennel in Algonac and looked at their Shepherds. I liked the chocolate one but Werner liked the big black and white one. I did not want the black and white one as he was very shy and hid. But that's the one Werner wanted, so that's the one we bought. We

named him Bear. I held him in my arms on the way home but by the time we got to the light in New Baltimore it was obvious that that dog was about to upchuck. So I hollered at Werner to stop and I jumped out of the car with truly Bear, who promptly lost his cookies.

That dog was much more attached to Werner than to me so Werner often took him to St Anne's with him.

In the end of July Werner and I went to Germany to visit his sister and other relatives and friends for about 3 weeks. One of our older LPN's Alfreda Wheeler, offered to take care of truly Bear so we left him with her. When we got back from Germany we were shocked to see that truly Bear was skin and bones. The nurse said that Bear had opened her refrigerator and ate several pounds of meat. Thinking back over that statement I wondered if she had fed him properly while we were gone. But we will never know. Truly Bear lost interest in eating. Werner tried hard to get him to eat by making up small meatballs for the dog. At first he ate some which thrilled us as we felt he was turning for the better but then he refused to eat anything. A few weeks later truly Bear had a white blood cell count of 38,000. Werner took him to the Gasow Vet hospital in Birmingham to try to save him but it was too late. We were at Debra Dahl Tymczak's wedding that night when truly Bear passed away in Gasow. The next morning Werner got a call that Bear was dead. Werner put a wash basket in the car and he and I drove to the Gasow Vet. Werner was mad that they didn't bother to call him for many hours after our dog died. He ran into the vet, asked where Bear was and they pointed toward the back of the hospital. Werner ran there and was totally enraged when he found Bear flopped into a slop sink in the back, half in and half out of the sink. Werner put our dog in the basket and ran out of the place.

Werner had the maintenance man dig a grave for the dog by the front of the side yard. We placed truly Bear in a comforter and placed him in the grave. Werner and I prayed over the dog and Werner gave him some coins to buy ice cream and hamburgers along the way. We then closed the grave. Werner was devastated over the loss of this dog. He went to the grave stone yard in Mt. Clemens and bought a head stone for Truly Bear. He was only 5 months old when he died on August 10.



Sandy & truly Bear

Werner was devastated as that was his first dog since he ran the apartment buildings. He stayed in bed the whole week mourning the loss of that dog. I knew we had to get a replacement for the Shepherd to restore Werner's mental health. So I went back to Whistledown Kennel in Algonac (bad mistake as I later learned she had the worse reputation as a German Shepherd kennel) She had 2 litters of Shepherds both about 6 weeks old. I looked at all the puppies and fell in love with one of them who had the most beautiful coat with several shades of color and beautiful amber shaded eyes. She warned me that his testicles did not descend. That did not bother me as I did not intend to breed him. I had to wait a week to pick him up as he was only 6 weeks old. I decided to surprise Werner with the new puppy by putting him into a wicker basket with colorful balloons in Rudi and Dinora's house in Livonia and then driving Werner to their house to see his new baby Shepherd. It took me a long time to drive to Whistledown, buy Bear, and drive him to Livonia, and then drive back to Utica and pick up Werner and drive him to Rudi's. Werner hollered at me when I came to his house saying it was rude of me to be late going to Rudi's house. I had to keep quiet because I was not late at all, Rudi and Dinora knew what time I would get there. When Werner walked into Rudi's living room and saw Bear sitting in a wicker basket full of balloons he said he had no idea who was giving what to whom. He figured that Rudi and Dinora did not want that kind of dog but he wasn't sure what kind of dog that was sitting in the basket. When I lifted Bear up and put him in Werner's arms on the back yard picnic bench and told him that was his new Shepherd, Werner's eyes filled with tears. He held him for a long time, he was so glad to have a new baby Shepherd.



Christopher, Rudi & Werner with shovel



Bear & Sandy



Rudi & Werner



Chris kicking Bear and Bear biting Chris

We placed Bear in the backyard for the afternoon as he was not housebroken and we could not trust him on the carpets. And that was a wise choice for Bear soon did his business in the middle of Rudi's fine grass. Werner was given a shovel by Rudi to pick up the doo-doo.

Werner and I tried hard to house break little Bear. One time when Werner caught Bear starting to pee in the house he picked him up by the abdomen and ran him through the house as Bear was peeing in an arc in front of Werner as Werner was shouting to Bear, "Out she go! Out she go!"

We had Bear for 7 years and 2 months. We took him everywhere we went except Germany. He went with us to Wil Mar every day. He would sit in the lobby with Werner and me. He would lay there peacefully unless a punk walked up the walk.

I would have to grab his collar and bring him around the corner to the nurses office till they left the area.



Edna, Sandy & "Bear"

We had a birthday party for Bear on July 2nd when he was one year old. All the patients and the help had a luncheon for Bear's 1st Birthday.



Ann Kay

When Bear was 1 year old he met Barney (alias puppy) who lived next door with Ann Kay. Ann and I would walk our dogs behind Eppler and into the wilderness in the later afternoon. We would let both dogs off leash and they would run and play together. Once they got in the wilderness Barney would start attacking Bear, shoving his schnoot into poor Bear's neck. But Bear loved Barney so much he would never retaliate. Every time Barney would run down the steep hill heading to the Clinton River he would turn around at the bottom of the hill and challenge Bear. Bear would crook his neck to one side as he looked at Barney at the bottom of the hill, as if to say, "oh, no, Barney, not again!!" But the next day it would happen, day after day. The only time Bear got rough with Barney was when Bear thought Baxter's dog Quinnie, was about to attack Barney as they walked past Quinnie's back yard. Bear growled very fiercely at Barney and pushed him very hard clear across the school drive to get him far away from the vicious sounding dog.

Bear hated Moukie for some unknown reason. The only thing I could figure out is the fact that Bear met Moukie right after he was viciously attacked by Snoor's guest's German Shepherd. I was walking Bear around the block at Maries house when the vicious dog jumped the fence and sunk his teeth into Bear's chest and wouldn't let go. I hollered for the owner and then started hitting the vicious dog over the head with the leash. Finally Snoor's son came out and pulled his dog off Bear. Bear got a very bad infection in his wounds and could have died from it.



Liz Kirchner

So when Moukie was the next dog he met I think he may have associated her with the vicious dog. Every time Moukie's mistress Liz Kirchner would walk her dog with mine Bear would chase her dog away from us, growling and threatening Moukie. Then when we were walking along the Clinton River and Bear kept chasing Moukie away from Liz, Moukie was ahead of us to stay clear of Bear when as a sudden she got mad at him, turned back around and threw him into the Clinton River. Bear was terrified because he could not get back up the 4 foot slippery bank and was being threatened with being swept down stream by the fast moving current. Ann laid down flat on the bank and reaching down grabbed Bear's collar, squeezed it in two and holding fast to it, pulled that 110 lb dog back up to solid ground. He was so relieved.

Another time Ann and I Barney and Bear were walking in the park close to the pig plant when Barney went off close to the fence and rolled upside down on a grease patch. Then Bear went over to the grease patch as I was hollering to him to stay. He ignored me and jumped on the middle of that grease patch. There was an animal trap under the grease which snapped on Bear's paw, causing him extreme pain. I had no idea how to release the trap so I went running over to the pig plant and asked the eastern European men if they could release the trap. One of them came back with me and released the trap and then took the trap back to the pig plant. I figured they put that trap there to catch a deer for extra free meat. Bear was in pain but relieved on his way back home. When we got back to the nursing home I told Werner what happened and he called the police. Sgt Reiterman came over to take the report. Bear was relieved to be back home safe and fell asleep in the nurse's station. Sgt Reiterman took the report at the nurse's station. As he

was finishing the report Bear woke up, opened one eye, saw Reiterman, opened the other eye, got up from the floor, and started after him. Reiterman backed up with his hands held high as Bear advanced toward him. I grabbed Bear by his long fur and shoved him down into the floor boards and then put Bear in the entrance way and shut the door.

Bear never wanted to eat. The first time I took Bear to the vet he said put the food down on the floor and leave the dog alone. When he gets hungry enough he'll eat. The next time I took Bear to the vet he had lost 39 lbs, dropping to 71 lbs from his former weight of 110 lbs. The vet said you have to feed that dog, he's way underweight. It was such a struggle getting Bear to eat anything. When he saw food coming he would hang his head and hang his ears. I finally gave the job of feeding Bear to Edna. She would ball up the wet and dry dog food and then chase after Bear. She would crawl behind the couch with that hand full of wet food as he crept away from her. She finally was successful by hand feeding him while singing to him at the same time. This nonsense went on for the rest of his life.



Bear & Barney

One time I walked with Ann and her dog with Bear and then when we finished walking we went in to Ann's house and sat down in her studio, with Barney and Bear at our feet. After a while Bear got up and went down the hill. We figured he was going to get a drink of water out of the toilet like he often did. Suddenly Ann's timer went off and she walked to the kitchen to get the cookies out of the oven. I suddenly heard he holler. Bear was in the kitchen, not the bathroom and he had just eaten 36 of her freshly baked cookies that were taken out of the oven 10 minutes ago! Turns out he loved oatmeal raisin cookies so Ann baked him a batch. He ate the second batch with gusto.

When Bear was 18 months old he was a gentle, calm dog. Then once Werner and I came in after midnight and walked in to the nursing home to see if the help was asleep. Bear walked in ahead of us and as a sudden he ran straight ahead and

pinned a black guy to the wall with his paws on the guy's shoulders, showing the guy his teeth. It turned out that the guy had just broken into and robbed our basement.



Old Bear in Lion's Head

Bear only lived for 7 years and 2 months. In his last few months we had to shave his hair down as he itched to the point of scratching his skin raw. Then I noticed that his abdomen was swollen. When he tried to run he would suddenly stop dead and I realized that running caused pain. Then he started vomiting with dry heaves.

We took Bear to a local vet. He took blood tests and told us that Bear was in kidney failure. The last day Bear was home he was so weak he could hardly walk. But when he saw Barney he slowly got up and walked his last walk with Barney. They got as far as the end of the blue house driveway and Bear had to turn back and lay down. I then borrowed my mother's car as Bear could not get into my mini van. I helped him into the car. Edna was there begging me not to take Bear to the hospital, to leave him home. I wished I had done that. Just before he went for his last walk I sat next to him in the breezeway and looked into his beautiful eyes knowing that was the last time I would be looking into those eyes.

We took him to Michigan State University veterinary hospital but they could not save him. He died there. The moment he died Werner felt that the dog had passed. He held Bear's collar tightly in his hands, saying goodbye to his faithful pal.

We drove to MSU that afternoon to retrieve Bear's body for burial. We had the maintenance man dig a 4 foot deep grave for Bear. It was very hard for me to drive the 2 hours there as I had just had a chemo treatment that day and was quite sick to my stomach. When we got there the vets were very sympathetic over us losing Bear. They put him in a big box and carried him out to our van. Werner

thanked them for their sympathy and then he removed the cover from the box so Bear “could see on his way back home”.

When we got back home Werner had me get his brand new comforter and we wrapped Bear up in it. Then the maintenance man gently lowered Bear into this grave as Edna jumped down into the grave to help catch Bear. We put evergreen branches over bear so the dirt would not lay right on top of him. And Werner put some money inside the comforter so Bear could buy ice cream and hamburgers along the way. We then recited the Our Father in German and English and a few other prayers. And Werner told Bear that they would be reunited soon. And we pointed bear’s head toward the Blue House so he could watch his mommy work.

Werner and I went to the monument yard in Clinton Township and bought a beautiful upright tombstone for bear with his picture on it, one flopsy ear and all.



Sandy holding Sable Bear

Within a week Werner and I checked out German Shepherd kennels and we chose one in Lapeer. She only had one Shepherd and she didn’t want to sell him and then changed her mind and sold him to us. He slept with Werner and I that night but he was making whimpering sounds all night long. He was an intelligent and very sweet dog. We named him Sable Bear as he was sable colored. When we let him outside he passed a stool that looked like packed tobacco. We took him with us to Wendy’s and gave him a hamburger and then took him to Stoney Creek and let him run around the park by the lake. I picked him up and we have a sweet picture of me holding him with a feather in his mouth.



Werner at Stony Creek

While Sable Bear ran around the park Werner decided to feed the sea gulls. First I gave him a loaf of bread and then I gave him a box of cheez its. He was so very happy feeding the birds out of his hands. He was very disappointed when I ran out of food for the birds.

We took him to the vet the next day and she said his intestines were intessuscepted and he had to have surgery. Not long after that surgery he got worse and had to have another surgery on his intestines. That didn't work so we had to put him to sleep. I stood there and held him lovingly while the vet put him to sleep. We buried him next to Old Bear.

We had a guarantee when we bought sable Bear so we went back to that kennel and told them that the dog died. They checked with their vet who told them that our dog could not be saved. We had to wait for over a month as she had no dogs available at the time. I looked at a new born litter and they looked almost like mice they were so small. One dog I thought I would not like to have because of the funny marking on his fanny was the one I ended up with as she had the choice of which one, not me.



Sandy with young Bear

So Werner and I picked that dog up once it was 8 weeks old. I took that dog to my vet soon after and at first she said I finally got a healthy dog, but then when she put a stethoscope to his heart she said, "OH NO" This dog has a bad heart, she told me. SO I took the dog to MSU. They did some tests on his heart and said it could not be repaired, that the mitral valves were stuck together. The vet said the dog had 6 months to a year and would have breathing problems at the end and would have to be put on heart medication. So we took the dog back to the breeder and told her we would have to have another replacement dog. She balked and said we would have to bring young Bear to her vet. We did. The vet listened to his heart and said he should be put down. I said I wanted a replacement now but that I was keeping young Bear until he died a natural death, probably in a few months. Again she said she didn't have one right away unless I wanted to take "A better quality dog" now and pay \$400 for him. I took the deal, which I shouldn't have done. So we got Mopsey, the klutsiest Shepherd that ever walked the face of the earth.



Mopsey



young Bear

Mopsey was such a kind, loving dog. Young Bear was so embarrassed at being seen with Mopsey, who followed young Bear everywhere, making ew, ew sounds walking along behind him. I used to laugh and say that Mopsey needed to carry a bushel basket along with him to try to keep everything together! One thing Mopsey did very well is he knew how to sing. One time I told the residents at Sun 'N Lake Towers that one of our entertainments was having Mopsey sing for us which he did splendidly that afternoon. But poor young Bear almost died of embarrassment listening to that dork sing his heart out. Not a thing any true blue German Shepherd would dare to do in public!

Mopsey also embarrassed himself at the swimming pool at Sun 'N Lake. Towers swimming pool. Mopsey was chasing young Bear all around the outside of the swimming pool. First young Bear cut a corner too close on the deep end and fell

into the pool. As elegant as could be he swam gracefully to the shallow end of the pool and walked up the stairs and out of the pool. Then they began the chase around the pool again. I was in the pool when Mopsey lost his balance at the shallow end of the pool and fell in close to where I was standing. His head kept sinking to the bottom of the pool as his tail and bottom kept sinking down to the bottom of the pool. His butt was sticking up as though to breathe. For a few seconds I just stood there not believing what I saw. He was going to drown if I didn't pull his head above water! So I grabbed his harness and pulled his head above water. He still didn't swim! I carried him by the harness to the steps and pushed him to the steps till his feet could feel the stairs and walk out of the pool by himself! Poor Mopsey! He never could do anything right, it seems!



Edna & young Bear

Mopsey was there when young Bear walked back into the blue house and died on the dining room floor. Bear's death did not seem to upset Mopsey too much, surprisingly. Werner and I gave Mopsey lots of love and attention after we buried Bear. Edna babysat Mopsey for us as we often had to leave him for the whole day while Werner went for dialysis.

Mopsey and Kitsey knew exactly when Werner died. They went wild, running back and forth through the whole blue house, even trying to climb the walls! I couldn't figure out why both animals went nuts at the same time. I thought maybe they had to go to the bathroom so I let them both outside. Kitsey climbed up the tree by the garage and ran around and around the trunk about 5 feet upwards, Mopsey ran to the brown house, stood outside the door right where Werner lay dead on the floor and howled and howled! I had no idea that Werner was dead just inside the door in the bedroom so I brought Mopsey back home to the blue house.



Mopsey

It was just Mopsey and me alone in the blue and the brown house from the time Werner had died. Mopsey seemed to adjust to that loss quite well. But 3 days after we buried Werner Mopsey suddenly felt sick and threw up in the kitchen of the blue house so I took him to the vet. The vet took a blood test which came back perfect. But Mopsey bled from the mouth and the rectum and died on the blue house kitchen floor. We had to bury him right next to room 11 in Wil Mar as the ground was now frozen solid but was still soft right next to the building. We said our prayers over little Mopsey, wrapped him in a comforter and covered him with dirt, Thus ended our last German Shepherd. Mopsey was only 14 months old, appeared to be a very healthy dog till the very last day, so I wondered if Werner took Mopsey so Werner, young Bear and Mopsey could all be together?? Mopsey died on 19 January, 1993.

When old Bear died, Werner said he only wanted a German Shepherd. I told him we had such bad luck with shepherds that I would like a Golden Retriever that I just saw and fell in love with that breed. Werner said no, only a Shepherd, so we bought the Shepherds instead and had the same rotten luck with that breed. After we bought Mopsey Werner called me from Sebring and said the blind preacher came to Sun 'N Lake with his seeing eye dog and he was so taken by that dog that he wouldn't have minded buying that breed of dog. I asked him what kind of dog the blind guy had. He said a Golden Retriever. I could have strangled Werner! That is exactly the breed I wanted to get after old Bear died and he said no!!!



Werner & Mopsy

When Mopsey died on January 19 I was without a dog as I was too busy with Werner's estate and I was exhausted and grief stricken over the loss of all those Shepherds in such a short period of time. I had mentioned to the owner of the Shaggy dog pet shop that I would like to have a Golden Retriever as I had such bad luck with Shepherds. (I called 4 vets in various areas around Utica and they all said any other breed they could tell you a good breeder, but not with a Shepherd. Shepherds were so inbred that there was no good kennel they could recommend.)

Werner had been goofy happy from the time he got married till the very hour he died. He had said right after we got married that on our first anniversary we would walk down the aisle at Our Lady of Grace church in Avon Park and we would get married again by the same Pastor. He was also looking forward to our first Valentine's Day as he was feeling very sentimental. So when Valentine's Day approached and I had no Werner, I said to him, "Werner, I don't know how you can accomplish this, but for our first Valentine's Day I want a Valentine's Day card and a present. " I had no idea whether he could accomplish this or not. But the day before Valentine's Day I received through the mail from Germany a card with a Bear and a big heart on it. The heart lit up red and beat by going on and off. So I smiled and said to myself that I did receive a Valentine's Day card from Werner but no present.



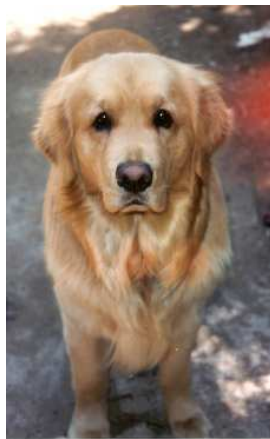
Harrigan

Then on April 5th I received a phone call from Shaggy dog saying that there was a beautiful Golden Retriever for sale. I told the owner that I was not ready for a puppy yet as I was so busy working on Werner's paperwork. She insisted that I call Mary Grove the owner as these were very fine puppies with premium blood lines. She said the puppy was from Golden Pond & Haltree Golden, the best two lines of Golden Retrievers. She gave me Mary Grove's phone number and urged me to call. I called but had no intention of getting a puppy for a little while until things calmed down a little. When I called her I found out that she had only one male puppy left out of 12 that had been in that litter. That made me think it was now or never if I wanted a high quality Golden. But when she told me that he was born on Valentine's Day, February 14, that told me that finally here was my Valentine's Day gift from Werner. So Ann and I drove to Mary Grove's house. She brought out Harrigan to the living room for me to see. He was adorable but of a lighter shade of gold than I had hoped for. But Mary told me that his fur would darken some what as he grew, which it did. After Harrigan went behind the chair and peed on the carpet, and when he came back out into the open I picked him up, paid for him and carried him to the car. Ann held him on the way home. When we got home Edna came out of the nursing home to see the new puppy. When she saw he was not a Shepherd she told me he was ugly and started walking away back to the nursing home. Harrigan followed her all the way back to the nursing home and tried to walk into the building with her. Edna instantly fell in love with Harrigan because he followed after her. She baby sat Harrigan for me when I had to leave for hours.



Marie, Harrigan & Edna

On Easter Sunday Harrigan decided to join us for dinner. He said grace before chowing down.



Harrigan

That summer when Harrigan was a teenage puppy Marlene and Edna came to visit me in the blue house back yard and saw me sitting on one of the two picnic tables with Harrigan next to me. Marlene thought I looked sad so she ran to Dairy Queen and bought 3 banana splits, one for her, Edna and me. She brought it back to the blue house and we all sat on the picnic table and ate the banana splits. As we got the banana splits 3/4s eaten suddenly Harrigan jumped up on the picnic table and started eating all of our banana splits by slowly walking from bowl to bowl lapping up the ice cream and bananas.



Harrigan 1 year old

Harrigan was a goofy, happy dog all of his days. From the first day we brought him home he did circus dog, jumping up on our back, putting his front paws on the back of your hips and walk like a circus dog, wiggling his hips and tail back and forth. He consistently did circus dog on Marlene. She was shorter than the rest of us so when he jumped up on her hips he was as tall as her and he looked like she was wearing a blond fur coat. Once in a while she would beat him through the fence, then she would shut the gate on him and grin and holler HAH!!



Harrigan playing in the sand



Dee & Owen White, Ohio



White's A frame in Ohio

Werner is standing with Dee & Owen White in southern Ohio. Owen was helping Werner with drilling the oil wells. Owen had this A frame built by the Amish. They lived on the basement level most of the time and the 2nd and 3rd stories were for show. Werner and I slept in a small loft on the 3rd floor. It was really cold up there as they heated only the basement level. As the sun rose we would awaken by the sound of the rooster calling “cockadoodle doo!!”



Werner at Grand Canyon

Werner and I went to the Grand Canyon in 1982. As Werner approached the Canyon for the first time he stopped dead in his tracks he was stupefied at how he was stunned at looking at the vastness of the Canyon



Werner in the desert in Arizona.

And, no, he has no intention of climbing that tree. He never climbed a tree in his whole life.



Werner in Arizona swimming pool

Werner loved swimming in a swimming pool. He went regularly with me to Vic Tanny's swimming pool.



Werner diving into Arizona pool.

Werner and I loved swimming together in a motel swimming pool and also in Vic Tanny's. Werner loved diving, I did not. We were in Arizona to close the deal with the share holders on the Park Nursing home in Taylor, Michigan.



Werner on golf cart in Arizona

Werner loved riding in a golf cart which he seldom go to do as he never golfed. He just wanted to ride around the course in a cart.

1983



Werner & Kurt Wilhelm

Kurt celebrated Christmas with us every year when he flew to Michigan from Derenburg, Germany. He attended every St. Anne's Christmas party and also went to Lucy Frombach's house in Windsor. We had to smuggle Kurt across the Canadian border because as a citizen of East Germany he was not allowed into Canada. Lucy was a friend of Elfrieda Krechner and invited all of us for a goose dinner at Christmas time. We were turned back at the tunnel but then Werner drove across the Ambassador bridge and told Kurt to pretend he was sleeping. At the border crossing Werner told Kurt to say USA, when he tried it out the speech came across as hew hess ah. So Werner tried a different approach. When asked our citizenship Werner asked Kurt if he was a citizen of the USA, Kurt responded

in a loud but sleepy voice, “YA!” The guard allowed us to enter Canada. I was nervous all through the goose dinner asking Werner what were we going to do if they don’t let him back into the USA. Uncle Kurt replied it was okay if they put him on a plane back to East Germany. We got Kurt back over the border by having him pretend to be asleep. After the border guard told Werner we could go Werner kept talking to him! I kicked Werner in the shins!

One time Mom and I went to Pacey’s alone together and stayed for a week. As always mom left that cottage spanking clean by Saturday noon, which was check out time. Mom then said to me we will go to the convenience store in town and buy a chicken dinner and eat it on the picnic table on the beach in Lion’s Head harbor because we are not about to clean up the kitchen again. I had just finished going to the rocky beach and feeding bread to the seagulls which was my job at departure time. You would go to the shore line and see no seagulls. Then I would throw pieces of bread into the air. Immediately, out of nowhere came over 300 seagulls, swooping down and catching the bread pieces in mid air. They would screech and fight the other seagulls for the bread. Mom and I would always throw the bread sideways to the poor birds who were chased away from the middle by the more aggressive birds. Once the bread was gone the birds would disappear as fast as they came.



Marie having a picnic at the Lion’s Head park.

I finished loading our stuff into the car and then we set off for the convenience store and picked up a delicious chicken dinner. We then found a nice isolated picnic bench right near the water and ate our lunch while admiring the boats moored in the harbor. I was so busy looking at the food and the boats in the marina that thankfully I did not see what the seagull had just done. He had picked up a large hunk of keys that I had set on the end of the picnic table. He put them in

his beak and proceeded to fly high way over the deepest part of the water and then by a miracle he flew back over dry land and dropped those keys on the grass. Those were the only set of keys that I had for not only the car but also my house! I have always considered that to be a small miracle that the bird dropped the keys on dry land and not into the deepest part of the bay!



Werner petting a real live Bear

When Werner and I were in the oil well country Werner came upon a guy with a Bear cub he was raising in the wild. Werner got out of the car, went over and petted the Bear. The owner and I were a nervous wreck wondering what the Bear might do to Werner. But the Bear was most peaceful while Werner petted him!

We went to Florida on vacation a number of times, taking Uncle Kurt with us sometimes and other times German friends. We traveled the entire length of the State including Key West. We usually stayed in a Holiday Inn but one time all the hotels were filled up due to a Regatta so Werner, Kurt, Bear and I slept on the beach on the Gulf Of Mexico for the night. Werner and Kurt slept in the car and Bear and I slept on the beach. I blew up and slept on an air mattress, I just got comfortable when Bear came up to me and bit the mattress. I laid there while the air slowly deflated from the mattress and I went from a soft comfortable bed to a very hard sand one.



Werner in front of ground for Registry hotel land

Werner is standing on the land upon which the Registry Hotel will be built later in the year. Werner bought one unit, #519, in the Registry hotel in Pelican Bay just north of Naples. It was a very poor investment, one which he never came anywhere close to breaking even. Werner's stock broker got Werner into that investment without Werner's knowledge or consent. Werner did not go after Gary because Gary made him a 63% return on his money that year. But there was personal liability attached to that investment so Werner could not get out of it. It was a beautiful hotel in a beautiful location but we could only stay there for 2 weeks a year and it cost Werner \$1,450 every month. Werner and I would often attend the AUO (Association of Unit Owners) to hear very sad tales of how badly the hotel was doing. Just before Werner died we would listen to the recent widows saying how they could not afford to continue making the monthly payments. The hotel management team quietly let a few of the distressed widows out of their units.

After Werner died I tried to get out of the contract but I couldn't because I wasn't financially distressed. Steve Feldman told me to stop the monthly payments which I did for a while then the hotel stated that they would sue me so Steve told me to right away western union the back payments. Then 5 months after Werner died Steve realized that the hotel never filed with the probate court in Florida as required by law so now they had no claim on me. So Steve, smiling, told the bank holding the mortgage where did they want him to send the deed! I saved a fortune by their mistake. I would still be paying on that mortgage.



Sandy by the falling waters waterfall



Werner with his big fish

Werner and I went to Leland and stayed at the Falling Waters motel just off of Lake Michigan. We were shocked when we saw the teenagers jump off the bridge and land in the fast moving waterfall. But they all made it safely, believe it or not. Werner asked one of the teenagers who was fishing if he could borrow his fishing pole. The kid said yes and Werner gave him \$5 for the use of the pole. In a very short period of time Werner snagged a very big fish. That was the end of the fishing expedition. He gave the kid his pole back and had the kid remove the large fish. He walked back to his car and had pictures taken of him with the fish.



Werner on bridge over falling waters



Werner & Bear in patio of Restaurant

Werner is standing on the bridge that connected the motel with the restaurant. We took Bear across the bridge to the restaurant and asked the owner if we could bring Bear on the patio, He was nervous about that idea as we had to walk into the restaurant in order to get to the patio. But he said okay but make it quick through the inside which we did.



Werner and Bear at Leland



Sandy & Bear on motel deck

Werner and Sandy with Bear on the deck of the Falling Waters motel in Leland, Michigan on the shore of Lake Michigan.

1984

Werner purchased Wil Mar in December, 1974 from Dr. & Mrs Hirth. I purchased Wil Mar from Werner in July 1984. The Blue House was also a part of the purchase transaction, both from the Hirths and later from Werner to me.



Werner on the roof of Wil Mar with the Stadlers

In 1978 the building business slowed way down so Marvin Stadler came to Werner and asked him if there was any work to be had at either nursing home. So Werner had the Stadlers, Marvin, Chuck and Danny work on the roof of room #11 at Wil Mar and also on the new construction at St. Anne's. Marvin said Werner kept him alive financially through those lean years.

Through many years Werner had a number of girlfriends and even though he never used birth control he never had a child on the way. He and I also had no luck in having a child so it was during this period that we decided to have fertility treatments. We tried a number of physicians and a number of fertility treatment options but we were never successful. It was a sad day when Werner and I decided

to give up. A few days before he died he said to me that he wished we had adopted a child.



Werner & Kurt Wilhelm on vacation



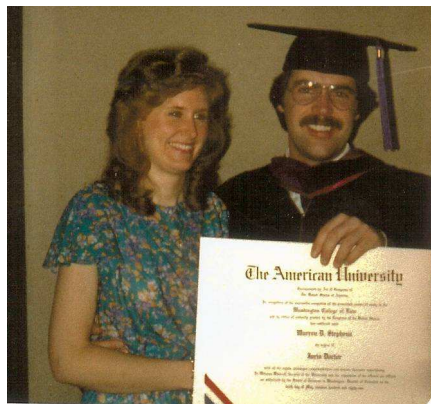
Werner with duck hunting gun

Werner went to Rudi & Dinora's house for Christmas almost every year. Once Christopher was born Werner would play with his gun. Christopher received a duck hunting game and Werner enjoyed shooting with that gun. Werner was an excellent marks man and shot most of those ducks down with little effort. I bought Christopher a very big, expensive 3 foot tall remote control robot that could walk and retrieve things. I never saw that robot again. In my opinion one of the family members took that robot back for a refund.



Warren & Jackie got married in Maryland

Warren and Jackie got married by a Judge shown in this picture. Not too long thereafter they had 2 children, Casey Shea and Patrick.



Warren & Jackie

Warren graduated from the American University and received a diploma a doctor of Law.

1985



Werner talking to Ch 7 News

Werner on Channel 7 news

Werner was talking to Channel 7 news caster just before Christmas. Werner was able to get Aubrey, who was the husband of a patient at Wil Mar, into Wil Mar to be with his wife in time for Christmas.



Bear



Barney

Bear and Barney (Puppy) were the best of friends all through the years. Ann Kay and I took both dogs for long walks in the wilderness off leash. Barney tortured Bear mercilessly and Bear loved Barney so much that he never retaliated. Both dogs walked the railroad tracks together, swam together in the Clinton River and climbed steep embankments with glee.

1986



Edna Smith & Marie Bender

Mom needed a cataract operation as she had serious cataracts. Edna also had serious cataracts so I talked both of them into having the operation done by Dr. Shulman. Both operations came out very well giving mom and Edna 20 – 20 vision. Mom no longer needed glasses or bifocals. She now had perfect vision.

1987



Marie Bender on way to the marina

The next time we went to Lion's Head I was not able to get to the cottage by driving through downtown Lion's Head. The main street was blocked off by the OPP. A couple of bears strolled leisurely down main street and got agitated when people came out of stores and got too close to them. The people scared the bears to the point that they climbed up the trees on main street and looked down at the passersby. The police were fearful that the bears could climb down and injure the pedestrians so they closed down main street. The bears did not come on down from the trees until after dark.

Now and again bears can be a real problem on the Bruce peninsula. One time an old woman who lived by herself in her cottage on Dyers Bay called the police in an utter panic. The bear had smelled her frying bacon. He climbed up on her kitchen roof and started to dig a hole through the roof to get at the bacon. She was very lucky the bear didn't get in before the police came as it was a long ride from Lion's Head OPP to her cottage.



Werner standing on Pelican Bay Registry land

Werner is standing on the vacant land where the Registry hotel is about to be constructed. The cranes in the background will be used to erect the huge hotel.

1988



Warren & Casey Shea Stephens



Jackie & Casey Shea Stephens

Casey Shea was Warren and Jackie's first child, born in the month of May in Maryland.



Nancy Stephens & Ashley Meyer



Mike Pacheco, George Meyer
Donna & Ashley Meyer



Ashley Meyer

Ashley Meyer is the last of Donna's children. She is the daughter of Donna Stephens and George Meyer. She is the half sister of Michael and Michael Pacheco.



Sandy, Doug, Nancy, Marilyn and Mike

Doug bought this house on Alexander St in Livonia. He did a lot of renovations on it and then invited us to his house for dinner. He also had an above ground pool in the back yard which everyone enjoyed in the summer time. Doug especially enjoyed a cool dip in the pool after a hot summer day.



Social Services workers



Kurt in car with old Bear

Uncle Kurt came to Werner and me for the last time in November when he was very sick with a very weak heart and knew he could not live much longer. Werner continued to drive Uncle Kurt around town in the Cadillac as Kurt loved doing that. He often sat in the back of the Cadillac with our dog Bear.



Werner with old Bear



Werner in Woodlawn Mausoleum

Uncle Kurt came to us for the last time very weak. He had to be taken from the plane in a wheelchair. He wanted Werner and I to take care of him in his last days. We called a hospice nurse who visited him once or twice week. Every time she

came out to see Kurt she was very surprised that he was still alive as his heart was so weak. Kurt slept in the upstairs of the blue house where he was very comfortable. Kurt also worked several midnights as an aide in the nursing home. He sent the money he earned back home to his relatives. One night he told me he felt funny. I told him not to go to the nursing home but he insisted. Then at 6 am the night nurse called Werner and said Kurt was not feeling well. Werner told her to put him on the couch in the TV room and if he didn't feel any better in a short time to call an ambulance and send him to Beaumont Hospital. He went unconscious so we sent him to Beaumont. Werner and I visited him for the next 3 weeks but he remained unconscious. Werner kept him alive on life support. He passed away on the end of March. He was sent to Santelli's funeral parlor at 13 Mile Rd. We entombed him at Woodlawn cemetery at 8 Mile and Woodward in a crypt right next to Martha Klodmann's employer Byron Carse.



