

Werner Wilhelm

His life in story and picture

1928-1993

Part 2



over: Elisabeth, Gunther, Margarete, Helmut & Martha Eschenbach
Martha Eisenschmidt Eschenbach & Otto Paul Eschenbach

Uncle Willy said he asked 3 times for an interview with the warden as he had no idea as to why he was placed into Buchenwald. He was never granted an interview. Willy volunteered for the medical corps while in Buchenwald for two reasons; you got more food, and when your patients were dying and too ill to eat anymore, you got to eat their rice water. When Willy entered Buchenwald he weighed 198 lbs. and was about 6 feet tall, when he left there he weighed 103 lbs.! Three incidents while in Buchenwald stood out in Willy's memory: once he was pushing a wheelbarrow through the camp and he ended up under the window of the Russian family living quarters. Suddenly a Russian housewife dropped a loaf of bread into his wheelbarrow. There was mass pandemonium as all of the prisoners dove for that loaf of bread, Willy included. Everyone got a piece of that loaf who was within grabbing distance. The next incident that comes to his mind was when he and another fellow was carrying a big heavy vat full of hot rice water to the mess hall. That vat was the "dinner" for all of the prisoners. Half way across the courtyard that cold snowy, icy winter day, Willy and the other prisoner managed to slip on a patch of ice, down they both went and the vat of rice water turned over on the ice. Willy and the other prisoner were immediately down on their hands and knees, licking up the rice water. The third incident occurred on the day of his release. Willy never knew why he was imprisoned, and by the same token he never knew why he was released either. One day the Russians simply opened up the gates of Buchenwald and told Willy and the others to leave. As Willy and the others were leaving the camp, the Russians suddenly started tossing tomatoes into the crowd of departing prisoners. A near riot broke out as the prisoners tried to get a tomato!

Willy walked first to his father's home where they had the paint factory. He found no one there and the paint factory demolished. Willy then walked home to Tunschutz, and once again found his family, now just about fully grown, there. The family were astonished to see Willy. They had no idea where the Russians had taken him, and they had no idea whether he was still alive or dead. The paint factory, Willy learned, was long gone. The Russians had flattened it right after he was taken to Buchenwald. He learned that the reason he was incarcerated was that he was a member of the ruling class in Germany and they incarcerated all wealthy, influential people to keep them from opposing the Russian take over. Anyone who employed over 8 workers was automatically targeted for imprisonment.



over: Elisabeth, Gunther, Margarete, Helmut & Martha Eschenbach
Martha Eisenschmidt Eschenbach & Otto Paul Eschenbach

Willy learned that his father in law, Otto Paul Eschenbach was now dead, having died of heart failure in 1947 at the young age of 63, the family said because of all the grief of losing both his sons and having his Gut over run by the Russians. The immediate cause of his death was that the doctor gave him sleeping medication that was too strong for his weakened heart.

Willy found that there was a manager on the Gut who was responsible for the efficient

running of the Gut, and who was responsible for keeping the quotas of livestock and grain that the Russians had assigned to this farm. Willy was very comfortable with this operation as it meant that the manager, and not him, was responsible to the Russians for the management of the Gut. One day the manager told Willy that he was going to Eisenberg to sell a cow and a pig in order to raise the necessary cash for the running of the farm, and would Willy help him get these animals to market. Willy quickly agreed to help. With much difficulty, Willy and the manager loaded the 300 lb. pig on the farm wagon, and then Willy tied the cow to the back of the wagon and hung onto the strings to make sure the cow didn't get away. They made it into Eisenburg without a hitch, and the manager quickly sold the livestock for a good price. Willy was glad for the manager's good fortune, but as it turned out, not for very long.

The next day when Willy got out of bed, the manager and his wagon and his family were nowhere to be seen. After a whole week went by, it dawned on Willy that the manager took the proceeds from the sale of the livestock to jump the border to the west. Willy then took stock of the farm's assets, then found the Manager's Russian quotas for that year, and it was soon evident to Willy that these quotas would be next to impossible to meet this year, but especially as the years go by as you would have to deplete the breeding stock in order to fill the quotas. This was an especially dangerous situation, Willy soon realized! And right after he completed his calculations, he was "invited" to meet with a high ranking Russian who took up residence in the neighborhood. So Willy went to a conference with the Russians in Eisenberg and soon found out it was about the missing manager and the need to meet the quotas. We don't need a new manager, the Russian said, you can take over the management of the Gut. Certainly, Willy replied. (He had learned very well how to deal with the Russians. You always agreed with them to their face, then tried to save your hide later when you were out of their grasp.) And we won't impose any new quotas on you,

you can simply meet the old quotas, they offered magnanimously. Of course, Willy replied. They shook hands, smiled broadly at one another, then the meeting broke up and Willy returned home. They can catch you once, Willy told himself, but you are not so dumb that you will let them catch you twice, Willy retorted. No sir. Willy told the wife and children that they were going to a train ride to Berlin. He and his wife put on good traveling clothes. But he had his two daughters put on Russian girl scout uniforms, complete with red ties. If anyone asks you were you are going on the train, you are to tell them that we are going to Berlin to see the new statue of Stalin, he told them. Otherwise you keep your mouths shut and talk to no one. Well, the Eberlein family got to Berlin in one piece, and crossed over the border to West Berlin without being challenged. Willy said that once they were over that Russian border, he felt a tremendous weight being lifted from his shoulders, and felt like he could breathe again. The daughters stated they were terrified that entire train ride, afraid that one of the Russians was going to confront them. They didn't know if they had the courage and the forte to answer in a convincing manner. Fortunately they arrived at the West Berlin border without challenge.



Herbert Eschenbach & Werner Wilhelm II

Willy went to Uncle Herbert's in West Berlin and found that Werner's mother had just left Herbert's place after having been there for 6 weeks. She had been airlifted to her brother Otto Brehmer, who was establishing himself in the west in Reiffenhausen. So now Herbert's lodgings were available to the next set of refugees. Willy registered with the Americans to be airlifted to West Germany. Six weeks later Willy's turn to be airlifted out of West Berlin came, and they asked him where he wanted to go, Hanover or Munich. He thought about it for a few minutes, then replied Munich, as he had been there with the paint factory before the war, and was familiar with that city. So the Americans airlifted him to Munich.



Margarete, Helga & Willy Eberlein

Willy said that when he was airlifted to Munich, he was 53 years old, had a wife and two daughters, he had no money, no job, no food and no place to stay. He also had no transportation. He said he was real scared as he stood there, trying to contemplate his future, and what to do next. He soon found a place to stay with another family. He and his family were not welcome there in the least, but the German government forced people to take in refugees until the refugee family could find a place to stay. Then Willy got a low level job with Esso oil. And with his first paycheck he bought himself a bicycle so he could get back and forth to work. He really bristled at the idea of being a peon in the work place, as he came from a millionaire family and was always a member of top management. Even in the war, he was a top ranking military officer and gave, not took, the orders. All he could say for the present situation is that it fed the family. Soon he saved up enough money to get their own apartment, no easy task as money was hard to come by, and a vacant apartment even harder. After he had been in this demeaning position for a few years, he had overheard through the front offices of Esso that the company had taken an Esso distributorship away from a man and that that distributorship was now available to whoever could come up with \$38,000 in cash. Willy knew that this distributorship would soon be snatched up as it was a good opportunity for the right man. Willy wanted that distributorship really bad, but he only had a few thousand dollars saved up at this point. Willy stayed awake at night trying to dream up a way to come up with the money in such a devastated economy. Finally, he came up with one possibility. He remembered one well to do friend of his that he associated with when he was the owner of the paint factory in Munich. This man had not gone to war, and had apparently did okay for himself business wise during the war. So Willy appeared at his front door and laid the proposal before his friend, and told him he hated to beg for money, but he needed \$38,000 cash, and he needed it by tomorrow at 9:00 am at the latest. The friend looked at Willy and replied, "Willy, you were a good businessman when I knew you before the war, and I'm sure you are still a good businessman today. You shall have your \$38,000 by tomorrow morning. So Willy picked up the money in the morning, went to Esso and worked out the contract, and purchased the Esso distributorship. The first year in business was a real financial nightmare. Willy went to the Esso officials and told them that he now knew why the old owner had to give it up, that there was no way that Willy could make a go of it under the present contract provisions, and if he couldn't then no one else could either as Willy was a top notch businessman. The Esso company said, no, don't give it up, we like you and feel you will do well. So they rewrote the entire contract with much more liberal provisions, and the rest of the story is history. Willy kept adding distributorships and retail outlets to his empire, and at the time of his death at 84 years of age, he was worth in the neighborhood of \$24 Million according to Werner's estimation. Not bad for a man that was totally broke at the age of 53! And by the way, Willy's standard of living improved a whole lot, too. He lived in a penthouse of a very ritzy apartment building that he owned in a Munich suburb of Oberschleissheim, and we were chauffeured around in his new Mercedes. And he owned a chalet in the Alps as well in a plush resort area.



Margarete & Willy Eberlein, Werner Wilhelm II and Willy Fichter

I am the one who finally convinced Werner to visit Uncle Willy. It took a lot of badgering and pestering on my part, for Werner's cousin Christa told him she called up Willy and tried to visit him, but Willy was very curt on the phone. Werner did not want the embarrassment of suffering the same fate. But I told him, look, you are a self made multi millionaire and I'm sure Willy would be as fascinated to hear your life story as we will be to hear his. Finally, with much trepidation, Werner picked up the phone in Astrid's living room and called Willy in Munich. Yes, I'd be delighted to see you, Willy told Werner and made an appointment. On the appointed day, Werner and I took the train out of Muhldorf and headed for Munich. When we got to Munich we took the street car, which was very confusing, and despite Uncle Willy's excellent directions, we had some problems deciding where to best get off. But it went without a hitch, and after some more confusion when we were now on foot, we found the apartment without problems. We were very impressed with the building, it was most elegant and expensive, and when we saw that he occupied the penthouse on the entire top floor, we were impressed! They had a very good security system and there was some problems getting us in, I bet Fort Knox might be easier to gain entry to. But Willy and his wife were most effusive and cordial in greeting us, despite Willy's reserved and aloof mannerisms. They were obviously delighted to see us. Willy and Werner were fascinated with one another and they never ran out of questions to ask one another about business, ways of doing things and how they got to where they are today. And I was totally fascinated with Willy's concentration camp experiences and made Werner translate every word to make sure I got it right, which was a great aggravation to Werner as he hated translating. I was able to impart to Uncle Willy reams of information regarding his wife's family history as I am an avid genealogist and had done an in depth study into Werner's mother's family. This is embarrassing, she knows more about our family than we do, Uncle Willy told Werner. Then Uncle Willy paid me a very great compliment. He said to Werner, she's highly intelligent. You'd better marry that one before she gets away! Coming from such a rich, powerful, intellectual man, I highly cherished that compliment, then as much as now. Thanks, Uncle Willy. I gave Uncle Willy a copy of Uncle Herbert's life history which I had retyped into a more professional form, and which I had translated into English as well. Uncle Willy was very honored to receive this copy and avidly studied it in the weeks to come. Willy tried to take us out to dinner at a fine restaurant as we had stayed long beyond our planned departure time, by mutual agreement as there was so many years to catch up on and so many topics to cover, but Werner and I wanted to keep it simple for them as Uncle Willy was unsteady on his feet

and we felt that leaving the house would be a big chore for him. We had a most delightful cold cut dinner of the finest meats and cheeses, which pleased Werner and I very much. Willy's grandson Willy Fichter, who had just returned from his Jamaica honeymoon a half hour previously, joined us and later drove us to the Munich train station. Willy had a train schedule posted in his home, and as the evening progressed we were so engrossed in conversation that one train after the other left the train station as we sat in his living room, reliving the past. Finally, the time for our departure was definitely at hand as the final train was leaving Munich for Muehldorf. Uncle Willy told young Willy to use the new Mercedes, and if we should miss the Muehldorf train connection, then he was to drive us into Muehldorf. But we got to the Muehldorf track with about 10 minutes to spare and Willy drove us very close to the waiting train, thus ending a totally fascinating day. Shortly afterwards we were to receive an envelope with a black border around it, informing us that Uncle Willy's rich & rewarding life had at last come to an end due to leukemia.



Margarete Eberlein



Willy's oil tanks

With the death of Uncle Willy his empire crumbled. His family sold off all of the Esso holdings and converted the estate to cash. According to Willy's will all assets were to go to his wife, Margarete. We later heard from Margarete's sister that Margarete's children took her to court, declaring her incompetent to handle such a vast estate herself, and they got control of Willy's money. Her sister said Margarete was devastated at receiving such treatment at the hands of her family.



Werner Wilhelm II vorne garage Haus, Grossobringen

Meanwhile, Werner's mama Martha Klodmann, having received such a shock to her nervous system hearing such a remark from her sister in law Martha Wilhelm Bamberg, decided to go back to Grossobringen and to live in the garage house as the Dr and Charlotte had abandoned it and had fled to the west.

Werner went back to Zschippach and almost went into total shock when he discovered that the mansion had been torn apart for its plumbing, electrical, and heating elements, as well as its parquet floors and expensive tile, and that the house was in the process of being razed by the Communists. Werner wanted to remove his cherry wood study furniture and was again shocked to discover it was already gone. Martha told him to try to save her damask table cloths, her Meissen China and her silver tableware, but when he got there all had been stolen by the peasants in the village. His mother was just sick at the loss of family heirlooms that had been in her family for generations back. Aw, Mama, what do you want with all that old junk anyway?, Werner asked her. We can buy all new! Martha looked at her son and burst out crying. Years later Werner knew exactly how his mother felt about the family treasures and was very ashamed of himself for saying something like that to her, especially at such a sensitive time in her life.

Martha Klodmann had some very expensive farm machinery in her possession that she wanted to save for when the Russians left and things got back to normal she would need them to run the farm with. Martha had another huge shock to her nervous system when the Russians confiscated all of her fine new farm machinery, her fine horses and sold the harvested crop and kept all of the money. Then to the shock and outrage of Martha and the other Rittergut owners the Russians demanded that Martha and the other owners make the mortgage payments on the farm machinery and the horses and to pay off the loans taken out for the seed used to grow this year's crops! And Dr. Wilhelm wanted to hide his large motor with which he ran the conveyor belt in his sauerkraut factory, as he would need that again after the Russians left. Dr. Wilhelm had jumped to Kassel in the west and Martha was a prison escapee and had to keep out of sight, so they sent Werner to try to find a hiding place for this machinery. Werner went to his Berger cousins in neighboring Dorna to ask them if he could hide his father's conveyor belt motor and apparatus in their barn as the machinery was so heavy and unwieldy that it could not be transported very far. Without hesitation the Berger family, whose daughter thought Werner was so cutely cross eyed, said yes, bring it here to us.



Gut Tuenschuetz belonging to Eschenbach family

Otto Paul Eschenbach, Margaret Eisenschmidt, Margarete, Martha, Helmut & Gunther Eschenbach

Then Werner got on his bicycle and made the long trip to Tunschütz to ask his cousin, Otto Paul Eschenbach, the last owner/operator of Tunschütz, whether he

could bring his large farm machinery and store it in their barns until the Russians left. Werner got there about 1:30 in the afternoon, and Otto's wife Martha Eisenschmidt Eschenbach, was just clearing away the last of the noon time dishes, and Otto, who was weak and tired from the effects of his bad heart and his deep grief over the loss of his 2 fine sons, had just settled down for an afternoon nap. Oh, we wish we knew you were coming, we would have waited on lunch for you, they both said. Martha sat him down and fed him a real good lunch. Then after lunch, Werner discussed his reason for coming, and Otto said without hesitation, of course, boy, you can bring your machinery here. And as Werner was preparing to leave about an hour later, Otto asked his wife in a very stern voice to make sure she packed a satchels full of sandwiches for the boy to eat on the long way home. Werner said the wife answered that she had already packed a pile of sandwiches for Werner. Werner said he was so starved at that time from being in prison on bread and water and not having his mother around to cook for him, and not having money for food, that he was overjoyed to hear he was going to get a bag full of sandwiches! When he left the mansion in Tunschütz, he pedaled a little way down the road just until he was no longer in site of the Gut house, then opened the bag and ate a few sandwiches right then and there on the road home. Werner never forgot the kindness of Otto Paul and his wife and on many occasions retold this story. At such a horrible time in his life, it meant so much to him that these people were so kind and warm hearted to him. Otto died a few months after Werner's visit, and lies buried in the Eschenbach plot in the church cemetery kitty corner from the Gut house.



Karl Brehmer, Werner Wilhelm, Karl Jr, Ilse Brehmer & Kinder

Werner's mother was reduced from the status of a multimillionaire land owner to someone who didn't know where her next meal was coming from. She had no income and no means of support in those days. She had no transportation as the Russians took all of their farm implements, horses, trucks, etc, leaving her with nothing. When she was starved for meat, she walked 5 miles to her Brehmer relatives in Ostramondra to get a duck for herself and Werner. The Brehmers were very good to Martha and Werner in their time of need, and for this reason Werner remembered that family in his will. Lotte Dassler remembers Martha driving a little pony driven cart with the one side flipped down to get to Ostramondra.



Karl Brehmer, Werner Wilhelm, Karl Jr, Ilse Brehmer & Kinder

Doctor Wilhelm's life was in total pandemonium as well in 1945. Prior to the Russians coming to Derenburg and Weimar, he was splitting his time between his practice in Grossobringen, his canned goods factory in Zschippach on Martha's estate and his brother Kurt's pharmacy in Derenburg. As was already told, Dr. Wilhelm drove all day and at about 11 p.m. at night he arrived in Derenburg and drove his family all through the night till he ran out of gas in Kassel. Uncle Edgar was just bombed out and could not accommodate the Wilhelm's as he had no place to stay himself. So Dr. Wilhelm found himself, his wife and his 4 year old daughter homeless.

Dr. Wilhelm registered with the West German government as a homeless refugee; the government placed him with a family in an upper apartment on Wilhelm's Hohe Allee, Kassel's main artery in and out of the city. The woman who owned the building was disgusted at having to put up with strangers in her house but there was nothing she could do about it as it was the law; you had to take in strangers if the government felt you had the room to accommodate them. And she did nothing to hide her disgust over the situation, which made for bad feelings on both sides. The Wilhelm family was allocated to one small room which made living very uncomfortable, especially with a small child, having to eat, sleep and live in one room. To add insult to injury, Dr. Wilhelm and Charlotte had to make many trips back to East Germany to try to salvage some of their possessions by carrying these things across the border nights. They could not take a 4 year old child with them, so they strong armed the landlady into watching Astrid. Astrid was terrified of being left alone with this hostile stranger and would wail and carry on when she saw she was once again being left alone. She was terrified that her parents were abandoning her and she told Werner years later that he was not the only one suffering deprivation, that she had an awful childhood due to the war and the resettlement afterwards.



Dr. Med Werner Wilhelm, Astrid & Charlotte Wilhelm

Astrid was always a highly nervous child and when Dr. Wilhelm expected the same high school performance out of her as he did from little Werner, Astrid was petrified. And when the father would scream at her and take his belt to her it was

more than she could handle and she would break out in a horrible eczema from all that stress. Dr. Wilhelm would have to bandage up her whole arm and swab it in salve to cure the eczema. Years later when Astrid applied for a job her father told her never to put on the employment application that she had eczema as that was a disease due to the malfunction of the nervous system and an employer in Germany would think you had mental problems if he saw the word eczema on the employment application. Never admit you have any kind of nervous disorder, Vati told the children. In Germany that will be held against you.

As an adult Astrid remains a highly nervous individual and her husband, Dr. Diebl said that she would never have made it if she had not married him as he has helped her through many an emotional crisis due to his psychiatric training.

Dr. Wilhelm made Werner feel just terrible and like he was a total outsider to the family, when in the late 1940's he filled out the fugitive papers for the whole family and forgot to put Werner's name down on the form! How could he forget his own son, Werner asked me? This omission created a lot of problems for Werner in the 1970's when he was trying to get an extra 10% compensation for being a refugee from the Communistic system. Had his father listed him, a copy of that form would have been all he needed. But because he was not listed, he needed documentation, sworn to and notarized, from other relatives stating that he fled from East Germany due to the Russian oppression. He asked Mutti to give him that statement during one of our visits to Astrid and Mutti in Muehldorf. Mutti was willing to give him the statement, but then Astrid started big excitements, stating that Mutti can't sign that statement, that Werner fled East Germany because he was selling coffee, and that if Mutti signed that statement she could go to jail! Werner was very disgusted with all the histrionics from his sister Astrid, and told her he was going to bed and that tomorrow we were leaving and he would have another family member sign the statement. Astrid got even wilder and tried to dream up a modified statement. Werner told her not to bother, that if she couldn't stick together as a family as her father had always told them to do, that that was her problem, not his. Mutti felt terrible. She was going to sign the statement but then got upset and confused when Astrid told her not to, that she could get in trouble. Werner shouted, then grumbled a few choice words at them, then lumbered off to bed. Meanwhile, I was glad that all that noise had finally stopped as I was sleeping on the second floor right down the hall from the great room, and all the halls are marble and sound really carries, echoes, and amplifies there. Suddenly, after about 10 minutes of subdued hysterical conversation between Mutti and Astrid, my bedroom door busts open and in rushes Mutti and Astrid, shouting frantically at me. They physically pull me out of bed and cart me off to the great room, where they start carrying on in fast, complicated German, which I later found out that the gist of that conversation was to tell me why they could not sign that paper for Werner. That paper was not my problem, I figured, that was between Werner and them. In those days I knew hardly any German, and even less about the refuge situation and the communistic take over of Thuringen. This understanding was to come much later as I lived through this process with Werner. I merely sat there in the great

room, very tired, and very disgusted about this rude interruption of my sleep as I had to get up at 4:45 am to catch a train to Frankfurt the next morning.



Werner Wilhelm II & Kurt Wilhelm

Come morning, I washed, dressed and packed my bags while Werner and Astrid carried on loud, frantic, near hysterical conversations. Mutti was not present as she slept till 11 am, catching up on her lost sleep from the late hours she kept the night before. We then jumped the train to Munich, then to Kassel and in the afternoon we met Uncle Kurt in Kassel. Kurt had just come out of East Germany in order to meet us there. The next day Uncle Kurt and Werner had to decide which attorney to go to in order to get Kurt's declaration of Werner being a refugee notarized. They tried to remember which attorneys were Dr. Wilhelms so as to avoid these men as Werner wanted to use his dad's address of Annestrasse 9 in Kassel so as to appear to be a German citizen. Werner even got German identification papers in order to have some German identification to show. They then chose an attorney out of the phone book and made an appointment. We then all went together for the appointment. Werner told me to keep my mouth shut so the attorney would not know I was an American.

While we were waiting for our appointment in the waiting room of the attorney's office, Werner suddenly realized that he had to pee real bad. Where can I pee, he urgently asked Uncle Kurt. Kurt whipped his head around the room, looking quickly from one end to the other, then burst out laughing until he couldn't catch his breath, and pointed to the large potted plant in the corner. Werner laughed too, then asked the secretary, who showed him to the men's toilet. We then saw the attorney, Kurt made his declaration under oath, signed it and then after both men sweated to death fearing that the false address would come to light, we relievedly walked out on the street with the desired document in hand. Werner thanked Uncle Kurt for the declaration, and Kurt said with feeling, for family, I sign anything, just like my brother Dr. Werner told me to do. Dr. Wilhelm had told his family to always be careful what they signed, except that in the case of the family, you must always stick together and help one another out.

Dr. Wilhelm, who was used to spacious and gracious living accommodations, knew he could not tolerate this type of living condition for very long. The doctor walked through Kassel, surveying the city for decent living accommodations, and a place to practice medicine. Accommodations were very scarce for the Americans had bombed this city to its knees, and most of the buildings were

reduced to a pile of rubble. Dr. Wilhelm found it very difficult getting around the city as most public transportation did not run on its former schedule or routes due to the rubble. The doctor traveled mostly on foot, which was very difficult as you had to continually walk up, on and over piles of bricks where buildings once stood. It was difficult to know where the sidewalk used to be and where the buildings should have been. The human carnage in this city was unbelievable. 10,000 people died in one night due to the American bombing. And many tens of thousands more died in the few weeks preceding and succeeding this infamous night. The government was in shambles when it came to knowing property rights and availability of property for sale, as so many people were dead, including whole extended families, that knowing what was still owned by living people and what belonged to dead families was unknown for a long period of time. Dr. Wilhelm got lucky. He found two bombed out buildings and one vacant lot that he was able to purchase with a clear title. One building was a totally bombed out apartment building at Annastrasse 9, around the corner from Wilhelm Hohe Allee, therefore a most desirable piece of property. The second was another bombed out building on Germeinstrasse, again around the corner from the main thoroughfare. The third was a vacant piece of land that the doctor intended to build on later.

The doctor immediately set up practice in the Germeinstrasse building. The front of the building accommodated his waiting room and a few examination rooms. The back of the building was completely bombed out and one could see the sky in this area. The doctor later built up the back of the building. The family could not live in Annestrasse for awhile as there was only one wall still standing and only for about 2 1/2 stories high. The entire apartment building had to be restored. The doctor added on several more stories to this building than it had had before the bombing, making it a 5 story apartment building. After the renovations were finished the doctor and his wife and daughter moved into a 5th story apartment and rented out the rest.

Before the restorations were complete, and doctor and his family were still living with the family who were forced to take him in, the doctor, Mutti, and Werner made many trips on foot across the border by Bebra bringing their possessions from East to West Germany. The most memorable of these possessions were their fine Persian carpets that they carried on their shoulders on their long trek westwards. Oh, the weight of those carpets, everyone said! You could not take these across the border on the train as they checked your possessions and took away from you anything of value that you tried to get across the border. So you carried them through the fields by night and sneaked across the border in rural, wooded areas.

Astrid was very upset when she relayed this story as she said that while her parents were going back and forth across the border, she was left in the company of the lady they lived with who hated her guts. She said she was so frightened and begged her parents not to leave her there. But those were war

years and man did what he had to in order to survive and the children had no choice but to suffer the consequences until the world returned to a more normal order. So Astrid cried herself to sleep nights and her parents spent those wee hours as pack donkeys.

Doctor Wilhelm eventually completed his building project and moved the family in the apartment building. He furnished it with things brought across the border mostly, with a few new things to fill in. And he was quickly recognized as a competent, caring physician and his waiting room was soon full. But his heart was not in it. He dearly missed his home, practice and patients in Grossobringen, and so much wanted to return to that region, but due to his children, he dared not remain in a communistic system. He told the children that if it were not for them, he would have returned to Grossobringen and lived out the rest of his days as the beloved family physician in that region. He also missed his position as the head of the Health Department in Coburg, a position he had held since he was in his mid twenties. (He had been the youngest physician to have ever served in this capacity.) And his patients missed him dearly too. They had all hoped that the communistic system would dissipate and their beloved doctor would once more return to Grossobringen. But that was never more to be. The doctor settled down to his practice in Kassel, but his heart was not in it. These people were strangers to him, and he to them. He was just a means to the restoration of a healthful state. He was not a real flesh and blood person, with a personality and wants and needs of his own. No one in Kassel knew that he screamed at and whomped his family when the school grades slipped. The entire town did not revolve around gossip about the latest happenings at the doctor's house. No one knew or cared. There was no next door neighbor to pay his service bills or to sew his clothing, etc. He was just a nameless, faceless person in a very cold, impersonal big city.

A tempting offer came the doctor's way in about 1951. He was invited to come back to Grossobringen and to Weimar for a formal conference and dinner with Herr Albrecht, the chief Communist in East Germany at that time. The doctor took up the offer and went there with his young daughter, Astrid. Doctor Wilhelm was fascinated by his long, involved conversation with Albrecht. He found Albrecht very well versed and well educated, indeed, a most intelligent person. They discussed Communism at great length. Although Dr. Wilhelm held a totally different philosophy of life from Albrecht, he was nevertheless fascinated by his conversation. And when do you think, Herr Albrecht, that Communism will come to West Germany, Dr. Wilhelm asked. Oh, not for a very long time, Albrecht replied. First communism will go to the eastern block countries, then to south America, then to north America. West Germany will be the very last to fall, said Albrecht. But sooner or later the entire world will go communistic and we will all be brothers. Astrid was fascinated, but frightened by this conversation and was afraid they would not get out of East Germany. Afterwards, she did not want to go there again and in fact never returned there until after the wall fell



Dr. William Villa

The communists offered to give Dr. Wilhelm his son's Villa in Grossobringen back if he were to return there and practice medicine and give up his West German citizenship. With a heavy heart, Dr. Wilhelm was forced to decline the offer due to the welfare of his children.

Dr. Wilhelm was not afraid to visit East Germany and he went there a number of times to visit his sister in Naumburg and his brother and his wife in Derenburg. He was never detained or unduly harassed at the border crossing point. However, Mutti, never one to take a slight without a fight, found herself confronted with an obnoxious 150 pound woman border guard who liked to fling her weight around. Well, Mutti had some weight to fling around too, which she did without a qualm. The border crossing female guard told Mutti that she could not take any of that "valuable" East German money out of the country so she could either put it in an envelope and mail it to a relative, or she could use it to buy some useless East German trinket souvenirs. Mutti knew that it would be a cold day in hell before the relatives ever received the money through the mail, and she had no use for the trinkets, so Mutti started an argument at the top of her lungs for the entire train to hear. The family was sure she was going to land in an East German prison to cool off. But somehow she got away with her carryings on without retribution.



Werner at Jena Paradies



Jena Universitaat



Jena Student Apartment



Werner Wilhelm Garage Haus

Young Werner went to Vati in Kassel in the beginning when he was first let out of prison, then when his mother escaped and returned to the garage house in Grossobringen, Werner once again crossed the border and went to live with his mother. When I think about it today, I am quite surprised that Werner returned to the Russian zone and subjected himself to the possibility of being arrested again. He was not in the district of Gera, where he had signed never to return, however, he was still under the influence of the Russians, and he was well aware of how fickle they could be and how you could anger them at the drop of a hat, and that

when angered, they might pay you a nocturnal visit and no one would ever see you again. But Werner was very attached to his mother and he did not want to leave her all alone in the Russian zone, so he returned to Grossobringen. He then enrolled in medical school at the university of Jena, where his father had attended some 30 years before, and rented a student room on the 3rd floor of an apartment building nearby the university. He then returned home to his mother's house in Grossobringen weekends.

Werner and his mother had no source of income while Werner attended the university, so Werner had to devise some way to support the two. Werner decided that the best way to support two people while attending medical school, and still have enough time to study was to sell coffee, so he bought coffee by the hundred weight from South American countries, and had it shipped in plain packaging to the train station in Weimar. He would have the train station store the package in a locker in the station, then he would come with a key about a week later, unlock the locker and remove the coffee. He would then take the coffee to his mother's house in Grossobringen, break it down into smaller packages, then he and his mother would sell the coffee throughout the small villages in the area.

It all sounds so innocuous today, and one would wonder why Werner would be selling something so prosaic as coffee, and why would so many people suddenly buy it from him instead of at the grocery store. The answer was simple: the East German currency was almost worthless so one could not trade with western countries as they had no interest in East German Mark. So all food stuffs that could not be produced within the Communist bloc could not be obtained by the East German people. And coffee was on top of the list of a highly desired, and totally unattainable product. Cocoa, bananas, oranges, grapefruit, pineapple and other tropical fruit were also no longer on the grocery shelves. Werner would occasionally obtain a shipment of cocoa, but he did not dabble in tropical fruits, probably because of their short shelf life. The danger lie in the fact that the Communists did not want East German Mark leaving the country because of the imbalance of trade and the resulting deficit it would cause. East Germany had enough problems with deficits in trade with the west without running up a huge one due to coffee, cocoa, etc. So the government solved the problem by passing laws making it illegal to import or possess coffee, cocoa, tropical fruits, etc. It also passed a law making it illegal to send East German Mark out of the country. Werner was doing both, so he was skating on very thin ice.



Karl Brehmer & Werner Wilhelm II

The Brehmer family in Ostramondra was very instrumental in helping Martha and Werner sell the coffee, and for this reason Werner remembered them in his will.

Werner's mother would get the coffee to Ostramondra by horse drawn wagon and the relatives would give her her share of the money that they had collected from selling coffee. Werner remarked that the Brehmers also did not do badly on this deal as they made enough money for themselves off this deal.



Henny & Otto Brehmer

Werner did not like shipping the coffee directly to the Weimar train station as he felt that there was too much chance of being detected by the authorities, especially considering that the shipments were coming so regularly and also the coffee might emit a smell from the shipping container, tipping off the authorities as to the contents. So Werner, believe it or not, actually talked his very classy Aunt Henny into receiving the coffee at the train station closest to Lehnstedt and taking it to Lehnstedt to be picked up by Werner. Aunt Henny said she transported the coffee from the train station to Lehnstedt by hand pulling a large, heavy farm wagon up hill. Aunt Henny was always a slight woman and she said that this was always a very difficult task for her. One time she said she got the coffee all the way up the hill when the police stopped her and examined the contents on the wagon. They informed her that transporting coffee was against the law and were in the process of confiscating it when she told them that the coffee was used to put her nephew through medical school in Jena and begged them to let her keep it. What was running through her mind is that she could not believe she was about to lose this shipment after having transported it up hill to the point of completely losing her breath and all of her muscle strength. She said that believe it or not, the police had pity on her and Werner and let her keep the shipment! What I find unbelievable was that fact that Werner was able to talk Aunt Henny, who was a very classy, multimillionaire woman, into hand pulling a farm wagon filled with contraband up a steep hill! It is absolutely amazing what Werner talked people into doing over the course of his lifetime. I assure you that no one else would have got away with half of what Werner did. If anyone else would have asked me to do half of what Werner had talked me into, I would have told them Werner's favorite saying, "You must be out of your mind!" But most of us all seemed to do what Werner asked of us, either right away, or after Werner jarred our eardrums lose by screaming at us for not doing what he asked.

Werner got away with the coffee transport for years after the war. Finally one day in January, 1950, Werners' long streak of luck ran out. The train station authorities started noticing a pattern of Werner's package arrivals and felt that it was not in the ordinary course of a student's life to receive all those packages. So one day they checked the contents of his package before putting it in the train

locker and lo and behold, they found coffee, lots of it. They then placed the package into the locker and waited to see who picked up the coffee. One week after the shipment arrived, Werner came to pick it up. The authorities observed him picking it up, called the police and informed them that Werner Wilhelm II of Grossobringen was trafficking illegally in coffee. So on January 16, 1950, Werner's 22nd birthday the Communist police walked into his garage house in Grossobringen, went up the stairs and announced their intention to arrest Werner. Werner, in fear for his life, sprung at the police, knocked one of them very hard in the Adam's apple, knocking all the breath out of him, and then pouncing on the other, knocking him over the banister and down the stairs. Werner then took the stairs in one leap, and was out of the house and into the fields behind the house. Due to the high weeds, he was able to escape undetected. He then ran all the way to Jena, not daring to take the train for fear that there was an all points bulletin out on him, and arrived at his apartment in Jena, flopped down on the couch in his living room and got a few hours sleep. He then intended to bundle up all his microscopes and books and take them with him, but his landlord came into his room at that point and told him that the police had been to his apartment shortly before he got there and told her to report to them if Werner should show up there. The landlady suggested that he skedaddle out of there as fast as his legs could carry him. He took her advise, leaving all of his valuable equipment behind. He then took to the expressway, catching a ride on a huge truck in the vicinity of the Hermsdorfer interchange. He rode with the truck back to the Weimar area, then paid a kid a few marks to go to the cleaners in Weimar and get his brand new suit out that was sent there for shortening. Werner was afraid to go there himself for fear that the police knew about the new suit and were on the lookout. The kid brought the new suit back, collected his few marks and was off. No one asked him any questions at the cleaners so evidently the police did not know about the new suit.



Martha Brehmer Wilhelm Klodmann

I always felt so sorry for poor Mama Martha during those few weeks when her son bolted out of her house and into the fields. She never had any idea whether he was alive or dead, free or in prison, until she heard from him again. Her nerves must have been totally shot by the time she found out he was safe.



Werner Wilhelm II age 17

Werner then put on the new suit, discarded his old clothes, then headed on foot for the West German border in the neighborhood of Reiffenhausen, for he intended to cross over and go to Uncle Otto and Aunt Henny Brehmer as Reiffenhausen is only a mile or so from East Germany. In the afternoon Werner ended up at a farm house in a very rural area at the East-West crossing point. The farmer told Werner that he studies the pattern of the guards at the crossing point and he knows just when they are the farthest away from his farm and he will help Werner take his best chance at crossing with the least chance of getting shot. In return for his help he asked Werner to give him all the east German Mark he had in his possession as the money would do him no good in West Germany. Werner gave him the money and hid out on the man's farm until 4 am, the appointed crossing over time. When Werner came out to the farmer's field at 4 am he found about 6 other people at the line also waiting to cross over. The farmer had them go to a place in the field that had the most tree cover and then told them to lie down flat in the forest area. He said to lie flat and don't make a sound until he gave the "go" signal by waving his arm. When he gave the signal it meant that the border guards were farthest away, and they were to then get up fast, run as fast as they could and don't stop running until they were well into the west.

Werner laid flat in the field, and awaited the "go" signal. After what seemed like an eternity, finally the "go" signal was given, Werner and all the others got up and went like the devil through the treed area and then through a clearing still on the East German side before they were over the East-West border. Werner said that when they got into the clearing, they were suddenly spotted by the guards, who then started shooting at them. Werner said he never knew how close they came to hitting him as he was so scared that he saw nothing except freedom in front of him! In the middle of the clearing as the guards were shooting at him he suddenly encountered rolls of barbed wire strewn across his path in front of him. He just jumped the rolls, tearing both his new suit pants and the flesh on his leg.

So when he entered West Germany all he owned were the clothes on his back, and the suit was now ruined due to large tears in the pants legs. Like Willy, he had no money, no food, no job, but he hoped to have a place to stay at Aunt Henny's and Uncle Otto's in Reiffenhausen and then later with his father. But he hated Kassel and he did not intend to stay there.

Werner said that even if the police were not trying to arrest him, he would not have been able to attend the medical school at Jena any longer because if you

were caught doing anything illegal, you were immediately expelled from the university and were not given a second chance. Werner said that earlier he had been caught by the Jena police for selling coffee and he begged them not to charge him with that crime as the university would expel him and he did not want to be thrown out of medical school. That time they took pity on him and let him off with a warning after he promised them he would never do it again.