Bear outside the mausoleum in Cadillac

We brought old Bear with us to the Woodlawn Mausoleum on the day that Uncle Kurt was being entombed. When the casket was being carried up the stairs of the mausoleum and Werner and I were walking behind the casket, Bear was very upset, hanging his head outside the window on the passenger side. Werner and I were afraid Bear might jump out of the car window. So I went up to the funeral director and asked him if we could bring Bear into the mausoleum as we were a very small family and he is part of the family. The funeral director asked the director of the mausoleum and he said yes, so I brought him into the chapel. Werner was so very pleased to see his Bearsie Dogsie coming in for Kurt's funeral service.



Werner & Bear, Peggy at the organ

We got permission to bring Bear into the mausoleum chapel, telling them that Bear was part of the family. Peggy played the organ in the chapel and I sang “Praise to the Lord (Lobe Der Herrn)”. Right in the middle of my singing we heard a very soft unearthly sound which the minister thought was a ghost. The minister and his assistant looked all around the ceiling of the chapel, expecting to see a spirit! It turned out it was Bear singing very softly along with me. He sure did sound like a ghost!

After Werner died I purchased the Divine Word mausoleum family room. Then I had Werner’s mother flown over from Frankfort Germany out of her crypt in the Stadt Friedhof in Germany and entombed right below Werner in the Divine Word family room. I then got the proper paperwork from Fritz Wilhelm, his son and had Kurt moved to the Divine Woed right across from Werner.

1989



Tante Henny Hettenhausen Brehmer
and Werner Wilhelm



Christa Brehmer Fenge & Henny Brehmer

Werner and I went to Aunt Henny's house every time we went to East Germany and then we stopped at her house again after we came back out of East Germany because she wanted to hear all about what happened there and who we saw and what they said to us. She now lived in Gottingen and had some huge pieces of furniture there that originally was in the Rittergut but now was much too large for a normal house. Aunt Henny, every time Werner and I were at her house, would ask us why we didn't have any children.

When we first got to Sun 'N Lake Towers it was the brightest moon I have ever seen – it looked like day light at 11 o'clock at night. I was walking Bear at 11 pm at night, so tired I kept my head down and just wanted the dog to do his business so I could go to bed. Suddenly Bear stretched way out front with his front paws and stopped dead, just looking straight ahead. So I got interested in what he was looking at and looked too. Stretched straight across the main road in front of the towers was a huge Blue Racer snake. He was a gorgeous bright iridescent blue, slowly slithering across the road. Bear and I just stood there and watched him cross the street.



Bear

Some days later I was walking Bear at night on the side of the C Bldg. I carried a flash light with me as I was looking for snakes in the grass as there was a rattle snake in our dining room a few days ago. I shine it all over the grass, nothing was there. I idly shined it straight ahead and was scared to death- there directly across the road by the back of the C Bldg was the big black bob cat, his eyes shining while the flash light was being shone on him. I was so scared of the 165 lb cat attacking me or Bear. And I had no key to the C bldg door. But he just stood there and I got safely indoors through the main door. I rode my 3 speed bike around the back of the subdivision but I was afraid of the cat although it just run along side me and Vernon without approaching the riders.



Werner with the Mayor of Marburg

When we went to visit Aunt Henny before going to East Germany she gave us 200 Mark to give to the Mayor of the neighboring village. She said that the Mayor helped her a great deal to get out of East Germany without she or Uncle Otto being arrested so she feels she owes him a lot. So we went to visit the Mayor and had a delightful visit with him and his wife.



Kurt & Werner in the Weimar train station

This is the train station I saw Werner standing on the front steps smiling after he passed away.



Otto & Clara Rauh & children

We traveled onto Zschippach where we met Otto & Clara Rau. Otto used to be Martha Klodmann's manager on the estate. He spent 6 weeks in Buchenwald for helping to butcher a pink pig to feed the Ukraine prisoners of war.



Werner standing by the entrance to the Zschippach cemetery.



Side view of Zschippach cemetery

This cemetery is at the back of the Rittergut estate. When Werner died I seriously considered buying up a memorial plot and put Werner's name on it. I would have purchased a plot just to the right of where Werner is standing. But his cousin

Christa Fenge strongly urged me not to do that, saying I should not give any money to the communists who confiscated this property. So I didn't.



Kurt Pendorf grave in Zschippach

Pendorf was the arch communist who jumped on top of the Rittergut mansion, waving a communist flag and proclaiming that he was confiscating the mansion in the name of the people. He was the punk of the village, a real never do well. When Werner and I were in front of Pendorf's grave Werner asked me if I could shit. I said no. He said he wanted to shit on Pendorf's grave but he didn't have to go at this moment.



Werner in the Zschippach cemetery

The first time Werner and I went into the Zschippach it was in the communist time and we were driven there by a communist taxi driver, Herr Schmiesser. I said nothing so he would not know I was an American. But when Werner got out of the taxi he told him that he was the son of the owner of this Rittergut. I could have

died of fright because Werner signed a paper given him in prison by the warden, saying he would never return to the Rittergut. Herr Schmeisser said his parents owned the mill at the edge of his property to which Werner's mother sold her grain. So when Herr Schmeisser drove us back to the Gera train station he jumped out of his cab and went directly to the police and reported all we had said and done. I thought, I sure hope they don't arrest Werner for returning. But they didn't. While we were standing there in the train station there were very loud BOOMS! that shook the very ground beneath our feet. We later learned that they were shooting off cannons.



Werner is standing next to Hitler's bomb shelter



Dr. Kurt Diebl standing on top of the hill with boxer

Kurt Diebl took us on excursions with his Boxer. On top of the hill Hitler's Home stood till the end of the war in 1945. His home was soon demolished by the Allied troops. Under the hill was Hitler's bomb shelter. It still stands as of 1980 but is sealed shut.



Margarete & Willy Eberlein and Werner Wilhelm

I kept urging Werner to call Willy Eberlein for a visit while we were in Germany. Werner was very hesitant because his cousin Christa Fenge warned him not to as she said Willy brushed her off when she called him. But I kept insisting that Werner call Willy Eberlein. I told Werner that Willy would be anxious to see him because he would be fascinated to hear Werner's lie story and how he amassed his fortune through the years. I was sitting in the Diebl household when Werner gathered up the courage to call Willy. Willy immediately enthusiastically invited Werner and me to his penthouse on the 5th floor of the apartment he owns. He gave us directions on how to get to his apartment by train and then by bus. It was quite complicated getting there. We were supposed to leave his home by 6 pm but we were having such a fascinating conversation that we kept missing bus after bus that would take us to the train station and back to Astrid's house. Willy really pleased me when he told Werner, "You better keep that one" after I told Willy and his wife many stories about their ancestors. Willy was very surprised at all the stories I told him that he was unaware of. One thing that Willy did have is the Eschenbach family tree that had prominently displayed on his wall.

Willy told me briefly the story of his life from 1945 to 1960. I wrote down his life experiences from those years as he told to me and we will be putting them on line.



Carl Brehmer and Werner Wilhelm



Carl Brehmer, Werner, Carl Jr., Ilse and their children

Tante Henny Brehmer told Werner and me that we should visit Carl Brehmer, the Rittergut Besitzer in Ostramondra. We were very warmly received by this family. We sat in their kitchen and later their living room and discussed the end of the war and the incarceration in Buchenwald from 1945. He was in Buchenwald with his cousin Dr. veterrinat Helmut Brehmer. Werner left \$50,000 in his will to Carl and

Ilse Brehmer because they gave a duck to his mother after WWII when she had nothing to eat. Martha rode on a horse which pulled a small wagon to Ostramondra to get the duck. This family also bought the coffee that Werner had shipped over the border to East Germany, thus allowing him to pay for his tuition in the medical school in Zurich, Switzerland.



Ilse,, Werner & Carl Brehmer

The first time we visited Carl and Ilse Brehmer he brought out from a safe hiding place a veritable treasure that had been handed down from generation to generation in the Brehmer family from the 1500s. Carl is holding the metal plate in his hand that is engraved with the letters JHL which represents the 3 male first names of the Brehmer family that they handed down to each generation. These names are Johann, Hermann and Louis.



Wilhelm & Dr veterinat Helmut Brehmer.

Dr. Helmut Brehmer lived in a Gut in Weihe. He was incarcerated in Buchenwald from 1945 to 1953 with his cousin Carl Brehmer. They slept on bunks above and below each other in Buchenwald. Before WWII he owned a large indoor arena for riding horses and had a number of horses for himself and for use for riding lessons. He has a huge very impressive mansion that he lives in and the adjoining riding arena matches the décor of the home. At the time we met him he was very old but he had a very impressive bearing as he was definitely a man of class.



? Brehmer, Werner Wilhelm and Bruno Lunneman



Werner Wilhelm, Ellen Lunneman & ? Brehmer

We learned about the Lunneman family from Carl Brehmer and also Tante Henny Brehmer when we visited them. So we went and visited the Ellen Lunneman family because the older lady in this picture was born a Brehmer and is related on the Brehmer side to Werner's mother who was born a Brehmer and to Carol Brehmer and the Brehmenr family living in Dorna.



Werner at the church in Lehnstedt

Werner and I visited Lehnstedt, the home of the Brehmer family. We visited the Lehnstedt cemetery where Frederick and Hermann Brehmer are buried. Their graves originally were located where the chapel now lies. Werner is standing in front of the Lutheran Church in Lehnstedt. This church is important to the Brehmer family as Werner's mother and also his Aunt Henny played the organ in this church for a number of years.



Rittergut Altraden which belonged to the Brehmer family

We traveled by train into what is now Poland in order to see and film what was once the Brehmer's Rittergut in Altraden. It was a difficult journey as we had to cross 2 communist borders to get there , first the DDR (East German) border and then we had to cross into modern day Poland via Frankfort on the Oder. Once into Poland neither Werner nor I could speak any polish. Werner said we should have brought an English – Polish dictionary with us. The Rittergut Altraden was beautiful beyond belief. We walked all around the Rittergut mansion from front to back. The workman watched us but said nothing.



Werner in front of the Altraden land and pond



Werner leaving Altraden by train

Werner is standing in front of the Altraden land that stands to the left side of the Altraden Gut. Werner was very emotional about finding this land because his mother told him what joy she had when her Uncle Herman Brehmer took her for a paddle boat ride on the pond behind Werner.

Werner is leaving Altraden in the second picture. Werner and I stayed over night in the train station on a bench. The outhouse was down the tracks behind Werner and was a filthy urine soaked mess.



Werner is walking in front of building in Bischofswerde, West Prussia

Werner and I took a train first to Altraden and then to Bischofswerde West Prussia. This is the home town of my great grandparent Minna Kaiser Dahl Henkel. She was born and raised in this very small town and as a teenager we moved to Potsdam near Berlin and then later to Detroit, Michigan.



Post Office in Bischofswerde (now Biskopie)

The post office is located right behind the train station. We went into the post office and asked questions but we can't speak polish and they can't speak English so we were unable to communicate. The lady running the post office kept saying "U faw veh! U faw veh!" We had no idea what she was saying. When we got back to the U.S. we found out she was saying, "DANGER! DANGER! What she was trying to tell us is that it was against the law to photograph a train station in Poland which I was doing.



Bischofswerde train station

Werner and I disembarked from the train in Bischofswerde and entered the train station. Werner slept on the bench and I traveled through the village taking pictures. I looked for a toilet in the train station to no avail. I found a very primitive out house right behind the train station.



Bischofswerde village



Bischofswerde village

I walked through the village. All the buildings are very old, from before the turn of the century.



a home in Bischofswerde



buildings in Bischofswerde



This was the only transportation in Bischofswerde

In Bischofswerde, West Prussia the only transportation is on foot, by train or what appeared to be the one and only horse and cart. Bischofswerde is a very small

village having less than 10 homes, a train station and a post office. It appears that the village is exactly the same as it was when Minna Kaiser Dahl lived there as a child.



The Castle in Boinghausen

After the trip to Bischofswerde Werner and I traveled to West Germany and visited the town that the Dahl family came from. My Grest grandfather Friedrich and his brother Wilhelm were born in Oberboinghausen, Germany and left there for America after there mother died.



Werner sitting across the street from the castle



The Dahl family home in Oberboinghausen



Dahl house in the background Boinghausen sign in the foreground

Werner and I came into Oberboinghausen by taxi to see the house where our great grandfather Friedrich Dahl was born. We then traveled to Marienheide and Gimborn where the Dahl family was born and raised earlier.



The owner of the Dahl store lives in Lindlar



Dr. Horst Fenge and Werner Wilhelm in front of the Dahl store

The owner of the Dahl store is related to our family in Detroit and Woodslee, Canada. He gave us some of the Dahl family tree.



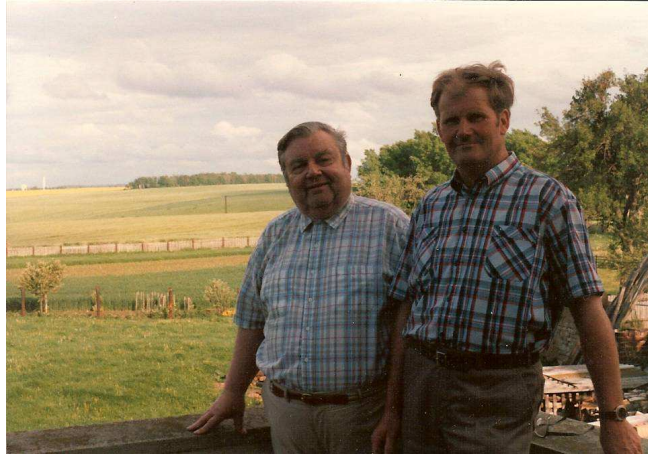
Werner with Stanislawski in Guthof, East Prussia

Werner and I traveled on by taxi to Guthof, the town Uncle Hugo lived in till the end of WWII. It is now located in present day Poland and is called Guttowy. We met the Stanislawski family who were the farm workers for Uncle Hugo. We were very warmly received by this family when we visited them. Uncle Hugo was forced to leave the Gut after the war.



Martha Seibicke & Werner Wilhelm

Werner and I were told by Tante Henny Brehmer that we had relatives who lived in Mertendof in East Germany but she did not know if they were Brehmers or Eschenbachs. So Werner and I went to their yard and he asked the woman if she was a Brehmer and she frowned and said no. Then Werner asked her if she was an Eschenbach and she perked right up and greeted us effusively and said yes. We met Martha and her son and grandson. Martha is the sister of Margarete Eberlein who now lives in Munich. We had Werner and his Aunt Martha take off their glasses for a picture as they looked remarkably alike.



Werner Wilhelm with his cousin Eberhard Seibicke

Her son Eberhard farms about 400 acres of land in Mertendorf. Their son Jens has now grown up, is married to Katrin and have a daughter Nicole. Eberhard built a very fine home before the wall fell so he had a very hard time finding building materials. When the wall first fell Werner offered to pay off the balance of his mortgage but Eberhard was too scared to let Werner do that as he was so scared that the communists who were still in power would ask him where he got the money. Werner told him that was ridiculous under the new Germany but Eberhard would not listen to him.



Gut Tuenschuetz with Otto Paul & Martha Eschenbach & children Martha, Helmut, Margarete , Gunther and Elizabeth Eschenbach

This the last owner (Besitzer) of Tuenschuetz who held the Gut until 1945 when Helmut and Gunther died and Otto Paul suffered from a poor heart which was aggravated by grief ove the loss of both of his sons in the war.



This is the grave marker of Otto Paul Eschenbach

This is the grave marker of Otto Paul Eschenbach, the last Besitzer of Tuenschuetz, his wife Marthat Eisenschmidt Eschenbach, and their 2 sons Gunther and Helmuth Eschenbach who were killed in WWII. The sons are not buried here, their bodies lie in a mass grave in Russia.

Going from Mertendorf to Tuenschuetz, the Gut belonging to the Eschenbach family since 1787 we saw a high tower that the communists used to spy on what was happening in the neighborhood. Tuenschuetz was no more than a mile away from Mertendorf. Less than a mile away from Tuenschuetz was the original Gut belonging to the Eschenbach family since before 1526, called Kischlitz. We traveled to Tuenschuetz and visited the Gut and the cemetery there and then traveled on to Kischlitz and photographed the Gut buildings.



Werner standing in front of the Jena train station



The second Jena train station

Werner took me to the train station in Jena to show me where his mother escaped with the help of another prisoner. They had to change train stations in Jena to go in a different direction to get to Marburg where there was a plague and prisoners were dying. The man prisoner told Martha to pretend they were husband and wife and walk through the train station instead of to the next train. It worked. They escaped by lying in the field across the street. The gray building is called Jena Paradies.



Here is Sandy by the Munich train station



Sandy in the Munich train station

It was in this train station that the porter opened the window and heaved the luggage through the window because Werner was too weak to carry the luggage under ground and back up again. Werner got mad at 2 women standing in front of him, so he pushed them into the train, calling them a bunch of fat cows. His sister would have been outraged if she knew that's what he did.



Werner sleeping on the train

Werner always slept on the train as we traveled through Germany. He laid down taking 3 seats for a bed. He got into many a fight from some older lady over his refusal to give up 2 of the 3 seats.



Sun 'N Lake Towers, front view



Sun 'N Lake Towers, side view

Werner learned about Fairway Pines in Sebring Florida in about 1987. It was built for 7,800,000 3 years earlier and was now in bankruptcy as the builders failed to pay the bond holders. It was now offered for sale for \$3,000,000. Werner thought it was a good deal and put an offer in on it. The FLSIC had possession of the property. But right after Werner put the offer in the FLSIC went under and the Fairway Pines was in limbo. The FDIC took over the Fairway Pines but no longer wanted to sell it as they were in over their heads taking in all the properties from the FSLIC. Werner reminded them that he had a sales contract and he wanted to close on the property. They said no so Werner sued the FDIC and won. Werner

and I were traveling over half of Florida filing paperwork and meeting with attorneys. The FDIC were so angry with us that when we were in their Peachtree office they just glared at us as we completed the necessary paperwork. We then went next door to the Shake & Steak place for lunch.

Werner and I then went to Barnett Bank in Sebring and borrowed \$3,000,000 to purchase Fairway Pines.

Once we got possession of it I was really busy making up pamphlets and a big beautiful sign that I placed at the entrance to our place.

Once we took possession I then had to write new contracts for all of the tenants and then set up monthly billing for the rents. We renamed it Sun 'N Lake Towers. We had 53 tenants when we took over. I did most of the showing and closing on the apartments and by the time I had to go back to Utica to run Wil Mar I had brought the occupancy up to 90 tenants.



Werner in his office with "Bear"

It was a beautiful place, only about 4 years old and very elegant. The entrance way was very well furnished. I cleaned and furnished several apartments at a time and they rented well soon afterwards. I got really good looking furniture from a resale shop in Avon Park. The price was right and the owner delivered it.

1990



Craig with Scott Stephens

Craig is holding his first born, Scott Michael Stephens .



Bear tied to the Astro van

The first 2 times I drove down to Sun 'N Lake Werner went along too, he in his Cadillac and me driving the Astro van with a trailer loaded with 4000 lbs of food stuffs for our new kitchen. He wanted to drive non stop through to Sebring, I wanted to drive at a regular pace, stopping for meals and to a hotel for the night. The first restaurant we stopped in Werner was in a big hurry to keep driving. I tied Bear to the back bumper of the car as it was too hot to keep the dog in the car. Werner rushed out of the restaurant and bolted to his car. I hollered at him to slow down and wait for me as I was not sure which way to go to get back on the I 75 freeway, but he wouldn't listen, just peeling out of that parking lot. I jumped into the car to follow him so I wouldn't get lost. I turned on the car and just then mom shouted "You got the dog tied to the back of the bumper!" Had mom not said that I would have killed my dog.

I brought mom down with me on several occasions. She loved being there and had her own Apartment in the A tower facing the golf course and overlooking the water hole. Mom was very popular with the residents. The most sophisticated residents, Fannie Fiedler and Darlene Watson, asked mom to join them at their table but mom preferred eating with Hulda and Margarete who were much more down to earth and friendly residents.

Mom ran the ice cream parlor wearing an ice cream turn of the century hat. I helped her scoop out the ice cream and serve it. Mom also ran the country store, helping the residents find items and collecting money from them. Being the mother of one of the owners made her a big cheese around there.

I bought 3 wheel adult bikes for Sun 'N Lake Towers. Mom sat on one of those bikes and rode around the parking lot with it. I rode one too. They are much harder to ride than a two wheeler.

We had a videographer from Sebring make a video of Sun 'N Lake Towers for advertising purposes. She did a video of Werner riding a 2 wheel bike. Watching that video was an heart stopper because Werner was so wiggly on that bike, I was sure he was going to go over. But he stayed upright to my relief.



Sandy in full size van bought from Doug

Earlier when the Astro van was being loaded to go to Florida I told Werner I would like to have a cell phone which was just coming out, for emergencies as I was dragging a 14 foot long trailer loaded with over 4,000 lbs of supplies for Sun 'N Lake. The astro van would labor when going up the steep hills which always gave me cause to worry. Later when I had a used full size work van it took the inclines better but with both vans I had to drop it down to 2nd gear for most of Tennessee.

One time I stepped into the back yard at Wil Mar, ready to climb into the mini van and get on my way. When I stood there and looked at how high the trailer was piled I was unsure whether or not the top of the trailer could clear the overhead of the bridges. He had piled on 4 wood chairs on and lashed them down. I had my doubts but I pulled out of Wil Mar's driveway and was on my way. When I drove into Sun 'N Lake's parking lot Werner and Rudi walked out to meet me. Rudi was horrified that I was all alone driving that van so precariously loaded for over 1266 miles. But Werner just smiled and said that Sandy could handle it.

Cell phones cost money so Werner came up with what he thought was a brilliant plan. When I walked out of the nursing home and toward the van, Werner grinned and showed me his brilliant idea for an emergency contingent – he had the maintenance man lash to the top of the van a 1954 balloon tire bike! Ya, sure, I'm sure I would be riding up and down the hills of Kentucky and Tennessee on a bike after I managed to remove it from the roof of the van! The cell phones were of very limited use in those days and would never have worked in the hills.

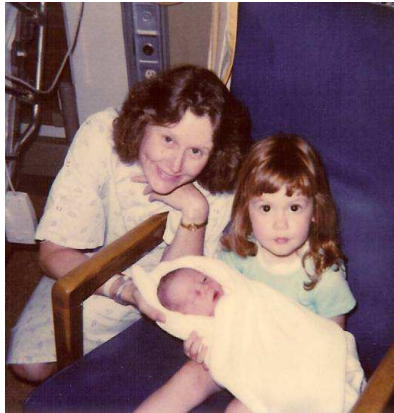


Werner, Bear and the Blooka van

When Barbara Hewitt was selling her old van for \$485 I decided to buy it. We went to a resort lodge up north for a nursing home convention. When several nursing home owners heard that Werner was buying a new van they all got excited because they knew that Werner never bought a new vehicle. So when we pulled in with our "New" van they all ran out to look it over, They were all so disappointed to see it was a 10+ year old van that went "BLOOKA BLOOKA" when we drove it. When we got it back home it made much more noise. I put Bear in it and when I drove it out into Cass Ave it went "Blooka Blooka BLAM! BLAM!! Bear got so scared he jumped right out the driver's window!

In the mid 1990s Marie began to weaken. The first thing I noticed was she had a hard time walking up the front steps of her home. She would take he hand and push on her upper leg to get up the stairs. She no longer walked with both legs, one after another. She would repeatedly do one step, again using he left hand to push up on her left leg.

1991



Jackie, Patrick & Casey Shea Stephens

Patrick was the second child of Warren and Jackie Stephens. He was born in June in Millersville, Maryland.



Warren, Jackie, Casey Shea & Patrick

This is one of the earlier pictures of the Warren Stephens family.

John came to our house on Grant Park to see me as I had just had surgery to remove breast cancer. I was so touched that John would drive all the way from Maryland to visit me after my surgery. He and his wife Virginia are such fine, caring people.



top: John Dale, Ann, Dave Rotary & William Dahl Jr.
 2nd: Marianne, Marie, Virginia Dale, Elenore & Brandon
 3rd: Doris Stoker, "Puggy", Emily, Kristen, Laurie Rotary & Sandy Wilhelm

When John & Virginia came to Michigan for a visit, they came to mom's house on Grant Park for a BBQ. We had a lot of fun and Marie put out a fine spread of food that day. We were all glad to see one another that day and we were especially happy to be able to socialize with John and Virginia. We were all so sorry that all those years went by where John was not in our family. It was amazing that John found Elenore through much diligent searching on his part and once he found her he was reunited with our entire family.



Werner in front of the Villa



Werner behind the garage house

Werner is standing before the Villa where he was born on 16 January, 1928. His grandfather August Wilhelm made the stone over the entrance and his grandfather Richard Brehmer paid for the cost of the building. Dr. Wilhelm turned the garage into a living quarters and moved in there with his girlfriend, Charlotte Nael.



Lotte Thiele Dassler & Werner Wilhelm Werner behind his Villa in Grossobringen

The first time we visited Grossobringen we took a taxi from the Weimar train station to Grossobringen which was about 5 miles apart. At that time it was East Germany and Werner had signed in 1945 to never return to behind the Iron Curtain. So he was frightened to be in East Germany. He told me that they must never know that I am an American so I must never talk when in the taxi. We drove slowly through Grossobringen but when we got to Lotte Dassler's house after circling around the Café zum Stern Lotte came running out in the middle of the street hollering "the little doctor, the little doctor"! stopping the car to see and talk to Werner. It turns out that Lotte was the spy for the East German government and was to report any foreign vehicle passing through Grossobringen, so she reported us to the government. The next time we came we stayed at her house and when she reported us a little while later, the Gestapo said to Lotte, "We were wondering when you were going to report Werner to us".



Inge Reichard and Herr Hess



Werner & Lotte Thiele Dasser

Inge inherited the café from her father. It was a small café and served about 6 people for lunch. She cooked one entrée for lunch and everybody ate the one dinner. When Inge heard that Werner (the little Doctor) as the village called him, was coming for lunch she made him his favorite meal, Rolladen & Kloeschen. Lotte Dasser told him to make 2 dinners for Werner because he loved that dinner so much. The picture shows Inge and her husband. Inge knew Werner since they were little children in the village and went to the first 3 grades in the village grammar school together.

Then the Mayor of the village came to us as we were eating lunch at the Café zum Stern and said to Werner that we were to come down to his office after we ate. We went to his office and he told Werner that he wanted Werner to sign over to him the Villa. Werner, knowing how to handle communists said, of course I'll turn the villa over to you, but I have to talk to my attorney to have him draw up the paper work. Naturally Werner had no intention of turning over the Villa, he just said he would so we could get safely out of East Germany. The American Consulate told Werner that they could not guarantee his safety or get him back out because he was born in Germany and the Germans still considered him to be a citizen of their country.



Christina Schroeder

After talking to the Mayor, Bernd Schroeder a government official show up from Weimer and said she will drive us back to Weimar. Werner told her he would call a taxi because we were afraid of where she might take us. She insisted and so with great trepidation we got into her car. She drove us to a field that was knee deep in weeds. I was watching her and the mayor's hands very closely to see if they had a gun, especially when she told us to get out of the car in the field. We got out of the car and then she told us that Lotte's parents were buried in that field. So we paid our respects and got back in the car. She drove us to the far end of Weimar and let us off a good distance from the train station.



Werner in front of Zschippach church



Werner inside Zschippach Church



Werner with Heidi, Stefanie and Jorgen

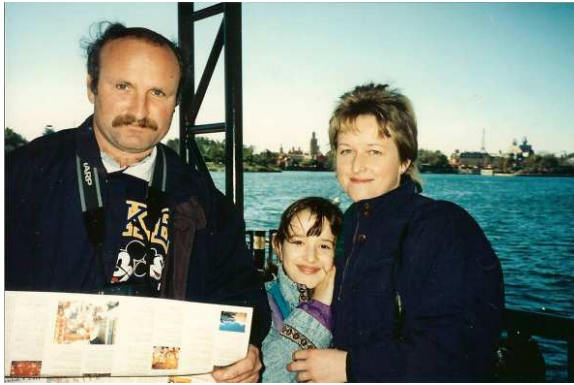
Werner's mother used to own this church and Werner and his mother used to attend services on Sunday. Just before he died Werner returned to this church with Heidi and her family and me to pray.



Werner standing on the grave site of his Brehmer ancestor

Werner is standing on the grave site of his Brehmer ancestor in the Roldisleben cemetery. The grave marker is no longer on the grave because unless you repay for the grave site after 20 years they remove the grave stone and bury someone else on the site. The Bremer family owned a Rittergut around the corner from the cemetery in the heart of Roldisleben until they moved to Altraden in what is now

Poland. From Altraden they moved to Lehnstedt in what was East Germany (DDR). The communists confiscated Lehnstedt in 1945 and from that point on the Brehmer Rittergut existed no more.



Carmen, Harald & Stefaniie Oertel



Heidi Baum



Jurgen Baum

Heidi Baum's father, Frita Kraer, was the Rittergut manager for Werner and his mother, Martha Klodmann. When he died his mother managed to keep the home at the back of the Rittergut. When she died she passed it on to Heidi Baum, her daughter. Now Heidi, her husband Jurgen and their children Carmen and Kirsten and their families live in the home. They built 2 apartments on to the main house in order that all families have their own residence. Sadly, Carmen's husband, Harold Oerel is dying of cancer.

We delivered the bequest that Werner had left him. He gave Fritz the money because Astrid refused to give him back the pharmacy after the wall fell.



Kitsey



Kitsey

I acquired Kitsey in December, 1991 when my first cat, Tinker Bell died. Tinker Bell was only 3 months old when she died of an infection. I got a cat in September, 1991 because my 2 Shepherds, old Bear and Sable Bear died and the vet said that I should not get a dog for several months incase they died of an infectious disease.



Tinker Bell



Barney, Tinker Bell & Sandy

Tinker Bell was sick from the time I got her. I had her on antibiotics for a month and when I stopped the antibiotics she sickened and died. Shaggy Dog shop called me in December and said they had 8 kittens for sale so I went there, looked over the kittens and took Kitsey because the owners said he was the toughest one and he was going to go to a house with 2 tough Shepherd puppies, young Bear and Mopsey.



Werner with Mopsey & Young Bear

Werner and I bought young Bear from the same kennel in Lapeer that we bought sable Bear. The owner of the kennel was the one who chose young Bear. She chose him because she knew that he had a bad heart. When I took him to my vet she told me he had a very bad heart. I took him to the MSU veterinary hospital. They told me his heart was so very bad that nothing could be done for him. She

said he would live one year at the best and would then die of heart failure. I went back to the kennel and she said I could not get a replacement Shepherd for a year. So we paid \$450 and got Mopsey in a few weeks. We got her a prescription for CIPRO to try to save one of her sick dogs.



Young Bear, December 1992

Young Bear lived one year, dying on December 15, 1992. He was a very intelligent Shepherd and very much full of life right to the very last day. He was not short of breath as the vet told us would happen to him. Young Bear walked to Ann's gate, back to the blue house and dropped dead on the office floor. He lifted his head once, then dropped his head back down and quit breathing.



Mopsey (rear) and young Bear



Kitsey

One time I called Werner from Utica and told him I would be driving down with Edna, Bear, Mopsy and Kitsey the next day. I told him that Kitsey, a male cat, had just matured and was peeing on my down comforter and down pillows so I had no

choice but to get him fixed. I was leaving for Florida the next morning so I told him to make an appointment with the local vet in Sebring to get him neutered. Werner bellowed that you never do to an animal what you wouldn't do to yourself. Fine, I replied to him, I'm bringing Kitsey down to Sebring and he will be sleeping in your bed.

Werner, Mali and I visited Carleen in the hospital where she said she was staying because she had breast cancer and had both her breasts removed. When I looked funny at her in her hospital bed because she had two prominent breasts protruding from the hospital gown she told me that she had immediate breast replacement. She then kept repeatedly pressing the button on her morphine pump to show us how much pain she was in, but by the expression on her face she appeared pain free. Dan Abrahamson told me that Carleen's mother told him that the surgery was for liposuction not for double breast removal. When Carleen had the so called mastectomy she told Hari that he should be there the day of surgery in case he would have to claim her dead body.

Later I realized what a farce it was, her saying that she had an immediate breast reconstruction. If you have breast implants they are placed in flat and are gradually inflated with saline solution, in other words while we were visiting her in the hospital her breasts should have been totally flat. She appears to be living in fantasy land, looking for attention and pity from others. She used these false illnesses to stay home from her nursing home and sapping sympathy from the health department. It apparently worked for a time before they got tough. And thinking back I thought it was highly unlikely that 10 years later she was still alive despite having a 10 lb liver tumor in 1992.

2 months after Werner died I was forced to go to Sun 'N Lake Towers because my big mouth sister called Sebring at midnight to tell me that Donna had breast cancer. When they said Werner and I weren't there Nancy blabs to the night watchman that Werner was dead. That forced me to immediately go to Sebring as Werner was the Administrator and the health dept down there insisted that there be an Administrator on the premises. So I had to drop everything and drive down to Sebring. The administrator's class was given the day after I arrived there so Bonnie, Joyce and I took the class. We all three got our administrator's license so the facility was covered.

But what fun we had at that seminar. Werner had a ball that day. The first day a 3 inch stack of papers rose up about 2 feet from the podium, sailed about 3 feet forward and landed right at the teacher's feet without a paper being out of place.

Right after that happened the VCR turned it self on, blinked red 3 times and then the tape flew out. This happened in full view of 40 students. No one was anywhere near the papers or the tape.

That night Bonnie and I got home late and got into bed in the hotel room just before midnight. At the stroke of midnight Bonnie asked me if I thought maybe Werner was in the room with us? Just as she asked that there was a really loud clanging of a pipe 3 times. There was nothing in the room to make that noise and we never heard it again.

The second day of the seminar Gretchen, the teacher moved the screen very carefully no more than 12 inches to show a slide show. The screen came alive! It jumped up and down and sideways hitting Gretchen in the back of the head and on the face, back and forth. Gretchen said in a real faint scared voice, "Would someone please help me!?" Just as she said that the screen jumped up in the air and flew straight forwards, landing between the podium and the side of the table. Again, the whole class witnessed this. For the remainder of that afternoon from time to time flying missals kept flying through the air from left to right across the stage.