Just before he died, Werner was reminiscing about his medical school days and asked me if I thought he would make a good physician. I almost died laughing, saying to him how well did he think he would get along with hypochondriac housewives and their squalling brats? "I guess it wouldn't have worked out too well, huh?" was his reply. Maybe as a research physician, an internist with a predominantly male clientele, or maybe as a urologist he might have done okay, was my reply. I would have hated to be an eye, ear, nose and throat doctor like my father, was Werner's next comment. Werner then told me how bitterly disappointed his father was that Werner did not complete his medical studies and take over the father's practice in Kassel. Werner and his sister Astrid talked over the father's comments on Werner going to Canada and becoming an engineer instead. He was very angry, depressed and disgusted over his son going first to Zurich, Switzerland to medical school, then going to Canada and switching his studies to engineering because there was a two year wait to get back into medical school in America and Werner did not want to wait that long, he wanted to start making good money as soon as possible.

In his later years Werner felt that not completing medical school was a bad mistake. Werner told everyone there are only two good professions to get into when you attend college. Either become a doctor or a lawyer.

Werner later toyed with becoming a lawyer so he could handle his own legal affairs that arose in the course of his apartment business. He took and passed the entrance exam, then he had an interview with a counselor at U of D law school. The counselor asked him why he wanted to be a lawyer and to what use was he going to put his law degree. When Werner told him why, the counselor told him he was applying at the wrong school, that he should go to Detroit College of Law, that they were a much more practical curriculum and much more in line with what was best for Werner. Due to business pressures at the apartment buildings, plus his job at GM, he never got enrolled in night classes as he intended to do. His attorney and old friend George Armbruster Sr. tried quite hard to get Werner to go to law school, telling him it would be valuable in running his real estate ventures.

Werner made one trip across the border from East to West just prior to the above incident. His father decided now that being he was settled in the apartment building on Anenstrasse he wanted a Boxer. In reading the want ads he found what sounded like an excellent Boxer in East Germany. So he gave young Werner the money and told him to bring this Boxer home. Werner went across

the East German border, purchased the dog, which they named Jolly (pronounced Yolly), and brought him back to Kassel by train. When Werner walked in the door with Jolly, Mutti was peeling a pot full of potatoes for supper. When Jolly looked hungrily at that pot of potatoes, Mutti snatched one out of the pot and tossed it to Jolly. He was so hungry he ate it almost in one gulp. Mutti then tossed him another, and he ate it with the same degree of voraciousness. Mutti ended up giving him the entire pot of raw potatoes, which he polished off. Jolly was very skinny from lack of food in East Germany, so Mutti soon fattened him up with good food. But like the inmates of Buchenwald, Jolly was not able to immediately eat rich meats, but had to gradually be given a better diet as his system was gradually able to handle it.



Dr med Werner Wilhelm with Jolli

Jolly was one big beast, so Dr. Wilhelm decided to send the hound to obedience school to learn some manners. Jolly came back a few weeks later in the same skinny condition he was in when he first got there. The school had obviously half starved the poor dog. Mutti soon fattened him up again.

Jolly also came to them full of fleas. Mutti used to take a very fine tooth comb and combed his hair for hours, pulling out all the fleas in the process. She also did that with their cats. Mutti was always meticulous in the grooming of her animals.

Werner said that his family always had cats off and on, but he never liked cats. "Why don't you like cats?", I asked him. Because they're all sneaky and undependable, like my sister, Astrid, was his reply. Werner loved teasing cats. He said he could make a cat talk. He would hold the cat in his arm, ask the cat if he liked Werner, and the cat would purr from being stroked. "See, he likes me!", Werner would say. Then Werner would ask the cat if he liked the other guy. Werner would then pinch the cat's tail and the cat would yowl, and Werner would say, Ya, da, see, he doesn't like you!

Years later Werner's sister Astrid decided she wanted a Boxer, and having grown up with Jolly, she was quite attached to him. So she studied Boxer pedigree lines and found one good quality line that stemmed in part from her dog Jolly, so she bought a male pup from this litter, which she named Doni. When Werner and I went to visit Astrid, Doni was about 8 years old. Doni was an alert, and at times, a rather sharp dog. Werner loved to tease Astrid by mockingly attacking

her and tickling her half to death. She would howl, and squeal and laugh and squirm. Well, Doni observed this for awhile and decided that Werner was attacking his mistress, which he felt he had to prevent. So he sprung wildly after Werner and Werner turned around and put his back to Doni to protect his face from attack. Astrid had to quickly intervene, giving Doni the command to stop. Werner greatly respected Doni after that episode. None of Astrid's subsequent boxers were as aggressive as Doni.

There is also a very funny story concerning Mutti, Vati and Werner in Kassel. Mutti always helped in the practice, East as well as West Germany. She quit about 4 p.m. and walked the few blocks home to Annestrassen to put a dinner on the table for Vati and Werner when he was visiting them. Mutti was struggling, carrying her big purse on her shoulder and complaining that it was getting just too heavy to carry. Werner carried it for her, and he was amazed at the weight of that purse. When they got home and walked the 5 flights of steps, Werner was so worn out carrying that darn heavy purse that he opened it up and said to Mutti, "Let's see what's inside that is so darn heavy". To both of their amazement, Mutti's purse was full of heavy metal surgical instruments. Vati wanted to take some of these instruments home, so every day he went to Mutti's purse and dropped one of them in. Then when he got home he was so tired that he forgot to take the instruments out, so they kept accumulating in Mutti's purse. Needless to say, Werner and Mutti pulled all the instruments out and Mutti had a far lighter purse to carry back and forth.



Dr med. Werner Wilhelm

Vati had a decent amount of money saved up in the bank over the years which he looked forward to using to create a comfortable retirement, plus a nest egg for his children to give them a decent start in life. So he got the shock of his life when he got up one morning and read in the newspaper that the German government had overnight knocked a zero off every person's bank account. If you had \$100,000 in the bank yesterday, today you had \$10,000. But, on the other hand, if your mortgage was \$100,000 yesterday, today it was still \$100,000! Debts were not decimated, just assets. Grandfather Richard Brehmer was certainly right when he said in 1933 that the government was the biggest crook!

Then the government came up with another new trick at the same time. They printed all new money, with a totally different appearance and told all the citizens that they had a few weeks to turn in all their old money for new money. About a month after the deadline had passed for exchanging the money, Vati came across a whole wad of bills that his mother had sewed into cloth for him that he was saving for a rainy day and had long since forgot all about. Vati was just sick as this considerable amount of money was not worth the paper it was printed on.

As a result of this monetary disaster in Germany, as Vati re earned and placed his excess money in a savings account, he placed the bulk of his savings in Switzerland where one's money is much more secure over the long run. He also put a lot of his money in a "Nachttressor" in Switzerland, a safe deposit box that earned no interest but gave Vati peace of mind.

After Werner left medical school in Jena and enrolled in medical school in Zurich, Switzerland, he got a nasty surprise. When he was a medical student in Jena his first internship experience was in the "Frauen Clinic" (gynecology). Werner was ever the bull in the china shop when it came to dealing with women, and spending the entire day working with hypochondriac women drove him right up the wall. And trying to draw blood from their thin veins was beyond Werner's scope of interest or skill. The women were in an uproar over him, and he was beyond his endurance putting up with them, so Werner soon had an interview with the student counselor and as a result he was transferred to the orthopedic unit. He liked that much better. Most of the patients were men and they had a real ailment. Werner participated in a lot of bone surgery while on that unit, which he found fascinating. But much of the bone surgery of that time was to correct the ravages of TB, usually hip surgery where TB had eroded the bone. And while in Switzerland he had a TB test and was shocked to find out that the test showed positive. Werner showed positive on TB tests for the rest of his life. His chest x-rays did not show active TB, but he had a productive cough all of his adult life. Whether this was a result of his bad heart, or TB, was never explored as Werner seldom went to a doctor and always refused to have a chest x-ray as he was afraid of x-rays for health reasons.

Another Jena story concerned the Russians in their newly adopted role as governors of the occupied zone. One day Werner was leaving the medical school building when he saw lots of activity at the Zeiss Optical works across the street from the University. The Russian soldiers were cleaning out the Zeiss optical works completely and loading it on boxcars to take to Russia. What about the owners of Zeiss optical works? Like Werner and his mother, the owners were arrested and were sitting in jail so that they would broach no opposition while the Russians cleaned them out.

Later Werner was to learn that the Russians jailed all persons who owned over 100 acres of land or who employed 8 or more workers or were in a position of authority to have others rise up against the Russians while they were putting their new communistic system in place. Many of Werner's relatives did not lose their Gut as they had less than 100 acres, and were therefore not confiscated. Others, like Werner and his Uncle Otto Brehmer, owned over 100 acres and were jailed. Uncle Otto were jailed by the Communists for over a year and Aunt Henny had no idea where he was. When he returned, he told her he was incarcerated in Frankfurt/Oder, on the Polish border.



Karl Brehmer Sr



Werner Wilhelm & Dr habil Helmut Brehmer



Willy Eberlein

Uncle Willy Eberlein, we learned much later, was jailed by the Russians because he owned a paint factory in Saalfeld and employed over 9 workers. They did not jail Uncle Willy's father as he was over 70 and they felt that Willy, and not his father, was the threat to the new system. The Russians also jailed Karl Brehmer of Ostramondra and Dr. habil Helmuth Brehmer of neighboring Wiehe and placed them in Buchenwald for 8 years because they had large Ritterguts. Dr Helmuth Brehmer was a renowned veterinary with a huge clinic, a huge arena and a very fine stock of horses worthy of a knight in the middle ages. They were picked up overnight, thrown into Buchenwald without explanation and were placed in the same area of the camp. They had sleeping bunks one on top of the other. They were in Buchenwald for 8 years; they were jailed in 1953 and released in 1962, and were never given a reason for why they were incarcerated or released.



Walli Brehmer Heier & Werner Wilhelm II

Another Gut owner, Walli Heier, owned about 100 acres in Rettgenstedt (now known as Ostramondra as the small village was incorporated into the larger one.) They were always in fear of the Russians and tried to keep their head low to avoid a collision. The Russians always loved hassling everyone, but especially the former large land owners, telling them that they can stop holding their nose in the air as they are now no better than anyone else as under the Communistic system they are all equal. Yup, they are all equal, Werner would say. They all own nothing!

In 1962 the Russians came through town holding a bullhorn, declaring over the bullhorn that all land owners are voluntarily giving up their land to the government. The Heiers were furious at the new Russian dictum, but one didn't dare show it or you would disappear.



Martha Eschenbach Seibicke & Werner Wilhelm

Another 1948 Russian story concerns the Eschenbach and the Seibicke families of Tuenschuetz and Mertendorf. The Eschenbachs of Tuenschuetz were always a prominent family in the area and they always generously supported a local orphanage in Naumburg with food from the farm, and clothing. When Martha Eschenbach married into the Seibicke family of Mertendorf she continued to support the orphanage from her Gut as well. Martha's husband was killed in World War II so she fell on hard times, but she continued to remember the children in the orphanage out of the goodness of her heart. One day she sent 100 eggs to the orphanage after they begged her for food, saying that they didn't have enough to give the children a decent meal. The Russians learned that she had given eggs to the orphanage, so they came to her farm and arrested her, saying that she could not meet her quotas to feed the Russian people due to giving the eggs away to the orphans. They bound her hands and legs in chains and dragged her through the streets of her home town as an example to others of what would happen to those who broke the Russian laws. Martha said that it was an unbearably humiliating experience to be the most prominent family in the village and to end up being dragged through the streets in chains.

Martha Eschenbach Seibicke's daughter in law, Gisela, also had a very traumatic life due to the war and the resultant Russian occupation. Gisela's father was killed in the war and her mother was never able to adjust to the loss of her husband. One day, while the children were still quite small, the mother had enough of trying to adjust to no husband and no means of support in a communistic system, so she walked into the lake and just kept walking until she went over her head and drowned herself. The poor children were then left to grow up in a communistic system with no mother and no father. Gisela is a very intelligent, very industrious person and she was so frustrated in having to work within a communistic government where there is no reward for your efforts. Gisela told a typical communistic era story of no reward for diligent effort. The government contracted with her husband Eberhard to grow 15 acres of crops and they told him what his pay would be for the crop. They also contracted the same deal with the neighbors on either side of Eberhard. All 3 grew crops for the government. The man on one side sowed the crop, then did nothing more to it. No watering, no weeding. The crop was puny and barely worth harvesting. The neighbor on the other side grew crops around the 15 acre perimeter, and watered and weeded this crop, but the middle was empty, only mud. Eberhard, on the other hand, grew 25 acres, figuring the government would pay him for the extra and he could use the extra money to improve his farm. The government

came at harvest time and paid all 3 men the exact same amount of money. Eberhard was furious!



Werner Wilhelm & Eberhard Seibicke in Mertendorf



Gisela, Martha & Jens Seibicke & Werner Wilhelm

One practice the east German industrious people took advantage of was gleaning. When the Russians got through harvesting the crops, they would let the citizens go into the fields and take out what was left over. The Seibickes knew which were the best fields with the most left over yield and they would spend whole weekends in these fields cleaning out the excess crops. This would help get them through the winter months. Gisela does all of her own canning. She also raises sheep and does all of her own butchering as well as making of sheepskin from the pelts. Her home made sausage from sheep is unbelievably tasty.

Building your own home in East Germany is almost unheard of, but Eberhard Seibicke, over a period of years, managed to do so. Materials were extremely hard to obtain, and Eberhard had to pay bribes in order to assure that he would get the best of what was available. Today he has a very fine, modern home. Just after the wall fell, Werner offered to give Eberhard the money needed to pay off his East German mortgage on the house, because after an initial phasing in period, they would then owe that money in West German currency, which was at a 1 to 6 ratio with East currency. Eberhard and Gisela refused to take the money, saying that they were afraid to, that the authorities would wonder where they suddenly got all that cash from. Werner had given them several thousand dollars several years earlier, to come for a visit to America. They had applied for a passport, but were told that Gisela could not go as she was not a blood relative to Werner. The father or the son might be able to go, but they normally did not issue passports to anyone under 65 years of age. The government lost too many of its able bodied workers to the west due to the currency difference, which is the reason that the wall was erected in the 50's and 60's. So the Seibickes put the \$3000 in a savings account, and when the wall fell they used this money to partially pay off the house mortgage.

The East Germans could exchange up to 40,000 East German Mark for 40,000 West German Mark on a Mark for Mark basis, but only for a very short period of time. After that grace period, the East German Mark went out of being, and had souvenir value only.

The Seibickes had modern, indoor plumbing. Not so with most of the rest of the Guts. These are large, prestigious brick buildings, but were built at the turn of

the century or before. When we went to visit these homes, they seldom had indoor facilities, and the outdoor ones were quite amusing. When we went to use the Luft sanitary facilities in Lehnstedt, they took us outdoors, through the courtyard and one went in an area of the barn where one could observe the cows and the chickens on the fence while one perched over an open wooden hole. These people had no idea that things were any different elsewhere.

Not too long after Werner left East Germany by jumping the border under gunfire, he decided that he hated Kassel and decided to go to the University of Zurich and study medicine there. Werner hated Kassel, a sterile city without history as most of the city was bombed to rubble, and also he couldn't stand not being the only child. He bitterly resented having to share the limelight with a younger sister, Astrid. So he packed up and left for Switzerland, where he enrolled in and attended the University's medical school.

Werner found a room on the fourth floor of a rooming house about 6 blocks from the university. But several problems presented themselves to him, one in 1949 and the other in 1990. The 1949 problem was the fact that the room had no heat, and in the winter the rugs froze to the floors and the water turned to ice in the wash bowl. The wash bowl was porcelain so one had to be sure he dumped the water out before going to school or the bowl would be cracked when one got home. And every morning the rug was frozen to the floor from the lack of heat. Werner said it was especially bad on the top floor where he was as there was no heat coming through from above and the wind whipped terribly under the gables. All Werner had was a bedroom and an ancient bath down the hall. There was no place to eat and no cooking facilities on the premises for Werner's use, so he had to make do as best as he could. So Werner decided to make himself pancakes in the morning for breakfast. He mixed up some flour and water and put it on a hot plate which he had plugged in for that purpose. The landlady came running up the stairs, out of breath, having a fit, saying that the electric meter ran like a race car! She reminded him that not only would she have to pay a higher bill, but also the electric was being rationed by the government and she would be fined if she went over her allocation.

The 1990 problem was the fact that the path from the University to the rooming house was all sharply uphill, and we were on foot the entire 1 mile distance from the train to the rooming house. I never thought that Werner was going to make that whole long, uphill way on foot, but he did. He really wanted to see for the last time in his life the place he lived as a university student in Zurich. And believe it or not, he also walked the entire long way to Lake Zurich at the end of the street to once more see the lake. Werner was an excellent swimmer, and once when he was a teenager, he swam the whole 5 miles across lake Zurich by himself, without a companion. He said it took him hours and did not unduly strain his stamina, but it did cause one severe problem. He got so terribly sunburned that his entire back was one mass of infected blisters. He went to the local doctor who gave him some soothing powder to put on the open weeping sores.

He said he sat in class with the entire back of his shirt just running with pus water from his sun burn. He later went home with the unhealed back and instead of getting help and sympathy from his father, Dr. Wilhelm told him that if he was stupid enough to swim across Lake Zurich all afternoon by himself, then he deserved what he got. Werner said it was a long time before he could sit comfortably and rest his back against a seat. He later got little growths all over his back as a result of the damage done by the sun. These growths worried him, so about 1986 Werner went to Dr. Timban and had these growths burned off with a hyfracator. He then had little flat button like skin bumps where the growths used to be.

Meanwhile, back at the rooming house in Zurich in 1949, he encountered a new problem with the landlady. There was a florist shop downstairs next to the rooming house, and the florist shop employed a young slightly retarded boy to deliver the flowers. Often the boy, while waiting for a delivery, would have nothing to do, and would take to drifting up to Werner's apartment and talk to him while he was studying. Werner felt sorry for the young boy and kind of liked the kid, so he let him come up. Well, the landlady could not understand that a medical student would put up with a retarded kid unless "something funny was going on". So on the strength of her suspicions; she gave Werner notice to move. Werner was glad to get rid of that obnoxious old landlady, but he was not able to find anything in the neighborhood of the University and was forced to go to a neighboring town to get a room to rent. The rent was 30 Marks a month instead of 60, but the train fare daily ate up more than the difference in the rent, and now he had less time to study, so all in all, it was a bad move.

Werner's father was very angry with his son that he was not attending college in Kassel or nearby, and he refused to support his son or pay his university tuition, so Werner was on his own for money. Werner and his father had words over his lack of support, but the father insisted that due to fleeing to the West and starting all over again, he had no money. So Werner had the same problem he had in Jena, how do you go to medical school and support yourself at the same time? Well, he solved the problem the same way he did in Jena, for in Switzerland if you were a foreigner you were not allowed to hold a job, as jobs were reserved for citizens only. So Werner went to the library and studied which South American countries grew coffee. He then wrote to the Chamber of Commerce in each country and told them he was a coffee distributor and that he was thinking of expanding his market and he was willing to try their product to see if it measured up to his high standards. And to his delight most of the countries replied to his letter by sending him a free sample of their coffee. Werner was overwhelmed with joy when Brazil sent him 100 pounds of free coffee! At 40 dollars a pound as the going market in east Germany, this 100 pounds was a real nest egg for him. Werner shipped the coffee to his Aunt Henny in Lehnstedt. His mother then picked it up from Henny and distributed it to her friends and relatives who sold the coffee, kept some of the profit and gave the rest of the money to Martha Klodmann. Martha then took the money to the University of Jena and

bought textbooks and microscopes and shipped these back across the border to the last train stop in Germany before Switzerland where the stationmaster stored them for Werner until he came across the Swiss border and claimed them. He then put the books and microscopes in suitcases and carried them by foot across the German-Swiss border, then after he was in Switzerland, he then boarded the train for Zurich. Once in Zurich he would go from book store to book store, seeing where he could get the best prices for his books and microscopes. He pretty much ended up dealing with one bookstore in the end. He would then take the bookstore money and use it to buy more coffee from his South American sources, and the cycle would start all over again.

Once, coming over the Swiss border from Germany Werner had a real scare. He had a 1000 Swiss Franc bill on him and he felt that they were going to search him and he knew if they asked him where he got all that money, he would not have a good explanation, as his trading deals back and forth over the border was probably illegal, so to protect himself from getting expelled from the country and from Swiss medical school, he rolled up the 1000 Swiss Franc bill and swallowed it whole! He then dug through his feces for several days looking for the 1000 Swiss Franc bill. Finally, 3 days later, he found it, but it had bleached all out and was a faint, almost indiscernible bill, and now was a yellow color from the bile. Very scared, he took it to the bank to exchange it for a good bill. He was sure that they were going to tell him to go to hell. The teller looked at that bill real funny like, then handed him a new 1000 Swiss franc bill, saying that the Swiss government always honors its currency, no matter what the condition of the bill. Werner was real relieved, that would have been a lot of money to lose.

One sad story from his Switzerland school days. He was invited to join a very fine fraternity, the Etruscans, a very old, Medieval organization attended mostly by young men from upper crust families. Werner attended several of their fraternity gatherings and fell absolutely in love with this organization. He loved the way they conducted their affairs and so much wanted to be a part of them. He loved telling the story of the upper classmen and the "foxes", the neophytes. The upper classmen imitated middle ages Lords, and the neophytes, called "foxes" were the serfs. The foxes had to be very attentive to the needs of both the upper classmen, but most especially to any woman who came into the fraternity house. If the fox didn't get the door and hold it for the lady before she entered, and then get her chair for her and put it under her as she sat, he was penalized by having to souffe a whole stein of beer. The Lord would order the foxes to drink the stein of beer by saying, "Fox, spoon yourself". The not so alert foxes were often dead drunk by the end of the evening. The Etruscans liked Werner and asked him to join, but with a very heavy heart he had to decline as he didn't have the money to pay the heavy dues. Many times in the last few years of his life, he had said to me, "My father could have paid those dues for me. And he should have wanted to see his son belong to such a prestigious organization. I really feel horrible that I was not able to belong to the Etruscans.

Werner's ultimate dream was to go to America, which he foresaw as the land of opportunity, so he applied for a VISA, and after one year when his VISA did not come through, he discovered that it may be years before he got to America as the quotas were quite restrictive. So he then explored the possibility of going to Canada and he found out that if he applied as a farmer he was almost guaranteed to be given a VISA, so that he did, and after a one year wait he got approval to go to Canada. A farmer in Winnipeg had requested a young German farmer so Werner was paired up with him and a VISA was issued. Werner completed his semester in the University of Zurich, then packed up and was on his way to Canada. He took 36 suitcases with him! No, not clothing! In most of the suitcases was parts of his motorcycle, and in others was parts for a travelling movie theater projection apparatus. He took the train from Zurich through Germany, then through France, then on the boat to Dover in England. Then on the English train, and off at Piccadilly Circus. There he got his luggage forward by moving his suitcases two at a time 10 feet forward, then went back and brought up two more, etc until he got them to the Empress of Canada laying in wait in the harbor. He got the fright of his life in Piccadilly Circus for he couldn't understand one word of English! Oh my Lord, Werner thought, I thought I could speak and understand English. How am I ever going to get along in Canada if I can't understand the language?!? However, when Werner got on the Empress of Canada he met a group of middle aged Scots and he understood everything they said. He was so relieved! When he told them about Piccadilly Circus, they said "don't worry boy, we can't understand those people either!"

On the way over on the train from Switzerland to the coast of France, Werner met an older lady who was coming from America back home to Switzerland. Because she had lived in America for many years, Werner asked her which was a better place to live, America or Switzerland. America, she replied. Then why are you leaving America and coming back to Switzerland, he quizzed her. Because, for a young man like you, America is the land of opportunity. You can make a lot of money and invest in many things, all of which give you a great money making opportunity, but also come with great risks. But for an old woman like me, it is much better to be in a stable, unchanging economy.



Werner Wilhelm on Empress of Canada



?, Werner Wilhelm und 2 Scots on Empress of Canada

Werner was scared when he was at the point of getting onto the Empress of Canada and going to America all by himself as a teenager. Werner had \$5,000 cash in his shirt, money he had earned over a 2 year period exchanging coffee, cocoa, microscopes and books. His grandmother Rosa Wilhelm had sewn the money into a wad and then had sewn a piece of material over the wad, then attached strings to it which Werner ran around his body to keep the wad tightly to his chest. He then kept this tied to him all during the boat ride to America, even sleeping on this wad. He later showed it to the trusted Scots people when they asked him if he had any money.

The Scots in talking to Werner discovered that Werner really did not want to go to Winnipeg, that he wanted to go to Toronto instead, as he felt that the opportunities for education and for making money were much greater there. But the Canadian government had made the arrangements to send him to the farmer who was awaiting Werner as a worker, and having grown up under the Nazis and the Communists, you do not question, second guess or confront your government. So when the Scots heard he wanted to go to Toronto, they asked him 2 pertinent questions: 1. did you pay your own fare, and 2. do you have any money of your own? Yes, he said, he paid his own fare, and yes, he had \$5,000, which he promptly pulled out of his shirt after unbuttoning his middle shirt button, and showed them. Put that back away!, they admonished him, and don't show that to anyone else!!. You should have given that to the purser when you boarded ship. No one gets my money, Werner replied. The Scots then buttonholed the immigration man that had come on board in Montreal and told him that the young man would rather go to Toronto. Werner died at hearing these bold assertions and was scared to death that they were going to send him right back to Europe. But instead the immigration man asked the same 2 questions and Werner told him he paid his own fare. When asked if he had any money of his own, the Scots all said in unison, "Show him, boy!" Werner unbuttoned the middle button on his shirt, reached in and when he showed him his \$5,000 wad, the immigration man stamped his exit VISA for Toronto. Werner was delighted, flabbergasted, and scared.

Werner had a real fondness for those Scots and took several sets of pictures to remember them by. They were his first new friends in a strange new world.



Werner Wilhelm on Empress of Canada



?, Werner Wilhelm und 2 Scots on Empress of Canada

The first place that the Empress of Canada docked in the new world was in Montreal. Werner took some pictures of himself, the boat and the people on the

boat with him. He also noted that he arrived in Montreal on the 8th day of May, 1951. He was a very young, quite thin young man. He also had a lot of guts to make such a trip on his own without knowing a soul in the new world.



Werner Wilhelm in Sudbury, Ontario, Canada

When the Empress of Canada docked in Toronto, Werner stepped off the boat and into the New World. It was a very odd, scary feeling, being in America as a teenager all alone, not even sure if you can speak the language, having no place to stay, not knowing if you'll find someplace, and not knowing if you can find a job. The immigration officer stepped off the boat right behind Werner, put his hand on Werner's shoulder and told him to follow. Werner, having been brought up in a Nazi government, was scared to death. But the immigration officer quickly explained to him that they were walking down the street together for two reasons: 1. he was escorting Werner to the Bank of Toronto to deposit the \$5,000 cash before someone took it away from him, and 2. afterwards the immigration officer was taking Werner to the YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association, kind of a hostel situation) to get a room until he could find permanent accommodations. Werner loved that little savings passbook he got from the Bank of Toronto. It had cute money saving slogans on every page. But Werner's favorite slogan, which he never forgot, and which he agreed with whole heartedly was "systematic savings insures success." Werner said that slogan was the foundation of his economic success.

Werner took pictures of his first Sunday in Toronto. He took a streetcar to the local park and then took some pictures there. It was a nice, balmy spring day, this 14th of May, 1951. Without a wife, friend or relative, it wasn't "you and me against the world", it was simply Werner against the world.

Werner was fascinated by the Scottish bag pipe players who marched in the Memorial Day parade on the 30 of May, 1951. It must have felt strange to Werner to watch a memorial day parade of a nation who had been at war with his homeland a few short years earlier.

Werner was able to get several jobs while in Canada. The first job he worked all night, moving cups from one conveyor belt to another, for 60 cents an hour. The second job was with Canada Dry and paid a little better money and was a little less boring. Then in 1951 Werner read an ad in the want ads that caught his attention. The International Nickel Company of Canada, Ltd. , a mining company near Sudbury, in Copper Cliff, Ontario, were advertising for help and they paid a

fantastically good wage, \$1.25 hour! So Werner got out his suitcases, reassembled his German motorcycle that he had unassembled in Switzerland in order to cart it to the new world as baggage so he wouldn't have to pay duty on it, and was off to Sudbury. He hung 4 big suitcases on his handle bars and on the back of his motorcycle and he was off to Sudbury, in subfreezing weather. He was almost permanently frostbitten by the time he arrived there on the motorcycle, but he got that high paying job unloading coke cars. He spent 8 hours per day bursting the retaining bar loose, then flinging open the doors of the box car. The nickel would then fall out the bottom of the box car into a pile below, waiting to be hauled away. Werner said the other men would deeply inhale the nickel dust to show everyone what he-men they were, but Werner was afraid of the dust and tried to avoid breathing it as much as he could.



Werner Wilhelm in der Nickelmine

One his fellow workers, and first friend in the new world at the nickel mines, Henry, was also from Germany and was intent on making it good in the new world. He was working at the nickel mines in order to get seed money to go on to other ventures. Henry had a wife and several children, but was managing to save up money. He bought a single lot in a new housing subdivision and was sure he was going to make money by hanging on to it for a few years, then selling it. He tried to convince Werner to do the same but Werner never liked subdivisions and would rather buy larger tracts of land. Werner always said that a man was never going to become a self made millionaire if he had to 1. make house payments, 2. make utility payments, or 3. support a family. Just before he died Werner changed his mind about the family part, he felt that a man could have had a family and still become a millionaire. But in looking back, Werner felt that his German friend in Sudbury was going to make it good on that lot he bought. The friend's ultimate goal in life was to start up and run a German meat shop, with specialty meats, breads and condiments. Werner also thought that was a good idea. Werner lost touch with his friend when he left Sudbury, and he always wondered whether or not that man got his meat shop and how well he did in life.

The return from Sudbury to Toronto in August, 1951 was a sad story. Werner had his German motorcycle for years and he just loved it. He went everywhere on it, it was his constant companion. When he decided to return to Toronto, again in the middle of the winter, he went by motorcycle. He had been driving for hours when he got low on gas and pulled into the gas station to fill up. He filled up his gas tank, spilling some of the gas over the side of the tank. He then put in

the oil and started shaking the motorcycle to mix the oil and the gas. Suddenly the gas started sloshing over the real hot motor, and as a sudden he had a fire and the gas was ignited by the hot engine. Get your bike out of my gas station, screamed the gas station owner over and over. Werner got his beloved bike out of the gas station, then it blew up by the side of the road. Thus he lost an old, good friend who had traveled many a mile with him.

While in Sudbury, Werner bought his very first automobile, a Ford. Werner always hated automobiles and tried to buy the most economical one he could find that would run. Werner was angry over how much money the American people squandered on an automobile, money that could be placed in the bank and invested to secure one's future.

Werner then decided to return to Toronto as it was of a metropolitan hub and he wanted to return to college and to buy some real estate. When he returned to Toronto he started searching for a good real estate venture and he settled on a rooming house that was for sale on Pembroke Street. It was recently purchased by a Jewish family who had evicted all of the tenants and then sent their mentally staid brother in to renovate the building. (The two smart brothers did all the real estate transactions. The dumb brother used to drag a wagon all over town loaded with wallpaper and paint. The dumb brother used to completely renovate old, broken down apartment buildings, then the smart brothers would resell the project at a substantial profit.) Werner paid the higher resale price, but still made good money on the project.

He soon filled up the apartment building, and when the other apartments were full, he vacated and then rented his own apartment. He had his handyman build him an apartment in the basement and he lived there. One day a woman came to him and told him that although she was white her husband, John, was black, and as a result, no one in Toronto would rent to them. She begged Werner to rent her anything, an apartment in the basement would be best. She promised that her husband John, who was a sheeny man, would leave before daybreak and come back after dark and that he would always use the rear entrance where no one would see him. Werner rented to that couple, and they were the best of tenants, never giving him or anyone else a moment's trouble. In the meantime Werner needed a place to live, so he just pulled his furniture out of the basement apartment and put it next to the boiler. He said that all he needed was a bed and a desk and he was just fine.

Another cute story about Werner and his Pembroke Street apartment building. There were two kinds of taxes in Toronto at the time; Catholic taxes and secular taxes. When the Catholic tax man came around, Werner told them there were no Catholics in the building, when the secular tax man came around, Werner told him that all the tenants were Catholic.

From 1952 to 1953 Werner got a job at the Dominion Chemical Company of Canada, Ltd. in Toronto. He was a Chemist, responsible for the chemical analysis and quality control of all chemicals manufactured.

One day Werner decided to go to Detroit to see what kind of employment he could find being he had completed his bachelor's degree. First he went to General Motors in the Fisher Building on Grand Boulevard as he felt that they were the most prestigious company and would probably pay the best wages. They told him he was still too much of a honky, too fresh off the boat and too fresh out of college, and his English still needed improvement. They told him to get a job at Ford Motor Company and then General Motors would search him out and hire him in 5 years when he gained some polish and some experience.

Werner then tried his luck at Ford Motor Company in Dearborn in 1953. They liked him very much, and wanted him to start the next day. He told them that this was all quite sudden, that he would have to go back to Toronto, quit his job there, then sell his apartment building. They told him to call his employer, take 2 weeks vacation, and start Ford tomorrow. Then after two weeks, Ford would give him two weeks off to go back to Toronto, quit his job and sell his apartment building.

Werner hated Detroit, and he especially hated cars, but they were paying such a darn good wage that he had no choice except to accept. So he started Ford the next day, and then went back to Toronto and quit his job at Dominion Chemical and later sold his apartment building there.

In 1953 and 1954 Werner worked at the Ford Motor Company, Steel Division, in Dearborn, Michigan. He was a metallurgical observer, observing and reporting all phases of quality control in the melting of steel, stripping, and blooming of ingots.

From 1954 to 1957, Werner worked at Ford Motor Company, Engine & Foundry Division, in Dearborn Michigan. He was a Chemical Engineer responsible for the physical and metallurgical examination of heat treated metals, engine parts, etc. He was quality advisor to the heat treat department. He was responsible for the control of electroplating and coating operations.



Werner Wilhelm II

In those days Werner dressed in very fine, expensive clothes. For those of you who had a hearty laugh over his sandals and shorts of his later years should take

a good look at 1. the fine sandals and shorts of his youth, those being all brand names of the highest quality fabric and workmanship, and 2. the picture of how he dressed in a 3 piece suit to go to Belle Isle one fine summer Sunday afternoon. He dressed very well into his forties, when, due to a number of disasters in his life, and his failing health, he reverted to the very comfortable, albeit casual, somewhat sloppy dress of his later years.

Werner started exhibiting health problems much earlier than normal. He had heart problems since age 5, having inherited an enlarged heart from the Wilhelm side. He later developed cataracts in his 30's which scared the devil out of him when it first occurred as he thought he would go blind in a matter of a few years. He also developed a pea sized nodule in the posterior lobe of his prostate, which gave him many a sleepless night as this is the area, the doctor told him, where most malignant tumors occur. He refused to have the cataracts removed or the nodule biopsied, preferring to leave well enough alone. This was the correct philosophy for him as the cataracts did not obstruct his reading or driving and he died without any cancer symptoms despite having 3 larger nodules in his prostate. In regard to the heart there was nothing that could be done about the enlargement except to avoid strenuous exertion, which Werner did at all costs as he was highly allergic to physical activity of any sorts except maybe swimming on occasion. He also developed high blood pressure (220/110) in his early forties which he carried with him almost to the end of his days. He used to laugh at his blood pressure, saying he needed this high number in order to keep him stirring. In those years he had a very ruddy complexion due to the high blood pressure.



Werner Wilhelm II & „Bear“

About age 50 he developed diabetes. At first it appeared mild, but as he started developing bladder infections he would get blood sugar values of 550. Once he went to Florida on vacation with a blood sugar of 550. I was having a fit, expecting him to go into a coma or show other serious health problems. While we were in the Miami area he walks into the water of an inland lake, and then starts swimming over a mile out to an island. When he got to the island all Kurt and I could see of him is a figure about the size of a child's small plastic soldier. You had to squint to see if it was really him. And while he was on the island we could see what appeared to be his very small arms waving back to us from shore. I was furious with him as I was so scared he'd get a cramp, or pass out, or whatever and drown. His dog Bear was also equally furious with him and scared for Werner's safety. So he barked and barked, but he was not about to

swim out to get him. There was no use the whole family drowning, was Bear's philosophy. But after resting on the island Werner made it back safe and sound. He later went on oral diabetic medication, none of which really worked well until he got on glucatrol, which quickly brought his blood sugar down to normal. But what quickly and permanently brought Werner's blood sugar down to normal was end stage kidney failure. Once the kidneys stopped properly filtering out waste products they allowed all the sugar in the blood stream to exit the body via the kidneys and bladder. Werner no longer needed oral diabetic medication.