When we first got there the first day we were one hour early as we didn't know how long it would take to drive there. This was the first chance I had to talk to Bonnie so she told me ghost story after story of what Werner had done since his death. There were the 3 of us from Sun 'N lake and one stranger sitting at our table. The stranger said to us that first morning, "I don't know who you are or where you come from, but one thing I do know, you don't gottem all together!" So on the 3rd day she was talking to Bonnie standing up at lunch time when suddenly a flying missal came right across her line of vision, almost hitting her on the nose. She startled for a minute, then said in a querulous voice, "I'm a believer".

On the final day I said, "Let's be a smart aleck and say goodbye to Gretchen." So we walked up to where she was putting her paperwork back into her briefcase. She was so shook up by what Werner had done that her hands were shaking so badly that she was pushing more papers out of the brief case than in. So when I said goodbye to her, Gretchen replied with great feeling to her voice, "Werner might be dead, but he's not gone!"

We then walked out of the building and as we were heading for the car, Werner opened the driver's door for me right in front of us. Bonnie laughed.

Bonnie said she talked to Werner at the beginning of January and he promised her he would be back in Sebring for her son's birthday, which was January 11. Bonnie said she went to bed that night about 11 pm and she was awakened by Werner from a dead sleep shortly afterwards. Werner came to her in full living color, full of anxiety, saying to her that she must learn to run Sun 'N lake by herself, that he could no longer help her, but that she should not ruin her health over it. Bonnie said it was so vivid that she just shook. And when she later learned that she saw him about 4 hours after he passed away she started shaking all over and had to have her husband leave work and pick her up, she was so over wrought.

She said looking back she knew he had to be either dead or in a coma because all sorts of ghostly things kept happening day after day. His chair kept rocking by itself so often that it just spooked out the office staff so much that they put the chair in storage. And when they put stuff on a shelf that he said he never wanted anything on that shelf when they came in the next morning the locked office had those forbidden books on the floor clear across the room. And when I sat in his chair in the dining room right after arriving there the water glass started moving by itself, coming straight toward me. I caught it just as it left the table and would have landed in my lap.

When I got upstairs and started to make the monthly calendar I turned on the TV and said "Aw" when I saw his favorite funny TV programs were on. A little later when I went to the bathroom I thought it was ridiculous to run a TV for a ghost, so I walked in the room and turned off the TV. As I turned it off I noticed that it was in the middle of his very favorite program. I turned around and was leaving the room when all of a sudden, SNAP! the TV turned itself back on. So I smiled and said, "Okay, Werner, I'll leave your TV program on".

For a complete compilation of Werner's ghostly activities that took place shortly after his death please go to his web site entitled "Some good ghost stories".

1992



Marie in the Chevy Vandura

Just before he died Werner bought me a full size conversion van to drive back and forth around town and to Sebring. I liked that fact that it had a king size bed in the back. I used it to sleep in several times and had planned to sleep in it for trips, but Werner died before I could do that.



Kitsey

Edna and I and the animals walked into Sun 'N Lake at suppertime and Werner said to me that Kitsey had a vet appointment the next day and he would be sleeping in Edna's apartment tonight. Next morning bright and early I took Kitsey to the vet and left him there for the day. At 4 p.m. Werner called me into his office and told me Kitsey was ready to be picked up. Edna was sitting in the office with Werner. As I was leaving I heard Werner to say to Edna, "Gee, I hope I never wet the bed!"



Werner dressed for Ross Perot

Ross Perot was running for US President and Werner was very taken with him. So when Ross Perot had a rally on the east coast of Florida Werner invited his bus loads of supporters to have supper while riding across state. A wonderful banquet of ribs with all the trimmings was prepared and at about 5 pm the 2 Perot buses came riding into our parking lot. Werner, dressed in his finest clothes, ran out to meet the buses. People from one of the buses asked us for ice water right away which we supplied. It turned out that the air conditioning on that bus had broken down and all of those people were sweating profusely. We had a nice banquet, and Werner got to circulate among all of the Perot supporters. They then returned to the 2 buses and started for their home town.



Sandy & Werner Wilhelm

Within a month Werner decided he wanted to get married. He chose his mother's birth day, which is the date he always wanted. We got I his car and drove to the courthouse in Sebring, walking up a bunch of stairs to get to the Marriage license bureau. We presented our driver's licenses and filled out the marriage license applications. A few days later we were on our way to Our Lady of Grace Church in Avon Park when Werner decided it was too late in the day and decided to go on

another day. I warned Werner that we were probably too late to get married on August 24 as the Catholic Church usually required 3 weeks to publish the banns before a wedding could take place. Werner wasn't listening to me. When we went back to Our Lady of Grace the secretary gave us each forms to fill out before talking to the priest who was counseling another parishioner. I warned Wilhelm that we might be refused as we were here only 1 week before his chosen wedding date. Werner asked me to answer a few questions that he was unsure of. We finished the paperwork and then waited for Father Gerald Grogan to arrive. While we were waiting for Father a mother and her daughter came in to the rectory and wanted to plan a funeral for her 30 year old daughter who just died of breast cancer, leaving 2 infants behind. That placed a pall over my mood as I had just been through breast cancer treatment.



Father Grogan, Werner, Sandy & Hari Mali



Sandy & Werner Wilhelm wedding day

Father Grogan then came into the room and was most deferential to Werner and me. Werner told him he wanted to get married on August 24, next week as that was his mother's birthday. Oh boy, here comes the refusal, I say to myself. Okay, Father Grogan says. We would like to get married in Sun 'N Lake Towers, says Werner. I have never performed a wedding outside this church, replies Father. I speak up and say that all our residents would like to be part of the wedding but it would be so difficult to get all those disabled people into church. Father Grogan thinks about that for a minute, then says, okay, we'll do the wedding ceremony at Sun 'N Lake Towers.



Werner & Sandy holding bouquet

For a bouquet someone gave me an artificial one, it was pretty enough to use. Werner hired a photographer recommended by our cook. We hired a videographer to take moving pictures. We hired a musician to play after the ceremony. We used a piano player that played religious songs at Sun 'N Lake Towers on Sundays to play the music during the ceremony.



Sandy & Werner cutting the wedding cake

Come the day of the wedding we got a nasty surprise. Hurricane Andrew, one of the biggest hurricanes to hit Florida in a long time, started rolling in. the morning of August 24th. I went to the music store early that morning and bought German folk music and old time music like Burl Ives. I brought the CD's back to the dining room where our wedding was to be held at 3 pm that afternoon. As the day progressed the storm got stronger and stronger. Our videographer did not show up.

Our still photographer did not show up. Our person to provide the music did not show up. They were all too afraid to venture out into the hurricane, Cars were bumper to bumper driving down US 27 from Miami and the Keys trying to outrun the storm. All the motels in the Sebring and Avon Park area were full, with drivers going on the find a safe haven.



Carleen Mali, Sandy & Werner Wilhelm & Hari Mali

Father Grogan showed up and conducted the wedding ceremony. Our matron of honor and best man showed up as they came the day before the storm. Hari and Carleen Mali flew in on August 23, rented a red Cadillac and drove from Orlando to Sun N' Lake. Hari stayed with Werner, Carleen and I went shopping. I had purchased my wedding dress at Lord & Taylor in Sterling Heights. I had the wedding veil that I had stored away and now was ready for use.

On the day of the wedding Carleen helped me get dressed and Hari came and helped Werner. Werner wore the same white jacket he had worn for the Ross Perot dinner. He had black trousers and a white shirt and dark tie.

We all entered the dining room just before 3 pm. Father Grogan arrived right after that. Carleen and Hari Mali gave us a video camera for a wedding present and that was a life saver as the videographer did not show up. We asked who knew how to operated the camera. One of our kitchen help said she knew how so we handed him the video camera. He moved that camera all over everywhere but we did get some good film out of it. The "Good photographer" that showed up to take the still pictures was a total disaster.

Werner and I had no faith in him so I took quite a number of pictures which are the only half way decent ones. I turned them into 8 X 10s and put them in an album. The lady who played the piano during our wedding stayed and played vernacular

music when she saw no one showed up for the reception. After she left Werner played the German music and some old fashioned music.



Werner eating ice cream on our wedding day

For the reception I got some really good pictures that I took myself and had one of our employees take others. I took this picture of Werner eating ice cream because he was so cute, refusing to pose for any more pictures until he had his ice cream. So I gave him a bowl of ice cream and then snapped the rest of the pictures.



Sandy & Werner walking down the aisle

The most important part of the wedding ceremony to Werner was when we marched down the aisle from the part A hall to the middle of the dining room near

the courtyard door. We held hands and Werner was so emotional with the march that he had tears in his eyes. He was very emotional all during the service. Getting married was very important to Werner. He was goofy happy for the rest of his life from the wedding till his death. He kept saying over and over how he wished he had gotten married years ago. He kept saying how happy it made him to be married. And he was so very happy for the rest of his days.



Carleen, Sandy, Werner & Hari Mali

The part of the wedding that angered Werner the most was Hari Mali's speech just before the cutting of the cake. Hari first presented him with a wedding card with a \$100 bill in it as Hari said he bet Werner two things – that he would never get married and that he would never buy a new car and as of today Werner did both. Then Hari said I deserved the \$100 because of all the verbal abuse I took from Werner through the years. That made Werner very mad at Hari.

After the marriage Werner and I continued to run Sun 'N lake Towers. Then 1 month later I had to return to Utica for a week for medical tests and doctor's visits. A little over a week later I had settled Wil Mar down and told Werner I was ready to return to Sun 'N Lake. Werner was so happy, saying that I would be returning to him for the first time as Mrs. Werner Wilhelm.



Werner in Disneyworld

Werner loved Disney world. We went to Disneyworld 3 times the year he died. He rode around Disneyworld in an electric wheelchair. His favorite ride was “Small World”. I got permission for Werner to ride on that twice by telling the woman controlling the ride that he was dying so could he go around twice without getting off. The people about to get on graciously gave up their seat so Werner could stay on for another trip around.

I went on the Merry go Round while Werner stayed in his wheelchair with the movie camera. He filmed his belly breathing up and down all the while we were on the merry go round.

Once I returned to Sun ‘N Lake Werner’s health began its final descent. His kidney function deteriorated rapidly. He started gaining 1 lb a day. He had a upright scale and every day he would move the marker. I mentioned to Werner that he was gaining a pound a day. He said nothing but the next thing I knew he moved the scale into the next apartment and locked the door so I couldn’t track his weight gain. He was gaining the weight because he was retaining fluid as his kidneys were failing to properly excrete fluid.

Werner and I went to the Registry Hotel at Pelican Bay and took a German couple with us. Werner asked me to entertain the Germans by taking them to the Outback to eat and to Wal Mart for shopping as he was so exhausted he wanted to lay in bed and rest. Werner suddenly realized that it had been over 7 hours since he last urinated and he now realized that he had very little urine in his bladder. I took all of us back to Sebring and then the company packed up and left for the airport. I wanted the maintenance man to drive the guests to the Orlando airport and I

wanted to drive Werner to the kidney doctor. Werner insisted that I drive the company to the airport. I really wanted to take Werner to the doctor but he insisted we go to the airport so I dropped Werner off at the entrance to the doctor's office and continued on to the airport with my guests in the car. There was a big traffic jam and the Germans almost missed their plane. I had to drop them off at the entrance of the airport so they were very upset as they thought I was going to walk them to the gate. But I had to get back to Werner as I left him stranded at the doctor's office. There was another big traffic jam and By the time I got there it was after office hours. As I walked in all the doctor's staff had a funny expression on their face so I thought, "Oh God, Werner died!" They saw my panicked expression so they told me that they had put him a taxi cab and sent him to the Orlando Hospital, where he had previously refused to go earlier. I drove to the hospital and went into the emergency room and found Werner there. He said his brain is so befuddled from the uremic poisoning that he could not even count out money to pay the cab so he asked the nurse to count out the money from his wallet as he did not trust the cab driver. So Werner said he opened his wallet and let the nurse take out the bills to pay the cab driver.

Werner was in that Orlando hospital for 12 days. He weighed 326 lbs from all the excess fluid and his creatinine was over 11. For his first treatment he met the doctor in the treatment room. The doctor looked at Werner's kidney blood values , then looked at Werner with a look on his face like he was chastising a kid for bad behavior, then said, "Impressive numbers" (Werner should have started dialysis at least a month earlier.) The doctor told him his blood was a toxic waste dump.

I wanted to stay with Werner when they cut into his femoral artery to start dialysis, but the doctor told me to go down the hall. Werner wanted me there so a few minutes after I sat down in the hall the nurse comes tearing around the corner saying the doctor wants me there. I came. But the doctor told me to stand behind the glass doors – I could be near Werner who was on the other side of the door but supposedly could not see the procedure. But it turned out that the glass door reflected everything – Werner, the doctor and everything the doctor was doing. Werner had his eyes shut but then the doctor told the nurse he wanted a different kind of scalpel than the one that came in the surgical kit. He was also handed a hug fat needle with a syringe full of numbing ingredient. She then handed him the numbing agent in one hand and the new scalpel in the other hand. Werner chose just that moment to open his eyes. He sees the doctor holding both up high right in Werner's line of vision. Werner starts screaming. Werner definitely needed his "Mama" to comfort him and calm him down.

I stayed with Werner in his room for the whole 12 days. He went to dialysis every morning and his blood values slowly came back down again. The nurses in that Orlando hospital in the dialysis room were wonderful Werner never had a bad episode, those women kept right on top of his blood pressure, adjusting everything before anything went bad. Beaumont Royal Oak dialysis on the other hand was a horror. It was staffed by Philippino nurses who stood in a back corner, talking away in their native language and not paying a bit of attention to the patient's conditions. Every patient in that room went sour, including Werner whose blood pressure dropped to 50 over 40 and he was passing out. He said to me "Please don't let them kill me". I got them to attend to Werner and bring him back blood pressure wise.

In Orlando back in his room the attending nurse there would have killed him if I hadn't been there. She put 3 pills on his tongue as soon as he got back from dialysis and had a blood pressure of 50 over 40. I scooped the pills off his tongue and asked her what they were for. 2 of the 3 were to lower his blood pressure! Needless to say he skipped that dose!

I slept on a chair in his private room those 12 days. Werner said he was not going to go to the hospital as we left Sun N Lake Towers so I had no clothes, pjs, toothbrush etc. with me. So I discovered that Werner went to sleep in the afternoon after his lunch. So I helped him with lunch and then got his okay to go to Wal Mart and get some pjs, underwear, toothbrush, some puzzles and a few changes of clothes. I went to Wal Mart all 12 days to keep my sanity.

When he left the Orlando hospital we set up an appointment for him to get dialysis at a private doctor's office. One patient there needed a new kidney and he said his wife was a perfect match but she refused to donate her kidney to her husband.



Werner with Bear in front of Wil Mar

He flew back to Michigan for Christmas and to be at Wil Mar to see what was going on. I drove back from Sebring to Utica in my mini Astro van. Werner's latest Cadillac was totally destroyed by the hill billy employees who drove it into the ground.

Werner got into Beaumont Royal Oak for dialysis. I wanted the Dequindre dialysis but he felt more secure going to Royal Oak. That added over 2 hours to my driving time. He went to dialysis 3 times a week which absolutely exhausted me as I had to get up by 4:30 am and didn't get back home till after 6 pm. I had to go to Wil Mar and run that on the non dialysis days so I was totally worn out.



Hari Mali at Chsittmas



Hari Mali at our wedding

Mali visited Werner when he was in a private room in Beaumont having daily dialysis. Mali was shocked to see Werner's deteriorated condition and knew that his "Bonanza Banker" as others laughingly called Werner, was at an end. (Mali

used to invite Werner and me to the Bonanza Restaurant, pile a plate up high for Werner, go back for seconds on food and drink and be oh so cordial to Werner and then just as the place would be ready to close Mali would hit him up for a \$200,000 or better loan., which Werner always granted as he felt that Mali was going to be a successful nursing home owner some day so he wanted to help him out.)

Hari Mali was down right evil in his behavior once he realized Werner was dying. In December Werner told Mali that he wanted the \$200,000 he had loaned him .. Mali said he would return the money some time in January. Werner said no, he had to have it before the end of December as Wil Mar needed to money to pay to the State. There was a big brouhaha as Werner got absolutely adamant that he needed the money back. Mali got downright angry. Before this blow up Mali was always most friendly and pleasant with Werner because he was constantly borrowing money from Werner so he always pretended how much he loved Werner. But now that he knew Werner was dying and the cookie jar was drying up he had no more reason to be friendly. If you can't get what you want out of someone you sure don't need to be nice to him.

Werner had surgery on his arm to have a piece of tubing placed in his right forearm as an access for dialysis. It was a horrible day. Werner had gone over 24 hours without any food and now that they brought him back to his room they said that the kitchen was closed and there was no more food available till the next morning. Werner and I got really upset. I told Werner that the lunch counter at Woolworths was about to close so I needed to run down there and get him a liver and onion dinner. Just as I got to the main entrance I see Mali and some Indian guy heading for Werner's room I ask the nurse to prevent Mali from visiting Werner as Werner has not even recovered from the anesthetic yet. She refuses. I call Werner from the front desk and tell him Mali and an Indian are coming up. Werner hollers loudly for me to get right back up, he needs a witness. So I go back up knowing Werner is starving and the lunch counter is about to close. Mali was so cocky, so obnoxious. Werner was so hungry, so woozy from the anesthetic and he was in pain from the insertion of the plastic hose in his arm. And Mali was dancing around mouthing off acting so sure of himself, feeling like he was on top of the world. He said to Werner that he doesn't need him any more, that he has Feldman, another nursing home owner. Mali find left and the lunch counter was closed and I wondered where I could get Werner supper at this late hour. I asked the staff and they said there was a restaurant across Woodward and down a ways. I did not want to take my car out of the parking garage as I had a fairly close parking space which I would never get again. So I walked a long ways across Woodward and got

Werner a steak dinner. Poor Werner was so very tired. He ate the steak dinner and went to sleep.

One month earlier, on December 15, while Werner was in Beaumont hospital Edna, little Bear's babysitter called up Werner and me hysterical, saying that little Bear had walked to Ann's gate, stood up on it, then came back into the blue house and dropped on his side on the office floor. He lifted up his head once, then laid his head back down and died. He had a bad heart from birth so we expected his early death, but it was still a shock when he went so suddenly. Edna was screeching into the phone and Werner handed the phone to me as he was having a huge fight with the hospital's administrator. Gary Banish, Werner's stock Broker, got up when the Administrator came in and introduced himself as Werner's attorney. In the middle of all this hollering in comes a cute, pudgy, pink cheeked volunteer in a pink candy striped uniform and said in a really sweet voice, "Here's your wheelchair, Mr. Wilhelm". His reply was "^^%\$# the wheelchair!" She ran out of that room as fast as her legs would carry her.

I in the meantime, am on the phone trying to calm Edna down.

I packed up Werner's things, putting them all in a wheelchair and pushing them to the parking structure. I then brought the car close to the door and helped Werner in. I then drove him home. We went to the blue house and we found little Bear dead on the office floor, Richard, the maintenance man dug a deep grave and we put little Bear into the grave. We had to sit Werner on a chair as he was too weak to stand. We wrapped little Bear into a comforter and laid him into the ground next to Old Bear. Werner put some coins into the grave so little Bear would have some money to buy ice cream and hamburgers along the way, We then said the Our Father in German and English, and then Werner told little Bear that he would be joining him pretty soon. We had Werner lay down on my bed in the blue house as he was too weak to make the journey to his bed in the brown house. Richard ran to a fast food restaurant and bought Werner a hamburger. Later he walked home, very much saddened by the events of the day.

1993

Werner had a bad heart since he was 5 years old. He got a serious case of pneumonia and when his father, Dr med Werner Wilhelm took an x ray of his chest he was shocked to see that Werner had a very enlarged heart. Werner was lucky in that he lived for almost 65 years with a bad heart. Werner was always very tired and did as little exercise as possible both as a boy and in his adulthood.



Toni Camargo & Harrigan

Toni teased him saying that now Werner and I were married I should be doing the cooking. Werner called me up and put Toni on the phone telling me I should be doing the cooking, not Werner. But corn beef and cabbage was always Werner's favorite soup to make. He had the meet boiling on the stove all day. Toni teased me while Werner was laughing in the background. Werner also told Toni that I had never sewn a button on Werner's shirt. He told her that when a button fell off a shirt I would just buy him a new shirt. Werner had a closet full of shirts as all his shirts were rags so when I saw a good looking shirt his size on sale I'd buy it. (When we first met I bought Werner and me cowboy shirts and cowboy hats at a western store in Rochester. The clerk was carrying on saying Werner should not have to pay the same for a 3x shirt as that skinny guy paid for a small shirt. We went to St Lawrence Church on Easter Sunday wearing the cowboy shirts and hats. We sure got a lot of funny looks by the congregation that day.) Werner loved that shirt and wore it often over the next 16 years. He died wearing that cowboy shirt. I asked the funeral director for that shirt back but he said he trashed it.

I walked back and forth that day typing things that Werner wanted typed. I would sit in the Wil Mar office passing the time of day with Werner and enjoying seeing how goofy happy he was that day.

Werner went home and laid down on his side of the bed around 4 pm as was his usual routine. Wil Mar called me so I told Werner that the nursing home doctor was there seeing patients. He immediately got out of bed and went over there as he needed note signed by the doctor. He saw the doctor, had a conversation with her and with the rest of the staff. Werner told one of the staff he was giving her a 10 cent raise on the next payroll. She was so happy about that. Werner asked the cook in the kitchen to bring him a sack of potatoes and carrots to finish off his cabbage soup. Werner then talked to Toni some more and decided he was tired

and started for home. Toni opened the day room door for Werner, turned on the outside light and told Werner to be careful walking, don't fall. Werner walked through the garage with his sack of potatoes and carrots, went into the house and put his sack of vegetables down by the back door. He then walked to the middle of the bedroom and kicked his tennis shoes off, laying one partially on top of the other. He then walked to his side of the bed, lost consciousness and crashed to the floor between the bed and the shelf. As near as I can tell by talking to Toni and estimating how long it took for him to walk to the house, I figure he died at 7:54 pm on January 11, 1993.

At about 8:30 am I suddenly had the overwhelming urge to tape some songs for Werner. I never taped anything in my life for him in the 16 years we were together, but now the urge to tape was overwhelming. I looked around for a tape recorder and found a brand new one in that cellophane wrap. I ripped it apart as fast as I could, then looked around for batteries. I found new batteries in cellophane too so I pulled that apart too as fast as I could, putting the batteries in the recorder, I then ran the recorder to the front bedroom, turned on 580 am on the radio, which I had not done for over a year. I put the recorder on a chair right in front of the radio and then left the room, shutting the door behind me to increase the sound.

At about 9 pm Mopsey and Kitsey suddenly went nuts in the blue house where I was working on the books. They ran back and forth through the house, actually trying to climb the walls as they ran. I was perplexed. Why were they running like that? Did they need to go to the bathroom? So I put my coat on and let them both outside. Kitsey ran up the tree next to the garage, and ran round and round the bark about 5 feet off the ground. Mopsey ran to the outside of Werner's bedroom and started howling, facing the door. I got both animals back in the house and then was really shocked. The tape recorder was sitting on a chair in the kitchen and the door to the bedroom where it was was still shut tight. How did the tape recorder get out of the bedroom by itself, through the door and into the kitchen when no one was there? I put the tape recorder back into the bedroom and again shut the door. Then a short time later for no particular reason I turned off the tape recorder, turned off the radio and put the radio in the kitchen. I had no idea what I had taped. The animals calmed down somewhat but still remained antsy.

I spent the evening hours bringing the books up to date and when I looked at the clock and saw it was after 11pm I realized that I had to get home to bed as Werner had dialysis the next day and I would have to get up at 4:30 am. So I packed up my paperwork and headed back to the brown house. As I walked in the door I first

saw the little sack of vegetables right inside the back door. I smiled. That looked so cute sitting there. Then I saw his shoes sitting one on top of the other in the middle of the room. That also looked so cute. Then I saw Werner laying on the floor between the bed and the shelves. I ran over to help him up. One look at this face and chest and I knew he was dead. His face was swollen and purple and his chest was totally still.

I called over to the nursing home and asked a nurse to come over and confirm he was dead. She checked. No pulse, no blood pressure. I immediately knew he was dead but I needed confirmation before I called Werner's doctor. I contacted Dr Rochet who pronounced him dead and filled out the death certificate. The police department and Sullivan Funeral home were called. The police man said he never thought Werner was going to die, he was so full of life. Sullivan Funeral home pulled him out from between the bed and the shelves and lifted him on their gurney. I stopped them long enough to say good bye to Werner and then to remove his gold watch and his 2.3 carat diamond ring. If he left our house with that we may never see it again. I walked with Werner through the garage, and the nursing home and to the hearse parked outside Mc Clellan near where Werner always parked his car. They then placed him in the hearse and I watched them drive away with Werner's body. What a lonely, empty feeling I was left with.

The next day I went to Sullivan Funeral home and made funeral plans. Werner wanted a one piece copper casket. Ray Lope was upset over that request as there was none to be had in this area. He tried to talk me into some other casket. Werner was adamant, it had to be a one piece copper casket. So Ray Lope went back to his office and started fishing for that casket. He finally found it in the hills of West Virginia but it would take 3 days to get here. I told him that was okay we could delay the funeral 3 days. The delay turned out perfect – it allowed him to be buried on his birthday, a fact he would love.



He wanted his funeral to be private, with only me and his closest employees at Wil Mar attending. That was what happened with few exceptions, Rudi and Dinora Pitz and Dave Jaye and my immediate family. Ann Kay took professional pictures of Werner and his funeral.

As I stood in front of the casket on the morning of his funeral I was the only one present in the funeral home. I suddenly wondered what I taped? It took me over a week to listen to the tape as I was spooked by that whole idea. Finally my curiosity got the better of me so I played the tape recorder.

I was genuinely frightened one week after I buried Werner to play those songs. It just felt so scary, so other worldly what had happened. There was nothing normal about what had happened. In no way was I myself when I taped those songs or when I responded to how crazy my dog and cat were acting. So now with goose bumps up and down my arms I turned on the tape recorder and listened to what I had taped that night of January 11th, 1993.

The first song was "The Old Lamplighter" .Werner and I loved this song, in which an old man turns the lights on in heaven when night is new and turns them off when night is through. Werner had often said to me that his father had said to him that if there was life after death that he would greet Werner from the stars, and then Werner said he would also greet me from the stars if there is life after death, which he did in a dramatic way with this beautiful old song.

The words to the song are as follows:

THE OLD LAMPLIGHTER

He made the night a little brighter where ever he would go, the Old Lamplighter of long, long ago.

His snowy hair was so much whiter beneath the candle glow, the Old Lamplighter of long, long ago.

You'd hear the patter of his feet as he came toddling down the street, his smile would hide a lonely heart, you see.

If there were sweethearts in the park he'd pass a lamp and leave it dark, remembering the days that used to be, for he recalls when dreams were new, he loved someone who loved him too, who walks with him alone in memory.

He made the night a little brighter wherever he would go, the Old Lamplighter of long, long ago.

He made the nights a little brighter wherever he would go, the Old Lamplighter of long, long ago.

Now if you look up at the sky you'd understand the reason why the little stars at night are all aglow, he turns them on when night is new, he turns them off when dawn is near, the little man we loved of long ago.

The second song was Old Durham Town. "I gotta leave old Durham town and the leaving's gonna get me down." It also has 1944 in it, the year I was born. Substitute the word "Wil Mar" for "Durham Town" and this song is so close to what Werner would have said it was absolutely spooky. It also goes on to mention about the father leaving the boy, something that happened to Werner in 1944 during the war when Werner was left alone with a strange family in Gera while his dad was in Derenberg. Werner also used to sit on the banks of the River Elbe and watch the ships going up and down that wide river, which he used to call "the Mississippi". The words to Old Durham Town are:

Durham Town

I've got to leave Old Durham Town, I've got to leave Old Durham Town, I've got to leave Old Durham Town, and the leaving's gonna get me down. Back in 1944 I remember daddy walking out the door, mama told me he was going to war, he was leaving, leaving, leaving, leaving me.

Now I've got to leave Old Durham Town, I've got to leave Old Durham Town, I've got to leave Old Durham Town, and the leaving's gonna get me down. When I was a boy I spent my time sitting on the banks of the river Tide watching all the ships going down the line, They were leaving, leaving, leaving, leaving me.

Now I've got to leave Old Durham Town, I've got to leave Old Durham Town, I've got to leave Old Durham Town, and the leaving's gonna get me down.

The third song was "So long, it's been good to know you. That song is a hilariously personal one for me for it says in there "Do you know she can't cook, do you know she can't sew", facts that Wil Mar and Werner were teasing me so very much with the very day Werner died. They were teasing me unmercifully over the phone and also when I went over there with the Living Trust because Werner was making corned beef and cabbage soup for me that very day. The song then goes on to say that he

hates so very much to leave me but he's been away from his family too long and he has to be traveling on. The reference of one lb of butter for 2 lbs of gold happened to Werner in Germany after World War II. Then towards the end of the song it says that the preacher is on the phone and he says you're getting married whether you like it or not, which after a 15 year procrastination, fit Werner's situation to a tee. The words to the song are:

SO LONG, IT'S BEEN GOOD TO KNOW YOU

So long, it's been good to know you, So long, its been good to know you, So long, it's been good to know you. It's been a long time since I've been home and I've gotta be drifting along. I've sung this song but I'll sing it again, of the people I've met and the places I've been. Some of the troubles that bothered my mind then a lot of good people that I've left behind.

So long, it's been good to know you, So long, its been good to know you, So long, it's been good to know you. While a long time since I've been home and I've gotta be drifting along.

The sweethearts they sat in the dark and they sparked, they hugged and they kissed in that dusky old dark, they sighed and they cried and they hugged and kissed, but instead of marriage they talk like this:

Honey, so long, it's been good to know you, So long, its been good to know you, So long, it's been good to know you. While a long time since I've been home and I've gotta be drifting along. I went to your family, I asked them for you, they all said, "Oh take her, oh take her, please do, she can't cook or sew and she won't scrub your floors", so I put on my coat, tiptoed out the door, singing

So long, it's been good to know you, So long, its been good to know you, So long, it's been good to know you. While a long time since I've been home and I've gotta be drifting along.

I walked down the street to the grocery store, crowded with people both rich and both poor, I asked the man how his butter was sold, he said " One lb of butter for 2 pounds of gold" , I said:

So long, it's been good to know you, So long, its been good to know you, So long, it's been good to know you. While a long time since I've been home and I've gotta be drifting along.

My telephone rang and it jumped off the wall, that was the preacher making a call. He said we're waiting to tie the knot, you're getting married believe it or not. Well, the church, it was jammed, the church it was packed, the pews were crowded from

the front to the back a 1000 friends waited to kiss my new bride, but I was so anxious I rushed her outside, told them,

So long, it's been good to know you, So long, its been good to know you, So long, it's been good to know you. While a long time since I've been home and I've gotta be drifting along.

When I finished listening to the 3rd song and waiting for the 4th song to start playing I said to myself that I was just going to be beside myself with emotion if that last song is "Somewhere, My Love" as that was his favorite song all through the years.

The Fourth song was Somewhere My Love, which all through the years was his theme song.. I got chills when I replayed all these songs of farewell.

The 4th song was a real shocker when I heard it after the funeral, for it was Werner's theme song all throughout his adult life, Lara's Theme from Dr. Zhivago, Somewhere My Love. And it certainly fit as the final farewell from Werner to me. It certainly is a song of farewell and a hope of an eventual happy reunion. And this particular song is a very poignant song of farewell, with a promise of meeting again some day. And all the horrible things that happened in the Dr. Zhivago movie happened to Werner in Germany under the communists. The words to this song are:

SOMEWHERE MY LOVE

Although the snow covers the hope of spring.

Somewhere a hill blossoms in green and gold, and there are dreams, all that your heart can hold.

Someday we'll meet again, my love.

Someday, whenever the spring breaks through.

You'll come to me out of the long ago, warm as the wind, soft as a kiss of snow.

Till then, my sweet, think of me now and then.

God speed, my love, till you are mine again.

Somewhere, my love, there will be songs to sing,

I later called the CKLW radio station to see when exactly these songs were played. They said that they couldn't tell me exactly when because for some reason they couldn't figure out, these songs were moved from their regular slot that night.

They were slated to play around 5:30 – 6:00 pm but for some unknown reason they were taken out of their time slot and played at a later hour.

Werner and I had gone to Holy Sepulchre mausoleum in 1988 when we were preparing to bury Uncle Kurt. At that time Werner stood in front of and greatly admired a double 12 vault family room at the end of the hall. It was called the Divine Word. It was beautifully done in marble and wood and had a stained glass window and an altar in the room. We then looked at other completed 6 vault mausoleums which Werner approved of. Werner and I then tentatively chose a 6 vault family room on the east side of the mausoleum.

So now a day after Werner's death I returned to the cemetery office and sat down with the salesman. He said there were no completed mausoleum spots, that I would have to pick my own totally unfinished room and hire an architecture to design it. So we walked up and down the halls to pick a spot and when I came to the Divine Word. I stopped dead and stared at it. I realized this was the family room that Werner Wilhelm stood there greatly admiring. Werner wanted it but then said we don't have a big family so we could not justify buying that many crypts. I thought about it for a few seconds and then said to myself, it is Werner's money and that is what he wants for himself, it is very elegant and worthy of his station in life, so I turned to the salesman and said I want to buy this family room for Werner.

The salesman was surprised but delighted. I was very pleased when I heard the price as it was originally over \$150,000 more when Werner priced it. In the ensuing 5 years the Archdiocese reduced the cost of the room from \$500,000 to \$345,000 because they wanted to get their money out of it.

Werner was buried on his birthday which would have greatly pleased him. We had the funeral mass at St. Lawrence church which Werner had attended on occasion throughout his life. (Every time Werner would experience a health crisis he would run back to the Catholic church, then slip back into his old habits when life returned to normal.)