In about 1982 he started having urine retention due to prostate hypertrophy and this problem, uncorrected for a number of years, was the major reason for his early demise. He started having to go to the bathroom day and night with increasing frequency but the quantity of urine expelled became less and less as time went on. I told him that it appeared that he was carrying around a full bladder all of the time and that he should see a urologist for treatment. After a lot of fighting back and forth he finally went to see Dr. Joseph Oldford & Dr. Ed Pontis, both of whom told him that he had a greatly enlarged prostate and that they wanted to do either a TUR or a complete prostatectomy on him. This kind of news he definitely did not want to hear, so he ignored them. He then started having one bladder infection after another. He would no sooner be off the antibiotics for a few weeks when he would start up with another infection. The burning and pain he experienced were just miserable! Finally one day he was in horrid pain, then as a sudden his urine was gross blood. Then later that day he could not pass any urine and his ever distending bladder was complete unmitigated torture. He begged me to take him to the nearest hospital, which was St. Joseph West. I got him there in record time, but once we got there he sat there for over an hour and no one would take care of him. I talked to the personnel, telling them what distress he was in, but again no one budged. Werner, in acute distress, shouted that I should call Dr. Timban, the physician for St. Anne's and ask him where we could meet him as Werner needed immediate attention. Dr. Timban answered his phone and told us to go to the emergency room at Holy Cross Hospital on Outer Drive in Detroit and that he would phone ahead to the emergency room there and tell them to give Werner immediate attention as soon as he walked through the door. I berated the staff at the St. Joseph's emergency room, who by the way were in no distress and had no real emergencies on their hands at the time, they were merely exercising a power play maneuver, and then put him in the car and drove straight over to Holy Cross. The trip with a bladder with more than 1000 cc in it was a really awfully painful experience for poor Werner. He was beyond his level of endurance by the time I got him through the door at Holy Cross. They were a good and efficient team of personnel there. They got him on a gurney in record time, got his clothes off and showed up with a catheter and leg bag in hand. Passing the catheter was so painful that it almost knocked Werner unconscious. I think the only reason he didn't pass out was that he was screaming so loud. The resulting urine was grossly bloody, including long strings of blood clots. That is probably why he couldn't pass any urine; the many blood clots probably closed the

urethra. They had to empty the leg bag twice there was so much urine in his bladder. Werner was given a prescription for an antibiotic and a suppository to relax the urinary tract and stop the spasms. We had a horrible time trying to fill the suppository prescription that late at night. Everyone in the hospital pharmacy looked at us like we were drug addicts planning a party. I finally had the emergency room talk to the pharmacy and much later I walked out with 2 prescriptions in my hand and had to face a very mad, sick, cranky Werner who was waiting for me very impatiently in the car. Werner later called Dr. Pontis' office and found out he had just transferred to Roswell Park Cancer Center in Buffalo, New York. Werner called Dr. Pontis in Buffalo, and then called the airlines and got tickets for him and me to fly to Buffalo. Werner and I drove his car to Metro airport, got on the plane at 4:45 am and we were off to Buffalo. We took a taxi to Roswell Park hospital and Werner was admitted for a week of testing. There was a big uproar immediately as Werner noticed he was missing his hand written phone directory. He hollered, screamed and railed at me for hours over the missing phone directory. I felt bad as I knew he had over 25 years of business numbers, contractors, etc in there and that he could never replace all those numbers, especially all the unlisted ones. But I didn't see where it was me who lost the darn thing, and besides with him bellowing like a stuck elephant due to the pain, I couldn't hear myself think, and the only thing I had on my mind was getting him on the plane and getting competent medical treatment for his problem, which I had thought at the time was immediate and life threatening. When we got to Buffalo and were in the hospital, I told Werner that I thought that the leg bag should be emptied. Guess who he thought should empty it. He told me to go into the men's room with him and do it in front of the sink. I told him to go in there first and make sure there were no other men in there. He bellowed at me to stop being so squeamish. I told him to go see if it was empty as men standing in front of a urinal would not appreciate a woman walking in on them. The bathroom was empty. We went in, I had a bucket with me, I opened the leg bag and let out the urine, and in doing so I had jarred and moved the indwelling catheter, and apparently another blot clot had blocked the urine, for as a sudden over 1000 cc of what appeared to be pure blood gushed out of the catheter and into the leg bag. I thought for sure Werner was exsanguinating and I stood there waiting for him to lose consciousness and drop out cold on the floor in front of me. When he retained consciousness, I clamped off the leg bag full of blood so that the overfull leg bag and catheter would act as a pressure bandage of sorts, then dressed him and ran him fast over to the urological area and demanded that a doctor look at once at the bag full of blood. A doctor did see him right away, and said, yes, there is a lot of blood in the urine, but that there is also a lot of urine there too and that although he was losing a lot of blood, it was not at this point life threatening. He told us to go back to the bathroom and empty the leg bag once more. Werner was given injectable and oral antibiotics and within the week his urine was normal appearing again and the present crisis was over. The doctor told him very sternly that the prostate had to be operated on as it was closing off the urethra and would cause further and more serious problems to the kidneys and bladder if not taken care of. The ya,

ya we were greeted with as Werner's answer told the doctor and me that he had no intention of having surgery, at least not at this point.

I had deluxe accommodations at a very high class, fancy Holiday Inn about a mile away for a very cheap price, only \$27 a night, as they had special arrangements with the hospital to provide rooms at almost their cost to out of state family members staying with the patient. The hospital was in a very bad neighborhood so every night they had a free shuttle transportation to all neighboring hotels for the family members. There was where I met some of the most desperate, despairing poor souls of the world. Most were older women losing their not so old husbands to cancer. I would see those women sitting in the rooms the next day with their husbands looking as though the world was coming to an end, which for them it was. And by the look on the dying men's faces, you could see that they desperately wished that they didn't have to leave such a helpless soul behind to cope with a cold cruel world which had no safe haven left for her. And these women did not stay at the Holiday Inn, either. They went to the Ronald Mc Donald House 1 block away from the hospital. This was a wonderful arrangement for these dear souls for there they all had one another and were not so all alone. And the Ronald Mc Donald house treated them grandly and made them feel for short while at least that they were not all alone in this world without a friend.

I would eat my meals in the cafeteria in the basement of the hospital as Werner & I were not aware at this point that the wife can get a tray in the room with the husband. The cafeteria was a bleak affair, both in harsh surroundings, third rate food, and the occasional cockroach crawling across your table or your food. While sitting there one day being entertained by the cockroach making his way across my table, I was approached by the hospital social worker who asked if I wanted company while eating. I immediately thought to myself that the social worker was not very perceptive as at the next table was an older woman sitting all alone with a look on her face that said she was expecting the roof to fall in on her any minute. I respectfully declined her offer and suggested that she dine with the poor older lady, which she did. Werner was still vigorous and lusty at this point in his life and we both felt that we didn't need anyone other than one another.

The younger children in wheelchairs with cancer also got to me. The IV's with chemo running in them was a very depressing sight indeed, especially in so many young ones wheeling through the hospital, pale white complexions and no hair.



Rudi Pitz & Werner Wilhelm II

Werner found his phone directory; when Rudi had gone to pick up the car he saw the directory lying on the pavement next to the car and picked it up and secured it for Werner. Back home it was life as normal. Werner would have nothing done for his prostate problem and he would have one infection after another. He now attended to the infections faster and thus avoided any more bleeding. One time the doctor was so frustrated at all those infections that he had Werner try gentimycin injectable for ten days. He would walk over to the nursing home at the appointed time with the vial and needle in his hand and let the nurse inject him. Then we had to go to the oil wells so we would stop on the shoulder of I-75 at the appointed time, we would hop out of the car, he would drop his shorts some and I would inject him right there on the highway. Much later, when we lost old Bear to kidney failure, I found out from the Vet that if you have weakened kidneys, gentimycin is very hard on a weakened kidney and will throw you into much more severe and permanent kidney damage. After Werner was dead and I found the bottle of gentimycin and the needles I felt very bad that I had given him that medication and thus had helped shorten his life span. But I had no way of knowing that at the time, but the doctor should have. It's sad to think that the vet knew more than the urologist.



Werner Wilhelm II & „Bear“

The urinary retention went from bad to worse. I kept on Werner and he kept screaming at me to mind my own business. I kept telling him he should empty his bladder, then we should pass a catheter in there to see how much urine is left. By the end of that year I didn't need a catheter to tell me that his bladder was always full, day and night. When he slept urine would be forced out of his bladder and hit the wall there was so much built up pressure. When we would wake up in the morning his side of the bed would be soaked and when he got up at night he would put down a dry towel over the wet area. But, no, he would not go to the doctor and get it taken care of. Then came the Christmas that it was 10 below zero and we left Rudi's after midnight after trying to get the car started and then running for over ½ hour. The car never did get to running properly and then

the car broke down at Telegraph and I 96 and we had to stop at the motel there and stay overnight. Well, their temperature never got above 55 degrees, Werner got both sides of the bed wet and we darn near froze to death that night.

Shortly thereafter Werner suddenly found he could not much urinate anymore. He would go to the bathroom, turn beet red from straining, almost pass out from the sharp rise in blood pressure from all that straining and almost nothing would come out after all that effort. He then went to Dr. Joseph Oldford, who hospitalized him at Harper Hospital on Valentine's Day in room 214 V, a most deluxe private room, and talked Werner into undergoing a cystoscopy, and while under a local block and a light sedative, he talked Werner into letting him biopsy his 20 year old nodule, which turned out to be benign, if you can believe that the doctor was actually able to find the exact location of the nodule and then get his needle into that small lump. But the best thing Dr. Oldford did was to refuse to discharge Werner until he learned to catheterize himself. Dr. Oldford told Werner and I that Werner's kidneys had turned into "elephant ears" from all that urine backing up into them over the past few years. Werner and I didn't fully realize the seriousness of this until he went into the end stages of kidney failure several years later. This stubbornness on Werner's part to correct the urine retention cost Werner and I many years we could have had together. Werner was off the wall over the fear of having to do this, but he was more fearful of having surgery, so he had to face one procedure or another as he couldn't urinate anymore. I did the first catheterization for him to show him it wasn't that bad of a happening. He was quite pleased at the tolerance level he had for this procedure after I did it for him the first time and the next time with the help of the nurse, and a lot of apprehension and bit of frustration, he did just fine and was very pleased with himself when it was all over. From that time on he quickly learned to manage this procedure quickly and with ease. The nurses had fits over his lack of infection control, especially while he was in the hospital where one can pick up some really nasty microbes. At home it was even worse. He would use one catheter for a year until it got burred and started causing bleeding because it was tearing up the lining of his urethra. He would then cuss over having to bear the expense of buying a new catheter (under \$2.00) but then he would buy and use a new one until a year later it got a burr. In the nine years he used a catheter I doubt if more than 10 were gone from the original box he purchased. Lubricant? That cost money, so we did without until we got some real bad bleeding episodes from shoving a dry catheter into tender tissue. So we then sent Sandy to Perry's to get the cheapest lubricant for \$1.25 on sale.

Werner was able to urinate fine after that, but the damage was already done at that point in his life. Dr. Oldford found that Werner's kidneys were the size of elephant ears and his BUN and creatinine slowly rose with each passing year after that, until in November of 1992 he held an excess of 81 pounds of water, had a BUN of 256 and had no choice but to go on dialysis.

At the time he had had Canadian citizenship, so now he had to apply for American Citizenship, which he had been denied when he was in Switzerland as the quotas were so low for his classification. But now as a Canadian citizen, they were willing to accept him for American citizenship. Werner had applied for Canadian citizenship for his mother Martha Klodmann, with no success. So now, after he had received his naturalization papers here in the US, he applied for citizenship for his mother.



Werner Wilhelm II vorne Wayne State Universitaat

Werner was always self conscious about his weight since early childhood. His classmates used to call him "thicky". So in Wayne State he was trying to keep his weight down, and if possible even lose some. He had heard that smoking reduced your appetite and increased your metabolism, so he decided to try it. He smoked for a short while, but didn't like the habit and didn't lose any weight so he gave it up. He especially decided to give up smoking as his father was always dead set against it. The father told Werner that he had a bad heart from childhood, plus he had a strong family history of the men dying from heart disease on the Wilhelm side of the family, so don't tempt fate by smoking. You can limp along for years on a bad heart, Dr. Wilhelm told him, as long as you don't smoke or drink. But if you do one or the other, or worse yet, both, you will have severe heart disease at an early age.



Roberta Cowlbeck



Roberta Cowlbeck & Werner Wilhelm

While in night school in Wayne State University, about 1954, Werner met a most lovely woman by the name of Roberta Cowlbeck. Roberta was extremely intelligent, very pretty, a most gracious well brought up woman, and she was in love with Werner. She was a Professor's Assistant, had a Master's Degree in Science and did tutoring on the side. Werner and Roberta had some real fun times together that first summer they met. They went to Boblo Island and to Metropolitan beach. Werner has some nice pictures to remember those times.

Roberta was very patient with Werner as he was often unavailable to date as he had to work and attend the university at the same time. And Werner was never one to turn down a chance for overtime, either. Werner loved working right through Christmas eve and Christmas day and also New Year's Eve and New Years Day because it was double time. He also said the older family men also enjoyed not having to work those holidays so they could be home with their families. But as a consequence Robbie found herself alone on every major holiday, a prospect she did not much appreciate.

She did much of Werner's homework for him and helped him out with all of his projects. Roberta went steady with Werner for years and years and years, and when he repeatedly refused to marry her she started dating others and fell in love with Arnie Awl and married him in 1962. Werner was devastated when he realized he lost Robbie. He tried real hard to win her back but she told him it was too late. She also got him into counseling with a local minister to help him accept the fact that he had lost her. He called her and Arnie at work to try to break up the relationship, without success. He even wrote Robbie a check for \$10,000 written out to Robbie Wilhelm, trying to get her to marry him. He talked about Roberta the year before he died, saying that he had looked her up and that she now has 4 children. It was a very sad day, indeed, when he lost Roberta as they were well suited to each other, mentally, physically and emotionally. It was just a case of Werner dragging his cold feet, a habit that he carried with him almost to the grave. Also he may have refused to get married as Robbie never got pregnant while she was dating him. Robbie was a most gracious and well brought up young woman. She always remembered to send Werner's mother a card on birthday, Easter, Christmas, etc. And naturally, she sent Werner very nice, attractive cards with well written personal notes on all the appropriate holidays. Whenever Werner's Mama invited Roberta to dinner, Roberta always sent a most gracious thank you card afterwards. Werner lost out on a lot of happiness in life the day he lost Roberta. He would have had a fine wife who would have stuck with him and helped him side by side all the days of his life, and even possibly he might have had a child by her. Of course, it was my good fortune that they did not get married so that I was able to marry him and have many happy years together with him, but Werner had about 16 lonely years after his breakup with Roberta until we found one another.

One day while working at Ford Motor Company he received some wonderful news - his mother had been approved by the American Immigration Service for immigration to the United States. Werner had earlier filled out all the paperwork, including the affidavit of support, and now his efforts had born fruit. So on Christmas day, 1955 Werner met his Mama as she stepped off the boat in New York. That was a very Happy Christmas indeed for young Werner.



Martha Brehmer Wilhelm Klodmann

But Werner had a big problem - he was still living at Wayne State University Student center and he couldn't keep his Mama there so he very soon got her a housekeeping job through the German Newspaper, the *Detroit Abendpost*. He got her a job with the Gach family, which was ideal as it was a live in position. But what a let down for his poor mother, from multi millionaire with her own estate to cleaning lady! And she had some problems in this new position as she spoke almost no English. Werner got her German English books to study, which she did diligently and within years she was speaking English passably well.

Mama worked at Gach's 5 days per week, from Monday through Friday, then had Saturday and Sunday off. She got bored with nothing to do on Saturdays and Sundays, so she took a Saturday and Sunday job with a family who lived around the corner, the Carse family. They loved her as a housekeeper and tried to steal her away from the Gach family. But Martha was loyal to the Gach's and stayed there during the week even though she liked the Carse family better.

A funny story from when she was working with the Gach's. The Gach's were very weight and health conscious people, so when she was going to prepare dinner for them, they counted how many people were going to eat that night and told her that that was how many potatoes she should peel. Coming from Germany, the land of potato eaters, she was flabbergasted that anyone would count people and give them only one potato each. When the family called Werner to see if everything was all right with the mother as they could not communicate with her, he relayed her potato story. They were surprised at her reaction, and told Werner they were not counting potatoes to save money, and that she could cook herself as many potatoes as she would like.



Werner Wilhelm & „Bear“

An interesting story about the Carse family. Werner and his mother really liked the Carse's but lost track of them after Werner's mother died. When Uncle Kurt was dying, Werner had to buy a mausoleum crypt for him, so he decided to buy a double crypt and put his Mama in the other one until he bought himself a family

room in another mausoleum. He found a reasonably priced crypt at Woodlawn mausoleum, so he bought it and when we buried Uncle Kurt there Werner was stunned when he read the crypt directly next to Uncle Kurt's and his Mama's - entombed right next to the double crypt Werner had just purchased were Byron Carse and his wife, Mama's old employers!



Werner Wilhelm

Werner wanted to go to New York city to see Wall Street and also to check out the jewelry in some of the finer jewelry shops there. He ended up buying his 2 1/3 carat diamond ring there in about 1954. He always got so much enjoyment out of wearing that ring, and he wore it every day of his life.

Once he almost lost that ring in a men's room. He took it off to wash his hands and laid it on the back of the sink while he washed and dried his hands. He then left the wash room without putting his ring back on. Several hours later he realized he left his ring there. dashed back to the washroom, and to his utter amazement and relief, the ring was still where he left it! He said he never again laid the ring down in a public place, but rather, he put the ring between his teeth when he washed his hands so he wouldn't leave it behind again.

He insisted on always wearing that ring everywhere he went, taking it off only at night. When he had his surgery to have his dialysis shunt put in, he made them tape his ring on his finger because he was no about to take it off. He died with that ring on his finger. When the undertaker pulled his body out from between the bed and the shelves, I had them stop long enough for me to remove the ring off his finger and place it on my own, for I knew if the ring went with him, I may never see it again. I also removed his gold watch that I had given him for a wedding present as I felt it would be stupid to let someone steal such valuable objects.

Werner did not want the wear and tear on his own car driving all the way to New York and back, and besides, he did not want to spend all that money on gas, so he explored cheaper ways to travel and came up with a good solution. He found the drive away ads in the Detroit news and contacted these people and soon connected himself up with a nice newer model car that needed to be driven to New York, so not only was he driving some one else's car, but the other person also paid for all the gas! It sounded like a good deal to Werner. He chose to use Car Wholesalers, Inc. as they gave him the best deal. Werner tried to do this

several times in the future, but in later years was turned down due to his rotten driving record.

An interesting observation by Dinora - she cannot understand how, if Werner said he loved his mother, could he let her work at a menial servant's job for ten years when he was making good money. She feels that there must have been a good deal of repressed anger and hurt in Werner towards his mother to let her work so hard at that age and at such a demeaning job.

A rebuttal by Werner - he said that he was trying to get a new start in life, and that as a honky fresh off the boat a man loses 10 years of his life trying to acclimatize himself and trying to find his niche in life, and that his mother was a tremendous help in earning \$25,000 and handing it all over to him to use gave him a quicker and surer start toward economic success. He felt that a good mother would owe that to her son.



Hotel 1919 Wyoming

Werner then bought an old apartment building at 1919 Wyoming, called the Hotel Wyoming, in 1955, on the west side of Detroit on the fringe of Dearborn. He ran that apartment building from about 1955 until about 1972. He advertised any large room, single \$7 per week, double, \$4 per week. He said it was the friendly place in town, a clean place to live. The licenses to operate cost him \$27 per year. It was mostly full, and Dinora laughingly said he rented out some of the rooms by the hour. She said he once got into a real fist fight with a big guy who only wanted to rent it out for one hour, not the standard two hours, which Werner refused to do. The man then took a swing at Werner, knocking his glasses off his face. Without his glasses Werner was helpless as he couldn't see a thing. Somehow the situation cooled off & the guy left without creaming Werner.

Werner said that it was at 1919 Wyoming that he learned to "wipe a joint". No, that's not a drug term, its an old fashioned plumbing term. In the olden days you had lead pipes in Detroit and when one sprung a leak you had to heat the joint, then take a rag and "wipe the joint" thus pulling the melted lead over the hole, this sealing the pipe and insuring its integrity. Werner said that it was at the Wyoming Hotel that he learned the plumbing business, for Lord knows, there were a lot of busted pipes to fix.

Werner's Mama moved into that building with him, quitting her job at Gach's and Carse's, much to their disappointment, in order to help Werner out. Mama cleaned all the common areas and collected all the rents.

The dirty pig tenants had a big cockroach problem there, but the clean tenants had little or no problems. One day Mama noticed a few cockroaches in her apartment as a pig had moved in next door to her apartment. So she scrubbed and cleaned some more, and still they came. So she spread Ajax cleanser all around the baseboards to kill them and suddenly she started getting them by the score. They studied up on cockroaches and found out that cockroaches love Ajax, it's one of their favorite foods! So Mama threw out the Ajax, used Borax instead and all her cockroach problems were over.

Martha had a hard time keeping those apartments clean. First of all so many of those people, being low income, were pigs. You could get a room at Werner's apartment building for only \$9 per week, and he had his sign up in the bus station so he did attract

some real low class transients. And secondly, they were very close by the River Rouge Ford Plant and that plant emitted such dirty, filthy soot that her windowsills were continually black with this soot, no matter how many times she cleaned them. With all that soot on the windowsills, I wonder what their lungs looked like.