From there a Sullivan limousine took me, Toni and another Wil Mar person to Holy Sepulchre. My mom and brothers came in a separate car. Also attending was Werner's CPA Larry Brown and his tax attorney Stephen Feldman. Prayers were said in the rotunda part of the mausoleum in the east entrance and then the coffin was wheeled through the halls to the Divine Word family room. The entombment was held up a little bit as they had dropped and broken into two pieces the cover to Werner's crypt. They glued it back together and continued on the

entombment. The casket was slid into the crypt and the first cover was plastered shut and then the marble face was put into place and secured. We all then said a few silent prayers and slowly walked away. I then sat in the mausoleum office receiving paperwork while Steve and Larry and a few other of Werner's associates bid me farewell and left.

We then got back into the limousine and started back to Utica. We then went to St Lawrence cafeteria and had a very late lunch. I then went home all by myself and sat in Werner's living room on his grey glass table, lit the revolving candles and prayed for him on his birthday. The house was so empty without him. All I had left was Mopsey and Kitsey, my German Shepherd dog and tuxedo cat.

Steve Feldman began the probate process on January 14, the first day Werner was laid out. I was all by myself with Werner in the funeral parlor when out of the corner of my eye I saw Stephen signing the guest register. So he went over to the casket where I was standing and gave me the papers to sign to begin the probate. It was a weird feeling as Werner always felt very close to Steve all through the years, ever since Steve was a young 35 year old attorney and Werner trusted him implicitly for all legal and financial matters and now these probate papers were being signed on Steve's birthday.

Steve lived up to Werner's expectations over the next year and a half. Werner told me over and over again to only go to Steve Feldman for the estate after he died and had in fact called Steve and told him he was giving him his home made trust and will so Steve could write it up in a more professional manner. Steve was shocked when he heard that Werner died right after he had talked to him. He thought Werner sounded so good that he did not expect him to die so soon. (The nursing home doctor, Dr. Grewal was also shocked to hear that Werner died as she saw and talked to him within less than an hour before he died.). Steve got all the paperwork cleaned up and submitted and got the probate closed in July, 1994, which I thought was record time for all that we had to complete.

We had a number of hilarious ghostly appearances and happenings in those days surrounding Werner's death. Several days before Werner died I found a beautiful pink and see through crystal vase. I asked Werner where he got it and he replied, "I didn't bring it here, you did." "No I didn't I said, I never saw that vase before, I replied". Werner then walked into the bathroom and picked up the vase, turned it upside down and said, "You didn't bring that in, it is a very expensive vase". No one was in our house but this vase came into the bathroom out of no where. And

shortly after Werner died it disappeared into thin air and was never seen again and no one was ever in that house but Werner and me.

One day Werner was sitting in the kitchen with a drawer pulled out eating lunch. There were over a hundred very small flying moths flying just around his head. Werner was following their flight paths with his index fingers while I watched in fascination. When he suddenly saw me he stopped following them with his fingers. When Werner died all those moths disappeared with no action on my part, they just went. I later heard that when a person is about to pass souls in the form of moths come and remain close by them..

In the Beaumont hospital dialysis room I had put my glasses down on a table right behind me. I was sitting right on the end of the room and no one was anywhere near me or the table. When I turned around my glasses were gone. There was no one there to take them. They just disappeared.

When Ann took pictures of Werner in his casket with Edna crying in great distress next to him the picture showed up with a huge white swatch in it. Ann said she never had that show up in any of her 35 years of taking pictures. A spiritualist said that it was a picture of a spirit showing up on the film.

About a week and a half after Werner died he showed up to me in full living color, relaxed, happy, looking younger and smiling at me saying, "You have to tell my sister I'm dead". I was exhausted from his death and all the work that entailed so I said to him, "Werner, you look really good to me. Why don't you go and tell her!"

The most dramatic ghost story occurred several months after Werner died. Werner appeared to Toni at 3:30 am on a Sunday morning. Toni saw and heard Werner, jumped up out of bed when she heard him say to her, "Toni, I'll protect you, I won't let anything happen to you!" Toni got so scared she kept walking the floor. That Sunday she went to church and prayed "God Werner always loved me, so however he wants to help me, let him do it". Then 3:30 pm in the afternoon Werner appeared again and told Toni to get her daughters and get into the bedroom now, so she did so. Then she said to herself "Why am I in my bedroom on a Sunday afternoon.?" Suddenly there was the sound of bullets roaring from the upstairs apartment through that floor down into the roof of Toni's apartment and into her living room where she and her daughters just left. Toni was so scared that she called her ex mother in law and got out of the apartment never to return as the apartments on all sides of her were full of drug addicts.

Toni and I went house hunting in the Sterling heights area with a nice young real estate lady called Elizabeth. The second best house we looked at had a chandelier in the entrance way that blinked on and off while we were there. Toni and I laughed and said it was Werner as he was playing with electrical things at that time.

The next house we looked at was an unbelievably good buy. It was in perfect condition and looked like it was much younger than it really was. I bought that home and Toni and her girls settled into it.



Marie & Sandy at Christmas

One other ghostly sort of thing happened after Toni moved in to the house on Ardel. It was just before Christmas and Toni and Marlene wanted to get the Christmas toys out of my car without the 2 girls seeing the toys. So Toni asked me to keep the girls occupied so they couldn't see what was going on in the garage. So I played the piano, & the girls sang and ran around the living room. My mom was there and the kids also had fun with her, including putting a crown on her head. None of us ever left the living room. Toni later hollered at me for pushing the garage door button repeatedly. I told her that I was never out of the living room. So then she said I must have let the girls push the button. I told Toni that the girls also never left the living room. Toni thought about it for a minute and then said, "None of you could possibly have made that garage door go up and down, I just realized that the garage door button was inside the garage so no one was pressing that button. The garage door just went up and down over 40 times all by itself. When Tonia and Marlene left the garage the garage door stopped going up and down.

In the Beaumont hospital dialysis room I had put my glasses down on a table right behind me. I was sitting right on the end of the room and no one was anywhere

near me or the table. When I turned around my glasses were gone. There was no one there to take them. They just disappeared.

When Werner died I was responsible for Wil Mar and Sun 'N Lake Towers and the Oil wells in Ohio and St. Anne's in Detroit which we still held the mortgage on. Also I was drowning in paperwork getting the estate cleaned up.

After Werner died a very cocky Mali set up a meeting between him and me that he wanted to have at St. Anne's by the tone of his voice I knew he was going to be a smart mouth, so I took Peggy, our nursing home manager with me. Just as I thought, Mali was so full of himself, dancing around showing off in front of his staff members. Peggy and I had had enough of him. He was acting just as bad as we thought he would. He said he expected me to give him a discount on what he owed me for the land contract. I said to myself, "The way you are behaving, I'm not about to shave a dime off what you owe me."

Mali had the wind taken out of his sails when he found out that Werner did not name him as executor. It is unbelievable that Mali would treat Werner with such venom and expect that Werner would have anything to do with him. Werner said that he was through with Mali for good even though Werner thought he was going to live for another two years. Werner would not at any time have had Mali handle any of his financial affairs, so we have no idea how he got that idea. It seems like it is one more example of his feelings of grandeur.

Mali got a new mortgage to pay me off for St. Anne's land contract as fast as he could as he knew that I lost all liking for him after the way he treated Werner and me. Mali's wife Carleen told a lot of wild tales so having anything to do with either one of them made me uneasy. When she was in Sebring visiting us she told us that she had a 10 lb liver tumor. I knew that was a fatal condition so I gave her a cross and a novena book from the school we went to. When I gave her that she gave me a most curious look. It was only after I found out that she never had a liver tumor that I realized why she had such a funny expression on her face while receiving religious gifts. If you are not near death and are not religious in nature someone giving you a novena book filled with prayers about having a happy death you wouldn't have a clue.

The worst lawyer Steve and I had to deal with was one from his own office – Lyshak. In early February I made up a picture book of Werner's life and sent it to his sister, telling her on the first page that she had lost her brother. She got the album right on her birthday, so she doesn't read the letter she just starts looking at

the pictures. When she gets to the last page and sees Werner in the casket she freaks and starts phoning me day and night. When she couldn't get a hold of me she called Dinora's brother in Italy and gets Rudi's number from him. Rudi and I discussed how we would handle her as Werner forewarned both of us how she would try to get her hands on his money and how she in fact had done that a number of times throughout his lifetime. So when I heard she was calling I did 2 things, first I put caller ID on my phone and then I called Steve for advice. Steve wasn't in the office so I got Lyshak, a disgusting whiner. He told me that I should be dealing with him, not Steve, as he was the expert on estate handling. I thought to my self if Steve was giving me to this guy I was going to find another law firm. Lyshak made me so depressed just listening to his whiny voice. Fortunately Steve called me back and was furious that Lyshak tried to steal me away from him.

We decided to let Rudi handle Werner's sister and Werner had told us what to say to her to keep her in line. Rudi did a marvelous job. She wanted to make an arrangement to steal some of Werner's money, she said if I did not want to make an arrangement she would sue the estate, knowing she could never win, but she would do that just to cause me trouble. So Werner took all the wind out of her sails by telling her that we would have to go back to Dr Werner's estate and settling that first. She immediately let all her breath out, was silent for a while then said "If that is Werner's wish, if that is Werner's will". So that settled that problem.

On January 19, 1993, 3 days after I buried Werner Mopsey suddenly got sick and threw up. I took him to the vet and had a blood test done. The blood test came back perfect. But by 4 pm that day Mopsey died on the kitchen floor, bleeding from the mouth and rectum. We had no idea what happened to him.



Harrigan, Edna & Marie

Right after Werner died Marie and Edna and Harrigan when with me to Szulc's cottage in Lion's head. Edna took very good care of Harrigan that week.



Edna, Kitsey & Harrigan

Edna took very good care of Harrigan and Kitsey whenever I went out of town or when she went to Lion's Head with me.

1994



Doug working on Blue house



Blue house under construction

In 1994 I decided to replace the old windows and doors as the blue house was very drafty. Once we started the replacement the north wall fell and we had to replace that whole north wall. We ended up replacing all 4 walls of the blue house. Vision construction company began the wood framing and then my brother Doug did all the finishing work on the interior of the house. It was a good thing that Doug finished the house as his workmanship was much finer than Vision's was.



Harrigan

Harrigan is shown here inspecting the construction work. This is the blue house being renovated. The old second floor framework is shown on this picture. It took

Vision Construction 1 year to frame in the blue house and it took my brother Doug 1 year to finish the interior of the house.

When I first was looking to buy something in the Bruce Peninsula area in Ontario, Canada the real estate man tried to sell me the 20 acres off Lake Huron. No mention of the fact that I would be sharing the property with Sir Bear.

The neighbor at the end of the road came to the deck where I was doing a jigsaw puzzle and warned me to remove the humming bird feeder that one of my guests had put up because the food in the feeder consisted of honey and bears are very attracted to honey. Over the years we have had a number of beautiful humming birds come to our decks. In fact 2 humming birds at various times have come into our card and game room, probably coming in unnoticed by us as we were leaving to go to lunch. It was easy to convince them to leave. They were beautiful birds of several different colors, red, blue, yellow and black. It was too bad that we had to remove the hummingbird feeder.



Lion's Head Bear



Kaylee Pacheco

Kaylee Pacheco is the daughter of Michael Pacheco and Nicole Hopper Pacheco. She was born in Downey, California.

In 1994 we totally renovated the Blue house on Cass Ave. We dug out a lot of sand from under the house to make a crawl space. We threw that sand in the back yard. When it rained the water pooled on the sidewalk because the sand kept it from sinking into the grassy area. Harrigan loved playing in the water and the sand.



Blue house on Cass being renovated

In 1994 I decided to renovate the Blue house which was built in 1879. At first I had George from the nursing home tear down the windows and doors and put on new ones. And then from then on Steve Feldman hired an architect and then Vision Construction to reframe the house. Once the framing was done my brother Doug refinished the whole inside of the house, redoing plumbing, electrical and entirely redoing the entire house inside and out.



Harrigan

Harrigan ran away from the back yard when he was young and I couldn't find him. I walked all around the block and started to get frantic as I couldn't find him anywhere. So I hopped into my car and rode around the block, no Harrigan. So I opened up both gates in case he came back. I then drove behind the school and again all around the block. As I was driving past the front gate I looked in and lo and behold, there was Harrigan standing in the middle of the driveway, worried, wondering where his mommy was. So I closed the gates and hugged the big klutz.

Another time Ann and I were watching the school parade while I left Harrigan locked up in the back yard. He wanted to be with us and I ignored him. All of a sudden Harrigan sailed over the nursing home gate, landed on the pillar and ran over to sit by me and Ann.

Another time I took Harrigan into the wilderness off leash for a walk. Ann went with us as we walked through the "Vietnam jungle". Suddenly Harrigan sees a deer in the Clinton Kalamazoo canal and runs full speed after him. I holler at Harrigan and he pays no attention to me. In a flash he is gone, chasing around the bend in the road and can't be seen. I asked Ann to stay right where she was in case Harrigan comes back there and I ran up ahead trying to find Harrigan. After walking for quite a distance suddenly Harrigan comes back out of the canal and as soon as he sees me he flops down on his side and his side goes up and down very fast he is so out of breath and his tongue is actually very long and hanging down in the dirt. He is so out of breath that he can't catch his breath, he just lays on the path sucking in breath. I am so mad at him for running away and disobeying me. that I said to him, I'm leaving you. It up to you to follow me back home. Harrigan got totally panicked, he did not want to be left alone so he got up and walked slower and followed me and Ann back home.

Harrigan caused me to have embarrassment twice when he was a puppy. The first time I was walking him on a leash about 9 pm at night. I had a leash in one hand and a rosary in another hand. Harrigan jumped up on me circus dog style and put one paw in my left pocket and one in my life pocket. He then got tired of being on my hips with his paws and so he started slipping down. His left paw went into the loop of my rosary and then into the left pocket and his right paw went through the loop of the leash and then into my right pocket. As he was losing balance he was pulling my pants down right in front of the restaurant. I let go of the leash, then stepped on the leash so he wouldn't run away. I pulled my pants back up and continued on my walk.

On another occasion I was walking down Auburn Ave in front of the Shamrock Bar on New Year's Eve, just before midnight, when Harrigan stepped in front of me, tripping me with his right front paw and down I went on the pavement. I really was in a lot of pain. When I tried to get up I almost passed out from the pain. The patrons in the bar who were about to ring in the New Year saw me lying on the pavement and called the police. They picked me up off the pavement and I hung half over the half wall feeling like I was going to pass out. In the mean while Harrigan got loose and was running down the middle of Auburn Ave. The policeman retrieved him helped me into the back of the police car and then pushed Harrigan in next to me. So I had an embarrassing ride home in a police car on New Year's Eve just as the bells and whistles and gun shots were going off. I wonder how many people at the Shamrock thought I was a fallen down drunk.



Harrigan & Sandy

This is one of my favorite pictures of Harrigan and me. It was taken in the back yard of the blue house when they were rebuilding it.



Sandy & Harrigan

This is another favorite picture of Harrigan and me. Maybe this is one of his “babies” that he drowned in the swimming pool on Father’s day, of all days.

I sold Wil Mar to a administrator chosen by Dan. That was a financial disaster. For more than a year the guy paid absolutely nothing to me. Finally Dan took it back and after 1 year of hard negotiations with Dan’s attorney we finally closed on Wil Mar and I got the bulk of the money owed me.

I own the blue house and I have a life lease on Werner’s apartment which is joined to the nursing home. I work in the blue house during the day and sleep in the nursing home apartment at night.

I sold Sun ‘N Lake Towers in the spring of 1994 to a group who took out a bond issue for over \$4 million. I received \$3,250,000 which was \$250,000 more than I owed Barnett Bank. I was so glad to sell that as the building had serious physical plant problems due to poor construction in the first place. The A building was separating from the B building as it was built on a high water table. Then the electrical room floor sunk almost 3 feet and the huge 5 foot electrical box was hanging in mid air by the pipe housing the electrical wires. And after Werner died the health department said they failed to have us put in a sprinkler system so they wanted me to put one in at a cost of \$38,000. I could not have run that by myself, and run Wil mar too, so I was so glad to be able to sell it, and at a profit to boot.

The State of Ohio sent me letters saying that the severance tax had not been paid in the oil wells for over a year or more. I had no idea what was pumped or what was owed as Werner had given up on those wells and did nothing for over a year. So I called Steve and gave him the name of the Ohio severance tax guy and asked him to handle it for me. So Steve called him and using his best hill billy accent started talking to the guy, telling him that Werner had passed away. The tax guy said to Steve that it is horrible to die with no money so he was going to cancel the debt and close the case. Steve almost stuffed his handkerchief in his mouth to keep from hearing the guy on the other end of the phone from hearing him guffaw.

The other problem came right on the heels of this one. When Rudi and I went to the Schweizerische Bank in Zurich and the Bank in Weimar all the money that Werner put in was missing. It doesn’t take a brain surgeon to figure out who used vollmachts to clean out those accounts. Werner told me not to hurt her so I did not confront her or force the issue.

Steve completed reams and reams of paperwork here in Michigan and got everything in good order. He was able to close all probates except the German one by July, 1994. We had some really funny ghost happenings attendant to closing the probate both here and in Germany. We had a probate court hearing scheduled and when we arrived at the court the judge who was scheduled to hear the case was a no call, no show. The judge who took his place was a really German friendly judge who even gave us clues on how to handle the German portion of the case. We felt that it was Werner who took a hand in changes judges that day.

Steve said when all their staff members got together to discuss Werner's estate the room suddenly got real, real cold and more than one of his staff suggested that Werner might be overlooking the meeting.

Then another time Sally came in and asked, "Is he here?" I asked who she was talking about. She just looked up toward the ceiling and scanned the room with her eyes. Just then the typist said, "What happened to my computer, it doesn't work!" She got down on her hands and knees, checking all the connections. All connections were working. She called back to the other offices – all their computers were working okay. Just then Steve came to the waiting room and called me in. I told the typist that if the computer worked fine just as soon as I left the area, then she would know it was Werner. As soon as I left the area her computer worked fine again.

One day Werner said to me, "Call Steve and tell him there has been a really big mistake in the figures for the estate." So I called Steve. He looked over the work the others had been doing for him and he was shocked to find that one of the workers had made a \$63,000.00 mistake in the figures which would have cost me tons of money.

One morning I was carrying a bunch of paperwork pertaining to Dr. Werner's estate. Werner warned me to never touch anything that pertained to his father's estate. I thought over Werner's words and decided to present this old paperwork to Steve anyway and see what he wanted to do with it. Just as I was walking through Werner's garage the garage door came down hard right on the top of my head! Okay, Werner I remember that I was not to handle Dr. Werner's paperwork.

Mom and I went to Lion's Head for a vacation the end of August, 1994. We stayed at the Lion's Head Beach motel right of the marina. Mom stayed in the motel and I went for a walk along the dirt path in front of the cottage just to the left of the marina and from there to the top of the cliff and down to Carter Rd by

Anita's cottage. Suddenly I saw that the Glocca Morra was for sale. That was the best of Tessie and Byron Grieg's cottages. We only got to rent that one twice but were so impressed with how elegant it was, including a wonderful fire place. Walking down further on Carter Rd I saw that the Booth cottage was also for sale. Sunday morning I called Paul Annett and asked if he could show me the Glocca Morra as I loved that cottage. He said it was for sale as Mr Hamilton, a lawyer, was getting a divorce. He agreed to meet me at the motel and drive me to the Glocca Morra. We went there shortly after noon on a Sunday. when I walked up the stairs to the front of the cottage I even got more interested in the place as I saw he put a new bedroom on the north side. All through the night before I was so excited to think that I could own the Glocca Morra as that was my dream in the 1960s to some day own one of the Grieg cottages. In 1968 Grieg sold the Glencoe for \$38,000 and now I had the funds to buy one of these. albeit a lot more money now. When Paul opened the door and I stepped into the cottage I got the biggest surprise of my life. They had left the roof to rot and it leaked onto all of the walls, destroying all the knotty pine paneling. The walls looked terrible. And the power lines cut right across one's line of vision which I found very irritating.

So I said to Paul, lets go see the Booth cottage. As mom, Paul and I climbed out of the car another real estate man and his clients climbed out too. Paul said to the other real estate man, why didn't he go first to the Glocca Morra so we would be in each other's way. SO they went down the road and we went into the Booth cottage. Mom sat down next to Mrs Thelma Booth and kept saying to Thelma, "Oh, I hope Sandy buys this cottage!" Bronson Booth toured me around the cottage, telling me the finer points. He was a bit unsteady on his feet as he was 90 years old and had a bad heart. Mom talked to Thelma. When we finished touring the cottage I told Paul I wanted to buy it right now, so we went back to the office and I put a down payment on it, gave him a price I hoped to pay and signed the offer to purchase. 15 minutes later the other couple came in to also buy the Booth cottage. I beat them to the sale by less than ½ hour. Mom was so happy I was buying that elegant cottage. I signed the papers on August 31 and moved in on September 31.

I was lucky I was able to make it to the closing that day. By the time I got to Goderich a very dense fog rolled in. I could see nothing, even right in front of me. The only way I got to the motel in Wiarton was because the white line on the edge of the hwy was freshly painted and stood out very clearly. All the way I kept my eye on the white line on the right side of the road. I got there safely by evening and the next day the fog had cleared. So after Breakfast mom and I went to the lawyer's office, delivered the cashier's check and the lawyer gave us the keys to

the cottage and told us to wait till 5 pm before entering the cottage as the Booth family would need all day to move their things out of the cottage. By 5 pm mom and I moved in with our belongings. Mom got busy on her hands and knees scrubbing the already clean kitchen floor. Mrs. Booth came back to the cottage saying she forgot to remove all her dishes from the dishwasher. She also asked if she could have her personal desk where she sat to make out her bills. Mrs. Booth was embarrassed because her niece, Mary Ellen Duncan who lives next door to our cottage went up on the deck and took all the potted flowers. Mrs. Booth told her to return them but Mary Ellen never did, saying they belonged to the Carter family of which she & Mrs. Booth was a member.

We decided that we needed to put a driveway in for mom as she had a really hard time walking up the stairs from the parking spot at the bottom of the stairs. Brian Shearer looked at the survey map that was done for the sale and determined that there was enough property to put in a cement driveway to the north of the garage. So he removed trees and shrubs on that side, leveled it out with gravel and poured cement, making a good driveway and a tight but decent turn around in back of the shed. It was a very steep driveway but it served the purpose.

We then had him put up a handrail from the driveway along the side of the house so mom would not fall when she was walking from the car to the front deck that led into the cottage. (The previous owner, Bronson Booth had fallen overboard on that side of the cottage 4 times because there was no handrail there. He fell on his head every time, but miraculously he never got a concussion or a serious wound. Thelma said that had they known there was enough property on the north side to make a driveway they may have not sold the cottage.)

Mary Ellen sent me a very nasty letter saying that by removing the trees and shrubbery to make that driveway I had destroyed the flora and fauna of the entire peninsula. She also got upset every time I had to trim her bushes that extended several feet onto my driveway. She said that she planted a bush in memory of her sister who died at age 8 and that I might destroy it by clipping it back a little. (In the next breath she told me how much she had hated that dead sister.)

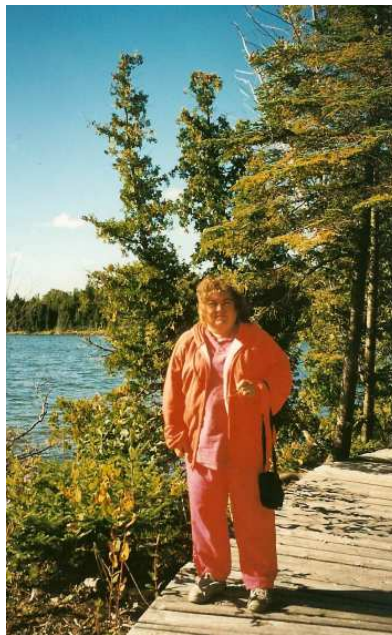
1995

Carter Rd was not the only place where bears were a really big nuisance. There was a bear that took up residence in the 40 acres in back of the bakery shop around the corner from Look About Lodge. One night the owner of the bakery shop heard

someone break into the front of his bakery while he was baking in the back so he ran around the corner to face the intruder and instead of a man, he ran right into a bear who was eating his blueberry muffins. The bear broke into the front and the back door of the bakery. They removed the splintered up old wooden doors and replaced them with metal doors which stopped the break ins, at least for now. When the father would finish his work for the night and want to go back home next door there was more than once where he was stuck in the garage because the bear was standing out in the open and he dared not walk in front of him to get home so he would have to wait there until the bear sauntered off.

The baker and his wife had 2 adopted children living with them. Those poor kids were so afraid of the bear on their property every night that they slept in the basement for several years in the summer and only returned to their own beds in the winter when the bear was hibernating.

Another time 2 bears were walking up and down Carter Rd. They generally come out as the sun is setting. One time they walked up the stairs and onto the deck at a cottage down the hill on Carter Rd and tried to demolish their shed to get at the bacon drippings. The bear backed up into the huge window of the bedroom where their son was sleeping. He was terrified that the bear would come through the window and land in his bedroom.



Sandy on the boardwalk of Lakewood estates

Lakewood Estates is a multi acre piece of land located just south of the bakery. A developer who had built many cottages north of Sauble Beach was now starting a development south of the bakery. He had all the land plotted out on one side of the small lake. I had been thinking of buying a lot there but as soon as I figured out the taxes and the monthly sewage fees would amount to on a yearly basis I quickly gave up that idea.

The Paul Annett real estate firm tried to sell me a 40 acre tract of land with a small piece of that tract fronting on Lake Huron. This land had previously belonged for many years to the Rutherford family who owned and ran the quaint log restaurant right on the edge of Lake Huron called the Look About Lodge. On the far end of Lake Huron there were 5 rustic very small rental cabins. Mom and dad, along with Art and Agnes stayed in one of them in 1949. In looking over all of the vacation properties, both this 40 acres, a lot in the Lakewood estates, and a blue cottage on the marina of Lion's Head Whipporwill Bay, I decided on buying the Booth cottage on the Georgian Bay, which turned out to be a very wise choice.

1996



Valerie Stephens

Valerie was the second child of Craig and Mary Anne Stephens.



Marie Bender & Elenore Mc Kinin

From May 15 to May 25, 1996 Mom and I went to Lion's Head with Aunt Elenore Dahl Mc Kinin. Aunt Elenore wrote in the guest book next to her name, "favorite aunt, only aunt". She also wrote "Thank your Sandy for a very pleasant visit. You are a dear honey".

On June 23 to June 29th 1996 Mom and I went to the cottage to remember Ed's birthday June 23 and his death day June 29.

Mom and I went to the cottage again July 17 to July 26, 1996. From this point on we didn't prepare lunch and dinner in the cottage any more but went to Mom's restaurant in Ferndale.

On August 29 to September 6, 1996 Mom and I went to the cottage with our neighbor Ann Kay and her dog, which she called Puppy and I called Barney.



Elenore Mc Kinin & Marie Bender

Aunt Elenore, Marie and I went to the Big Tub restaurant in Tobermory which sits on the deepest fresh water channel in North America. We had lunch on the deck and then walked down to the water.

1997

Several years later Paul Annett called me and said that the Carter relative who owned the vacant lot just south of mine had died and her estate was putting the vacant land up for sale. I immediately bought that land which is immediately adjacent to mine, giving her the asking price to be assured of getting the property and there are always buyers ready to buy a piece of property on the Georgian Bay. I then called Brian Shearer, the contractor who always took care of the property for the Booths and told him I wanted a circular driveway on the vacant land. He cut down the trees and put in gravel to make a circular driveway right to the kitchen door. Therefore we were all able to step right into the cottage with no steps.

Mary Ellen Duncan was always a problem. First she had her sail boat on my property.

Mom and I went to that cottage from September, 1994 until she died in 2002. Sometimes we went alone, other times friends and relatives came with us.

On May 14 to May 26, 1997 Mom and I went to the cottage with Aunt Elenore McKinin. Aunt Elenore wrote in the guest book, "What a special vacation I'm having here. Aunt Elenore.

On July 23 to July 30, 1997 I went up to the cottage with my German guests Heidrun Baum, Carmen Oertel and Stefanie Oertel. Mom did not come up this trip as she would not be able to understand any of their German language and they would not understand Mom. Stefanie got sick to her stomach on the 40 hills road and she got a pain in her stomach sweeping the driveway and had to go to the Lion's Head hospital. I was afraid she might have a blood disease as she looked so gray complected. The hospital found nothing wrong with her and the pain soon disappeared. I had to pay the hospital bill but Carmen submitted the hospital bill in to the German health care system and they reimbursed me a few month's later.



Sandy, Marie, Warren, Jackie, Casey Shea, Patrick & Doug

On August 5 to August 11, 1997 Warren, Jackie, Casey She and Patrick Stephens came for their first cottage visit to Lion's Head. They planned to stay for only a few days and then go on to Niagara Falls but they had such a good time that they stayed till August 11. They then left for Niagara Falls right after breakfast at mom's restaurant. Warren was driving his old Honda and I have a picture of Casey Shea and Patrick in the back seat crying as they left as they wanted to stay the two weeks at the cottage. Mom and I stayed on at the cottage till August 14 before returning to Utica.

On October 12 to October 17, 1997 mom and I stayed at the cottage alone for the last time this year.

1998



Roxanne Stephens

Roxanne Stephens is the 3rd child of Craig and Mary Anne Stephens.



Sandy, Marie, Warren, Jackie, Casey Shea, Patrick & Doug

One time the end of July at 6:30 am on a Saturday the Lifeline called me and said mom had pushed the button. Every time mom pushed the button they call her to ask what the emergency was but mom was very hard of hearing so she would not answer them so they always called me. I was in a sheer panic this morning as Warren had just left home to come to Michigan to go to the cottage. It was a 9 ½ hour ride here so it would be terrible if they drove all the way to Michigan and could not go to the cottage if mom was hurt. So I ran right over to mom's house with my heart in my mouth. I ran into the house and found all the lights blazing. I ran into the living room. Mom was not there, then I ran into the kitchen, the main bath, the 2 front bedrooms, then the back bedroom. Oh no, I thought, half panic stricken. I hope she didn't fall down the basement stairs! But then I remembered there was one more bathroom, so I ran there. Coming out of the bathroom just as I was running in was mom. I almost ran right into her. "What are you doing here," mom asked. "Why did you push the button?" I asked. "I didn't push the button", mom replied. Yes you did, I said, No I didn't mom replied. Well the alarm company said the alarm went off so they called me. I didn't push the button. Oh. mom said, maybe I sat on it. I looked on the bed. Yup, there's no doubt – mom had sat on it. Now Warren and his family could come in peace with no worry of having their Lion's Head vacation ruined.

On May 13 to May 24, 1998 we had a special visit with Nancy and Aunt Elenore at my cottage. Aunt Elenore signed the Guest book at the cottage and put this in it "This was special Sandy, thanks to you. Happy Birthday, Mike, Aunt Elenore, May 16, 1998".

Earlier in the month of May both of them flew into Detroit Metro Airport and we had a nice visit at mom's house on Grant Park in Utica, Aunt Elenore fell down the front steps at mom's house and hit her head really bad and had to be taken by ambulance to the hospital. She was in the hospital for several days because she had a bad concussion. Mom, Nancy and I visited her in the hospital where we took a picture of her in the hospital bed. Elenore was shocked that we took her picture there. We took her out of St. Joseph's hospital on Thursday morning and went on to Steve's Café for lunch. Elenore surprised us all by saying that we are all neat and pretty so we should start out immediately for Maryland. She said that the doctor said she could travel by car as long as she kept her hear straight ahead.



John Dahl Dale & Elenore Dahl Mc Kinin

By leaving now we could still be to Warren and Jackie's and she could be at John's house in time to celebrate Mother's Day. So we set off for Maryland by 2 pm and stayed overnight in Maryland, getting to John's house and dropping off Elenore to stay with her son for a few days. Mom, Nancy and I then continued on, arriving at Warren's house for supper. We had a very fun visit with Warren, Jackie and their kids. Jackie made reservation for Mother's Day at the Holiday Inn near their house for all of us. John's wife said she was not comfortable going to an all white restaurant so John picked a diner that they go to that she was comfortable with. We all went there for a Mother's Day dinner. We had John, Virginia Dale, Aunt Elenore Mc Kinin, Marie Bender, our mom, Nancy, Sandy, Warren, Jackie, Casey Shea and Patrick Stephens. On the outside I was a bit apprehensive as it looked like a very old metal diner on the outside but it was a brand new structure on the inside. For most of the meal we were the only patrons. We had a wonderful dinner and enjoyed the atmosphere and the service. Toward the end of the dinner a wonderfully dressed black family came and sat at the large table behind us. They were very well behaved.

At our table we all had a wonderful visit with one another and we were all very surprised at how well behaved Warren and Jackie's children, Casey Shea and Patrick were. For being so young it was unbelievable how quiet they were for a number of hours while sitting at the table. We got a number of nice pictures of all of us at the table that day.

After Dinner Aunt Elenore went back home to John and Virginia Dale's house and Mom, Nancy and I went back to Warren and Jackie's house.

Casey Shea and Patrick demonstrated for Nancy, mom and I how well they could play the piano. We sat on the couch and the children sat on the piano bench and played the piano for us 4 handed. They did a professional job and we were very impressed. Those are very talented and very intelligent children. The next year Patrick played the violin for us.

I really enjoyed walking the dog, "Patchy" with Casey Shea and Patrick. They live in such a beautiful neighborhood. The hills make for rough walking. It is easier if you walk behind the houses in the forested area and come out into the school yard. Nancy came along with us with her rollator so she could sit and rest. She sat there and watched Patrick and Casey Shea hang upside down on the monkey bars. We also enjoyed Patrick skating on his roller blades. I went with the kids to the swings and slides. I told the kids to bring some wax paper along. When we got to the slide I told them to slide down a number of times sitting on the waxed paper. Once they did that they found that they slid down faster and faster each time. The last time down Patrick flew down and landed sitting on the sand in front of the slide. Patrick also went down the slide standing up on his roller blades. That scared me. I thought it was far too dangerous. Then we all sat down on the swings. A few minutes later a mother comes with her 3 year old child and decides to put him on the slide. The two kids get an "oh!oh!" look on their face. The mother puts the kid on the top of the slide then runs down to the bottom to catch him. He flew right past her arms, landing on his bottom in the sand and bawling. We decided it was time to leave!

After each of us spending several days at our relative's houses we packed up and headed for Niagara Falls. I asked Nancy to let me in the bathroom first as I needed to pack up all the suitcases and carry them down to the kitchen. Nancy jumped into the bathroom first and kept me waiting over an hour. When I got down to the kitchen Nancy and Warren were gone. While eating breakfast with mom and Jackie I asked where Warren and Nancy went. Jackie said that Nancy had miscounted her pills so she needed to go to the pharmacy to get more. We were

supposed to leave Maryland at 9 am. At 11 am Nancy walked back into Warren's house saying she was unable to get her pills. So she called Bob and asked him to read the ingredients on the bottle so she could find the same thing here. When she started repeating the ingredients I was beside myself. They went driving all over town looking for sodium, chloride, calcium – very common over the counter ingredients found in ordinary foods that we eat every day. I told her to get into the car, we can stop in any drug store and get a bottle containing all of those elements. So we started out to pick up Elenore at 12 noon instead of 9 am. So instead of arriving at Niagara Falls around 9 pm we ended up in a third rate motel in the middle of nowhere at 9:30 pm in a driving rain. I told all three to wait until I parked the car and I would escort each of them one by one to the restaurant attached to the motel. It was pitch black outside, in a driving rain and I didn't want anyone to fall. As soon as I parked the car I hear 3 doors slam and all 3 get out of the car at once. I holler I don't want anyone to fall. They tell me I'm bossy. They get into the crummy restaurant just before closing.

I run over to the motel and register us for the night. So instead of being in a first class room over looking Niagara Falls we find ourselves in a dismal motel room and a lousy restaurant. The next day we head out for Niagara Falls and arrive there about 2:30 in the afternoon. We register and put our suitcases down in 2 wonderful hotel rooms over looking the American Falls. As soon as I bring all the suitcases up Elenore says to me "Let's go". Go where I ask. To the casino that Elenore had spotted right next door to our hotel. I didn't even see there was a casino next door but Aunt Elenore had an eagle eye for Casinos. So Elenore and I go while mom and Nancy enjoy the view of the American Falls from their hotel room. 2 hours later we return to our hotel room with Elenore 218 dollars richer. We then go to the restaurant downstairs for dinner. Afterwards I checked my sugar and was shocked – it was so high the meter said "HI" and suggested I check for ketones. I never let it get that high again. Too much stress that day.

The next day we had breakfast at the hotel and started off to explore the area. I drove to the American side of the Falls. Elenore walks, Nancy uses her rollator and I push mom in her wheelchair. We enjoy the day in a beautiful park on the American side next to the Falls. We sat on a bench and then walked closer to the Falls. I got worried as it was on a bit of a slant as you got nearer the Falls.

On the Canadian side of the Falls we walked along the sidewalk and watched the mighty power of that cascading water. We then got back into the car and started off. In the confusion of guiding 3 unsteady women into the car standing in the

traffic lane of the parkway I drove off leaving Nancy's rollator behind so I bought her a new one when I got to a medical supply place.



Marie Bender & Elenore Mc Kinin at Szulc, Lions Head



"Bear" in front of Szulc Lion's Head

We made it from Niagara Falls to my cottage in Lion's Head by supper time. We spent the next week at my cottage enjoying the beautiful scenery, going out to lunch and supper at Mom's Restaurant and listening to old fashioned music and playing card games in the evenings. They also enjoyed reading books and rag magazines in the afternoon. Mom wanted the queen size bed so Nancy and Elenore had what is usually mom's room. Elenore was always too cold at night as she wanted the bedroom warm and Nancy wanted it cooler. I turned up the temperature a bit in that bedroom for Elenore. I also gave her extra blankets.

During the day we would go riding through the dirt roads enjoying the scenery. We also went to Tobermory and then also to Wiarton. Mom bought a new pair of shoes from Gilbert's shoe store. I bought Aunt Elenore a new jacket from an upscale dress shop in Wiarton. Elenore did not want to get out of the van so I told

the store owner that I wanted to take the spring jacket to Elenore to see if she wanted it or not. The store owner was really nervous about me taking the jacket down the street and she also was worried, hoping that the door of the van would not get grease on the jacket. Elenore loved the jacket and mom was happy with her new shoes. But the next day mom said the shoes were a bit tight so we drove back to Wiarton again and told Gary that the shoes were too tight. So with mom sitting in her handicap seat in the van Gary came out to the curb, we pulled mom's seat around and Gary kneeled on the sidewalk and took the shoes that were too tight off and put the new shoes on her feet. Mom was very glad, saying they fit perfect.



Nancy & Elenore

Mom and Elenore would get up early every morning at the cottage and make breakfast together. They would then load up the dishwasher and start it up for the day. I would take Harrigan out for a walk along the shoreline and let him do his business. We went for a nice long walk along Carter Lane waiting for Harrigan to empty out. When I came back in to the cottage there was this horrible acrid smell. I asked where the smell came from. Mom and Elenore asked what smell. I opened up the dishwasher where I figured the smell was coming from, and sure enough, the smell was caused by the spatula having fallen into the bottom of the dishwasher and the plastic being melt by the heating element in the bottom. I opened up all the windows and they started hollering at me why was I opening all the windows and I told them so that the poisonous gas wouldn't asphyxiate them. What smell? They asked me!

Nancy loved being at the cottage that week. She said it was so beautiful and so peaceful. In the middle of the week Bob called her and told her about how the yellow pages was going to charge them for another whole year for their ad. She was upset that all her tranquility was destroyed with that bad news.



Sandy & Nancy at airport

We drove back home to mom's house at the end of the week and Nancy and Elenore flew back home. We went to the airport both times to see each one of them off. It was so sad to see them leave.

On June 07 – to June 12, 1998 Mom and I went back up to the cottage. It was a shorter visit than usual. A lot more driving than usual, but we still had a lot of fun together. We had some excitement that trip. It turned out that 2 bears were walking up and down Carter Rd., terrifying everyone who was up there at the time. The doctor at the top of the road had 2 small children so he felt he could not afford to take a chance of those Bears coming up upon his small children so he shot the bears and hid their bodies as it is against the law to shoot a bear.

Another time a bear walked down the road and climbed up the stairs to a neighbor's deck and started demolishing his shed because he smelled bacon grease that was stored there. Their 12 year old son was 15 feet away from the bear and was totally terrified.

When we went to the bakery shop near Lake Huron we were shocked to see the door of the baker shop bashed in! After the bakery was closed and the father was baking goods for he next day he hears a lot of noise by the counter where the bake goods were stored, so he ran in to the front of the baker shop figuring he would come upon an intruder trying to rob the shop. He came upon an intruder all right, a 4 legged one. A Bear had smashed in the glass of the case and was eating the blue berry muffins. The bear lived on this property and kept breaking into the bakery. The owner sought help from the province and they told him he was to do nothing to threaten the bear or to molest him in any way! The bear cost the baker shop over \$4,500 dollars in damage which the province would not reimburse. The provincial government brought in bears from other areas with no regard to the damage or danger they were causing to the residents of the Bruce peninsula.

We went back up to the cottage from July 1 to July 19, 1998. While mom and I were up there Doug Sr and Doug Jr came up on July 10 to July 19.

On August 1 Warren, Jackie, Casey Shea and Patrick arrived at my house on Cass Ave, arriving there about 4:30 pm. They left Millersville, Maryland about 6:15 am and drove straight through. We all had dinner together, visited for a while before going to bed for the night. Mike and Marilyn came and we all sat in the backyard of the blue house together. We took some really nice pictures both in front of the blue house and also on the swing in the back yard.

The next morning we had breakfast at Steve's Café and headed up to the cottage, arriving there about 4:30 pm. We unloaded our baggage and went to Mom's restaurant to eat dinner. We arrived at the cottage August 2 and stayed there till August 14th, 1998. We were so thrilled to have the whole family there at the cottage. Patrick was a riot that year. He played the piano board, while reaching behind him with his foot to play his toy at the same time. Warren always said to me with a wry grin on his face, "Every toy Aunt Sandy sends the kids always makes noise" (Looking back, I think he was right. The toy he brought with them from Maryland that I sent Patrick did make a lot of noise, that I got to admit.) The second day we were at the cottage Jackie remembered that she did not mail their mortgage payment which was due this week. If they mailed it from Lion's Head it would be way past due as mail takes forever to get across the border. So I remembered that Steve Feldman, my attorney had my checks and my power of attorney so I called him and gave him all the information regarding Warren's mortgage payment and Steve sent it overnight from his office and Warren gave me a check to cover it.

The next year they came to the cottage Jackie remembered to pay all her bills and drop them in the mail box back home. But then when we were at the cottage she saw an envelope under the back seat and when she pulled it out she was petrified to find out that it was the mortgage bill. Again, it would not get to the mortgage company on time! Again we called Steve Feldman and once more he mailed out the mortgage payment overnight.

Patrick was also so much fun while we were playing cards at night. He would make all kinds of really cool quiet noises while he would smack his head with his hands all while playing. It drove Warren half nuts but I loved it! Casey Shea would also imitate him but he had a better talent for doing that. I said to Warren that he should put Patrick in commercials he could really make some good money.

Patrick and Casey Shea could also do some really cool songs together, especially the song naming all of the states. Patrick also did a song in falsetto that was so funny. Boy, I hated to see those kids grow up!

Patrick, Casey Shea and I went to the Sandy Beach on Lake Huron by the former Look A Bout Lodge. We brought along with us a large inflatable rubber boat. Casey Shea and Patrick turned that boat upside down, both stepped gingerly onto the top of the boat, held each other's hands and bounced up and down trying to remain on the boat. They did pretty darn well staying on the top of that boat. When they tumbled off of it, they managed to get back on it again.

They did quite a bit of swimming in the deeper part of the water. I was out in the water standing next to them as they bounced on the boat. Warren read a book and kept an eye on the kids.

Warren, Patrick, Casey Shea and I used to play cards every night. Warren would yowl whenever one of us would mess up the play he was about to make with manipulation. One time the 4 of us played sequence and we would all get so upset when the other team would mess up our play. Casey Shea would put her chips all over the board instead of putting them close to one another so Warren called her scatter shot Shea but in the end she surprised us all by almost winning, which she would have if Warren had not beat her to it by one turn.

Warren, Casey Shea, Patrick and I went fishing in Larry Catteau's 25 foot boat. It was a rough day and got rougher as the night wore on. By the time Larry got to the north bluff the waves appeared to be about 4 foot high. Once in a while the wave would jump into the boat. We had hamburgers with us but I was too scared to eat mine. I told Larry I was worried and I wanted him to head back to the Lion's Head bluff. Larry saw nothing wrong about staying in the rough waves. Larry said to me, "A person who lives by the sea should expect to die by the sea." That saying sure gave me a warm fuzzy feeling! But as Larry returned to the Lion's Head bluff the waves really calmed down, and were half the height as on the other bluff. So Larry decided to go trolling up and down the Lion's Head bluff to see if we could catch any fish. The wind whipped up and the noreaster blew in from the shore outward. The wind and the rain was so strong that we could not see anything and yet we knew that there were about 5 small boats somewhere between us and the shore. You could see nothing out the windshield as it was totally covered by a driving wind. We went in much earlier than the 4 hours we had paid for and were in fact very glad to see the harbor and not ram into any of the small boats. We went

home to the cottage to find a very upset mother and Jackie. They were beside themselves with worry, afraid that we would perish at sea.

Later that week Jackie had a headache and went to bed. Normally Jackie carefully monitors how many sweets the kids eat while playing cards at night in the card and game room. So with her not there to watch Patrick got a nice big stack of cookies and assorted sweets and even Casey Shea made a bigger pile than usual but still not even half of the size of Patrick's. Patrick ate the whole stack in the course of the evening, but Casey Shea stopped and left half her stack uneaten. I saw nothing wrong with Patrick having a good time with the sweets. We broke up the card playing about 11 pm and we all went to bed. Casey Shea and Patrick slept on a blow up mattress in the living room and Warren and Jackie had the queen size bed in the middle bedroom. Everyone went to sleep for the night. About 3 am Casey Shea runs into Warren's room telling him that Patrick is dying! Warren runs over to Patrick's bed and does not believe what he sees. Patrick has thrown up all over his bed and his sheets. Warren bundles him up in his sheets and runs him into the bathtub and hoses him down. He cleans up the kid, puts new pajamas on him and lays him back down on the couch. Poor Warren had to clean up all that mess on and around the blow up mattress before going back to bed. That sure was the end of Patrick pigging out on sweet stuff. He was told he had to go back to the stack of only three cookies of his choice.

Patchy sure gave us all a big fright. He was laying on the front deck watching what was happening on the road when all of a sudden he sees a golden retriever and his handler coming down the road ready to pass in front of our cottage. He jumps over the closed gate, flying down the stairs without hardly touching the stairs and threatens the retriever and the lady, barking at them furiously and lunging at them. The woman becomes hysterical crying. The dog is very frightened looking to her for support. Warren is on the stone beach reading his book and as soon as he hears all this racket he runs up the stairs, grabs Patchy by the metal lead and yanks the chain straight up making Patchy walk on his 2 front paws. We were all so embarrassed at what Patchy did. Jackie went down to the cottage the woman and dog were staying at and gave her a profuse apology.

Warren was so upset over Patchy's behavior that he did not bring him to the cottage the next year.

Warren, Jackie and the kids went on a horse back ride at the near by riding stables later that vacation. They all had a good time and the horses were very much better behaved than they were at Rocky gap/

The first couple of years we went to Owen Sound the kids would pick out their school clothes at the Owen Sound Mall. Later on when Casey Sheea Started high school I just gave her the money as she wanted to start school first and see what style everyone was wearing before she bought clothing
Patrick was not at all fussy about what her wore.

We drove up and down 40 hills road a number of times that vacation but in the end I stayed on Hwy 6 as I could tell Warren did not approve Forty Hills Rd., thinking it was too dangerous.

Every year we went to Tobermory and shopped in the quaint little shops, buying some little memento of the trip. On another day we would drive into Wiarton and browse through the shops. Warren always walked into the Smoke Shop in Town and bought Cuban cigars which we were not allowed to buy or smoke them in the US. Warren would sit on the shore with his book and cigar and keep an eye on the kids who were playing in the water on the rocks. They were able to keep their balance very well on the rocks with the exception of the time where the waves came crashing in. Casey Shea and Patrick were standing knee deep when a wave knocked Patrick over. Then another wave came and it knocked Patrick totally flat on his back. I had been watching from the second deck as I was afraid something like that would happen. I hollered at Warren that his son was drowning. Casey Shea looked down, saw another tumbler come washing over Patrick. She reached down and pulled him up on his feet. He was embarrassed that he fell so he said "I did that on purpose". (We don't think so.)

The kids ran into the bay every day and would come out very cold as the water in the Georgian Bay is very cold, at times 38 degrees at the end of June. They would run into the main bath tub in their bathing suits and run the warm water for 5 to 10 minutes to warm up. We had various flotation devices to play with in the bay. We had blow up boats and even a huge sea monster. We used to hang the yellow sea monster up on the second floor so we could see it from the bay.

We were all very sad when it came time to go back home. When we got to the side door of the blue house Casey Shea and Patrick hugged each other on the stoop and cried at the thought that the wonderful trip to Lion's Head was over for another year.

On October 7 to October 17, 1998 Mom and I went up to the cottage in Lion's Head alone. Mom cleaned the cottage and did the dishes every day and at night

she and I played rummy or scrabble together. I would walk the dog in the afternoon and mom would read.

One blustery October day mom and I were leaving mom's restaurant right after dark. Mom was wearing her pretty butterscotch colored rain coat and was walking out right in front of me. As mom walked out the door I just opened mom was caught with a hard gust of wind and was pulled right off her feet and was air born. I grabbed her rain coat and pulled her back down. She sure was shocked! From that time on I held her arm and walked beside her to make sure she didn't fall.

1999

When Toni was caring for mom in the 2 bed room at my cottage suddenly in the middle of the night she heard the bear lumbering up the road heading for the cottage. She could feel the ground shake underneath his huge paws and she could hear the leaves swish as he passed through them. Toni got out of bed and putting her hand gingerly through the curtain, cranked the window shut,

I laughed when Toni retold the account to me with eyes as big as saucers. I laughed at her and her tale of how frightened she was. Well, as they say, he who laughs, laughs last. The next night the tale was no longer funny. I was in my bedroom and at the exact stroke of midnight the bear starts walking up Mary Ellen's side of her cottage as my side was enclosed by a green chain link fence, thanks be to God, I could hear the swishing sound as he ambled through the shrubs, And he was so heavy that as he walked he actually shook the cottage. It wasn't funny any more. I was really scared! I jumped out of bed, stood stock still and listened. Kitsey was scared and ran under the bed. Harrigan sat at attention and listened, wondering no doubt as to what was going on out there, I was wondering what if anything I should do. Should I turn the lights on outside? Should I turn the lights off inside? Should I make a lot of noise like they tell you to do when a bear is near? Or should I keep stock still? Harrigan got bored and went to sleep. Kitsey kept himself buried deep under the bed and I stood as still as a statue listening. In a short period of time the Bear left.

One year we had a black bird continually slam into our living room window where mom sat. He kept really dirtying up the window with his beak and we kept cleaning the window and he kept restriking it with his beak and dirtying it over and over again. We could not discourage that bird from striking the window no matter what we tried.



Marie Bender

That reminds me of the time mom and I were staying at the Lion's Head beach motel and I was coming out of the bathroom and mom was making breakfast in the kitchen with a very sorrowful look on her face. As she saw me coming into the kitchen ready to sit down to breakfast, mom said "I'm busted!" I asked her why she was "busted". Mom showed me a prominent sign in the motel unit that said "DO not feed the pigeons". Well, mom fed those pigeons and once she started feeding them they came back to the window every morning and if she did not bring them food fast enough, they kept pecking loudly at the window until she would give them left over food, and being the owner was around the back of the motel a lot in the morning mom was sure she was going to be caught red handed.

There was a beautiful melodious sound at that motel. There were many sail boats moored there and when the wind caught the metal chains that held the sails they would clink against the pole and also sing. It was a nice sound to fall asleep to.

Just before Christmas of 1999 mom asked me for a meat grinder for Christmas, saying she wanted to make hash again. I thought that was a wonderful idea as I loved her hash. But then on the 15th of December, 1999 I went to mom's house to pick her up for lunch and she said her left hand really hurt her. I figured it was arthritis. Then the next Wednesday as I picked her up for lunch she said, "Watch this". She lifted up her right arm and it swung inward and hit her right in the eye. That was dangerous as she had had cataract operation and we did not want to

dislodge the implant. I then asked her to raise her arm right over her head. She did and the arm swung right back down hard and clunked her on the head. That's when I realized she had had a stroke. I took her to lunch and then to Beaumont Hospital. They kept her for over 4 hours and then confirmed it was a stroke. I was angry that it took over 4 hours to see her as they say a stroke has to be treated within 3 hours to prevent damage.

The first other worldly experience came one day when mom was still taking care of herself. I left her just before 9 pm as she was getting ready to go to bed. Before I went home I decided to make a fast trip into K Mart which was still on Hall Rd. Coming out of K Mart I got into the car and started down Hall Rd. All the way from the parking lot and getting more and more insistent as I was driving toward my house was a repeated urge to go back to mom's house. It got more and more urgent for me to go back to her house. So for no apparent reason I walked back into her house, and seeing her bedroom light on I walked into her bedroom. There was mom sitting on the floor up against the back bookcase. "Oh, I'm so glad you came back", Mom said . "I lost my balance and ran backwards all across the bedroom floor and landed on the floor up against the bookcase. I kept praying and praying that you'd come back and help me off the floor as I could not get up by myself."

Another time I came home for lunch and found her lying on the living room floor. She had fallen and tried very hard for over an hour to get up but was unable to. She rolled to the couch but couldn't get up by pushing up on it, so she rolled to the other side of the room, tried to get up using the arm of the chair, but again did not have the strength to pull herself up so she just laid there till I came for lunch.

Another time I came for lunch and found out she could not get off the toilet, that she didn't have enough strength to lift herself off. So I had Curt put bars on both bathrooms around the toilet. That helped her.

I got worried that that might happen again so I bought her a Lifeline button that she could wear around her neck and push the button whenever she needed help. One day when I was on the phone with Edna mom pushed the button. Lifeline called me and found the line busy so they called Ann. Ann ran over to mom's house and found that she had fallen in the half bath and was lying half in and half out of the shower. So she called the ambulance and then called me. She didn't break anything and 3 hours later went back home.

A week later I came to mom's and saw her on the living room floor. I asked her why she didn't push the button. She said it was because she did not want to get into an ambulance and go to the hospital.

On June 16, 1999 Mom, Curt Crowl and I went to Lion's Head cottage. Mom unpacked all her clothes and put them away in the drawers. We then went to supper at Mom's restaurant. After dinner mom went back into her bedroom and when she was leaving she twisted around and shut the door behind her. As she twisted around she broke her hip and fell to the floor in front of the bathroom door. Kurt was outside trying to get a raccoon away from my car, I called him for help. He came inside and with great effort he got her off the floor and into her wheelchair. He then wheeled her to the car and again with great effort he lifted her into the van. We drive her to the Lion's Head hospital. They x rayed her hip and found out the end of her femur had completely broken loose. She was in great pain. They said she needed a hip replacement and could have that done either at Owen Sound hospital or back home. I doubt that Blue Cross would pay for a hip replacement in Canada so I had to make arrangements to have her transported back home. The Canadian health system refused to allow mom to be transferred in their ambulance as she was not a Canadian citizen. So mom laid in that hospital sedated with morphine until I could find a way to get her back home. I tried to arrange an aerial lift by helicopter out of Toronto. It would cost \$4,500 and they would be willing to do it but they could not do it until Friday afternoon. I had called Dr. Nathan and he had arranged for mom to be operated on by Dr Maibauer, the best orthopedic surgeon, so we had to get her there by Friday morning. I called Taylor ambulance out of Detroit and they agreed to transport her after their regular runs for the day was finished. They showed up at quarter to ten in the evening. I was so tired from lack of sleep that I was so worried about trying to stay awake that late at night for the next 5 hours. I was so grateful I had Curt with me. There was some problem with keeping mom comfortable all the way to Rochester, Michigan as the ambulance did not have enough morphine for the trip. After some rangling around the hospital doctor prescribed the proper amount of morphine to keep mom comfortable so they were on their way.

Curt and I had to run to the cottage to pick up Harrigan and Kitsey. I could have died when I got to the cottage and found out that Harrigan had opened the front door and was sitting by himself on the front deck. Fortunately Kitsey was inside the cottage hiding under the front radiator.

I drove the beginning of the trip home. As we started down Hwy 6, my heart dropped – fog started rolling in at 10 pm. Fortunately it never got more than a few

swirls here and there. We got to Mc Donald's at 10:58 pm and they closed at 11 pm. I rushed through the side door just before they locked it and ran into the bathroom and peed. What a relief not to drive 4 ½ hours home with a full bladder. We caught up with the ambulance in Goderich just as they were pulling into the gas station looking for diesel fuel as they were low on fuel in Lion's Head. There was no diesel fuel from Lion's Head to the US border. They were sweating it hoping to have enough fuel to make it that far. They missed the Hwy 402 turn off from Hwy 21 so we were worried when we saw them sail right past their exit, but they made it okay as they arrived at Crittenden hospital at 4:15 am.

Dr Maibauer operated on mom's hip the next day. They put compression leggings on mom which caused her quite a bit of distress. About a week later they transferred mom to the rehab unit. She remained in the rehab unit for 30 days. She made very slow progress and they warned us that she would have to go to a nursing home if she did not make enough progress to be able to stand and turn on her own with assistance. When mom heard nursing home she got serious. I had a lot of worry whether or not I would be able to take her home. I had to find a 24 hour care giver and I needed to have a ramp put into the front of mom's house. I called Bonnie, mom's hairdresser who was also a social worker and she gave me the name of 2 care givers. I found one of them available, Cora. A very bad choice but I had no alternative. Cora stole \$287 from mom's dresser drawer on the first night. But it was either Cora or a nursing home and mom was so scared of being put in a nursing home, so Cora it was.

I called Marvin Stadler and begged him to put a ramp in for mom's house and told him I had to have it in 3 days. So Marvin called his 80 year old buddy and together they put that ramp in in 3 days. The 80 year old 100 lb guy was laying down on his back way under the ramp nailing in the boards from the underside.

So Cora, Toni Put and I went to the hospital and put mom in the van. The day before we took her home the nurse took mom to the van to see if we could get her in. We managed it. When we got her to her house Curt was there waiting for us and wheeled her up the brand new ramp.

We took mom to lunch and dinner every day at Steve's restaurant. I contacted Creative Controls and they put a movable seat in my Oldsmobile Silhouette van. Mom was very short, only 4'11" tall so we had to have her step up onto a step stool before being able to slide onto the seat.

When I bought a 2nd Silhouette van a few years later we had a new handicap seat put in where it came right down equal in height to the wheel chair. That was absolutely needed as mom got weaker and could no longer step up on a stool. That chair lasted very well for us right up until a few days before she died.

Mom was always happy in her last 2 ½ years. Once we got rid of Cora all the rest of her caregivers were kind to her. It was very hard for me to cover every shift, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It was Marlene Kaminski who saved me on a number of occasions when Rochelle would call me at the last minute and tell me she wasn't coming back that night. Marlene never said no to me, even when she had to go to work the next day.

I was almost always the one who put mom into the chair in the van. As I was standing right in front of her to keep her safe, and leaning my head forward up against her head, she would often say "I love you". That would warm the cockles of my heart and make all the effort worth it.

Cora almost did ruin our vacation the next time Warren and his family came to the cottage with us. She slammed the door into mom's handicap chair and totally left it broken and unable to close. Warren jerry rigged it to close part way and were able to use the van until I had it repaired then we went back home.

On May 19 to May 21, 1999 Curt Crawl came up to the cottage. Also on May 19, 1999 Mom, Aunt Elenore and I went up to the cottage at Lion's Head. We all had a wonderful time together. I played beautiful old time music such as Bing Crosby, Perry Como, Burl Ives, and a number of old fashioned religious singers such as Loretta Lynn and Patsy Kline. We played cards every night while snacking on pop, chips, pop corn and cookies. We played canasta and rummy and manipulation, a game Elenore learned from her friends in Minnesota. We went for rides during the day and we even stopped at the marina and took pictures of mom and Elenore in front of the light house. Elenore and Marie had many enjoyable hours relaxing with one another and reminiscing about the past. Every morning I slept in while mom and Elenore got up early, had breakfast together and cleaned up the kitchen and ran the dishwasher. When I got up they would run the washer and drier. Then we would go to lunch and do some exploring on the peninsula. Mom and Elenore loved to buy a few new outfits for themselves every time we went shopping at Tobermory, Wiarton and Owen Sound. In Owen Sound Elenore insisted in paying for our rather expensive lunch at Kelsey's a high end restaurant. Elenore didn't have that kind of money so when she went to the

bathroom in the restaurant I slipped her money way down back into her purse where she wouldn't find it till later. Mom grinned when she saw me doing that.

One afternoon I made a supper from one of mom's long time recipes. It tasted like a very mild chili. Mom called it goulash. It was made with Stokley's kidney beans and De Monte original stewed tomatoes and a light amount of dried onions and a good quality non fat ground beef. When it was all complete I left on the lowest heat on the stove to let it simmer for about 15 minutes. I went to my bedroom to do some things and then returned to the kitchen, prepared the potatoes and then spooned the chili into 3 bowls and put it on the dining room table, said grace and started eating. AHH! the chili was so hot it burned my throat. What happened to the chili?!? I asked. I put pepper in it, Aunt Elenore replied. Chili always has to have chili in it, Aunt Elenore said. I couldn't believe that someone had a life time of ulcers and burning pains in her stomach could actually eat something so spicy. It hurt my stomach, that's for sure. I had always eaten the chili till it was gone. This time I had to throw the remainder in the garbage. It was just way too hot to eat without ruining my stomach.

Aunt Elenore loved to buy lemon cookies and salmon cream cheese at the cottage. She would use those for a snack while playing cards.

Mom and Elenore were always sad when we packed up and started back home.

Once we were back home Elenore would spend a few more days with her sister Marie and then we would drive Elenore to her grand daughter Laurie's house where she would spend the better part of the week with the Rotary family before flying back home to Minnesota.

On July 31, 1999 Warren, Jackie and the kids arrived at the blue house around 5 pm. Mike arrived there at about the same time. Again pictures were taken and we all sat in the blue house backyard on the swing. We went out to eat and then visited till bed time. Early the next morning we ate breakfast and started off to Lion's Head. We stayed in Lion's Head from August 1, 1999 (Warren's birthday) till August 14, 1999. Mom had just gotten out of Crittenden hospital where she had surgery on June 19 and was then in the rehab unit a whole month, getting out shortly before we went to the cottage. Mom now had a care giver, Cora Thomas. Jackie talked to mom at length in the cottage and told me that mom told her that Cora was mean to her. I was shocked as mom never told me that. Jackie was very concerned, feeling I had to fire Cora and she offered to stay with me and mom until

I found a new care giver. Warren did not want her to do that so I was forced to keep Cora until I found a new care giver.

Looking at mom's signature on the cottage log, it was obvious that mom's signature was deteriorating over the past year. Mom had had a total of 6 strokes and each stroke weakened her physically and mentally. It broke our hearts to see the gradual deterioration from year to year beginning in the middle 1990s.

We had a good time despite mom's infirmity. We worked around it, all of us pitching in to treat mom good. Mom was happy these last days and really enjoyed being with Warren and his family.

The kids loved wading and swimming in the Georgian bay. Jackie and Warren had both of the kids wear life jackets for safety. Both kids tried to dive to the bottom but had a very hard time getting down to the bottom as the buoyancy of the jacket would float them back up to the top. Casey Shea had to stand on her tip toes when she got to the big flat rock out further in the bay. On the other side of the big flat rocks was a huge drop off. Several years later the water depth had fallen so dramatically that she could stand easily on those flat rocks and have her body no more than chest deep in the water.

Warren and the kids loved to go for long bike rides up and down the shore line on Hwy 9. They all wore their safety helmets. We also played basketball on the cement driveway. Warren and Jackie and the kids also took walks to town, walking around Lion's Head and going in and out the local stores. They also went horse back riding at the stables by the Indian reservation. I went with them and took pictures but I did not ride a horse as I was too stiff to be able to mount a horse despite their mounting block and when they returned from the ride I would not have been able to go into the stable and climb off the horse by sliding off onto the wooden slats.

On September 10 to September 20th 1999 we went back up to Lion's Head again. These were no longer fun times for me. I had to go up with care givers instead of friends and beloved relatives. We still had Cora with us as I still didn't have a dependable replacement to care for mom 24 hours a day. These were stressful and worrisome days for me and I'm sure for mom too. Looking at mom's signature you could see that she was failing. In the book this time she had signed Bender twice.

On October 8th to October 20, 1999 I was again with mom and her two care givers. They did not get along at all and Cora was a big concern of mine. A very

frightening thing happened to me this visit. Cora's father, who was a very evil, drunken man briefly got into me and talked one sentence through me which scared me to no end. I was standing in the living room with Cora and Rochelle when suddenly I blacked out and started to turn around, I then turned forward and saw a funny look on both of their faces. Why did you say "Do you have 25 lbs of sugar?" They asked me. I had no knowledge whatsoever that I had said that. I asked Cora and Rochelle if that meant anything to either one of them. Cora said that her dad always needed 25 lbs of sugar to make his liquor. That really upset me as I did not want that dead man's spirit anywhere near me.

Another queer thing happened on that trip. We came home from a trip to find something huge and lit up with many different colored lights floating out in the end of the bay. Other cottagers were surprised to see this, whatever it was, floating out there as we had never seen it before and we have never seen anything like it since. When we came back after dinner it was still there. After dark it was still there. Cora insisted it was a UFO. I wasn't sure whether it was or was not because it was so strange and kind of resembled pictures of a UFO in books. Cora got out her camera and took pictures of it. She ran back in and was afraid of it. I teased her, saying it could come right up the drive way and get her. Then she really got scared. I said I wonder which one of us it would go after? Then I said to her I wonder if an alien would prefer white meat or dark meat. The everybody got scared.

The next day Rochelle and I were cleaning the leaves off the cement driveway when I mentioned to her that there was \$278 missing from mom's dresser and that God was going to punish whoever stole it. Cora had her ear to the window listening to what I was saying to Rochelle. Cora then called the agency she worked for seeing if there were any new jobs available for her. I was both relieved and scared. I wanted her gone as mom was scared of her and stuff was missing from mom's house but on the other hand I needed to cover all shifts, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

When we got back to mom's house Cora indicated that she might not be back. Edna was there in the driveway and was begging Cora to stay. I could have clobbered Edna. I wanted Cora to go and I was afraid to fire her because I did not want her to say that I discriminated against her so I wanted her to leave on her own which is what she was doing. Cora left on Friday afternoon and Rochelle said she would do 7 days a week, 24 hours a day until I found a 2 day relief. Monday morning I parked my car sideways across the bottom of mom's driveway incase Cora tried to come back. But fortunately she never came back. Within a short

period of time Marlene and Toni agreed to do 2 days a week to let Rochelle have a 2 day break. From this time on till mom passed away nothing was ever again missing from mom's house.

2000

Brian Shearer my carpenter said he and his man were sitting in his utility van with the door open eating lunch when suddenly a bear cub comes barreling across my back yard half way up the cliff. They never saw mama bear.

Another time Doug Jr was leaving to go home a few days before us so I asked him to take the garbage in our kitchen and drop it off at the dumpster at the marina because there were bears near the cottage and I did not want to attract them to the cottage. Instead of taking the garbage with them they drop it into my garbage can outside the back of the cottage. At 1 am in the morning a bear comes ambling up to the garbage can and backing his bum into the cottage wall began looting the garbage can. I was in the bedroom at the time and I could feel the cottage shake as the bear backed into the stone wall.

Sometime around 2000 I put a second story on the cottage. Brian Shearer, my carpenter, got a permit to put on a room which could be no more than 13% of the entire cottage. When he had the room almost finished he asked me to climb up the ladder to see the new room so I could give him suggestions of what I wanted as to the finishing touches. Boy, was I ever frightened to climb up that ladder and to step sideways onto the room floor without falling off the edge. All the while I was up there my legs just shook with fright. Once I was able to step sideways back onto the ladder I was so relieved!

The next year Brian told me he could get a permit to put a second room on the upstairs. I readily agreed to that. Especially for both rooms it was only costing me 60 cents on a dollar Canadian to American. What a bargain! And for the second room we managed to turn a storage closet into a bathroom. This allowed me to have more guests at one time as we now had 5 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms.