One hot summer day Werner went around, trying to collect the delinquent rents. He came to the one apartment, knocked on the open door, announced himself, then entered. He was flabbergasted to see his tenant with her pants down, hanging out over the kitchen sink, peeing. She was too lazy to walk down the hall and use the toilet!

Werner had a lot of trouble with some of the rough hillbillies who lived there and on occasion, things got a little too hot to handle. One time Werner was trying to evict a bad tenant and just couldn't seem to get the job accomplished. One hot, muggy night Werner woke up at 4 am and found two huge, strange men walking into his bedroom. Werner waited till they were right on top of him, then used his old trick of slugging one of them in the Adam's Apple, then kicking the other one in the groin area, then running like hell for safety. He bolted out of his apartment, and then down Michigan Avenue stark naked. He then went to the phone booth and tried to call the police. It's hard to find a dime on your naked body, and in those days, no dime, no phone call. He finally flagged down a passing patrol car who drove him home, and by that time the intruders had vanished. The intruders were identified by other tenants, Werner took them to court, and the intruders said they merely paid him a social call to discuss apartment business! The judge let them off scot free!

Werner and his mother had a TV, and so Werner's right hand maintenance man, Karl Schneider used to come down to his apartment and have dinner with them,

then Werner would give him a few beers and they would all watch TV. They were all the best of friends. Mama really liked Karl. When Mama knew she was dying, she told Werner that Karl was a very valuable employee and to treat him well and keep him as an employee. Werner took her advise, but a few years later things got hot again and one of the rough hillbilly tenants threw Karl down the basement stairs and he died of a head injury. Again, the judge let the guy off scot free!

A funny story from Dinora. She said that the mother liked to go to bed early and she was very put out about all those hillbilly kids running around in the alley behind their apartment building making lots of noise all hours of the day and night. So when she wanted to sleep and the kids were hollering their fool heads off, she'd get a pail of water and dump it out the window over their heads!

It was while Werner was living at the Wyoming Hotel that he lost \$20,000 in the stock market due to the Eisenhower recession. It certainly was a very serious setback for such a young man who had such boundless ambition and determination to become a millionaire.

In 1959 Werner earned his Master of Science degree at Wayne State University and became a Professional Engineer.



Lincoln Square Building

Werner later bought three more apartment buildings, the Lincoln, the Dix-Fort apartments and the Park La Salle.



Park Lasalle Apartments

Werner purchased the Park La Salle in 1967. It was a 100 unit FHA repossessed modern apartment building that had been financially dehydrated after the bankruptcy of the original owner. Werner was once again, the "man on the spot". He cleaned out 4" sanitary sewers and dug out human excrement with his bare hands. This was the most elegant of all his apartment projects, being practically new, but from a financial standpoint it was the biggest disaster as it was filled with professional blacks who were looking to get something for nothing and therefore started a rent strike as they knew they would get 2 to 3 years free rent before Werner or FHA could untangle the legal snarl caused by the induction of the rent strike.

In 1968, Werner purchased an old landmark, the 100 unit apartment project, the Dix-Ford.

In 1968 Werner also purchased the Lincoln Square project. This was another landmark on the west side of Detroit consisting of one entire city block containing 150 5 room apartments, 20 stores, 6 story warehouses, and one 1400 seat theatre. The Lincoln Square was a distressed property purchased from a well known realtor, Mr. Ralph Lipshaw, who was closing his offices in Michigan. That's where Werner operated the two largest Pacific Steam Boilers in the City of Detroit, after City Hall.

In 1968 Werner was involved in the active management of all of the above apartment buildings through the Detroit riots. Due to Werner's vigilance and hard work, and the grace of God, Werner and the apartment buildings survived the riots in one piece.

The Lincoln was one square block of apartment buildings, and included two streets of apartments, a 6 story warehouse and a theater. The Lincoln building was full of ADC mothers on the Military Street side and better quality tenants on the other street. Then the HUD programs began, promising new houses to all ADC mothers with 3 or more kids. The real estate sharks started combing all the ADC tenants in the Lincoln building, selling them these HUD houses and pretty soon many of them moved out and Werner was not able to keep up the occupancy. He tried to get a tenant for the warehouse, and had Gorman renting part of it, but he could never fill it. Then the tenants he did have left were constantly not being able to pay their bills, and the rent would get behind and they would get their electric shut off for non payment. When Werner would come home from work nights he would find a half dozen extension cords running down the back of his building where tenants without electricity would be plugged into his outlets in the basement. He bought his maintenance man a pair of insulated wire clippers and told him to go around every day clipping the extension cords in half. Every day it was the same game.

He had a feisty woman manager named Bobbie Bolton who ran the Lincoln for him. She took care of the rent collection, the tenant problems, and kept the

maintenance going. Bobbie was married to a raw hillbilly straight out from the hills of Tennessee, named Drew. Drew got homesick several times a year, especially after receiving a letter from his mother begging him to come home and telling him how beautiful the mountains were. So Drew would stick around long enough to get Bobbie pregnant, then would head back home to Tennessee. One time Drew's mother wrote that there was this nice fat squirrel climbing all over the trees outside their windows and that she watches this squirrel everyday, but they are doing nothing about it because they are waiting for Drew to come back home and shoot it so she can make squirrel stew for him. Drew went back to Tennessee and shot the squirrel for his mama. Bobbie lasted many years for Werner, and even went to court for him on eviction procedures, which are horrendous in Detroit, but in the end when she left she took a good chunk of cash with her and Werner was forced to make a police report.

The Lincoln had a horrendous fuel consumption due to its size and inefficiency so it ate up humungous amounts of coal. They had a conveyor belt that ran the coal from the bin to the furnace. When the conveyor belt broke down, Werner hired black guys to shovel coal 24 hours a day.

One day a Michigan Consolidated man came around and told Werner that the gas company had an incentive program to get large apartment buildings to convert from coal to gas furnaces, and that \$3,000 was available for this conversion. The crooked gas company guy said if Werner would split the \$3,000 with him, he would get Werner into the program. Werner agreed to the split as this was the only way to get anything, and the guy had gas furnaces installed and a gas meter put in. Werner's eyes spun when he saw how fast the meter spun around. It went so fast you couldn't even read it. That scared the pants off Werner. How was he ever going to pay this kind of a gas bill? Then after further studying of the problem, Werner came up with a neat solution - only let the gas man in to read the meter every other month because Werner found out that every 2 months the gas meter went around twice, so if he kept the guy out in between he would only pay for one meter spin around, not two!

With the decline in tenancy due to the HUD program, the building was no longer profitable and Werner decided to let the building go rather than get deeper and deeper into debt with repairs, huge utility bills and dwindling rents. The straw that broke the camel's back was when the huge 4 inch water pipes broke and the 30 feet deep basement flooded out everything. The water kept flowing, going right over the sidewalk. Werner gave the building back to the mortgage company and let the city figure out how to pump 30 feet of continually running water out of the basement. The city razed the apartment complex and put up a welfare office and a secretary of state office there. This ended a long standing landmark in the city of Detroit. Werner wanted to turn one of the store fronts into a church and call it Wilhelm's Church of God as he felt that this would be a very profitable venture. He said his lawyer and accountant talked him out of it. He is very sorry he did not follow his own inclinations as he felt he would have made a bundle on

this sort of venture. Too bad I didn't know you in those days, he told me years later. You really know your bible and you are a great preacher! With your brains and my money we would have made a winning combination.

Werner also moaned that he didn't know my father years earlier as my father could have rented out his 6 story warehouse and held weekly auctions of used furniture and appliances like Farris brothers do. I told him over and over that my father never would have been interested in scrounging around the city of Detroit daily, looking for used furniture and appliances to resell at auction. But Werner never listened to me. He continually thought that would be a great money maker for my father.

Werner ended up in court once over the Lincoln building and the woman judge wanted to hear all the particulars. Werner told her that the tenants called him a rotten name that he couldn't repeat in the courtroom or in front of a lady. Go ahead, the woman judge said, I want to hear it. Its real bad, your honor, he said. Tell me, she said. "You mother fucker, I'll kill you!" is what the guy said to me. That's not so bad, the judge said, what do you think those guys call me!

Werner found out later through new attorneys that he probably could have saved the Lincoln building by renegotiating the mortgage with them as they would probably have reduced the mortgage to a payable figure rather than lose everything. But Werner said he was too new to this country and he was afraid of being successfully sued for the balance of the mortgage so he kept away from the mortgage company. He was also very frightened that the City of Detroit was going to sue him to pay the water bill for all that water that filled that huge 30 foot deep basement and even overflowed onto the street.

The Dix Fort apartments was another rough adventure in hillbilly apartment management and it also had a bittersweet ending, although in this case he sold it for a break even amount. The hillbillies Werner could usually handle and he got along fairly well with them. He also said they were pretty good maintenance men and were ambitious and got their work done, with some exceptions.

One story he loves to tell is about this hillbilly he hired to paint the insides of the apartments to get them ready to rent again. The guy didn't appear to have too much ambition. "Keep rolling, keep rolling", Werner said to the guy who was suspending the paint roller in mid air, meditating. Keep rolling, keep rolling! the guy shouted. You keep rolling, I quit! he said and walked off the job.

Another time in talking to one of his maintenance men he said, "We got to get this job done". The maintenance man replied, we - we - we - you mean me - me -me!



The biggest disaster in Werner's apartment history was the Park Lasalle. That was a beautiful apartment complex and looked well worth acquiring. But the reason that it was sold was that it was full of professional Negroes who were constant complainers and who wanted to get something for nothing. They started a tenant's union, paid no rent for several years, forcing Werner to give up the project as no rents were for coming. Werner said that his lawyer had told him when he took over the project to turn it into a condominium and Werner said that looking back at it in retrospect, that would have been a profitable venture.

Suddenly one day in 1961 while Werner was working at Ford Motor Company he got a call from an employment agency, would he like to meet the fellow for lunch to talk over an interesting and good paying employment prospect. At first Werner turned down the proposition. He was fairly content for the past 5 years at Ford's and was making a good salary. But then the proposition seemed intriguing, so he accepted. It turned out that the employment agency was told specifically to go out and steal Werner away from Ford. Whether they had remembered him from his interview from 5 years before or whether his work and good name came to the attention of GM Werner never really knew. But the money was better, the job was intriguing, it was a new challenge, so he took it. But he told the man that he had already booked a vacation to see his parents in Germany and that he did not intend to lose that money or that visit back home. He also told them that he was kind of scared as he was not that familiar with the requirements of the new job as that was a relatively new field and he wasn't really exposed to it in Ford's. The man told him that Werner's boss was not familiar with Nuclear Ray Instrumentation, which Werner would be doing, so he would arrange with GM to send both Werner and his boss to Cambridge, England for classes, and that after the classes were finished Werner could hop over the channel and visit his parents. Werner agreed and found the Cambridge seminar most informative and most delightful.



Werner Wilhelm in his GM Buro

Werner settled in to the job at General Motors, and after an initial period of fright and discomfort at starting a new job, things then went very well. He was now a Senior Scientist at the New General Motors Technical center, "Where today

meets tomorrow". He was in charge of special material problems. He visited and received assignments from all divisions, national and international. During his industrial involvement at Ford as well as at General Motors, he was the man on the spot, to get the job done, when his boss needed something, he got it and he got it timely and professionally done.

Some months later, GM asked Werner to go to Flint and give a presentation that he had already written up and published in the GM magazine. Werner was quite proud of his article in the GM magazine and saved a number of copies of this particular article. GM had Werner's picture taken by a professional photographer, and he was indeed a handsome lad. His wavy blond hair and light blue eyes showed up so well in that picture. But now Werner was scared to death about giving the presentation in front of all those other engineers.

Just prior to giving the presentation, GM decided to send Werner to Dale Carnegie classes to learn how to be more assertive. When Werner's friends and acquaintances heard this in later years, they got tears in their eyes and held their sides laughing at the thought that anyone would send Werner to class to learn how to be more assertive! But at the time these classes were very valuable to Werner to learn how to conduct himself on the job & in public and he appreciated the opportunity to go. Dale Carnegie taught him to control his anxiety when speaking in public by pretending that everyone in front of him was nothing more than a room full of monkeys. Werner said this monkey idea got him through the trauma of giving his first speech. But Werner also got in trouble with GM regarding his accommodations on this trip. He was told to stay overnight in Flint, which he did. He also went out eating and drinking with other GM men that night, and had a good time. But whereas the other men stayed at the Holiday Inn, Werner went to the YMCA to save money. He always said that he was more careful with other people's money than he was with his own, and GM was no exception. He also was careful with the food bill, but he did get himself a dinner with lots of quantity, if not quality.



Werner leading girl dancer at night club

He also had a good time that night as the guys took him to a high class strip tease joint, and being Werner appeared so naive and innocent, the management and the guys at GM had Werner lead the girls down on the floor from off stage.

When Werner presented his food and lodging bills for reimbursement at GM, he got called to the office. He couldn't imagine why until the conversation began.

GM was horrified that one of their employees stayed at a YMCA. But I wanted to save the company money, Werner protested. Prestige and GM's reputation is much more important than the few dollars you saved us, they replied. Don't ever stay at a YMCA as a GM employee again, they admonished. Secondly, they also did not appreciate him ordering the cheapest dinner on the menu, again, they were concerned with maintaining GM's good image.

After the Cambridge seminar, Werner went to Kassel to visit Vati, Mutti, and Astrid. What he found there was a real can of worms! Vati had taken a shine to his office secretary and was sleeping with her on the side. The situation had now progressed to the point where he told Mutti to get out of the apartment, that he was moving the girlfriend in. Astrid, when she saw Werner, begged her half brother to talk some sense into Vati and make him give up the girlfriend and reconcile with Mutti. Werner said that he was having real problems with his relationship with Roberta as she was pressing him for marriage, and with problems of his own that he couldn't handle he had no intention of meddling in his father's affair.

Mutti, never one to give up without a good fight, solved the problem on her own. A man who had lived in Kassel all of his life and went to America after the war, and who knew Mutti, was now temporarily back in town as his mother was dying of cancer and he wanted to be with her. His wife had just died the previous year in America so he was in the market for a new wife. Mutti told him that she was in the process of getting a divorce from Dr. Wilhelm and threw all of her charms at this new widower. He was in a very vulnerable state, having lost his wife recently, and now his mother was dying so he caved in pretty easily to Mutti's aggression, and agreed to marry her and to take her and Astrid back to America with him. He even had his brother buy Astrid a bike and lean it up against a tree in New York and take a picture of it and send it to Astrid. Astrid was fascinated with the new bike as she never saw a 20 inch bike before and she was anxious to go to America and ride her new bike.

Meanwhile Vati is all shook up when he realizes that Charlotte has her new situation well in hand and is about to embark on a new life without him. Then the young secretary starts asking Dr. Wilhelm when is she going to get Charlotte's jewelry. About this time Dr. Wilhelm wakes up and realizes that this sweet young thing may be only out for his money, drops her and goes back to Mutti. Thus ended a real family crisis without Werner having to get involved. Werner thus ended his visit back to Germany and returned to America and his Mama Martha who was waiting for him.



Werner Wilhelm II & Charlotte Wilhelm

Every time Werner went to Kassel to visit Vati and Mutti he would beg Mutti to make him his favorite dinner, Rolladen and Kloeschen. Mutti and Werner would then trod off to the local meat market in Kassel and would buy the finest horsemeat they could find. As the years rolled on and they got farther and farther away from the war years, Mutti found it increasingly difficult to find horse meat as it was no longer readily available as there was no longer a meat shortage and people preferred beef and pork over horse meat. But Mutti would manage to find a very fine, thin sliced piece of horse meat for Werner's rolladen dinner. She would then bring it home, unwrap it, then bring out her wooden hammer and pound the devil out of it to tenderize it. She would then put a piece of bacon and a pickle in the middle and then wrap the horse meat around it. She would then make the kloeschen (dumplings), make gravy for the rolladen and Werner would have the feast of his life. He so looked forward to this dinner. When we would go to East Germany, Inge Reichard Hess, the owner of the Gasthaus in Grossobringen, would always make this dinner for him, but with beef as horse meat was no longer available nor desired by the rest of her patrons.. She would never take money from him for his and my dinner, and he would always order a second dinner, but at the end of our brief stay, he would press a 50 Mark piece on her for her hospitality. She was very reluctant to take it as she enjoyed our company and loved to make Werner happy, for she knew in his case, the way to his heart was indeed through his stomach! And as was the case with all the Germans who loved Werner, one never knew each time he left Germany if one would ever see him again.

After Inge Hess died, when we went back for our last visit to Germany before Werner's death, we stayed with Lotte Thiele Dassler and she made rolladen and kloeschen for Werner. Hers was as delicious as I have ever tasted, but unfortunately, Werner was no longer able to eat the meat due to his kidney failure. But he did eat lots of gravy and kloeschen. I guiltily ate his and my portion of meat. I felt so bad that he could no longer eat such a wonderful tasting piece of meat. Lotte had specially gone to the butcher in the neighboring village of Buttstedt to obtain this meat, too.

Just before our last visit to Germany we got 2 cards from Germany in the mail with black borders around them. Oh, no, not two deaths, Werner said, for that is what the black borders signify.

One of them was Inge Reichard Hess. She had had throat cancer for 6 years with no ill effects. The tumor was in her neck but never grew in size. Suddenly

the tumor grew by leaps and bounds and in a short time she was in crisis as she could no longer breathe as the tumor went into her lungs and was blocking off the airway in both the throat and the lungs.



Otto Rauh, Werner Wilhelm II & Clara Rauh

The second black border card was from Otto Rauh, Werner's mother's long time manager on Zschippach. Otto was 84 years old, had been frail for a number of years, and suddenly his health completely gave out. Otto and Clara had the happiness of being able to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Zschippach with all their family and friends the August before.

Several times Werner tried to get Martha to go back to Germany, but she said that she got so sick to her stomach from the boat ride that she didn't really want to go back and would Werner go for her. And Werner, she said, be good to Vati, for after all, no matter what he says or does, he is our Vati.

Werner did Nuclear Ray Instrumentation at GM. What his main job was when a part failed, he had to see what structural weakness or defect caused that part to fail so that GM could correct the problem for future models. Werner said one of their problems in his day was the fact that the chrome would not stay on the bumpers and the company wanted to know what impurity caused this problem. Werner and his bosses never did figure this problem out. The boss told Werner to write a good bullshit report that had a lot of substance to it, but really said nothing. Werner wrote a report, turned it into his boss and watched his boss explode like a Roman candle. What's wrong with my report, Werner timidly asked. You never commit yourself in writing, the boss screamed. You always use qualifiers, like "it seems", "it appears", "on the surface". Always give yourself room to later wiggle yourself out, especially if you don't know the answer. And never, never commit the company to anything.

Werner's Mama Martha always wanted him to look nice when he went to his job first at Ford, then at General Motors, so she talked him into going to Mr. Generous, a fine tailor in downtown Detroit. She would go with him and help him pick out real fine material for suits. She would have him fitted for a 3 piece suit, then she would pay the tailor bill. Werner liked dressing up in those days and he bought real fine clothing and the best in shoes. Mama would also see that he had a fresh new haircut by a reputable barber on a regular basis. Martha loved her son's fine curly blond hair and she would love to run her fingers through it. She also loved his sky blue eyes which were so much like his father's. His

sloppy, careless dress and his home made hair cuts did not surface until well into the 70's.