On April 26 till May 3, 2000 Mom and I went to the cottage with Rochelle Collins. Mom was very excited to have reached the year 2000 as she was hoping to live long enough to see the year 2000 since she was a young child.

We came back again to Lion's Head from May 15 to May 24 with mom, Rochelle, Rochelle's boyfriend Jim and Sandy. Jim worked on the front deck that week and was paid for his work. Mom enjoyed her stay at the cottage. Mom's handwriting was better this time around. We went to the restaurant for lunch and dinner every day. Mom enjoyed getting out to the restaurant and being fussed over by the owner and waitresses. Jennifer brought her brand new baby Jacob over in his car carrier, which I affectionately called "the bucket". Mom made a cute fuss over Jake.

In the middle of June, 2000 Craig and his family flew in on the red eye from California to Detroit Metro airport. I met them at 6 am as they deplaned from the Spirit Airline jet. Craig wanted to go to Tennessee and meet his Stephens relatives. So I rented an extended 15 passenger van from Enterprise and we started off to Tennessee. We met a number of his Stephens relatives in Tennessee. One family was especially friendly and took Craig to museum where there was a family history book for sale. This book was valuable to Craig as it had some of his ancestors in it.

We stopped in a trailer park and met some very friendly Stephens relatives who gave us some information about Stephens relatives. The funniest one was from a relative who hated Don's uncle Duggan. Duggan had insulted her as a child and she was pleased to tell us that Duggan got into trouble with the law and now "Duggan is in the pen!" The woman we visited had been treated for cancer and the next time Mary Anne called that family she had been told that the woman passed away.' We then traveled down Hwy 40 and met Craig's 99 ½ year old aunt who was his grandmother Christine's sister. She was very physically and mentally fit. She got up off a chair like a 30 year old. She gave Craig one very valuable original picture of her father and let us copy a picture of her mother. So Craig received two valuable pictures of his great grandparents. These pictures were 8 X 10 and were very clear. As we left her house that day she said to us that the next time we see her will be in eternity. And she was right. She passed away that year. She was a real southern lady, petite, under 5 feet tall and very mindful of her manners. She lived in a senior citizen apartment complex in Nashville Tennessee.

We drove over a very high mountain in I- 71 which I found very frightening as the fog at the top of the mountain was extremely dense and on my left side the road was narrow, only two lanes and dropped steeply on the left side. Cars were coming in the opposite direction and I could barely see anything on the road. That condition lasted for 5 miles and then cleared right up. (I later drove over the same mountain top with Mary Anne and again encountered the same frightening

conditions. I was later told that this condition exists on that mountain top all the time because the mountain is so high that it is above the clouds in that area.

On the way back home we stopped at June's house in Ohio and she shared some information and an article from her records. We brought in my scanner and scanned in her stuff. The next time Mary Anne and I went back to Ohio in the middle of a multiple tornado outbreak that really frightened both of us, Mary Anne called June and June refused to see us. Mary Anne was so disappointed because we were given a half dozen Stephens photos that Mary Anne hoped she could identify.

Rochelle babysat Roxanne, Valerie and Scott while we were at June's house and Rochelle blew up and made a big ruckus. I was tired from the long trip and with Rochelle and Mary Anne at logger heads I cancelled the planned trip to Cedar Point.

We connected up with Warren and we agreed to meet in a fine resort in western Maryland so all the kids could get to know one another. So we checked into the Rocky Gap resort and Warren and his family came to the resort a short while after we checked in. We ate at the resort restaurant and the kids got to meet one another. For some reason Roxanne felt really attached to Casey Shea and stayed close by her and hugged her.

We were told that this resort had horse back riding available so both Stephens families decided to go horse back riding. We were surprised to find that the stable was nowhere near the resort. We had to drive off into a hill billy looking back road and came to a very rotten run down stable of horses that did not look very well cared for. I needed to find a toilet. They showed me a free standing outhouse. I went inside and was very amused to see that you could see through the gaps in the very weathered slats and see what everyone was doing on the outside. The lean to area where the horses were standing to keep out of the sun was a wet, slimy, filthy mess. The owners brought the horses out of there as none of us would want to put our feet into that slimy mess. They saddled the horses and helped the riders up. Roxanne and Valerie stayed behind with us and they gave them pony rides around the corral while an owner held onto the leash. I was watching the kids on the horse when as a sudden a young skinny colt broke loose and started running wild and free in the area where I was standing. The owner warned me to stay away from the colt because he might kick me. Believe me, I kept my distance from that colt. They say he was acting up because he was separated from his mother who

went riding with our adults. The mother was acting up because she wanted to be back with her baby.

They told me that the horse back ride was one horrible totally wild trip to hell and back. One of the horses kicked the girl owner in the side of the lower leg and when the ride was finished her leg was still numb. Rochelle went wild when the horse was slipping on a slimy wet steep incline. She insisted on changing horses with another rider. Warren thought she was over doing it, on the verge of histrionics. While they were on their trail ride Mom, Jackie, Mary Anne and I were sitting in the van. Jackie and Mary Anne got to know each other for the first time and had a chance to swap stories about their families. When our families got back from their ride from hell they were so glad to get off those horses!

We were all hungry by now so we drove around looking for a place to eat. Within a mile from the stable we found an old dilapidated restaurant. It's name was "The road kill café". We decided that it might be a safer idea to pass that one by! There was nothing else between the stable and the Rocky Gap so we ate there again.

Mary Anne and some of the kids rented bikes at the Rocky Gap and rode over some rather rough, road full of tree roots. Mary Anne, who is a very good bike rider ended up having a mishap when the tree roots twisted the bike around.

The next day Warren paid for him and me to go golfing on the resort. It turned out he paid for 18 holes so we did not get back to the resort until well after 2 pm. Poor mom! No one got her anything to eat while we were gone.

None of our cell phones would work at that resort. We had to use the resort phone at a high price. It turned out that the Rocky Resort was only a short distance from the Presidential Camp David so I figured that is way the cell phones wouldn't work. It was protecting the President's safety.

The next day we all took our group pictures and headed our separate ways, Warren back to Millersville, us to Utica. On the way home Warren's car carrier popped open and its contents spilled on the road. We learned to bungee the top down after that experience.

After a day of rest at mom's house we headed off to Lion's Head. Both Mary Anne and Rochelle's feelings were hurt at mom's house and Mary Anne ended up shedding tears. But they ended up settling down to a usual routine and we ended up at Lion's Head from June 26 to July 7, 2000.

We ate at the Northwinds Restaurant for lunch and supper. Craig liked the idea of going with Larry Catteau for a fishing trip with Mary Anne, Scott and Valerie so he made arrangements at the counter after lunch. Larry said he'd be glad to take them fishing, and then with a determined look on his face and pointing directly at Roxanne, he said "Just not that one!" It was a wise decision as Roxanne at 3 years old was far too rambunctious and far too overactive to trust that she would not fall overboard.

So they packed up food for the boat, I drove them to the dock, went back to the cottage and mom and I stayed behind at the cottage with Roxanne. I played with a big ball with her to keep her occupied. We kicked it back and forth for an hour until she got bored. Rochelle then drove her to Mom's restaurant for dinner. She was restless, getting on and off the chair. Very surprisingly Roxanne brought a wooden paddle that her mom and dad used to spank her with her along with her. She brought the paddle in the table with her and laid it down next to her. She then walked over to the Scottish woman, Ina, and started talking to her. Ina can have a short Scottish fuse when perturbed so I was waiting for Ina to tell me or Roxanne off. Fortunately the food came to our table and I was able to get Roxanne to sit down and eat. After we ate I figured we had better leave the restaurant before Roxanne caused a problem so I grabbed her hand and told her she had to hang on to me tight as we walked out into the parking lot. I said to Roxanne we had to stay out of the street so we wouldn't get hit by a car. Hwy 6 is right in front of the restaurant and cars do 60 mph so I didn't want her anywhere near the road. But as I held her hand she tried to squirm loose and run away. I held fast to her hand and started for the car. She turned sideways and tried to wiggle loose from my hand. She almost succeeded as she is very strong and very determined. So I picked up the paddle and gave her one good whack with it. She was so startled that that gave me time to reach down and pick her up and carry her to the car. When we got back to the cottage it was almost time to pick them up from the harbor so we drove over that way. So mom and Rochelle stayed behind at the cottage and Roxanne and I went back to the harbor. Roxanne kicked her sandals off at the edge of the Georgian Bay and walked bare foot into the water. I could never do that, the stones would kill my feet but Roxanne walked like it was smooth sand. We then saw the fishing boat come into the harbor and she stopped playing in the water and ran over the stones to meet them.



Rochelle Collins

Mary Anne and Rochelle got into it again at the cottage. They were both shedding tears over hurt feelings. Rochelle and mom were still asleep in their room so I took Craig's family out to brunch to smooth things over. When we got back Rochelle was upset that we left for the restaurant without them. But I told them I was now taking just the 2 of them by themselves. When we got back from the restaurant Craig had taken my Cadillac and took off for Warton where he and family enjoyed a fair and ate supper at the Barley Bin on the north end of town.



Craig Stephens in dumpster in Lion's Head

Mary Anne loved to go for long walks both on the shore line and in the forest on the top of the cliff heading to town. Some one told Mary Anne that sometimes there was a bear walking up on the cliff so she had to be wary and while she was walking on the cliff she should make a lot of noise so as to not startle the bear as most of the time bears wanted to stay away from humans. But then someone in town told Mary Anne that an Olympic runner in Canada startled a bear and the bear killed her. They told Mary Anne that that story was in the local paper a few days ago. Mary Anne wanted to read the report of that attack so she made Craig jump into a dumpster outside of the convenience store in Lion's Head to find that article. Boy, were people ever looking funny at Craig standing chest deep inside

that dumpster! But after diligent searching he found that article. Having to look out for bears took some of the fun out of walking in the wilderness for poor Mary Anne. She had just been attacked once on her bike by a dog back home, but to be attacked by a bear would be a whole different thing. Rochelle is the woman standing in front of the dumpster in case Craig needed help.

At the end of the week we all packed up and returned to mom's house in Utica. Craig and his family then boarded the Spirit plane back to California.

On July 30, 2000 Warren, Jackie and the kids came for their annual visit to the cottage. This time they brought Patchie, Rosie, and their 2 cats. Some how they managed to fit them all into the back of their van. As usual they all arrived about 4 pm, we sat in the back yard with Mike and Marilyn and then we all went to dinner, and after dinner sat and talked till after dark.

We headed out to the cottage the next day on July 31st, 2000. We had to go to Nick's Restaurant this year as the power was out at Steve's Café. From Nicks we headed up to the cottage. The next day we celebrated Warren's 47th birthday at the cottage. The next day we again drove up 40 hills road and stopped at the Indian hut on Hwy 6 where the kids swung on the "Tired Horse" and then we went inside and bought some shirts before traveling on to Tobermory. Tobermory is a very interesting harbor at the tip of the Bruce Peninsula where one can find many huge yachts laying ar anchor there either overnight or for several days. They arrive there from Lake Superior or Lake Huron. There are a number of cruise ships that cruise around Flower Pot Island, stopping there for several hours or simply rounding the island and traveling back to their port o call in Tobermory. Jackie has never gone there with her children as she does not feel comfortable on deep water. Marie has gone on one of the cruises but had to remain on the main deck down below as we were unable to get her up the stairs. We had to put a blanket on mom as it is very cool on the open water.

I had quite a fright that morning when we were all about to get in the car and head for the cottage. Rochelle called me at 9:00 in the morning and says she cannot go to the cottage with us as she has a headache. That she might come up later in the week if she feels better. I have a fit. I called the owner of the 24 hour care service and asked her if Simeona Cayetano, a caregiver from her agency that I had used once, would be able to come with us on this trip. She was doubtful but when she called her Simeona said yes, that she would be at mom's house by 10:30 am. Boy, did she ever save the day for me! There is no way I could have taken care of mom by myself for 2 weeks. I liked Simeona. She was very quiet, was very introverted,

and somehow reminded me of our Grandmother Elizabeth Bender. Rochelle was taken aback as she suddenly realized that by pulling that stunt she lost 2 weeks pay.

We left for home on August 12, 2000. We were always so sad to say goodbye to one another for another whole year. Warren and Jackie and the kids left for home as usual at about 4:30 am so Warren could get back home by 1:30 in the afternoon. I was also sad to see Simeona leave too as I felt she was a higher class caregiver than anyone else I had gotten from the agency. She said she was born in Belize and that the Georgian Bay reminded her of back home as she lived on the water.



Helen Kent & Sandy



Rochelle Collins, Harrigan, Ann Kay, Marie Bender & Helen Kent

On August 24 to September 1, 2000 I and mom went up to the cottage with Ann Kay, puppy, Rochelle Collins, Mom and Helen Kent. We especially invited Helen as she had just lost her husband, Dean. We had a wonderful time up there together for that week. We read, played cards, went for walks along the shoreline and went for rides on the 40 hills road, and visited and went shopping in Tobermory and Wiarton. Puppy was getting very old and slowing down quite a bit, but he was refreshed by the clean air up there and went for longer walks there than he did back home. Ann laughed about her sleeping accommodations at the cottage. The downstairs bedrooms were full so Ann took the brand new bedroom upstairs. Further on in the week Ann turned on her bedroom light and then we decided to walk along the shoreline before calling it a night. So when we were walking back to the cottage Ann looked up to her bedroom and was shocked to see that anyone could look right into her bedroom and see everything as there were no curtains on the window!

Ann also got another shock. When walking puppy up and down Carter Rd at dusk all of a sudden dozens of bats came flying at her and puppy every night, almost dive bombing them in the evening. Ann was also delighted to see that humming birds would appear just outside the cottage. There were red and yellow and green ones.

At night while playing cards we had to keep the doors closed as there would be hundreds of flying insects trying to get into the cottage. Some of the moths that came at night were huge.

A really funny thing happened when we were walking from the car to the cottage along the cement driveway on the side of the cottage. Helen was walking ahead of us when as a sudden her back went out and she walked funny to protect her back from severe pain, almost waddling. Rochelle was right behind her and when she heard Helen say she had to walk funny to protect her back, Rochelle suddenly cried out that her back went out too and she started imitating Helen, almost waddling like a duck. But once Helen walked around the corner and out of sight Rochelle forgot to keep waddling and walked normal again. We were all grinning over that.

Helen and Ann decided to go wading in the Georgian Bay. They put their bathing suits on and walked down to the water and just as they were about to go in the water a cold icy rain started and they went back into the cottage and never had another opportunity to back into the Bay. We all got along good that trip and had a very happy time that week.

On October 10 to October 15, 2000 Mom, Rochelle and I went to the cottage together. It was kind of lonely without the extra company. We played cards together and went to the restaurant for lunch and dinner. That was the last time we went up to the cottage that year.



Ann Kay

Ann's house was a total disaster. The living room and hall were so dark and dirty that you could not see. We painted the red and black walls a pretty light colored green. The bedroom walls we painted a light yellow and put a book case in the bedroom. We also had Cindy and Bob build a book case for the back of her bed. The bathroom floor was rotted out so a new floor was put in and a totally new bathroom, including a Jacuzzi and sink and toilet was put in. The kitchen was totally redone. New floors, wall tiles and cabinets and a desk were put in. A new TV with a beautiful table was installed.



Sandy Wilhelm

2001

The next time we went up to the cottage was April 26 to May 2, 2001. This trip up we had mom, Rochelle, Harrigan and I. It was colder this early in the year but we really enjoyed ourselves as every room in the cottage was amply supplied with heat. We went to eat at a restaurant and played cards every evening. I also contracted with Brian Shearer to build a second bedroom and bath onto the upstairs

of the cottage. As soon as this was completed I contracted with Parker Home Health care to install an elevator to go to the second floor so Elenore, Marie and I could safely go there. I have used both the elevator and the stairs to go up and down. The best use of the elevator since its installation is to bring heavy luggage up to the second floor.

We ad several repairs done to the elevator. It often stalled out and we had to have a person from Parker Home Health come out and repair it under warranty. They finally fixed it when they discovered that they had the wrong strength fuse. This time the repair man came he brought “Bob”, a sight dog with him. He asked Rochelle to hold the leash tight because Bob is one of those dogs that if they see anything interesting the dog takes off and there is no calling them back, they are gone after their prey. So Rochelle held on tight and I took a picture of that gorgeous dog being held by Rochelle.



Elenore Mc Kinin

Aunt Elenore flew into Michigan from Minnesota and after a few days visit at mom’s house we all headed out for the cottage where we stayed from May 23 to June 6, 2001. We arrived at mom’s restaurant about 4:30 pm on a rather cold day. I told them I would drop them off at the restaurant and run into the cottage and turn on the heat and then run right back to the restaurant again. Elenore kept arguing with me to stay at the restaurant with them and go to the cottage and turn on the heat after we finished eating. I kept telling her that the cottage was much too cold so I needed to turn the heat on now so it would warm up quite a bit over the next hour or so. no, no, no Elenore argued. Stay here. Okay if you insist but you’re gonna freeze I told her. No we won’t Elenore insisted, it isn’t that cold out. So we ate a leisurely dinner and then drove to the cottage, opened up the kitchen door and in we all walked. Oh, no, Elenore cried out. It’s really cold in here! I told you so, I said to her. I had mom and Elenore sit in the big comfortable orange chairs and then I covered them up with bedding and when they were still freezing I covered up the bedding with rugs. I turned on all the heaters full force but it took quite a while for the cottage to heat up. Mom and Elenore looked so cute totally buried

right up to their chins in bedding and rugs that I took a picture of the both of them. Aunt Elenore kept reminding me for the next hour how cold it was in the cottage and that even her bones were freezing. (Should I have said, "Isn't that what I told you?") Within an hour they were able to remove all the bedding and once I brought all the luggage in they set to work putting their clothes into dresser drawers and closets. We then spent a couple of hours playing cards before settling down for the evening.

Whereas in previous years mom and Elenore made the breakfast and did the dishes together now Rochelle had to do mom's share of the work as mom was stuck in a wheelchair and a lift chair. As always it was so sad to have to pack up and leave the cottage. We all loved so much being there. The scenery was unbelievably gorgeous and it is such a peaceful place to spend a week.



Sandy, Elenore & Marie

We had a wonderful time that visit. Mom and Aunt Elenore had breakfast together every morning and then we all went to lunch and dinner at the restaurant. Every evening we played cards together and had many a laugh. Mom and Elenore always had a wonderful mirthful time together. They always loved to tease one another and play at pretending to make fun of one another while in fact having warm feelings of love for one another. I would always buy several rag magazines for mom and Elenore to read while we were at the cottage. Aunt Elenore was very good at doing crossword puzzles and every time I would start one Aunt Elenore in no time flat would completely fill one out.

On June 24 to July 2, 2001 Mom, Rochelle, Harrigan and I went to the cottage together. Rochelle would take care of mom 24 hours a day and enjoyed coming up to the cottage on vacation. We went out to the restaurant for lunch and dinner. Rochelle would read while watching mom in the cottage while I would walk

Harrigan several times a day up and down the shore line. Harrigan loved his walks and sometimes he would jump into the bay and swim back.

On July 16 to July 23, 2001 Toni Put and her 2 daughters Chelsea and Hayley went with mom, Harrigan, Kitsey and I to the cottage. She also brought her little dog Gizmo with her. We had a lot of fun playing ball out on the front deck. And at night we played cards. We also went for car rides and clothes shopping. Mom loved Toni and was very happy to be cared for by her. This is the one and only time Toni went to the cottage with us. Once she got married she no longer came to the cottage with us.

Mom was at Toni's wedding and I stood up for her in the wedding chapel in Shelby Township. Greg was so nervous and upset over getting married that he turned beet red and looked like he was about to pass out. I stood up for Toni and Cindy's husband Bob Quenneville was Greg's best man. I rode in the limousine with Toni to and from the wedding chapel and Cindy Quenneville took the Cadillac keys and drove mom around in the Cadillac following the limousine. We then went to Toni's house and took pictures on her front lawn with all of us and her dogs. We then went to Greg's sister's house and had pizza and hot wings for dinner. Toni had a informal wedding reception a week later but I did not take mom there. I was so glad that mom didn't go as Greg ended up having a fist fight with his brother and it got to be quite a brawl.

I brought mom to Toni's house for dinner. Marlene Kaminski also came along for dinner. Greg's dog Coco, a chocolate lab had just had puppies so mom and I were in the back yard admiring the puppies. Mom had the puppy in her lap but Toni took it away as it was too large for mom to handle. Toni put the dog and her puppies back in the cage in the living room to keep the house in good order. Toni, Marlene, Mom and I sat together at the dining room table. Greg spent the whole night in the garage.



Sandy, Marie, Warren, Jackie, Casey Shea and Patrick

On August 4, 2001 Warren, Jackie and the children arrived at the blue house around 4:30 pm. We visited until 5 pm when we went to the restaurant to eat with Mike and Marilyn. We visited for awhile in the blue house and then retired for the night. From August 5th to August 17th we went to Lion's Head. Patchie came along this year. Kitsey signed in as a Master Dog Teaser. Marie signed in the guest book but her handwriting again deteriorated some more since last year. Mom was weaker this time around and needed more assistance from Rochelle. I gave Casey Shea money for school clothes as she no longer wanted to go to the mall to buy clothes. Instead she preferred to start school and see what the other girls were wearing before she bought her own clothes for the school year. Patrick wasn't fussy at all about what clothes he wore.

Warren, Casey Shea, Patrick and I played cards every night. We always had a lot of fun together. We played CD,s every night but now the kids no longer appreciated the music I played. They were more into the teenage type of music. Jackie tried her hand at doing jigsaw puzzles after watching me do several of them. Then Patrick tried his hand at putting together the same size puzzles as Jackie was putting together. Patrick would work very hard at putting a puzzle together, then he would run into the living room and compare his puzzle with his mother's. He would get so excited as he saw his puzzle going together faster than his mother's.

We went to the Northwinds restaurant on most days because Joyce Boychuk had leased her restaurant out to a fat, unattractive unfriendly new manager. When we first went in to the new restaurant we were all shocked. She had painted over Joyce's attractive walls with screaming orange paint and then covered the walls with pictures of African villages. The best picture in my estimation was a huge picture of a head of a light blue and white cow.

The food was unbelievably horrid. She cooked with weird tasting spices that made the food almost inedible. And the cost was outrageous. Most dinners were in the range of \$18.50 to \$23.50. The only two times I went in there was the first time and then again when I wanted to show my guests how horrible the food and the décor were.

Rochelle took good care of mom so I was able to go for walks with Warren and his family without any worry.

On October 14 to October 17, 2001 Rochelle, mom and I went up to the cottage. It sure was a lot cooler this time than it was in the summer. When mom got tired Rochelle would help her into bed and then Rochelle and I would play cards for a couple of hours. We would also put jigsaw puzzles together. As always we went to Northwinds for lunch and dinner. Rochelle and I decided to go exploring on the side roads west of Hwy 6 just to see some new dirt roads. We went north on a dirt road north of the bakery shop and without warning we came to a very narrow area where the road suddenly ended. It was almost impossible to turn around and I was afraid of getting the car stuck in a marsh. Rochelle got out of the car and directed me in the sharp turn around so I wouldn't get stuck. It was a tight squeeze!

In November of 2001 Mom, Rochelle and I flew to California and stayed at the Imperial motel near Yorba Linda. We were there for the birth of mom's second great great grandchild, Kaitlyn Marie Blais. We had a lot of professional pictures taken at Linda's house in Yorba Linda. Mom was very happy at being the center of attention and was very pleased that she got to hold the baby in spite of her infirmity. Getting Devon to hold still and keep a pose was a trick.



?, Sandy, Virginia Bender, Marie Bender & Nancy Wellington

During this trip to California Nancy asked us if we could go to visit our cousin Virginia Bender Grote who lives in Sunland. California. It was over an hour's ride by a series of Freeways but we made it there without incident. It is a much older area and the houses are quite close together. When we settled into the inside of the house it became apparent that there had been structural damage resulting from the last earthquake which shook the walls loose.

We then went to a local restaurant for lunch. Virginia's good friend and neighbor came with us. Virginia and I talked over many things from her childhood that few other people are aware of. She was so very glad that I had known of the many stories of physical and emotional abuse that she had suffered at the hands of her mother as her mother has denied everything, saying that Virginia is a liar. But I knew her to be telling the truth as mom had told me all of the stories that Virginia had told to me.

In Canada I paid for my purchase with a \$100 bill and got \$50 change back. Mom saw that beautiful red bill and reached for it. I gave her the \$50 and she put it into the vault for safe keeping. All this with the vault only happened once mom had a few strokes. Mom understood almost everything after the strokes but funny things happened. After every stroke mom had funny things happen in regard to her thought processes.

With the first stroke which happened between the marina motel in Lion's Head and mom's house she lost a major part of her hearing. With the second stroke mom lost control of her right hand and arm and nothing else. But then with each successive stroke mom lost her ability to write and some of her thought processes.

2002

On May 10 to May 16, 2002 Curt, Rochelle, mom, Harrigan, Kitsey and I went to the cottage. It was nice weather and Curt did a lot of cleaning up of the property. He cut down a lot of the shrubbery in front and round the side of the cottage. He pulled a lot of weeds, but unbeknownst to him there was a large patch of very small poison ivy plants just to the right of the stairs leading down to the bay. He was unaware of that until he got back home and came down with a severe itch. That sure gave him one miserable week till it calmed down!



Elenore Mc Kinin

On May 24, 2002 to June 7, 2002 Aunt Elenore came to the cottage for another visit. How we loved having Aunt Elenore being at the cottage with us! This time we had mom, Aunt Elenore, Rochelle, and Kitsey with us. Aunt Elenore cherished having this time to spend with her beloved little sister Marie. Seeing Marie so weak almost broke Elenore's heart. Elenore spent many an hour talking to Marie. We all loved playing cards together every night after supper. Elenore was a very sharp card player. Mom kept interrupting the game as she had to continually every hour or less go to the bathroom. So we solved that problem by putting the commode in the card and game room and covering mom up with a blanket. Mom did not mind at all but Aunt Elenore was shocked, it was too much for her sense of decorum. But we had so much fun that night. Another very treasured happening that trip up to the cottage was that Elenore dictated to me her life story and I typed it on the lap top computer as she told it to me. When we got back to mom's house I was able to put pictures to the story and give a copy of her life to her and to her

children. What a treasure that is to now have it on line for all of her loved ones to read.



Elenore, Marie & Sandy
Elenore, Marie and Rochelle at the Owen Sound Mall

Mom, Elenore, Rochelle and Mom went to the Owen Sound Mall. We shopped through Zellars and then headed toward Tabi's woman's shopr in the middle of the mall. Just as we were approaching Tabi's mom threw another stroke and was in considerable pain. So Rochelle ran back to Zellar's, got a bottle of water, then ran back to mom and gave her a pain pill. For almost an hour Mom was bending over in pain, her head almost on her knees. Elenore felt so bad for mom. She kept rubbing mom's head and talking nice to her. We continued on to Tabi's and bought mom, Elenore and Marie a lot of clothes. I kept putting clothes in mom's lap asking her is she wanted the clothes. She always said yes. One hour later we had a big pile of matching clothes for mom, a smaller pile for Elenore and a smallest pile for Rochelle. As I was about to check out Mom came to, looked over the 3 piles of clothes and said, "Oh, let's go and leave the clothes". The clerks, who ran themselves ragged for over an hour were about to die when mom said that. But we bought the clothes. Mom was very pleased with her new wardrobe.



Marie Bender & Elenore Mc Kinin

Elenore was so saddened by her sister Marie's weakening condition. When we got back home to Marie's house Elenore was so emotionally touched when she came down to breakfast and listened to Marie give the care giver directions on how to set up breakfast for Elenore. "Marie is in such a weakened state and yet she shows such concern for me", Elenore said with such feeling in her voice.

Elenore was so sad and so concerned as she was preparing to go back home to Minnesota. I am sure Elenore knew that there was a good possibility that she would never see her little sister again in this life. The 2 sisters were so close to one another through the years, visiting back and forth on Coyle, Alter Rd, and then later on Diamond and on San Jose in Redford. And when Elenore moved to Florida and Herman passed away Marie would fly down to Florida and visit Elenore there. And after Elenore moved to Minnesota she would fly to Detroit and visit Marie on Grant Park.

On July 5 to July 12, 2002 my brother Doug and his family came to visit me and mom in Lion's Head. Present this time at the cottage were Doug Sr., Marie, Rochelle, Shelly, Lizzie, Karen, Kitsey and Sandy. This was the first time for Doug and his family to visit at the cottage so we all had a great time together. We went out to eat for lunch and dinner and we also went to Tobermory and went on a cruise out of Tobermory and around flower pot island. Rochelle took care of mom this trip. Every one got along well this trip. Every one was good to mom. Mom was getting quite weak and spent most of her time sitting in her reclining chair.



Marie Bender

There is a funny story about mom and her reclining chair. I went to Parker Home Health Care in Owen Sound and looked around at their handicap reclining chairs. There was one chair that was very pretty and seemed that it would fit well to Marie as it was on the petite side. so I paid for it and had it delivered to the cottage. Mom sat in it for a day and then said she didn't like that recliner and wanted it taken back to the health store. Mom refused to even sit in the recliner chair and made the care giver move her out of the recliner and into the dark green rocker with foot rest.

So I drive 50 miles back to Owen Sound and sat in a bunch of recliners and chose one that is very comfortable and also very pretty with muted swirls of pink and blue on a muted white background. So Parker Home Health removed the first chair and delivered the second one. The second one met with mom's approval.

On July 15 to July 22, 2002 we went to my cottage with Mom, Rochelle, Crispin and Curt Cowl. Curt did quite a bit of work around the cottage, especially cutting down and trimming overgrown shrubbery. Curt was careful to avoid the poison ivy this time around. Crispin was a very timid, well behaved Sheltie. He was a joy to have at the cottage.



Sandy, Marie, Warren, Jackie, Casey Shea & Patrick

On August 2, 2002 Warren and his entire family, including Patch the dog came to the blue house just before dinner time. Mike and Marilyn came over and we went to dinner and visited for quite a bit afterwards. Then we all went home and the Stephens family settled into the blue house. Every year we would bring the trundle bed out from under the twin bed upstairs and set it up as a twin bed in the card and game room for one of the kids to sleep on. Warren and Jackie slept in the master bedroom of the blue house. Jackie would retire earlier due to her bad heart but Warren would stay up on the back porch till later in the evening. The next morning we would go to Steve's café for lunch and then we would all head up for the cottage. We took separate cars this trip.

We were at the cottage this year from August 3 to August 16, 2002. We had a managerie with us this year. In Warren's car we had Patchie the dog, Cassie the cat and Charlie the cat. They kept the two cats in a cage all the way to Lion's Head. It was a very unique set up. In one cage they had food, water and a litter box. Patchy rode in the middle seat with the kids. It was such a cute sound when the cats would run around upstairs over my bedroom. You could hear all the little pitter patter of their tiny feet on the ceiling over my bed.

This trip we had mom, me, Rochelle, Warren, Jackie, Casey Shea, Patrick, Cassie the cat, Charlie the cat, Patchy the dog, Rochelle, and Kitsey feller, the master dog teaser. Casey Shea and Patrick went into the Georgian Bay at least once or twice a day. They tried out the flat shelf of rock which was now a lot shallower than in previous years. The government now released huge amounts of water from Lake Superior down the Mississippi because the Mississippi river is getting so low that the steamboats are bottoming out. So now when Casey Shea stands on that flat rock that used to be so deep in the water that she had to stand on her tip toes and

now she stands on the top of the rock with no water over her feet. For the first time since they have come to the cottage with us Patrick was starting to tease Casey Shea about her boyfriends, her make up, etc. This time Jackie did not want the kids and Warren to go on the fishing boat or to go horse back riding.

Jackie was really nice to mom and she was also very friendly to Rochelle. Jackie was so glad to see that we no longer had Cora who mom said was treating her really nasty. The whole Stephens family slept in the new 2 bedroom one bath apartment upstairs. We now had a wireless computer system so Warren, Casey Shea, Patrick and I could all be on the internet at the same time. We all took nice walks along the shoreline, especially Warren and Jackie who took long early morning walks along Hwy 9 and back.



Warren Stephens the CB hill billy truck driver

On the way back as we were riding along the Sauble Beach road, this rough, southern sounding CB got on my walkie talkie and started saying things, such as knowing which car we were in and other rough hill billy type talk. This scared me and I hoped that Warren was not too far away in case we started having any problem with this trucker. After listening to the CB talk for a while I suddenly burst out laughing. That rough sounding hill billy truck driver was Warren, who did a marvelous job of disguising his voice and his accent.

We went back home to the blue house, had dinner together at the Outback Steak house. While they went to the Steakhouse and got started ordering I went to K Mart and put in the pictures at the one hour place so they could have their pictures to take home this evening, which worked out fine. When I got back to the steak house I could not believe my eyes – the group had devoured 2 huge blooming onions in less than 15 minutes.!

After we got back to the blue house we all said goodbye very sadly as they would be driving back home starting out about 4 am. They drove for several hours on their way home and then stopped for donuts and drinks. They normally got home about 1 pm.

On September 6 to September 20, 2002 Mom and I went to the cottage with Cindy Quenneille, Harrigan and Kitsey. Cindy had a spooky thing happen to her while taking care of mom at the cottage. Suddenly she smelled a strong odor of perfume but we never have any perfume or any kind of odor producing products in the house as Sandy does not want anything of that sort in the house. And yet there was a strong odor of perfume in the house.

Cindy was a wonderful care giver for mom. She was always attentive to mom's needs and careful in moving her. Mom enjoyed being at the cottage again. She enjoyed being able to get out of the house and watching the waves roll into the shore in the Georgian Bay. Mom had been able to watch the beautiful Georgian Bay since 1953 and never tired of watching the waves roll in. Her reclining chair had been placed right next to the big windows so she could see the sea shore all day long.



Greg White & Sandy Wilhelm
Michelle, Marie, Nancy, Linda & Gary Bennett
Tasha, Michael, Donna & Ashley

The above picture was thanksgiving at Linda's house in Yorba Linda, California. Linda made a wonderful dinner that day. Linda also made a wonderful birthday dinner for Marie on November 13. There was one very sad thing that day. Linda refused to invite Craig, Mary Anne and the kids to her house so there was a lot of

bitterness on Craig and Mary Anne's part. Mary Anne came to the Woodfin Suites in the morning where mom and I and Nancy were staying and a lot of hateful words were spoken that morning. Mary Anne said that Mom, Nancy and I should not go to Linda's house because the Craig family were not invited.

We always took mom to the restaurant for lunch and dinner and all the owners and the hired help had made a big fuss over her so she was always happy to meet the hired help. One time one of our favorite waitresses brought her brand new baby Jake over in his carrier and mom was so happy to see that little baby. Mom also got a lot of pleasure out of watching small children run around the restaurant and removed decorations from the tables.

Mom got a big kick out of watching Roxanne go up to Ina and start talking away to her. We were all waiting for Ina to blow up and tell the girl off, but she never did. Mom and I were so glad to see the food come to distract Roxanne and get her out of Ina's hair. When Roxanne sat down at the table and started to eat Ina looked over at her and said "I had a bloody one of those come to visit me a while back and I was so glad to see him go".

"Bloody" was one of Ina's favorite expletives. She came in to the restaurant one day just blustering and said she was going to turn in that bloody post man in to the postmaster because he didn't take her birthday card to her relative out of her mail box and it was already a bit late for mailing.

She had a wonderful Scottish accent and was a delight to listen to. And she was doubly cute when she got angry with the world and would spout off in her Scottish brogue. It was so sad when she couldn't come into the restaurant by herself any more.

The other character that used to come into Mom's restaurant regularly was Rita and her husband. Nothing pleased Rita, she complained about anything and everything. Her poor husband learned how to keep his mouth shut. But no matter what, every night Rita had to have her piece of coconut cream pie. Toward the end the staff had to hold onto both of them so they could safely get from the table to their car. The last couple of years they weren't at the restaurant anymore as their family put them in a nursing home.

Cindy was a big help to both mom and me that trip up to the cottage. She took good care of mom and helped me with the driving on those long stretched of

highway. Cindy was a really good driver, having been a school bus driver for over 14 years.

Mom went with us one last time to Lion's Head on October 10 to October 17, 2002. Both Cindy and Rochelle came with us to help with mom and Cindy was also helping her husband Bob who came up with us to work on the cottage. Besides mom and I, Bob and Cindy we also had Kitsey, the birthday boy with us. He was 11 years old on October 16.

Bob and Cindy did a lot of work around the cottage. Bob moved many big stones and even some boulders from the cliff side to what Cindy and Bob calls "The Friendship Circle". Bob was having a very difficult time moving a huge boulder so he used a board as a lever and asked Cindy to help him put the lever under the boulder to pry it loose. Cindy helped but in the process she got her ring finger caught under the lever and crushed her gold band into her finger, bending the ring out of round and injuring her finger. Cindy also helped take care of mom because mom begged her to. Cindy was embarrassed to jump in when Rochelle was very ready and capable of caring for mom because mom insisted that Cindy take care of her. We all could have died of embarrassment when mom got really mad that I moved mom's purse out in the open, saying she wanted it to be kept hidden. I had to bring it back to my bedroom and hide it. Mike used to call mom's purse "the vault" because she used to hide it in the side pocket of her chair back home and didn't want anyone to go near it. Once money went in it never came back out.

The 2 funny stories about her purse occurred when mom wanted to leave the corner booth of Steve's and I wanted to visit a bit more with my friends. Mom got mad when she kept saying she wanted to leave and we never left. So she turned her wheelchair around and started pedaling to the door. When mom got close to the door I had to get up and leave or she might end up in the parking lot. Rochelle put mom in her car lift chair and brought her into the house in her wheel chair. When mom got back in her chair in her house I suddenly saw she had a mitt full of dollar bills. Now, where did that come from, I asked myself. Suddenly it dawned on me. Mom lifted all the tips from the 4 tables where the patrons had just left tips. So I called Steve's and asked which waitress had those tables. They were all Judy's so the next day I gave Judy the money out of my own pocket, because once something goes into the "vault" it never comes out again.

Mom had at least 6 strokes in all before she died. With the last ones she lost her ability to swallow and to feed herself/ Her sister Elenore was a lot luckier. Marie was the only one of the 6 kids to suffer strokes.

October 10 to the 17th 2002 was the last time mom went to the cottage which she dearly loved. Mom went quickly down hill from October to December. She got weaker and weaker as the weeks went on. Mom could no longer transfer herself from chair to wheel chair or to commode. We had to hold her under her arms and totally lift her and transfer her. The last few weeks her skin got so fragile she developed huge bruises from being transferred. We had a lot of great help those last months. We had Rochelle, Cindy, Marlene, Ann, Judy and Helen.

When we got back home from the cottage we put up a small Christmas tree in mom's living room. We decorated it with a lot of ornaments including one that twirled round and round. Mom smiled and really enjoyed looking at the tree. I bought mom 4 Furbys and put them on her lap and had them dance and talk to one another. She thought they were silly but very cute.

Harrigan began to slow down as 2002 wound down into fall. Harrigan had a soft lump on his side in front of his back leg. When we walked along the shore line in Canada he had trouble walking. On the way back he jumped into the water and swam back, which evidently was easier on him. Once we got home Harrigan kept slowing down. On the morning of October 28 2002 Harrigan could no longer get up off the floor. He tried so hard and even scooted along the rug trying to get outside to do his job but he just couldn't move. He was so embarrassed doing it on the rug. I called Liz Kirchner my neighbor and she slid a blanket under him and we used the blanket to lift him into the back of the van. I drove him over to the vet and asked her to put Harrigan to sleep. We carried him on a bed board to a room in the vet's and while I was petting him and talking nice to him the vet gently put him to sleep. He looked at me until the medicine took over, then he put his head down on the table and passed away.

I was heart broken as I walked out of the vet's office without Harrigan. I had taken Harrigan to the Shaggy dog pet shop to have him washed and groomed 3 days before thinking that would make him feel better. While there a Shih Tzu ran up to me and put her paws around my leg. I don't want a Shih Tzu I said to my self. Right after Harrigan passed I went back into the Shaggy Dog pet shop to return toys I had bought for Harrigan. As soon as I went back in there the Shih Tzu again ran up to me and wanted me to pick her up. I figured if she wanted to be with me twice there must be a reason, so I bought her and took her home to mom's to show her off.

Brandy took right away to mom too. She jumped up on the foot of mom's recliner and then ran all the way up to mom's face and kissed her. Mom liked Brandy but felt that she was a bit too rambunctious.

Mom started having visitations from her mom, her sister Mildred and her brothers Bill and Shorty. They would come in the night and talk to her. It would scare the care takers. One time when Toni was staying over night she had the baby monitor on and she heard mom talking to her mom and siblings and then she heard the whispering back from the siblings. She heard Mildred say "Give me those cards. I'll show you how to shuffle!" Toni said she was so scared she wasn't about to go in mom's room no matter what mom might need.

Rochelle was watching mom one night shortly before mom died. Rochelle was asleep when mom sat up in bed (mom was so very weak that she could not do anything at all for herself) got up out of bed, grabbed her walker which she held straight ahead in front of her and ran down the hall without the use of the walker. Rochelle was shocked to see mom, who was no longer capable of even moving herself in bed, running down the hall and into the living room. Nellie, Mildred, Bill and Shorty were standing to one side of the front door telling Marie to just step into the light. Mom looked at the light and then shook her head no. After standing there for less than a minute mom then lost consciousness.

Realizing that mom was close to death I asked my cousin Pat Nowicki if she could help me find a burgundy velvet dress to bury mom in. Pat told me that she had checked around and that Lord & Taylor had 2 nice ones and she asked the sales lady to put them aside till I could come into the store. I went there, looked at them and I was disappointed as it was not quite what I had in mind. I saw a very nice looking dress right in the front of the store. But something told me to take that dress and put it under a strong light. What a surprise! It was so pretty and soft colored in subdued lighting but it was absolutely garish under bright lighting. So I put that one back down where I got it from. I was now so discouraged at not finding just the right dress. And as I walked back toward the check out counter all of a sudden I saw the perfect dress for mom. It was so soft and feminine and rich looking. It was over \$375 but no matter, the high cost, it was perfect for mom. And when I got the dress up to the check out counter it was on sale for less than \$250. What a pleasant surprise that was. I took the dress home to mom's house and as soon as I walked in the door mom was alert and smiling at me so I took the bag off the dress and showed it to her. She beamed with approval she liked that dress so much, But I was wondering if mom knew that was the dress she was going to be laid out in.

When I brought the dress to the funeral parlor I also brought with me the two things mom made me promise to have her buried in. She always had very cold feet and often very miserable at night in bed unless she put on very warm socks. So she made my promise to make sure she would be buried in very warm socks and warm shoes, so that's what I brought with me to the funeral parlor.

Mom could not longer feed herself or swallow after that. I took mom to Dr. Nathan and he said it would be kinder not to feed her as we could cause a bigger problem by having the food land in her lungs and she could asphyxiate. He said she was very near the end. I ran to Meijer at 15 and Utica Rd to buy thickening so mom could swallow liquids without choking/ Rochelle called me and said mom was in horrible pain. I rushed back home but the pain seemed to subside by the time I got back. After that day mom could no longer swallow. She went to the restaurant with us until 2 days before she died. After that we kept her in bed. On December 4th Pat and Jean came to visit mom in her bedroom. Mom was in a coma but she opened her eyes and looked at them with a quizzical look in her eyes, then fell back asleep. Judy then brought a beautiful very large angel and strapped it into the side seat of my van where mom normally rode. I put it in the kitchen next to the sink.

The last day of mom's life was December 5th, my birthday. We stayed with mom all day running in to her bedroom every time we heard her move. Then at dinner time Mike and Marilyn came and visited her. Mike was terribly upset by the fact that mom had a very hard time breathing and continually tried to catch her breath by sucking in air with deep breaths. Rochelle left at the end of her shift and Cindy came on. She stayed with mom while Mike, Marilyn and I went to supper. Mike and Marilyn went home and I stayed with mom and Cindy who was taking over for this shift. Cindy brought me a number of boards that she and Bob made for my birthday for me to do jigsaw puzzles on. Toni some how found out about mom's serious condition and came over. So Toni, Cindy and I were taking turns walking into mom's bedroom and caring for her. They kept her clean and comfortable. We put Bearsie her very favorite beanie baby right next to her in bed and we put a rosary in her hand. It was just a matter of doing a death watch at this point. It was now past 10 pm and I was utterly exhausted from very little sleep during the death watch. I had no idea how long mom would live so I told the girls I needed to go home and try to get some sleep as I had less than 3 hours in the past 3 days. I no sooner got home and started to open a can of soup when the phone rang with Cindy telling me that mom had just passed away at 10:28 pm. I went right back to mom's and sat with her and my 2 friends. I was told that I had to wait 30 minutes after

mom was gone before I could call the hospice nurse. Otherwise the fire department would try to resuscitate her. (I had Dr. Nathan call hospice 3 days before Mom died as I did not want any hassle with the coroner. I had Dr. Nathan talk to the hospice nurse and make it very clear that this was a natural death and was expected soon so there would be no nonsense at the end.) So I called the hospice nurse and waited for her arrival which took over 45 minutes. In the meantime I suddenly realized that Elenore needed to be informed in case she wanted to come. I put the telephone book down on the bed and dropped my cell phone right on top of mom's leg. We all gasped as mom's legs were so tender that that would have been so very painful had she been still alive. Just before mom died we took the covers off her legs to readjust her position and when we looked at her legs mom had her eyes open and we hoped she could not see her legs as they were purple from the knees down due to no circulation.

I got Elenore on the phone right away. She said she didn't think she could make that trip at her age. I then called my brother Mike and told him to call Nancy and her kids and tell them Mom had passed away as I was just way too exhausted to do that myself. I found out the next day he had not called anyone.

The hospice nurse came, verified that mom was gone and called the police. The police peeked in the bedroom and ran off. Three days before mom died I called Ray Lope from Sullivan Funeral Home and told him to talk to mom's doctor and verify that this was a natural death as I didn't want any hassle when the time came. Ray Lope told his staff that as soon as they got the call they were to call him no matter what time of day or night. So Sullivan's funeral wagon came about 1 am and carried mom out of her bed and onto a stretcher in the hallway as they could not get a stretcher into her bedroom.

They then ran mom into the living room and then right in front of mom's Christmas tree they zipped her up in the body bag. That broke my heart. They then opened the front door and pushed the gurney down the ramp and into their van.

I was so exhausted and my stomach hurt so much from so little sleep for 3 days so Cindy, Toni and I went into the kitchen and I poured me a bowl of cereal. It sure was out of character for me to be in the kitchen eating at 1:15 in the morning but I was so shocked over mom's death and her removal from her own home that I could not settle down so the 3 of us sat and talked well into the night.

The next morning Cindy, Toni and I went to Sullivan's funeral home to make the final arrangements. Mom had made all of her own arrangements several years before. I had to make arrangements for Nancy in order for her to have a pre paid funeral agreement so she could qualify for state health care. When mom heard I was going to Sullivan's she said she wanted to go with me. So we went together. Mom paid sharp attention to all the arrangements and then said she wanted a prepaid funeral agreement too so Ray Lope said we could do both. In the middle of Nancy's arrangements mom told Ray she wanted to look at caskets. Ray said okay, let's go look at caskets, so we left the office and went to the room containing all the caskets. Mom loved the one that had the statute of the Blessed Mother holding the dead Jesus in her arms (the Pieta) on all four corners. I was surprised that she chose that one. I would have chosen a more feminine looking one. They had a pink casket with a floral design on the lid that I thought she would prefer.

We then went back to the office and mom picked out her prayer cards and her thank you cards. She was very satisfied and happy with her choices. Another funny thing mom did. For over 5 years Hall Rd was all torn up with new construction, making a big mess in front of Sullivan's funeral home. Mom said a number of times that she hoped the road construction would be over before she passed away. And over and over again when we passed by Sullivan's mom would say, "That's my home away from home."

While I was at the funeral parlor Aunt Elenore called my home and mom's home wanting to tell me that she was flying out that day and needed to have me pick her up at the airport. But Elenore could not get a hold of me as I was not at home, but at the funeral parlor. Elenore got panic stricken and called Doris to have her pick her up. But Doris told her she was not familiar with the airport so Elenore should take a taxi to Doris's home. Elenore was now totally panic stricken. She was going to be in a wheelchair, needed to be taken off the airplane and wheeled to the baggage pick up and then someone would have to take her and her baggage to a car. As soon as I got back to mom's house I called Elenore and told her I would pick her up right as she got off the plane. Elenore was greatly relieved.

I was so exhausted from lack of sleep and the stress of mom dying that there was no way I could drive to the airport so fortunately Cindy said she would drive me. Then Doris called and said she would like to go with us to the airport, I told her that she would have to be at Steve's café by 4 pm as we needed to eat early to be at the airport on time. We sit down to eat at the corner booth and I look at the menu trying to decide what would be soft on my stomach as my stomach is so sore from stress and prolonged lack of sleep. I guess chicken would be the easiest on my

stomach I say out loud. Doris is shocked. "Sandy, you're not going to eat meat on a Friday!" she says. I hate fish and it is not even lent, but I'm not going to get into an argument with her so I eat the despised fish and keep my mouth shut.

Cindy drives us to the airport and parks in the parking garage right near the entrance to the airport. Only one person can go to the gate so I suggest that Cindy and Doris sit on the bench by the exit to the garage while I go get Elenore. I go to the ticket counter and get a pass to go get my old disabled Aunt at the gate. When I get there it takes a while for the airplane to arrive and when it gets there they said they had to find a wheelchair. I takes them over a half hour to find a wheelchair. Finally Elenore emerges from the plane and we were so very glad to see one another at long last. I then push her to the baggage claim and find her bag. I then try to find where I left Cindy but had no trouble finding her as they were just around the corner. Doris is having a meltdown as I was so long waiting for Elenore and finding the baggage that she is sure that I will never be able to find them. So Cindy grabs Elenore's bag and we all get to the van which is just around the corner from where they were sitting. Cindy drives us home to mom's house.

The funeral is delayed for several days per Ray Lope's suggestion as the Stephens family has to make arrangements to fly to Michigan, and in Warren's case drive from Maryland. Jackie and the kids cannot come as they are in school and have never missed a day. Linda wanted to come but she has a very bad cold and is afraid to fly as her ears are plugged. Donna and her daughter Michelle came as well as Craig and his whole family. Valerie especially wanted to come as she loved Marie and wanted to say goodbye. Nancy and Bob came and Bob took very good care of Nancy as she had problems with her walking ability and her balance. Elenore was the first one here and she slept in mom's room and Cindy stayed there and looked out for Elenore.

When everyone arrived in Utica they were met by a huge Santa Claus and a huge snowman on the front lawn. It was filled with air and kept inflated by an electric air pump. We put that on the front lawn a week or two before so mom could see them as she sat in her reclining chair by the front window.

We did the Christmas tree and the inflatables early as we were afraid mom would not make it to Christmas.

We held off the funeral until December 13 to allow everyone to get here to Utica. We entered mom's room in the funeral parlor about 1:15 pm waiting for all the family to get there. Mom was beautiful in her white flowing gown that I had

bought at Lord & Taylor the week before. Mom wore beautiful diamond pins on her gown that were given to her by me and some of her caregivers. She had her wedding rings on and also her amethyst ring given to her by her son Bill many years ago. Mother was truly a vision of loveliness as she lay there in eternal repose.

Many family members came to visit mom. Aunt Elenore was there as were Aunt Jean and Pat Nowicki. Doris Stocker, who dearly loved mom, was also there. A number of Edward's relatives were also there. Carol Bender Meyers came in the evening and Sandy had a nice conversation with her. Carol who had sons slightly older and slightly younger than Craig, said that both of her sons were still single.

Clyde Bender came while I was in the coffee room having a taco Bell pizza. One of my friends came running up to the coffee room and said my brother Mike wanted me to come right down as there was someone there he didn't recognize. As I walked into the room and faced the new comer I knew right away that it had to be Clyde Bender as he looked just like his mother, Agnes Bender. We had a very friendly meeting and he told me a cute story from long ago. He said that Edward brought his new bride to meet Art and Agnes and that Clyde who was peeking around the corner said that Uncle Ed sure had a very pretty bride. She was a real beauty!

Dave Gamache came and said that Monaclaire was unable to make it was she was having eye problems and her health was going down.

Karen Bender and her children came for the funeral and we had some very nice pictures taken of Doug, Karen and their children.

Many of mom's faithful caregivers were with us in the funeral parlor and at the cemetery. They took such good care of her that they felt that they were a part of her family. Mom loved many of her care givers and had many a happy time hanging out with us in her last 2 ½ years of life. When the casket was about to be closed a few of the caregivers who had given lovely jewelry to mom requested that they could take a piece with them for remembrance. Other caregivers insisted that the jewelry they gave Marie remain buried with her as they wanted her to look really nice in her pretty jewelry. Mom's caregivers loved her so much that even years later they tell many funny stories about our experiences with her in her last 2 years, and sometimes even years before that.

In the middle of the funeral wake Doug's second wife Kathy came in looking very lovely and Doug was very happy to see her again after about a 5 year absence. They were both very happy to see each other again and were quickly reunited, much to both of their pleasure. They remarried in San Francisco on June 13, 2003 and returned to Kathy's home in St. Clair Shores. They were together for the 1 year 5 months they were happily married till her untimely death from pancreatic cancer on the 1st of November, 2004 at the young age of 48.

On December 15, 2002 Marie's body was taken to St. Lawrence Church and laid in state at the back of the church in front of the baptismal fount. Father Tim Szott conducted the funeral service for Marie. Mom would have been very happy he was the celebrant as she had gone into the church 3 times over the past year of her life and had the Last Rites, (or Anointing of the Sick as it is now called.) performed by Father Tim. He developed a genuine affection for Marie as he administered to her in her last days. She went to confession just before the Last Rites twice that year and was greatly comforted by it especially the second time when Father Tim explained to her that with confession and the Anointing of the Sick all her sins were taken away and she could slip away into eternity with the assurance that she would be ascending into heaven.

Mom's earthly remains were taken to the front of the church before the altar and the baptismal pall was placed over her closed casket by her family. Bearsie, who was so dear to mom, was sitting in the first pew right next to mom. She bought that Bear at the Great Lakes Crossing Mall in a shop. I wheeled her to the beanie baby section and let her pick out a bear. I was sure she was going to pick out that beautiful white angel bear but we were all shocked when instead she picked out the green bear with mottled skin. When Linda saw the bear she told her grandma Marie that she thought Bearsie had a skin problem. Don't you want that beautiful white angel bear? we all asked her. No, she said cuddling the green beanie baby, I want him. So Bearsie went home with Marie that day and was given a lot of love and affection by her for the rest of her days. Bearsie went to the cemetery and sat on her casket and after the burial he went home with Sandy and now sits on a shelf next to her computer.

Father Tim Szott prayed the last commendation and farewell under a tent and the St. Lawrence cemetery with many of our close relatives present.

Aunt Jean, Pat and Chet went to the cemetery and then to the restaurant with us for the funeral luncheon afterwards. We chose Steve's Café for the luncheon as that is where we took mom day after day for the last 2 ½ years of her life.



Marie & Edward Bender's final resting place in St. Lawrence cemetery

Aunt Elenore stayed a few more days and then left for home. It was so sad for Sandy to see her leave as Marie, Elenore and Sandy had spent so many happy times together through the years and now Marie was gone forever and there was no telling how much longer we would have Elenore.

Craig and his family flew out a few days later, returning to California. Donna and her daughter Michelle left about the same time. I had bought a winter coat for Michelle as it was quite cold in Michigan, much colder than southern California. I smiled to myself when a week later I went to K Mart and found the coat I bought for Michelle hanging on the rack. Michelle had taken it back for a refund. A real smart move as she would never have any use for a winter coat again in southern California.

Sandy was now all alone in Marie's house with only her years of memories. The huge snowman and the equally huge Santa Claus were laying flat on the ground, crumpled up, looking sad, never to be inflated again. Inside the house there was that 3 foot tall angel in mom's kitchen sitting next to the sink by the cupboards. In the living room was the nice glass encased Blessed Mother statue which remains in the living room to this day. Judy took the large angel home just recently to place in her family room as a remembrance of mom. For the last 6 years mom's house remains sad and empty.

2003

Bears were not the only scary thing on Carter Rd. A new neighbor from Shelby Township, Michigan bought the Nesbitt cottage named the Glencoe. They were in their cottage when they heard a breaking glass noise from further down Carter Lane. In a little while the sound of breaking glass got closer and louder. Then they heard a teenage boy say to his partner, "I'm getting sick of breaking these bathroom windows". Terrified, they called the OPP. Naturally they were far away at the time, in Owen Sound. It sounded like the boys were in the process of breaking the bathroom window of the cottage next door so they were getting frantic. The neighbor on the other end of Carter Rd came along on his bike and saw the kids coming out of the cottage next door and when they saw Don Tefft they took off back to Lion's Head on foot. Tefft followed them on his bike. The OPP showed up after Tefft followed the kids. Once in Lion's Head the kids split up so Don followed one of them to their home and then reported to the police where one of the boys lived. The OPP apprehended the one kid who squealed on the other kid.

Occasionally the cottages are broken into by school kids who are kicked out of the high school for the day for bad behavior. The kids in question the last time this happened were from the Indian Reservation which is way too far to walk home so they pass the rest of the day breaking into cottages looking for liquor and valuables.

One year later, in august 2003 mom's house was very much needed by me when I discovered I had a cancerous tumor in my left arm which needed to be removed. At first when I felt the pain in my left arm it started about 1 month before Mom died. I figured it was because I was lifting her so much that I strained my muscles in the left arm. It got worse as the spring and summer wore on. Then in August when Warren and Jackie and the kids were almost at the blue house I picked up a garbage can in my house and the bone fractures and I was in excruciating pain. We were planning to go to the cottage on Sunday morning but I knew I had to go to the doctor first to find out what it was and what needed to be done for it. On Sunday we went to the mall to shop for school clothes for Casey Shea and Patrick and I was in so much pain it was a killer to walk around. I held my arm straight down and tried not to move it. A couple of hours later the pain subsided a bit. The next day Warren went with me to Dr, Jaiyesimi's office to see what could be done. He sent me next door to Dr. Les's office, she said it was bone cancer and needed to be operated on. I asked her if I could go to the cottage with my family and have it cared for when I got back home. She said yes, just don't move it till she could

operated on it. We set a surgery date that day for 2 days after the Stephens went home.

Warren and his family and I had a very pleasant time at the cottage although I was plenty worried about my arm. When Warren and his family went home I went into the hospital and had the cancerous tumor removed from the left arm. My friends were with me in the pre op room and kept my spirits up. The surgery went well and the arm was expected to make a full recovery.

My friends Cindy, and Judy went with me to Beaumont hospital and stayed with me all day. I was released from the hospital at 5 pm, went to Steve's and got a carry out turkey sandwich and then went to mom's house for the night. I needed help getting out of bed that night and the next day due to the pain in my arm and also due to the extreme weakness from the anesthetic. Judy and my R.N. friend Liz Kirchner stayed with me over night. Judy laughed herself silly when I kept calling for help in getting out of mom's Craftmatic bed at 1 am. I was too weak to get out of bed by myself so I cranked up the head and foot of the bed to assist myself in getting up and instead I got totally wedged in between the head and foot of the bed and was totally stuck. I hollered my head off but I had turned on the large attic fan full blast and no one could hear me over the sound of the blades. Finally my dog Brandy heard me hollering and jumped up on Judy till she woke and heard me. Judy thought it was hilarious looking at me solidly wedged in mom's bed, but I found it rather scary as I couldn't move.

The next day was also scary as I was so weak and my muscles were sore that I could not get up from the couch without great pain. Judy had to hoist me up. When 2 days later I told her I thought I could care for myself in my own home so was so glad saying I had worn her out. So Brandy and I returned to the brown house.

I went to Dr. Jaiyesimi's office and was started on an oral chemo drug called aromasin in September, 2003. I did very well on that drug from 2003 till June of 2008.

Right after the surgery I had a round of radiation to that arm to kill any residual cancer in that are. The radiation worked – the cancer in that arm disappeared and has remained gone for 7 years.

On June 17 to June 22, 2003 Judy Dunn went to the cottage with me, Brandy and Kitsey. This was the first time I went to cottage without mom. Mom and I had

gone to the cottage since September, 1994 when I purchased the cottage and mom and I first moved in. Judy and I had a great time together. Judy helped me care for Brandy and Kitsey.

On July 19 to July 23, 2003 I went to the cottage with Karen, Shelley, Lizzie, and Brandy. Lizzie and Brandy got along very well together that trip to the cottage. We all had a good time going to the restaurant for lunch and dinner and going shopping in town.

On August 4, 2003 Warren, Jackie and the kids showed up once again in the blue house. We went out to eat with Mike and Marilyn and sat and talked for a while in the yard. We then retired early to go to the cottage early the next day. On August 5 to August 15, 2003 Warren, Jackie, Casey Shea, Patrick, Patch, Rosie, Cassie and Charlie and Brandy and Kitsey and I arrived at the cottage about 5 pm and went to dinner at Northwinds in Ferndale. Warren, Jackie and the kids went for bike rides up and down the shore line. They also took early morning walks along Hwy 9. Warren had gone to the Toronto Star newspaper stand for the first 3 or 4 days then gave up buying a paper as he said they were so liberal in their reporting that he had no interest in reading that paper. Jackie and I read some of the rag magazines and did some jigsaw puzzles. Most nights Warren, Casey Shea, Patrick and I played cards. The amount of moths and flying insects after dark was disgusting. The tiny fling insects were able to come right through the screens and we had to continually smack them as they kept landing on the table while we were playing cards. The dogs and cats were very well behaved this trip. The kids walked Patch and Rosie along the shoreline several times a day while the cats remained upstairs day and night. I got a kick out of hearing them patter across the floor over my ceiling every night. It was such a pleasant sound. We went to Tobermory and Wiarton this trip but none of us went horse back riding or fishing.

The electrical power went out one night in the middle of the week. By the time we went to mom's to eat the power was back on. We found out that a car had ran into a telephone pole on Hwy 6 knocking out the power for about 3 hours. Then about 3 pm on Friday the power went out again at the cottage. So I called mom's restaurant and asked them if they had power. They informed us that it was not a local outage but the power was down all through Canada and also in Michigan and Ohio. Joyce said the restaurant was closed as they had no power to cook or keep the food refrigerated. I asked her what she could do for us as we had no food in the cottage as we always ate at her restaurant. She told me to give her a ½ hour to prepare something for all of us. We showed up and they had the picnic tables all set up for us in their back yard. Alex grilled hot dogs and hamburgers on his grill

and brought out all the left over salad bar stuff from the refrigerator as that food would not be edible after the refrigerator was inoperative over night. Alex handed out bottles of beer to Warren and Jackie. They were very pleased when we paid them \$50 as they were not expecting to be paid.

Warren and I were very worried about getting home tomorrow as both he and I had less than a half tank of gas and we needed at least a half tank to get to Utica and Warren needed at least another full tank of gas to get to Maryland. When we explained our dilemma to Alex he said that there were a few farmers in the area that had their own gas pumps that didn't need electricity to pump out the gas so if the electric grid was still down tomorrow morning he would see that we got gas into our tanks.

When I woke up in the morning the lights were back on so I told Warren lets go right down to the Shell station on Hwy 6 and fill up our tanks so we can at least get home to Utica, We filled our tanks and started home. It was a good thing that we filled up in Ferndale as our area was the only place that had any power from Lion's Head to the Blue Water Bridge. It was only as we crossed over the bridge that the power went back on. We had windmills on Hwy 6 in Ferndale, maybe that is why we were the only ones with electricity. So early the next morning Warren and the family started the long trip home to Maryland.

On the 13th of September 2003 I drove to the Detroit Metropolitan Airport and picked up my German translator, Ruth Mink Mineo who just flew in from Dothen Alabama. We then drove straight through to Lion's Head with Brandy in the back seat. Ruth and I had a wonderful time at the cottage. We went to the Josie dress shop in Wiarton and bought Ruth some elegant size 6 2 piece suits. She was so pleased with her new clothes. We spent the week sight sighting and enjoying each other's company. On the 20th of September we drove back home and Ruth boarded a plane back to Alabama.

From October 26 to November 3, 2003 Cindy, Judy, Kitsey feller, brandy girl and I went to the cottage and stayed there until the snow started to fall. We played cards every night and went shopping for clothes during the day.



Sandy Wilhelm packing for the poor in Kentucky

Sister Mary Esther, O.S.M. contacted me and asked me to send clothing and toys to the poor in Harlan, Kentucky where she was living as a missionary. Per her request I sent a total of 504 big boxes of clothing and toys to Harlan Kentucky, which is the poorest county in the US. I bought clothing and toys from the local second hand stores, boxed them up, weighed them and had UPS pick them up from the blue house garage. In the beginning I sent the packages to Mary Widner, Francine Rowe, Santa Claus, and Trinkets and Treasures which was run by the Church in Harlan. I rented and stocked the second hand store run by the Catholic Church in Harlan. Melanie Forester ran that store for the first year. I shipped 25,000 pieces of clothing to the store and then drove down to the store and hung most of the clothing.

From May 19th to May 23rd 2004 Cindy, Matt, Brandy and I went to the cottage for the first time this year. Cindy and her son did some work around the cottage that I was very grateful for.

On May 27 2004 Aunt Elenore flew in to Detroit Metro and we spent a few days together at mom's house and then we drove with Brandy May 29th to June 10th 2004 to Lion's Head. We enjoyed sitting in the living room of the cottage together during the day and playing cards at night. Elenore and I also did crossword puzzles together in the cottage. Boy, was Elenore ever good at finishing crossword puzzles! We went for car rides during the day. One May 29th we went back home and a few days later she flew back home to Minnesota. For the first time Elenore was too weak to go to Laurie's house after the cottage as she normally did in times past. This was the last time I saw Aunt Elenore alive.

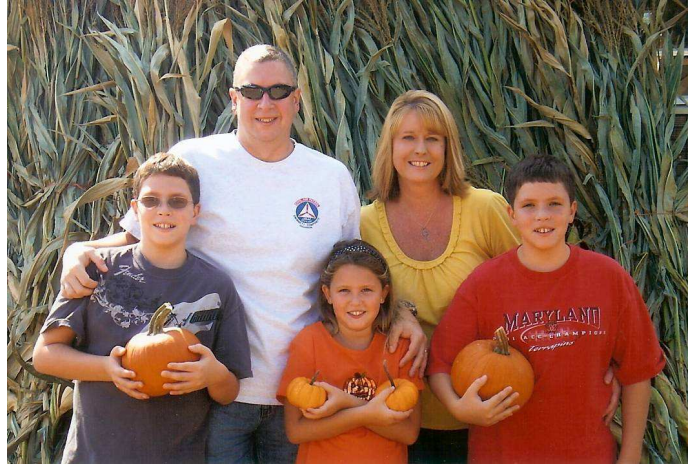
On June 16 to June 20, 2004 I was at the cottage with Curt and Brandy. Curt did a lot of yard work around the cottage. He drove most of the way to the cottage and back which was a relief for me.

On June 25 to June 30th and July 2nd, 2004 we went up to the cottage with Karen, Shelley, Lizzie, Doug Bender Jr, Jennifer Garro and Sandy and Brandy Wilhelm. We had a great time at the cottage that week. Doug and Jenny went riding on the motor scooters. Karen, Doug Jr and Jennifer went on a fishing trip on the Georgian Bay. We all went on an excursion around the Flower Pot Island in the Tobermory harbor. We got some nice pictures on the boat. Every evening we played the card game manipulation and around 10:30 – 11:00 pm everyone except Shelley and I went down to the shoreline and started a bon fire using the wood we cut from the overgrown bushes and trees. They stayed there till about 1 am. One night they saw the *aurora borealis* in all its colorful glory. I bought fire works from the dime store in Wiarton and Douggie set them off. I was standing on the second deck watching the fireworks when suddenly one of the rockets that Douggie lit tipped over and the rocket went 100 miles an hour right next to my head, missing me by inches! I sure was lucky that night! Mikey kept the fire roaring by constantly placing large dead tree branches on the bon fire. They also roasted marshmallows on a stick over the bon fire and drank a few bottles of beer.