In his resume, Werner listed the following as being the extent of his education in Germany, Switzerland and the United States: Public School, Grossobringen Village School, 1934 to 1938. High School at the Schiller School in Jena, 1938 to 1945. Four years liberal arts at the University of Jena, Germany, 1946 to 1948, and at the University of Zurich, Switzerland, 1949 to 1951, earning a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry there. He then pursued graduate studies at Wayne State University from 1954 to 1959, earning a Master of Science in Applied Chemistry. He had completed 3 years in Chemistry, 2 years in Physics, 2 years in Physiological Chemistry, 2 years in Microbiology, and 2 years in Radiology.

He had completed the following graduate courses:

Advanced Inorganic Chemistry:

Nuclear, atomic, and molecular structure; the chemical bond; dipole moments; complex inorganic compounds; oxidation potentials; acid-base theory; non-aqueous solvents; the hybrids, halogens, inter-halogens and halogenoids.

Advanced Physicochemical Measurements:

Special experiments covering the laws of interactions between matter and energy; solutions with thermodynamic applications, homogeneous equilibria, chemical kinetics, heterogeneous equilibria, and electromotive force.

Advanced Qualitative Analysis:

Various methods of qualitative analysis, including spot tests, chemical microscopy, spectroscopy, and x-ray diffraction methods. Laboratory work in the use of the above methods for the analysis of alloys, ores, minerals, and various commercial products. Analytical chemistry of the less common elements.

The Chemistry of Surfaces:

The physicochemical properties of the surface and interfacial region. The thermodynamics of surface formation, surface tension methods, surface films, heterogeneous catalysis, and other phenomena related to surfaces.

Library Research For Chemists:

Chemical and physical literature. Intended to give facility in the location of information of a chemical and physical nature. Consideration of biographies, encyclopedias, abstract journals, reviews, monographs, dictionaries, and inorganic, organic, physical, analytical, and biochemical literature.

Modern Physics:

Ideas and methods of procedure which aid in bridging the gap between classical physics and the physics of small particles. The electro magnetic and new

corpuscular theories of light, photoelectric effects, the Bohr theory of the atom, magnitudes in atomic physics, radioactivity, elementary nuclear studies, and the transmutation of elements.

Nuclear Physics:

Natural radioactivity; detection and properties of nuclear radiations; fundamental properties of nuclei; qualitative discussion of theories of nuclear structure; nuclear reactions, theory and instrumentation, including the principles of operation of accelerators, theory of diffusion of neutrons; cosmic rays.

Advanced Physical Chemistry

An advanced course in Nuclear Structure, atomic and molecular structure. Photochemistry and introductory quantum mechanics.

Elements of Nuclear Engineering:

Study of nuclear energy including the processes for separation of isotopes from the viewpoint of chemical engineering. Materials of construction, design principles, and energy dissipation from reactors.

Nuclear Physics Laboratory:

Laboratory experiments in nuclear techniques and instrumentation.

Applications of Radioactive Isotopes:

Properties and safe handling of radioactive substances. Lecture and laboratory experiments dealing with the identification and use of various radioactive isotopes and the application of tracer techniques.

Special Topics:

Assignments of special problems with reference to isotopes and radioactive standard sources.

Werner also completed the following Research Papers, Term Papers, and Experimental Research Reports:

Absorption of continuous beta spectra and construction of feather analyzer.

Beta self absorption of calcium oxalate.

Colloidal systems; Absorption at liquid surfaces.

Chemical kinetics; reaction velocity in a unimolecular reaction.

Decay of radioactivity and monitoring of radioactive material.

Determination of the absolute amount of radioactive isotope.

Determination of the corrected efficiency with RaD, -E, and -F in equilibrium.

Determination of the operating potential and sensitivity of various counting instruments.

Effect of backscattering.

Electromotive force and the quinhydrone electrode.

Experimental determination and comparison of the conductance, conductance ratio, and degree of ionization of strong and weak electrolytes over a range of concentrations and at infinite dilution with special reference to mono-, di-, and trichloroacetic acids.

Feather's Analysis.

Fractional dissociation by freezing points and activities from freezing point data.

Homogeneous equilibrium; Distribution of a base between two slightly ionized acids.

Homogeneous equilibrium; Fractional hydrolysis from distribution ratios.

Nuclear research reactor design: Swimming pool type, light and heavy water moderated.

Oxidation-Reduction states of iron.

Phase equilibrium; Ternary systems.

Phase equilibrium; Transition points of solid salts.

Problems in statistical analysis and radiation shielding.

Rate of deposition of injected phosphorus in the various tissues of the rat.

Relative beta measurements, backscattering, and self-absorption.

Solutions: Distillation of a mixture of two miscible liquids having a maximum boiling point.

Surface treatment of metals by peroxygen compounds.

Techniques of measurements with Geiger-Mueller counters.

Use of statistical methods in radiocounting.

Voltage-, gain-, and discriminator -relationship during operation of scaler Ridl model 200.

Werner's Master Thesis at Wayne State University was "Radioactive Standard Sources".

Werner belonged to the following professional societies:

The American Chemical Society,
the American Crystallographic Association,
The American Ordinance Association, and
The American Optical Society.

In his later years Werner belonged to the Health Care Association of Michigan (HCAM), as well as its predecessors.

He refused to belong to the American College of Nursing Home Administrators because he objected to the name. He said that this organization was peopled by a bunch of dumb asses who never saw the inside of any college, so they drummed up the name "College" in their title to give themselves a false sense of dignity.

In his resume Werner said he spoke the following languages: German, English, Latin, Spanish and French. (I can assure you that Werner was most fluent in English and German, and had a very good command of Latin, but knew no more than a few words in French or Spanish.)

Werner gave as his hobbies: swimming, chess, International and Financial News, and Junior Achievement Adviser. Again, I can assure you that Werner was the finest of swimmers; he could swim 5 miles without tiring. He did the breast stroke in a very effortless manner, swimming was much easier for him than walking. He was also an excellent diver. He would dive off the diving board or the end of the pool and then effortlessly swim underwater the entire length of the pool. I guess after having dived over 30 feet in the Schiller School in Gera, diving off a board about 4 feet off the water is a piece of cake!



Werner Wilhelm & Sandy Wilhelm

Werner was also tops in chess. Werner said that life itself is one big chess game. In order to come out ahead in the game of life you always have to think at least three steps ahead and adjust your moves accordingly. A chess game with Werner typically took about 1 hour to 1 1/2 hours, and Werner usually came out on top. Werner often played chess with Rudi when we went over to their home, usually on a Sunday afternoon. We would have a wonderful dinner prepared by Dinora, then afterwards Dinora, Christopher and me would walk to the local park and Rudi and Werner would play chess together. They really enjoyed their games. Rudi said he lost more than he won, but that every game was a real struggle and that Werner never gave up too much voluntarily. Rudi said several times that he played chess with Werner the Thursday before he died and that was a real weird, other worldly flavored game. For the first and only time in their chess playing career together, after a half a dozen or so moves, both he and Werner were totally blocked and no one could move any piece anywhere. That had never happened to them before, and Rudi and Werner just sat staring at the board in utter amazement. This is just one more manifestation of the beginning of the Twilight Zone as Werner was fast approaching the end of his life.

International and financial news fascinated Werner all the days of his life. He always watched the international news on TV and read it in the paper. He loved to subscribe to the Wall Street Journal and the financial newspapers and he read then avidly, but he didn't want to pay for them, so he subscribed in the name of Irvan Silberman and would get a number of copies sent to his house before he was cancelled for non-payment. Afterwards, Mali would give Werner his old copies of the Wall Street Journal. I subscribed to a number of financial magazines for him, which he read, and he was very tickled when he would follow their advise and make some money in the stock market. He loved watching Wall Street week and other such shows on TV. Werner worked day and night on his

financial empire. All day and into the evening he would run his two nursing homes, then around about 7:30 p.m. he would hop into bed and start making phone calls, almost all business, for two to three hours on many occasions. He would then turn on TV and watch his "funnies" for relaxation

Werner often told me of his days as a Junior Achievement Advisor, but believe me, that was General Motor's idea, and not Werner's. Werner HATED other people's kids, and he was very vocal about this feeling. They did dumb projects together and Werner was not too impressed with the IQ of these kids. But he muddled through for the sake of impressing his boss.

Werner also hated charities. Giving to charities was for suckers, he decided early on in life. He worked very hard for what he had, and he felt that the next guy should work just as hard for his keep and that there should be no free handouts in life. One day at General Motors they came around with pledge cards for the United Foundation and every man was asked to give his fair share. Werner tossed his pledge card in the waste basket, reiterating his feelings on charities to anyone who was within hearing distance. It then came to the attention of his boss that General Motors did not have 100% participation because Werner had tossed his pledge card in the waste basket. The old timers were watching for the ensuing fireworks to begin, because they knew that GM would not tolerate less than 100% participation. One day Werner was working hard on a project when suddenly he got a summons to go to his boss, Mr. Chamber's office. All the guys smiled a know it all smile and they were taking bets as to how long Werner would be in the boss's office before he saw the light and pledged his fair share. Mr. Chamber's office was all glass so all the guys could look in, watch Werner and Mr. Chambers talking together and surmise from their body language and facial expressions just what was going on in there. "Werner, haven't I always been good to you?", began Mr. Chambers. "Yes, sir", replied Werner. "Hasn't General Motors always been good to you?", Mr. Chambers continued. "Yes, sir", Werner replied. "Then, Werner, don't you feel that you owe it to General Motors to be fair to them and sign you pledge card for your fair share?" "Yes, sir", Werner replied. And that was the end of the interview. Werner was given a new pledge card on the spot which he signed. All the guys that Werner was working with mobbed him and asked what went on in the bosses' office. Werner replied, "Mr. Chambers asked me if I didn't think I should give my fair share, and I said, Yes sir!"

Werner said that there were many times that there was not that much to do at GM and that he then ran his rooming house and apartment business from work, in fact, he said it was a joke there that Werner had a phone growing out of his ear, he was on it so much. But then there were other times when GM had a real pressure job, that there was a material failure that had to be analyzed and an answer given, often overnight, when the company was in a hot spot. That would be the time, Werner said, when the guys in his department would work overnight, and even for several days 24 hours per day until they cracked the mystery and

provided an answer to the dilemma. And even when they were not able to crack the problem, Werner and his staff would give them a good sounding double talk answer to satisfy the press, a lawsuit, etc.

Werner had a humorous problem develop when he was working at GM. He suddenly started developing a rash on his hands. He didn't think too much of it and kept on working. The rash then started traveling, and still he didn't think much of it and ignored the problem. Then the rash started itching real bad, so he kept scratching and working. Then the rash settled in real good in his scrotum, and he said he then knew he had a problem because it was not socially acceptable to keep scratching there all day and night, so he sheepishly went to sick bay and told the nurse there his problem. They then examined the rash and said it was eczema, probably as a result of an allergic reaction to a chemical he was working with. They asked him what he had been handling lately. They boiled it down to the carbon tetrachloride he had been handling a lot in the last few weeks. They told him he had to take several weeks off with pay until the rash completely cleared up. That news wasn't too hard to take!

Another humorous story from Werner's GM days was his friend and co worker, Barney Matrilie. Barney was a fellow scientist, doing much the same work as Werner. When things were a bit slow the guys would get together and join in a little levity. Barney, the other fellows found out, had a unique talent not possessed by any of the others. Barney could burp out a tune! No matter what song you'd ask Barney to do, if he knew it, he could burp it out! The guys used to howl with laughter when Barney would demonstrate his unique abilities.

Barney also had another unique talent. He was the biggest wimp on the lot when it came to dealing with his wife. His wife was a real #\$\$%^ (it rhymes with witch), and poor Barney was totally unable to stand up to her. She said and Barney jumped, or he better jump, if he knew what was good for him! She certainly wore the pants in that household. To make matters worse, Barney had seven children, only one of whom was a boy. So he was really outnumbered and the daughters took lessons from their mother, totally destroying any opportunity Barney might have had for domestic tranquility.

Barney's wife had the same type of reputation in the community as well. She was a member of the school board and no one was too enthusiastic about seeing her coming there, either. She was a real #\$\$%^& (rhymes with witch) with the kids, too. The neighborhood children soon took to calling her "Old lady Matrilie". One year she even hid in a neighbor's shrubs in order to eavesdrop on what the neighborhood children were saying. The kids found out she was in there and almost died laughing over the sight of a grown woman crouching in a neighbor's bushes.



Werner Wilhelm in seinen GM Büro

Werner always wore a badge when working with radioactive materials at GM. He was always x-raying materials in order to determine by use of x-ray diffraction their contents and flaws. Werner was always very afraid of radioactive material and took every precaution. He said he saw x-rays everywhere and tried to avoid exposure to them as much as possible. Working in a basement as he did in his rooming house in Toronto and in St. Anne's made him nervous as he said every basement gave off radon which could give one cancer. Werner had to turn in his badge at regular intervals to be read to see how much exposure to radiation he was receiving on the job. Werner always wore his badge at work, and then took it off and laid it on the work table overnight. One day they read his badge and said that he had received such a high level of radiation that it completely clouded the badge. They never figured out how that happened, and whether it happened when he was wearing the badge or overnight if someone had used the x-ray diffraction room and exposed the badge while Werner was not wearing it.

Werner had a good friend when he was going to college, a fellow by the name of George Rabninski. George took his lab work very seriously and got his results very accurately done. Werner, on the other hand, was working and going to school and never had that kind of time to piddle around with his experiments. Get in there and get them done, then write them up, was Werner's philosophy. Soon Werner did not even have enough time to even perform all of his experiments due to the apartment buildings, his job at Ford, and going to school, so he talked George into sharing the results of his experiments with him. Werner then wrote the reports based on George's lab results and aced his classes. George, on the other hand, spent so much time perfecting his experiments that he never got his results written up and flunked the class!

George Rabninski fell in love with a lovely Catholic girl and wanted very much to marry her and settle down, but George had one problem. He knew the girl loved him too, but she was young and a devout Catholic, and it turned out that George was married before. He told Werner that he was escaping from the Russian occupied territory at the end of World War II and had to run on foot out of the Ukraine and through East Germany to the free zone as a young teenager. He soon met up with a pretty young girl who was also fleeing for her life, and they stopped and got married in order to legitimize giving into their hormones. It took a month to get from the Ukraine to the border of West Germany and by that time it was obvious to both of them that they had nothing in common so they decided to split. She then discovered that she was pregnant and they both decided that

that was a disaster as neither one of them wanted to be forced into a loveless marriage. So George insisted that the girl engage in all kinds of strenuous activity in order to lose the baby. They ran for miles and miles together every day and before the month was up the much desired miscarriage occurred. They then went their separate ways and never heard from one another again.

George talked the situation over with Werner and Werner warned him that there was a very good possibility that his present fiancée was going to turn him down because in the eyes of the Catholic Church he was not eligible for marriage. George wanted to present her with an engagement ring when he proposed. Werner then told him to hold off a few days on buying a ring. Werner then called all over town and found out that the only place that would take the ring back and give him a full refund was the J.L. Hudson Company. So Werner and George went there and picked out a ring and Werner had to co sign because he had a job and George didn't. George took the lovely ring with him, took his fiancée out to a very nice dinner, then presented her with the ring, asked her to marry him, and was truthful about the fact that he had been married before and that the Catholic Church had refused to give him an annulment. Poor George! she turned him down flat. George and Werner went the next evening and returned the engagement ring.

George never got a nice job like Werner had. No one was interested in a guy who spent so much time analyzing a situation that he never got around to writing a report and wrapping up the project. George, you gotta come up with an answer in a specified amount of time, even if your research has to be rushed and dirty. When your boss says he wants your report on his desk in the morning, it had better be there or you won't have a job for very long, Werner told him. But George never learned.

Werner had some other interesting friends that he worked with in the General Motors Tech Center. One of his favorite stories concerned payday. He said that at noon on pay day all the married men would step outside the building and their wives would all be lined up in their cars, waiting to pick up the men's pay checks and deposit them. The wives would hang out the car window, kiss their husbands as they handed over the pay check, and give the husbands two dollars back so they could buy lunch at the cafeteria. Werner said he was always so glad that he was single so that he could spend \$5 and get a real good lunch. Food was one area where Werner did not skimp too much. He went to very fine restaurants and bought very fine dinners.

In the 1980's Werner got real nostalgic and stopped at the GM cafeteria with me and we had a real nice lunch there. It was a beautiful summer day and Werner enjoyed looking at the fine landscape and remembering better days in his life when things were less hectic and he had time for pleasure.



Werner's yacht, named "Focus"

When Werner worked at GM he owned a 30 foot pleasure craft, which he docked at the Detroit Yacht Club, of which he was a member. He really enjoyed his boat and his membership in the Yacht Club for a number of years. He took a lot of girlfriends on that boat as well as the guys he worked with. He also spent a number of happy, leisurely hours on that boat with his beloved Mama. He has pictures of her sitting in the back of the boat and wearing his Captain's hat. Ann spent many an hour on that boat with him. He finally gave up his membership in the Yacht Club just before he sold his boat. That boat was getting to be too much upkeep and people loved to go out with you, but when you got back to dock they declared that it was very late and that they had to get to work the next day, and off the boat they would jump and leave Werner with a filthy mess. And Werner started to get into a lot of hassle with a few big mouth punk type of new members. He got into a verbal dispute with one of the guys and the guy tied Werner's stern lines while Werner was out and when Werner got back, he couldn't get into his slip due to the fact that he had a tight spot on the end and the lines were tied. Werner had a fraidy cat non swimmer girlfriend on board, so he had to jump off the boat into the water, swim to the dock, pull himself up, untie the lines, then swim back to the boat and climb up the side of it. Right after Werner untied the lines he spotted the guy who tied them on the dock, so Werner went over to the guy and shove him off the dock and into the water. The guy was not a good swimmer and so he had a few anxious moments until he got himself back out of the water and onto the dock. The guy squealed on Werner, the Yacht Club had a meeting with both men and decided that both of them were guilty of unsportsman like conduct and moved Werner over to the main dock at a much higher cost. Werner then quit the yacht club and built himself a dock in an old woman's back yard on Alter Rd. The dockage for that year was free because he built the dock (he had his maintenance man build it). He sold his boat the next year and the new dock fell into the water.

He had two memorable nights with that boat. On the first occasion he took a bunch of his GM buddies on a ride from the Detroit Yacht club to an employee's house on the Clinton River in Mt. Clemens. It was a pleasurable boat ride with the exception of the fact that everyone but Werner got roaring drunk on the way up there. When they got to the friends house he had a dock, and they pulled in to it and then planned to go into his house for a bit before going back. The house owner, roaring drunk at this point of the evening, reaches into his pants pocket, pulls out the keys, which promptly fly out of his hand, skid across the prow of the boat and slip into the dark murky waters of the Clinton River. The idiot dives in after the keys several times, with no success. So he goes up to his house, smashes in one of basement windows, crawls into the house that way and then

lets the other guys in. They socialize, eat a little and then start the long ride back. Everyone hops off the boat, saying they have to go to work the next day, leaving Werner with the horrendous mess.

Another time Werner was taking the boat up to Mt. Clemens to store it for the winter months. It was November, the month that is famous for life threatening storms on the Great Lakes, and Werner just happened to pick just such a day for sailing. He had a girl friend with him who could not swim a stroke, and the waves got so high and so furious that Werner was afraid that the boat would capsize. Werner figured he could swim to shore in this raging storm if he had to, but he knew that the girl would be drowned. He said he was very scared because not only had he had the waves problem, but it was also pitch dark outside and he could not even see where he was going or find the mouth of the Clinton River. Finally, light years later, he found the Clinton River and safety.