2004

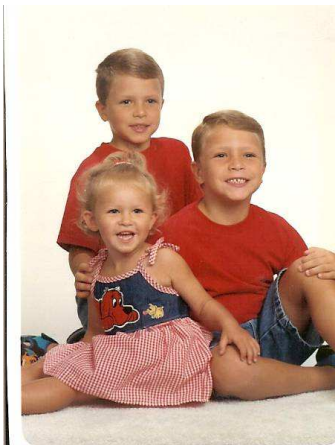
There were 2 bears walking up and down Carter Rd one summer. They terrified the cottagers. One man was renting the Duncan cottage and he had a St. Bernard with him. At 1 am the St. Bernard insisted on going outside so the man put his clothes on and walked the dog so he could do his business. But it turns out that the dog had another purpose for wanting to go outside. As the renter started walking his dog toward the main road the renter spotted a big bear coming at him and the dog. He quickly turned around and ran back into the Duncan cottage.

The doctor at the end of Carter Rd just off Hwy 9 had 2 small children and he was so worried that his children might come upon the 2 bears so when no one was around he shot the 2 bears and somehow disposed of their bodies. It is against the law to shoot bears but being he had 2 small children and 2 undependable bears roaming around, no one blamed him for shooting the bears.



Bailey, Donny, Emily, Amy & Brandon Zindorf

On July 16 to July 24, 2004 Donny and Amy Zindorf came to my cottage in Lion's Head with their 3 children Emily and twins Brandon and Bailey. The children loved running along the shore line with Brandy. As they walked down the stone steps to the rocky shore Brandy ran right along with them. On the 24th of July they returned once again to Georgia.



Bailey, Emily & Brandon Zindorf

Donny had been in the service for 6 years so when he returned to Georgia he had very little money. They had twin boys, Brandon and Bailey shortly after they were married. They rented a 3rd floor apartment. Amy wanted a daughter but told her mom Sharon that they could not afford another child. Sharon told her daughter that there never was a perfect time to have a child and time marches on so if she wanted a daughter she should go ahead and have one. Emily came the next year. Amy was so happy to finally have a daughter. The apartment was quite crowded with 3 kids and the boys had to bump their bikes down three flights of stairs every time they wanted to go riding and then haul them up 3 flights when they were done

riding. Donny had sufficient income to afford a house payment as they were already paying \$1000 a month rent on the apartment, but they needed to save up a down payment. Every time they had some money saved up they would have an emergency and have to pay on that instead. The most recent emergency is when the boys were on their hands and knees playing "Doggy, doggy" one brother kicked the tooth out of his brother's mouth and they had to have a new tooth put in at a substantial cost. Amy found a new subdivision where the brand new homes were affordable and would not cost any more than they were paying for rent. All they needed was a down payment. When I heard this I gave them the down payment and they bought the house and have remained current with their house payments to date.

Sharon's husband Bill lost his mother who lived in Livonia so they had to come up there from Georgia for the funeral. One the way driving up to Michigan Donny's old faithful high mileage car gave up the ghost in Chattanooga, Tennessee, so he had to leave his car there and rent a mini van to get to Livonia. I met Sharon and her family in Livonia and checked them into 2 hotel rooms because they had planned to stay in their deceased mother's house with 30 other people which would have been awful. After they checked in we all went to the dining room to order supper. Donny and his family did not come for quite a while after we ordered dinner as they fell behind the rest of the family due to having to take time to rent a van. They showed up while we were still at the table and we all ate together.

I went to the funeral parlor with the family. Sharon found out that a relative had very important pictures that they put on a board but were going to leave with the pictures after the funeral and Sharon dearly wanted a copy. So I called my neighbor Curt Crawl and asked him to bring my all in one printer to the funeral parlor along with photo paper and extra ink cartridges. I then spent the 2 days making 8 X 10s out of the relatives old photos and placed them in sleeves in a binder. I made the relatives very happy by making them 8 X 10s of their favorite pictures and putting their pictures into sleeves to protect them. When the relatives took their original pictures home, now Sharon had some fine quality 8 X 10 copies of all the important originals.

On August 1 to August 7, 2004 Warren, Jackie, Casey Shea and Patrick came for a short stay for the last time at my cottage in Lion's Head. The children were much older now and had jobs they had to return to to save up money to go to college. We played cards in the evening and every morning Warren would spend hours on his computer handling his work load. I did not know that they were staying such a short time this trip so I was very sad to hear they were going home after only 6

days. For the next 9 years they were no longer able to come to the cottage as they had work obligations.

October 4 to October 10, 2004 Ann Kay and Helen Kent along with Brandy and Kitsey went with me to the cottage. We went to Mom's restaurant for lunch and dinner daily and every night Ann and I played cards while Helen read as she does not like playing cards. Ann was fascinated by the bats who flew around the cottage at dark dusk, sometimes swooping down low and barely missing your head. But bats have good radar and always miss you no matter how close they get to you. Ann also thoroughly enjoyed the humming birds that hung around the cottage feeding off the humming bird feeder we hung on the front deck. On two occasions, this trip and a later trip to the cottage the humming bird got into the cottage and was up at the ceiling of the cottage just staying stock still. When I opened the front door of the cottage the humming bird flew away. Later on I had to remove the humming bird feeder which was filled with honey as it was attracting bears which we had no desire to have any where near the cottage.

In August, 2004 Doug, Kathy, Mike, Marilyn and I went to Frankfort for the first time. Mike and Marilyn had a deluxe 2 bedroom condo at Harbor lights on Lake Michigan. Doug and Kathy had a 1 bedroom handicap condo also right on the beach of Lake Michigan. Doug Jr. slept on the boat which was docked at Captain Dick's slip which he lent to Douggie. Kathy was on heavy pain medication as she was suffering from pancreatic cancer, but in spite of the pain she enjoyed her trip up there. She shopped with us and went out to eat with us but due to her illness ate very little. She also went to bed every day shortly after dinner. We all enjoyed sitting on the beach of Lake Michigan and all of us took a group picture standing on the sand. Derek was also with the Otter men on the beach having his picture taken.

The Otter men did the dune climb that year while Doug, Kathy, Mike, Marilyn and I watched from the outlook. I couldn't believe how little all the climbers looked when they were at the bottom of the dune at the water.

The Otters went canoeing down the Au Sauble river. Doug, Kathy and I watched the canoers from that picnic table spot about half way and then we watched them come in at the end where the canoes were loaded on the racks and driven back to the starting point. Kathy went over to the picnic bench where Mike was lounging and she massaged his feet for him.

We went back to the starting point and bought hot dogs and hamburgers and drinks from the pass through window.

In the summer of 2004 Mike and I went to Doug and Kathy's house on Champine St in St. Clair Shores. It was a beautiful summer day and we all sat on the front porch and enjoyed Kathy's beautiful flowers. Kathy had to carry her back pack of medicine around with her to control the pain.



Kitsey

On October 20 to October 25, 2004 Cindy & Bob Quenneville came to the cottage along with Kitsey, and Brandy and me. Bob and Cindy did a lot of landscaping around the back of the cottage and down by the shore line. Bob ordered a truck load of pea gravel which he ordered the dump truck driver to dump in two places, down below in the cement parking spot and up at the top of the turn around by the parking spot near the clump of trees. Cindy and I shoveled the pea gravel into the 2 wheel barrows and Bob dumped them in the low spots and then raked them out flat. Bob then cut down some tall but scrawny birch trees and lined the turn around driveway with the birches to keep the pea gravel from slipping down into the forest. Cindy and Bob tried to dig out a clump of 4 tree stumps, but no matter how hard and deep they dug they could not get those roots loose. Just when we were most frustrated over having to leave that huge clump in place a contractor working on Honig's cottage came over and asked if he could use our water. We said sure, but could you take your back hoe and try to remove this huge clump of tree roots? Sure he said and later came over to our turn around with his back hoe and chain. He wrapped the chain around the clump, fastened the chain to the backhoe and started driving backwards with the back hoe. After a lot of effort, suddenly the clump broke free. The back hoe driver lifted the clump up into the air and then asked us if we would like him to dump that clump on his farm field. Oh, would you!!, we asked. That clump was so huge that there would be no place to put it on

our property. It sure was a good trade we made that day, the removal of a huge clump for the use of our water.

By the middle of October 2004 Kathy was in considerable pain and had to spend many hours in bed due to pain and exhaustion. Doug took care of Kathy when he did not have to go to work and Kathy's father also stayed with her at times. Once Kathy asked her father to help her out of bed and walk her into the living room. As he was just standing there holding her, he said to her, "let's dance" and waltzed her all over the living room. On another day Kathy wanted to get out of the bed and smoke. So Doug hugged her to him and danced her out of the house to the garage as they do not smoke in the house/

Doug engaged hospice for Kathy to help manage her health problems. Kathy had a problem with one of the hospice nurses but then she changed to a male hospice nurse that she got along with very well and who was with her to the end. On November 1, All Saints Day, the male nurse came and made Kathy comfortable. He then went into the living room and was talking to Doug when all of a sudden Doug heard Kathy call out his name. He ran to the bedroom and found out she had just passed away.

On November 1 Doug and Kathy's family and I went to Van Lerberghe's funeral home to make the final arrangements. Kathy had gone to the funeral parlor earlier in the summer and made almost all of the arrangements with the female mortician. Kathy wanted all of her Dollmaker dolls arranged around the front of the funeral parlor on both sides of the casket. I helped arrange the dolls among flower arrangements. Kathy was right to use the Dollmaker dolls as a decorative touch. It was beautiful. At the end of the funeral Kathy gave the dolls away to her friends she knew would enjoy having them. The dolls were put in their original boxes and were carried away by the new owners.

The board in the hallway that announced the deceased took me aback when I read it. It said

**KATHY
PRABEL**

**MARIE
BENDER**

It looked as if mom was side by side with Kathy. Every time I saw that sign it took my breath away.

On the last day Kathy's body was carried away to the crematorium by Van Leberghe's hearse. Doug and I went to the luncheon on 9 Mile Rd that was arranged by Kathy's family.

I arranged to have a memorial service for Kathy at our church, St. Lawrence in Utica. Doug brought the cremains and Sister Janet put a small table at the foot of the altar. On the table she placed the cremains, a lighted candle and a small bouquet of flowers. I made a memorial booklet for Kathy with the mass service in it and a synopsis of her short life here on earth. I read a memorial to her at the podium in the church just before the 2 readings and the gospel. From the church we went on procession to the cemetery and once there we placed Kathy's ashes in a vault, said some prayers for the repose of her soul.

After the interment ceremony we returned to the St. Lawrence activity room and had a very nice luncheon.

2005

May 12 to May 20, 2005 Karen came to the cottage with Shelley and Lizzie. I brought Kitsey feller and Brandy Wynne with me. Cindy also came along and helped to drive. The dogs and the cat got along very well together. Karen, Shelley, Cindy and I played cards every night and listened to the 60s music on the cds.

June 20 to June 24, 2005 Cindy, Karen, Shelley, Lizzie, Sandy and Brandy came up to the cottage. Lizzie and Brandy got along very well together. We all came together in my van and Cindy helped with the driving in spite of her bad heart. In between coming up to Lion's Head to spend time at the cottage she has to go regularly to Toronto to have her heart checked out. They found out she had a genetic heart disorder so they put a defibrolater – pacemaker in her chest to guard against sudden death from a possibility of the heart suddenly stopping. Cindy then gave me a card from the hospital in Toronto telling a doctor what to do in case of a heart emergency while she was with me in the cottage at Lion's Head.

July 9 to July 17, 2005, first Cindy and I went to the cottage and then Bob came one day later. I brought Brandy and Kitsey with me. Cindy washed all the windows in the cottage inside and out and also swept and mopped the deck and the cement driveway. Bob and Cindy cleaned up all the brush around the cottage and cut down a number of dead and dying trees around the cottage, both on the forest

side to the south and the shoreline side. Bob ran electrical wiring from the cottage to the head of the turn around driveway so we would have lighting at night when we walked the dogs. Bob also ran a number of plugs around the deck so we could plug fixtures and stuff in without running wires inside the house.

August 20 to August 27, 2005 Karen, Shelley, Lizzie, Doug Sr, Brandy, Kitsey and I went to the cottage for a week's vacation. The next day, August 21 to August 27 Doug Bender Jr. and Jennifer Garro came up to the cottage.

August 24 to August 27, 2005 Mike Bender Jr. and Crystal Freeman joined us at the cottage. It was a very hot month at the cottage. On one of those days it was so hot and stuffy (very unusual Lion's Head weather) that the Benders decided to spend most of the day in the Georgian Bay cooling off in the water. Doug Jr. and Mike Jr. brought down the inflatable rafts to the water and pumped them up with air and then Jenny and Shelley got into the rafts and drifted down the bay toward the marina. The men played football in the water and on shore. Doug Sr. was on the rocks throwing the ball and Doug and Mike were in the water throwing the football back to Doug Sr. on shore.

We have some wonderful pictures of the football being tossed back and forth. After the football playing wound down Doug Jr. and Mike waded down river and grabbed the lead ropes on the rafts and towed the girls back to the water in front of the cottage. They had drifted almost all the way to the cottages just before the marina.

September 10 to September 20, 2005 Cindy Quenneville and I went up to the cottage with Brandy & Kitsey. Cindy and I went to Mom's restaurant for lunch and dinner every day. We also went shopping in Wiarton and Owen Sound and once to Tobermory. We took Brandy for walks along the shoreline. She was well behaved and walked off line as most of the cottagers were gone for the winter. Every night we played manipulation and Racko. In the afternoons we often put together a 500 or a 1000 piece jigsaw puzzle. We would take a picture of ourselves holding the finished puzzle.

2006

April 27 to May 14, 2006 Cindy Quenneville, Kitsey, Brandy and Sandy went up to the cottage for the first time this year. Cindy and Bob raked all the leaves that

accumulated over the winter and threw the dead leaves over the cliff on the bay side and also over the fence on the cliff side.

Two days later, on April 29, 2006 Mike Pare and Bill Windsor also came up to visit for the day from Kincardine and went back home after dinner. Mike is Cindy's brother in law and Bill is his good friend. Bill was just recuperating from abdominal surgery so they decided to take a ride for the day to see the cottage and to sit for a while on the Georgian Bay. They just loved the scenery up there.

June 04 to June 15, 2006 Judy Dunn, Cindy Quenneville, Brandy, Kitsey and I went up to the cottage. This was Judy's first time up at the cottage. She loved the scenery but she was worried about leaving her 2 miniature pincers, Tara and Max home alone with just a babysitter who came in her house every day just long enough to feed them and let them out to do their business. But Judy, Cindy and I had a good time every night playing manipulation and listening to old time and religious music, and snacking on chips, cookies and pop. And Cindy and Judy let Brandy out several times a day and walked her up and down the shoreline. Brandy loved it up there and ran up and down the road and down the rocks to the shore line. June 12 and

June 13, 2006 while Cindy and Judy were up at the cottage Bob, Matthew, Bill Windsor and Mike Pare came back up at 9:00 am and helped build a large deck on the south side of the cottage. Prior to Mike and Bill coming Bob and Matt cut down several large trees that were in the way of the proposed deck,. I felt bad about cutting down a cedar tree and asked Bob if we could build around the tree like they did on the east deck, but Bob said no, that we needed all that space for the new deck. When the deck was finished I saw that he was absolutely correct, there would be no place for a tree in the middle of the deck.

Bob had all the boards delivered ahead of time so by the time Bill and Mike came they were ready to begin. Bob and Matt worked on one side while Mike and Bill worked on the other side. In no time at all they had the outer framing complete. As Bob was giving directions as to the outer side of the deck, Matt stopped his dad and suggested that they gain more space for the new deck by following the same line of the front border instead of cutting in. Bob stopped and studied Matt's design and said Matt was right, that was a good idea to enlarge the front of the deck by following the line of the front rail. Bob stopped and thought it out and said that if they were careful with their cuts and measurements they had enough wood to do an enlarged deck.

I sat up against the cottage south wall and was fascinated watching them frame up the deck and then starting to precision cut each board. In order to not come up short Bob measured every piece of board that he had cut out from a long board and figured out where the shorter piece would fit on the deck as the deck slanted gradually inward. His precision measurements were a work of art. When they finished they had a little bit of wood left over. As the 4 men laid and cut each plank Cindy took the drill and drilled in a row of long screws on each board as the men held the board steady. Every plank was perfectly set in place. By putting spacers in as they were setting the boards in place they were assured that each board was perfectly in place. Amazingly, 4 men finished that large deck by 4 pm. None of us could believe that such a large deck could be finished in one day. Bill finished first as he had had surgery on his liver recently and he was exhausted by 4 pm. We all went to Mom's restaurant for dinner and then Bill and Mike started on their 1 ½ hour ride back to Kincardine. Boy did we enjoy sitting on our new deck. We did jigsaw puzzles on the picnic table we placed on the rear of the deck.

No sooner had Bob finished this deck then he was making plans for a future shed off the back of the deck to put supplies in. He has had to postpone his building plans because he has an injured shoulder.

June 30 to July 10, 2006 Cindy and I went up to the cottage with Kitsey and Brandy. Cindy was hard at work again, cleaning out the shed and rearranging the bikes, garden supplies, etc. She also cleaned out and rearranged my walk in closet, throwing out unneeded stuff. She also cleaned out mom's closet moving stuff around, making more room. We made time however to do jigsaw puzzles and play card games after supper.

Warren and his family came up to the cottage in Lion's Head for the last time in August, 2006.

I had ordered 2 swings for the cottage, a single swing that we put on the water side. Warren really enjoyed that swing. He spent hours in the afternoon reading a book and smoking a cigar. Often this visit it rained so Warren still sat out on the swing with a big golfing type umbrella hanging over his head, hooked above the swing.

Warren and Patrick helped hoist the double swing onto the new deck. Warren jumped over the rail to help Patrick handle his side of the huge swing. The delivery men handled the outer side of the deck. The double swing was placed in good order on the front of the deck. Several days after Warren left for home

someone stole the single swing on the shore line. I am sure that it was the Greenop kid or his friends who was selling dope for a living, but I couldn't prove it. The swing disappeared at about 3:30 am in a driving rainstorm. I was awakened by bright lights and the noise of an engine. I thought the sound was a fire truck and with the extremely bright lights I was sure it was coming from a fire truck so I figured that the Greenop cottage was probably on fire. I looked out my bedroom window and saw really bright lights and a hurricane force driving rain. I walked to the living room and all I saw was the bright lights and the driving rain. I thought about going out doors but decided not to as I would be totally drenched in no time at all. It never occurred to me to call the police as I thought the police were there on the road with the fire truck. The bright lights turned out to be from the Greenop property and the truck turned out to be the vehicle they were using to steal my brand new swing. When we looked on the ground around the place where the swing was taken all we saw was one hook where the top of the swing pole was fastened to the cross bar on the swing.

I had purchased the single swing with a credit card so the credit card insurance would pay for the stolen swing as I bought it only a few weeks before. But the credit card company wanted the information about the cottage's insurance and I did not want to charge the \$500 cost of the swing to the cottage insurance as I had a \$1000 deductible which had been waived as I had had no claims over the past 10 years. So if I made a claim for the swing I would have once again had a \$1000 deductible against any future claim.

At the same time as they delivered the single swing they put on the shore they also delivered a double swing that I decided we should put on the new deck that Cindy and Bob put on the south side of the cottage. The 2 delivery men started to hoist the swing over the rail and Patrick was standing on the upper side ready to catch the swing as it was being pushed over the rail. When Warren saw that only Patrick was on that side to receive the swing he quickly jumped over the rail and grabbed the swing as it came over to the deck side. The other men also jumped over the rail and set the swing in place next to the water side of the deck. No one stole that swing, it was too heavy to handle.

July 16 to July 21, 2006 Warren Stephens, Jackie, Casey Shea and Patrick came up to the cottage for a short visit. They could no longer afford the luxury of a 2 week vacation as the kids had summer jobs and could no longer stay away from their jobs for more than a week. They did not bring Patch or the cats with them as they knew that they were going to stay for a very short visit this time. I was amazed that they came all that way from Maryland to Canada for 4 short days. They were

on the road for almost the same amount of time as they were at the cottage. That was the last time we were together. It was very sad that they could no longer come to the cottage. We all had such a wonderful time together in the previous years.

July 26, 2006 Bob and Cindy Quenneville dropped off the scooters.

July 29 to August 5, 2006 Karen Bender came to the cottage with her family, Shelley, Lizzie, Doug Bender Jr., Mike Bender II, July 29 to August 3 Crystal Freeman and Jennifer Garro came to the cottage.

On July 30 my brother Doug Sr. showed up at the cottage. We all had a great time hanging out together. The younger people went for a boat ride on a flat boat which stopped at every cave on the Lion's Head cliff and let every body off to leave the boat and climb one of the cliffs. We have pictures of the boys standing up on the cliff.

Sandy and Brandy walked down Carter Rd to the end and visited Anita Cunningham and her husband. Mom, Elenore and I used to sit on the huge boulder just outside of Anita's cottage before she owned it.

We all went to Owen Sound and bought clothing from the Urban Planet next to Penningtons. Karen and I went to Pennington's and bought a few items of clothing. The skinnier people cleaned up on wonderful inexpensive clothing from Urban Planet.

Doug Jr. and Jennifer rode the motor scooters up and down the Hwy 9. Doug and Doug Jr. also went to scooter rides.

In the first half of August, 2006 Mike, Marilyn, Doug Sr and I went to Frankfort where we met Dougie, Jenny, Karen and Shelley. Shelley had Lizzie along. Karen and Shelley stayed in the old school house because they allowed Shelley to bring Lizzie. That trip was a bit of a problem for Karen as she was driven there by Dougie and therefore didn't have her own car and had to depend on others to be picked up.

We all got to see the dune climb that year. Even Shelley did the dune climb, and did it quite well. We also got to go for a boat ride on Doug's boat from Frankfort to the Dunes and back. Mike and Marilyn went with us this year. Both Mike and Marilyn wore Mae West life jackets that year in case some thing happened. But it was a very calm trip and we got some very nice pictures of all of us on that trip.

I went on a night fishing excursion on the boat. It was a very nice trip lasting for over 4 hours but the waves were very rough. Most of the night were over 4 foot tall. The sunset was gorgeous as we were fishing. We caught over 6 large salmon that trip. As soon as Douggie got off the boat he ran to the ice house and cleaned and filleted them and put them on ice.

Karen and I needed a lot of help in getting into and off the boat, but with Doug's help we managed it.

Karen, Shelley and I went shopping in Frankfort and later we went shopping in a mall in Traverse City and then walked the main street in Traverse City. Mike and Doug Jr went with us. Doug Sr. stayed home and worked on his computer as he had no interest in shopping. Mike Sr went with us but said that is the last shopping trip as he legs were killing him from all that walking. But Mike did enjoy shopping at the mall as he got a number of really nice clothes. We ate that evening at the Big Bear Lodge, a very fine dining lodge.

Doug Sr. and I went canoeing down the Au Sauble River. Doug Jr and his friends went along the same time. We enjoyed watching them clown around, knocking each other out of the canoe along the way.

Doug and I were taking pictures along the way near the landing site by the picnic bench and the porta potty. When we went a little further along the road and stopped our car to take pictures of our canoeing group we suddenly saw a deer standing in the grass. Doug got a few good pictures of the deer before he ran off.

August 31 to September 9, 2006 Cindy and I went to the cottage with Brandy and Kitsey. Cindy and Tonia had a lot of fun riding the scooters from the cottage to Wiarton and back. They got stopped by the OPP for having no helmets on and for no title or insurance. Both of them pretended that they were dumb Americans and got away with it! After that they wore their helmets and carried the paperwork with them. We went out to eat with Tonia several times and once with Jennifer and her kids and once with Roberta and her husband and kids.

October 25, 2006 to November 9, 2006 Cindy, Judy, Brandy, Kitsey and I went to the cottage for the last time in 2006. Bob came up to the cottage on November 1 and picked up the scooters and Judy and returned to Utica. Cindy, Kitsey, Brandy and I remained at the cottage till November 9, 2006 ehwn we had to leave as we had a 4 inch snowfall over night and we had a tough time getting the van around the circle with all that snow. The tires were skidding into the cliff. We packed up and left for home for the last time that year.

2007

In March of 2007 I woke up at 4 am and found I had double vision as I looked at the clock over my bed. When I got up in the morning I called Ann Kay my neighbor and asked her to drive me to Beaumont hospital. When I got in her car and started on the road I got the shock of my life. The double vision was wild! There was one car in front of us and one coming the other way. My vision saw 2 cars in front of me and 2 cars coming toward me and they interspersed with one of each car in between the other. And the street signs were climbing up the embankments. I was started on decadron, a steroids and was told the double vision would clear up in a few days. It didn't. The doctors talked about putting a shunt in my brain or doing radiation. They decided on radiation which was a very good decision. Three days after starting radiation I went home with no improvement in the double vision.

I went to Father Bob Fisher and went to confession and had the Anointing of the Sick as the doctor told me that if the radiation did not work that I would be dead in 2 months. I felt much more peaceful after that figuring what ever would be would be. On day 7 the vision suddenly cleared just as I was sitting in my driveway looking at the Dr.'s office across the street.



Rochelle Collins

But then 3 days after I left the hospital I was working in front of my computer when suddenly 2 things happened at once – Rochelle was calling me and suddenly out of no where something horrible was happening to my abdomen and also I felt so very sick all over. I asked Rochelle to come to me, which she did. From 7 pm to 11 pm was a horror. I got sicker and sicker and spent the night on the toilet. By 6 am I got so sick that I started passing out. We called the fire dept and they transported me to the hospital. The doctors knew exactly what illness I had but they did not tell me it was C DEF, which I caught from the hospital in my last

admission. I was very ill from March till the end of July. I only found out it was CDEF from Marilyn as she and her sister in law also caught it from a hospital stay.

June 8 to June 10, 2007 Bob brought the scooters back up to the cottage.

June 8 to June 18, 2007 Cindy stayed up at the cottage cleaning it up and enjoying the scenery.

June 30, 2007 to July 7, 2007 my brother Doug and his family came up with me for a nice visit. Present this trip was Doug Sr, Karen, Shelley, Lizzie, Doug Bender Jr. , Jennifer Garro, Rochelle Collins and Cindy Quenneville. Cindy had to sleep with Tonia this week as there was no beds available for her to sleep in. Rochelle Collins was present this time at the cottage as she had been with me since March as I was so sick with CDEF but by the time we got back to Utica I dismissed Rochelle the next weekend as I was well enough to take care of myself. We all had a great time at the cottage. Every night Doug Sr. and Jr. and Karen went down to the sea shore and fired up a bon fire in the late evenings. Karen, Doug Jr. Jennifer and I played manipulation every night. We also went shopping in Owen Sound and also at Northwinds and Wiarton. Karen and I got a few items at Penningtons.

July 7, 2007 the Benders went home as they had to return to work on Monday but Cindy, Rochelle and I stayed till July 12, 2007. We played cards every night and ate lunch and dinner at mom's restaurant. We went back home to Utica and Rochelle went back home to Dryden. She had earned \$33,000 caring for me from March to mid July, 2007.

In July, 2007 Mike and I went to Frankfort, Michigan and met Doug, Karen, Duggie and Shelley there. I was all excited to go to the Sleeping Bear Dunes and watch the Otter kids climb the 450 foot very steep sand dune. They planned to do the Dune climb on Wednesday after brunch. As soon as lunch was over Mike got a severe pain in this side and Doug rushed us to the local hospital. We spent the majority of the afternoon at the hospital and then were given pain pills and Mike returned home on our couch where he rested. I missed the dune climb because I was at the hospital with Mike. I also missed the boat ride that night because I didn't want to leave Mike alone.

July 27 to August 5, 2007 Cindy and I went up to the cottage. Her friend Bill Windsor also came up for the day to visit with us and enjoy the gorgeous site of the Georgian Bay. Cindy bought and planted flowers from the garden center at Hwy 6. she also brought tiger lilies from her home in Windsor. They looked very limp

because she did not plant them for a whole week, but the next year they came up full bloom.

September 15 to September 22, 2007 Cindy and I went back up to the cottage. Cindy and Tonia went motor bike riding together again. In the evenings Cindy and I played manipulation and in the afternoon we worked on jigsaw puzzles on the picnic table on the south deck. We continued to go to mom's restaurant for lunch and dinner every day.



Sandy Wilhelm & Brandy

In the fall of 2007 I started having problem with walking so I started using 2 canes. I had to give my dog Brandy to my friend Judy to take care of as I was no longer able to take Brandy for walks due to my leg problem. So Judy cares for Brandy at her house and Brandy is quite content hanging out with Tara and Max, 2 min pins belonging to Judy and I get to visit with Brandy from time to time.



Deputy Rob Moody & "Ranger"

I was contacted by my nephew Doug Jr., asking for help in paying for supplies for the Monroe County K 9s and also for the purchase of a new canine, Ranger. I am gladly helping with the expenses of the canines but not quite as much as last year due to the big drop in the stock market.

October 26 to November 14 2007 we went up to the cottage for the last time that year. We went to Roberta and Jay's front yard on Halloween to see their fabulous Halloween display. It was indeed very spooky that night. 2 things impressed me the most that night. The scariest thing occurred when I was standing on the front lawn and some creepy thing started crawling toward me in the dark. It was green and threatening. I kept backing up to get away from it and it kept coming toward me. I was genuinely scared. When my friends saw I was scared they started laughing at me because it was one of Roberta's friends dressed up to look scary. The other Halloween display was the most impressive that I have ever seen. It was a life size hearse which the interior was lit up and had a skeleton half sitting up on a catafalque inside the hearse. There was a huge wind storm at the time which made the hearse severely rock back and forth which made it look just like it was running down the road.

Jennifer brought her 2 kids in their costumes to see us at the cottage. We gave each kid a giant chocolate candy bar. That afternoon Roberta brought her 2 twins and her older boy to our cottage to show them off in their costumes. We had 3 more huge candy bars for these kids. The twins had chocolate all over their faces.

Cindy put away all the chairs, hoses and gardening equipment for the year. We packed up all our clothing and got out of there quickly when the first snow fall of the year presented itself.

2008

Steve Feldman did a marvelous job of cleaning up his estate. It was all completed by July, 1994 except for his German estate that just got completed in December, 2008. We had such a horrible time with that as neither one of us speaks formal legal German so we had to depend on German speaking lawyers and we had a half dozen very poor ones till we settled on Dr Gottfried Werner, who by the way was chosen by my Werner. He got things done in a straight forward manner, slowly plodding along over a period of 15 years.

In June of 2008 a CT scan I had showed that the aromasin was no longer effective so I started on Taxol and avastin with decadron and benedryl. That was very effective. After 7 months of treatment the next CT scan in January 2009 showed all of the cancer had disappeared except for one fracture and one small spot. So I had radiation to cure the bone fracture and Gemzar to get rid of the spot.

I have been spending 2008 and 2009 putting our genealogy on line. I first wrote the stories of our families 29 years ago and now Doug and I are scanning them in and putting them on a web site for all to enjoy.

I found dad's 78 rpm records that he cut in the late 1940s and early 1950s. We bought a conversion record player and transferred 4 78 rpm records to a CD in which we can hear Nellie Dahl, Norman Bender, Grandma Elizabeth Bender and Grandpa Henry Bender talk and also we can hear Nellie Dahl and Nancy and Virginia Bender sing.

I found our 43 Bender home movies and took them to Troy home video and had them transferred to DVD. They are now on the web for all to enjoy.



Linda Stephens White

I wrote my niece Linda, asking her for her Stephens home movies. She mailed them to me and we had Troy Video Transfer convert them to a DVD. I mailed her back a DVD and she said we could keep the original movies.

Shortly thereafter the video store called me on my cell phone to tell me the DVD was ready to be picked up. I gave the video to Doug but he brought it back, saying he could not get it to work. Troy video then put it in a different format and now it works so the family and friends can view it on the web.



Helen Kent

As I was getting better my friends were getting worse. Helen's son Steve got cancer of his tongue. First they did surgery on his tongue and when he developed a lump under his neck they did chemo and radiation. Then he developed another lump and had to have surgery under his jaw. I paid for the Stadler brothers to put in a kitchen as Helen never had a kitchen in the 40 years she lived in that house. We then put in bathrooms upstairs and downstairs for their safety. A banister and railings have been put in upstairs to guard against Helen falling down the stairs.

When I was up at the cottage I got 2 shocking phone calls the same day. I got a phone call from David Nowicki that my Aunt Dorothy Jean Dahl died on July 7, 2008 at 3 pm in a hospital in Clinton Township, Michigan. I then got a 2nd phone call from Brandon Rotary that my Aunt Elenore Dahl Mc Kinin died on July 7, 2008 at 11 pm in Minneapolis, Minnesota in a nursing home. Both aunts died of pancreatic cancer. I was unable to attend either funeral as I was at the cottage with relatives.

I got a lovely phone call several weeks later from my cousin Kristen. She was unable to attend Elenore's funeral as she was working in Michigan and her boss said he would fire her if she left work to go to the funeral. So about a week after Elenore was buried she was in the bathroom in the middle of the night when Elenore appeared just outside the door, smiled and waved at Kristne. What a wonderful farewell gift that was!

Then our friend Liz Kirchner went into heart and kidney failure. After treating her with meds for this condition she developed acute leukemia. I paid for her apartment to be cleaned up and painted and hand rails put in for her comfort and safety. Bill Streaks and the Stadler boys did a wonderful job of totally cleaning up her living room and storage room.

2009



DANE, LAUREN, KURT, ANDREA, STEVE, LESLIE, SCOTT, LISA
MOM DAD

John (Joseph) Giesregen is sitting next to his wife with their children behind.

We got a very pleasant surprise in February, 2009. We got an e mail from the family of Joseph (now John) saying he Googled and they sent him back an e mail saying that his mother's name appears in Marie Dahl Bender's biography. The Giesregen family e mailed us with the particulars of John's life and it matched what we know about grandpa Wm Dahl. So now we are asking for DNA on both Joseph and our Tom Dahl. The DNA tests were done and Sandy was saddened to see that the DNA results did not match. Joseph is not Bill Dahl Sr.'s son.

I got a big shock the end of March, 2009. Very suddenly I got a severe case of cellulites in both legs in a matter of hours. My legs were a very deep red, very hot to the touch and swollen. I had a fever of over 100. I ended up in the hospital for 9 days on IV antibiotics. Just as my legs were healing due to the antibiotics the cardiologist doubled the dosage of the heart medication and I passed out with a blood pressure of 70/50. I was lucky to survive that episode.

Dr. J changed taxol to gemzar and then ordered pool therapy for my legs. I was delighted when both treatments resulted in my being able to walk without the use of canes.

Shelley called me August 20th. Krystal's beloved dog Jericho died. The whole family loved that little guy.