Then there was the time that he was out boating with a girlfriend on the Detroit River in Detroit, right in the middle of the River, when he ran out of gas (yup, that wasn't just a car problem, it seemed to be a universal problem for poor Werner). Chug, chug, sputter, sputter, die. Now what? Werner did not have a ship to shore radio, so he dove off the boat and started swimming to the Canadian side of the river. He was a very powerful, but relaxed swimmer, and had no problem reaching shore, and was able to easily handle the undertow of the river. He ended up walking into the Canadian Club whiskey factory over there and using their phone to call the coast guard for gas. Then swam back to the boat and waited for the coast guard to show up. Anyone who is familiar with the mighty undertow of the Detroit River was horrified to hear that Werner swam both ways – one way was bad enough, but to tempt fate by swimming both ways? Absolutely irresponsible and downright nuts was everyone's assessment. I bet Werner never discussed this incident with Dr. Wilhelm!



Werner with paddles on Deer Lake, upper peninsula



Werner on Deer Lake near Barbeau, UP

So that was the end of his boating career with two minor exceptions. He later bought a \$100 sail boat and put it into Deer Lake on his UP property and decided that he and I would go sailing. I put on a life jacket and insisted on putting a pair of oars in the boat. He bellowed at me, didn't I have any faith in his sailing ability? Didn't I know that he had years of sailing experience in his younger days? Nope, I didn't know that and if his sailing experience matched his motorcycle experience, maybe I should go to the nearest phone and double my

life insurance policy limits. He didn't think I was very funny. I told him that maybe he better wear a life jacket in case he fell out of the boat and got caught in all those lily pads. He was insulted by that suggestion as well. Anyway, I put up the sail, I got in the back and he sat in the prow. I brought my camera along to take pictures on the lake. Bad move. We got going, I adjusted to sail to catch the wind full force, and we were off. It was an exhilarating feeling to be sailing on the water, but I wondered what do you do when you hit the other side of the lake and the wind is against you coming back. Oh well, Werner said he had all this experience, so I guess he will know what to do to adjust the sails for the return trip. I didn't need to worry about that, it turns out. I needed to worry about something much more immediate and serious. We started going faster and faster and faster, and the faster we went, the more the prow went down and as a sudden the entire lake started rushing in over the prow. Get your weight off the prow, I screamed. Werner just sat there, blissfully enjoying his sailing. Get off the prow, you're drowning us! I screamed. Just about that time the realization hit him that he had a very wet rear end from the rushing of water over it and into the boat. The camera, sitting in the front of the boat, was thoroughly underwater. Bye bye camera! I was hoping that the next thing wouldn't be bye bye Sandy! The boat was half full of water before I got Werner off that prow and into the boat. I then used my trusty paddles to paddle us back to shore. The next time we went to use the boat, some punk had shot lots of holes clear through it.



"Bear"

The second episode with boating was when he decided to buy a boat, motor and trailer for several hundred dollars from a used boat dealer in Houghton Lake. He then took it home and launched it in Lake St. Clair. I couldn't believe my eyes. By the time he, I and our German Shepherd got into the boat, the top of the boat was even with the water! If we so much as sneezed, we would all be underwater. Our German Shepherd Bear had more sense than either one of us. I put the boat in the water at the launching site, then pulled the boat over to the cement retaining wall, walked Bear to the edge of the wall and tried to put him in the boat. The dog looked at me as if to say "You must be nuts!"

After a wrestling match, I got Bear into the boat, and then started to wade the boat into deeper water. The entire picnic crowd on the grass erupted into peals of laughter. I wondered to myself what was going on on the shore that was so funny. I was soon to find out and so were they. Looking back I saw Bear swimming to shore with a frantic look on his doggy face. Once he reached the shore he ran over to the picnic area and shook off all that gasoline saturated water all over the people and their blankets. They who had laughed were not

laughing last! We finally got Werner and the dog into the boat and started out. Werner it turned out was quite rusty with his navigational skills. He ran into 2 of the other boats floating there before he got underway. I made Werner stay fairly close to shore after I saw he was going to head for the middle of the lake. I told him he wasn't going any further out than I and Bear could swim. The only reason we didn't drown that day was that there were absolutely no waves, the lake was glass clear.

Werner's Mama always wanted him to buy a home in Grosse Pointe so a decent reputable girl from a good family would marry him. She told him that she would not interfere in his marriage and would continue to reside on Wyoming and take care of his apartment building so he didn't have to worry about 1919 Wyoming. And once in awhile she would take the Baker bus and come to visit him and his new wife. And she offered to give him the \$25,000 she had saved up so that he would have a nice down payment on a house. But Mama's fondest wish to see him married before she died was not to be. When Mama knew she was dying, she went out to the store and bought a wedding card for her son so that he would have wedding congratulations from his mother.

Werner came close on several occasions to buying a home in Grosse Pointe for himself, but in both cases he later chickened out as he did not want to spend the money on a house. In the first instance he found a real nice red brick home on Berkshire for only \$48,000. His attorney, George Armbruster Sr. encouraged him to buy it, saying he would make money as the house would appreciate in value.

On the second occasion, the owner of Cornillie coal, who was on first name basis with Werner as he bought such tremendous amounts of coal for his 4 apartment buildings, urged Werner to buy his fabulous castle like house on the Detroit River in Windmill Pointe. Werner was sadly tempted, but being he was just buying St. Anne's he wanted to keep the rest of his cash in reserve in case he needed it.

Much later, several years after I was going steady with him, I found a gorgeous house for \$200,000 in the Lake Arrowhead area at 25 Mile Road off Van Dyke. I took Werner through all of the houses there and told him which was my favorite. My favorite was also his favorite as the entrance way was set up much like Rittergut Zschippach's Herrnhaus. But Werner did not want to spend that kind of money on a house, especially since he had one attached to the nursing home that he was very fond of. Just before he died, Dinora and Werner were talking and Dinora told him how bad she felt that he never bought me that fine house in Lake Arrowhead, that all women want a nice home, a family, and the right to stay home at least part of their lives and be a housewife. Werner had promised me all of the above, but none of them were ever to come to pass.

Werner also said to Dinora that he regretted not buying her that little white house on Crooks Rd that she wanted in 1970. She said it wasn't much, but that it would have been hers.

One of the major reasons, according to Dinora, that she & Werner parted ways was the fact that he would not buy them a decent home in Grosse Pointe, and she felt that she had no decent home life with people floating in and out of their apartment at all hours of the day and night, listing all of their problems, etc. She said that life was a constant hullabaloo and she felt that they had no privacy. She also felt that Werner made enough money so that she should be able to stay home and keep house, but he did not agree with her. He wanted her to go out and make money too.

Werner's mother always wanted to make the home a conducive place to live, especially after having had the finest things in life prior to the Russian occupation of Thuringen when she lost everything. She bore up under Wyoming and made nary a complaint about living in less than ideal conditions, and she pitched in physically to help out, and gave her son much moral support as well. There were a few things from her past standard of living that she felt that she just had to replace. The first was a set of fine china. She had some Meissen china, medium green cups and saucers, that she was able to smuggle across the German Border by painting the bottoms of the cups and saucers to hide the traditional Meissen double swords. These came out of Grossobringen, her china from Zschippach was stolen while she was in prison in Gera. So in the 1950's Werner and his mother chose their favorite pattern, Sans Souci, from the Rosenthal line, and Werner sent away to Germany for a full set, including tea service. When it was shipped, everything was in good order except that one coffee cup was missing.

Mama also wanted good silverware as this was also stolen from the Rittergut house, and taken from her when she tried to cross the East-West border in Berlin, so Werner bought a nice set for his Mama. Mama Martha had silverware in Grossobringen that she packed into her suitcase and tried to take with her to her cousin Herbert's in Berlin. But as she was stopped in the train at the border, they inspected her bags and found the silverware inside. They confiscated the silverware, giving her a receipt for it. The receipt merely stated that the silverware was of silver like material. Mama was able to smuggle out of East Germany some genuine silverware that had her initials on it, MB, boldly engraved on the handles.

Years later, in the 1970's Werner was very impressed with the fine silverware that the Holiday Inn in Lancaster, Ohio had, which he said reminded him of the silverware they had on Zschippach, so every time we would eat there Werner would take his set with him. Werner now has a decent collection of Holiday Inn silverware.

Mama also missed her fine damask linen table ware so she bought and used an imitation, but fine looking table cloths. Another item that she dearly missed was her Persian carpets. So one day just before Christmas she went downtown

shopping and found some very fine Persian carpets on sale. She decided to buy them as a Christmas present for herself and Werner. She took the Baker street bus downtown, but now the dilemma was: how was she going to get home. Surely she could not take that large carpet on the bus, and besides, she did not have the strength to carry it alone. The carpet salesman quickly settled that problem for her. He merely called a cab and put both Mama and the Persian carpet in it. Mama arrive home at 4:30 p.m. Christmas eve, in time to start the holiday festivities.

Mama also missed her fur coats from earlier, more gracious times. She especially wanted a mink and a fox. Werner solved the problem by buying second hand pelts and having the cleaners make them over to fit her. Mama was happy with her "new" fur coats and Werner was happy with not having to pay an arm and a leg for these furs.



Martha Brehmer Wilhelm Klodmann, her last birthday

Mama loved to garden, which in a small way allowed her to once again do some farming on a very small scale. Mama always put in a big garden on the vacant lot across the street from 1919 Wyoming. There was another woman her age who also loved to garden and she put in her garden adjacent to Mama's. Both women would garden together, socialize and compare notes on the progress of their vegetables. For years this past time continued. Then one year the garden was no longer attended and Mama asked her friend why she stopped gardening. Because she just had surgery for cancer of the uterus, she replied.



Martha Klodmann in Munden



Martha Klodmann's casket



Martha Klodmann's crypt in Frankfurt

The next year there was no garden put in across the street from Werner's rooming house because Mama had suddenly developed stomach cancer in November and was laid to rest in March. The other woman passed away during the course of the winter, too. Werner often looked across the street at both barren patches of land with a very heavy heart.



Werner Wilhelm II

Werner decided to go to New York in order to peruse all the fine jewelry stores there and to look at the fine jewelry and the diamonds. He found a 2 1/3 carat diamond men's ring for himself which he dearly cherished all the days of his life. He constantly wore this ring, even refusing to take it off when he went to surgery in 14th of December, 1992 for the first time since his tonsillectomy. They humored him by taping the ring on his finger.

When he knew he was finally getting married to me, he went to a jeweler on 9 mile and Greenfield in Detroit and had the ring enlarged to fit his ring finger. Before that he always wore it on his pinky finger. Well, as was his custom, he stalled and stalled over getting married, and finally, just before we did get married, he had to have his ring reduced as he had lost so much weight due to his continual vomiting. The night before he died, he looked at me and said to me, you know when I die, a German widow always wears the husband's wedding ring. This I am doing out of reverence for his memory.

While in New York, Werner went to a restaurant to eat, and soon he was engaged in conversation by a fellow a little older than himself. During the course of the conversation, Werner told the man his name, and what hotel he was staying at and even his room number. Afterwards, Werner tried to say goodbye to this guy, but he couldn't shake him off. As the night wore on, it dawned on Werner that this guy was a homosexual. Werner was very agitated and a little scared. Finally, Werner got a good idea. He went into a dance hall, went to the bathroom and left by the back door. The guy was waiting for him back at the front door so the act of ditching the guy was successful. But Werner spent a very fretful night, hoping that the guy would not come up to his room as Werner had foolishly told this guy where he was staying. So much for life in the big city.

Werner was always an excellent dancer. He was very light on his feet and never missed a step. He had gone to the Arthur Murray school of dance and had learned his lessons well. He loved telling the story of how the instructors taught him how to lead. You put one arm around her waist and with the other hand you push firmly on her palm, he was told, Then you step forward. Do not be afraid to step forward, the instructor said. She's just a girl and she has to learn to get her feet out of your way! Werner loved to dance and good dancers loved to dance with him as he was poetry in motion. I cringed when I had to dance with him as I had had little opportunity to dance and I could not match his expertise. But I loved watching my mother and him dance as they were a perfectly matched dance pair. Why can't you dance like your mother, he would ask me. Because she was a housewife all of her life and had time to go out dancing with my

father, who was also a very good dancer. I, on the other hand, work day and night in this darn nursing home. @#\$, Werner would answer me back!

Rudi, Dinora, Werner and I would go to German festivals. Dinora would like to dance and Rudi not. Once in awhile Werner would dance with Dinora and I would feel the sparks in the air. After Werner was dead I understood why.

Dinora said that Werner always wanted a son, a little Werner, but despite his best efforts, that was never meant to be. Werner went to a fertility specialist in the late 1960's to see why he couldn't seem to have a child. Tests were taken and he was told that although his sperm count varied widely, there were times that the count was over 65 million, and even though the motility was poor, most being 1+ or less, and the morphology left much to be desired, that he should not give up hope, that there was always a chance he would get lucky. Just after we met at the Shelby Inn on Mound Rd and West Utica Rd Werner came down with epididymitis and suffered horribly for over a week until the antibiotic knocked out the infection. After he went back to the doctor to verify that the infection was gone, he took me out to a fine prime rib dinner at the Kingsley Inn on Woodward and on the car ride home he sadly and nervously informed me that he had had a sperm count run after the infection was over and it showed no living sperm whatsoever, and a few dead ones. Did I realize that that could mean that we could never have children? I told him I knew of that possibility after such an infection. He was badly shaken and had a very hard time discussing this topic with me.

I didn't find out until after Werner died that he had known about his fertility problem since the 1960's and that he had had tests taken to try to determine the cause of the problem. I came across this hilarious spoof given to Werner by the fertility specialist to try to soften the blow of learning that he had a problem. This was the absolute funniest thing I have ever come across in Werner's possessions. It is well worth sharing it with you in this biography:

The year is 1971 and by this time the British Government policy of socialized medicine required that any married couple who did not have a child within the first 5 years of marriage must receive the service of a government man, who will attempt to be the means of the wife becoming the mother of a child.

HUSBAND: "Well, I'm off to the office, I suppose the government man will be here shortly." (The husband leaves with head bowed and wife pretties herself and powders her nose just as the doorbell rings.). She is expecting the government man, but instead the caller is a baby photographer who has come to see if he could interest her in some baby pictures. The following conversation ensues:

LADY: Oh, good morning.

MAN: How do you do. You probably don't know me, but I represent

_____.

LADY: You needn't explain, Mr. _____.

MAN: Jones is the name, madam and I make a specialty of _____.

LADY: Yes, of course. It's all right, won't you sit down.

MAN: Your husband probably told you that _____.

LADY: Oh yes, and we both agreed that it is the best thing to do.

MAN: Well in that case, I might as well get busy. Just leave that to me, madam. I recommend 2 in the bathtub, one or two on the couch, and a couple on the floor.

LADY: Bathtub! Couch! Floor! Good heavens!

MAN: Well, my dear lady, even the best of us can't get a good shot every time, but out of 6 one is bound to be a honey. I usually have the best luck with the bathtub shots.

LADY: You'll have to forgive me, but doesn't that seem a bit informal?

MAN: No indeed, in my line of work a man doesn't do his best in a hurry. (He opens up his album and shows it to her). Look at this baby, a real good job. Took 4 hours and isn't it a honey?

LADY: yes, indeed, a lovely child.

MAN: But for a tough job, look at this one. Believe it or not, it was done on the top of a bus in Picadilly Circus.

LADY: My Gawd!

MAN: It's really not hard when a man in my line knows how, it's really a pleasure. Now, this one, I shot it in Hudson's display window. Made it the first time, just one shot.

LADY: Even one shot in Hudson's display window seems a bit public.

MAN: Well, there's a little story behind that one. The mother of the child was a cinema actress and needed a little publicity and did she ever get it!

LADY: I would think so.

MAN: There's a picture of the handsomest twins in town. I knocked out that job in Green Park on a snowy afternoon last winter. It took me from two in the afternoon until 5. I never worked under more difficult conditions with people crowding 4 or 5 deep, just to get a look.

LADY: 4 or 5 deep?

MAN: Yep, people everywhere. Just imagine, more than 3 hours, under handicaps like that. I even had 2 Bobbies helping me. I could have gotten another shot or two before dark, but by that time the squirrels were nibbling on my equipment and I had to give up. Well, Madam, if you're ready. I'll set up my tripod and get started.

LADY: Your TRIPOD!!???

MAN: I always use a tripod to set my equipment on, as it gets to heavy to hold up for any length of time --- Good Heavens, she's fainted----.

After the epididymitis healed Werner went to doctors off and on for the next 14 years in an effort to improve his or my fertility but to no avail. We even tried for a

test tube baby. The most heart breaking episode of the test tube era was when due to the fertility drugs I produced 5 beautiful ripe eggs, then due to Dr. Magyar's ineptitude in being able to gauge when the eggs were ripe, ovulation occurred over a weekend and all was lost. That broke my heart, especially considering that at that time Werner's sperm count and motility and morphology were acceptable and we might have had a chance. It was a very strange morning indeed, when I walked out of the surgical holding area as it was useless to attempt to harvest eggs after ovulation occurred, for when Werner and I left the hospital we were startled to see 3 big beautiful rainbows in this sky, one over another. I had never seen such big rainbows, and I had never seen three of them together. A lot of the people leaving the hospital stopped to see what we were looking at up in the sky and were as shocked as us to see such a sight. At the time I was hoping that it would be a sign of a child in the future. But that was never to be. Werner had often refused to let me play with or handle other people's children, saying that he promised me that I would have one of my own some day. But we never had one of our own, and now there are no one else's children in the family to cuddle and love. Just before he died, Werner was very upset at having to leave his money to someone as he didn't want to leave it to any one. No one loved or supported him other than me, he would say, and his sister had cheated him out of his father's inheritance. Too bad we never had a child, I said to him. It would even be better to adopt a child than leave all that money to people who don't love you or even know you, I said to him. Surprisingly, for the first time in his life he agreed, and he asked me how we would go about adopting one. But within a week Werner was dead on the floor and that ended all dreams of ever having children.

Then there was the year Werner almost spent Christmas in jail in inner city Detroit by Wayne State University. He was stopped for his usual zippy, erratic driving and it was discovered when he handed his paperwork to the officer that he had the wrong plates on his car, so they hauled him down to the station. It turned out that he had almost no money on him, and he never had a credit card, so they locked him up. He called back to 1919 Wyoming, but it turned out that no one there had any money either, so he had to spend the night in jail until the banks opened the next day and he could get some money to bail himself out.

Werner's driving record always vacillated between bad to atrocious. Werner was always a very intense, dynamic man and he ate and drove with a vengeance. The speed you eat is the speed you work, he always told me, which in his case was indeed very fast. And he drove the same way, intense and fast. He was always in a hurry and we always said that Werner always ran about 1/2 hour behind clock time as he had so much to do and tried to cram so much into the course of a single day. So he tried to increase the available time in a day by decreasing the amount of commuting time, i.e., go like the furies of hell are behind you and hope that you get there in one piece (and the heck with the other guys on the road around you, for in a dog eat dog world its every man for himself). I remember one day he had to get Lisa to the Metropolitan airport and

he was running quite late, she was supposed to have been there a half hour before, and now it started to snow and we were getting well into rush hour time. He got to the intersection of I-75 and I-94 when we suddenly ran into a total traffic jam where no one was going anywhere. @#%! was Werner's reaction to this log jam at the very time where we had to go full speed ahead to make the plane. Then suddenly he sharply veered his steering wheel, and as a sudden it felt like we were air born, without the benefit of an airplane. He had pulled onto the outside emergency stopping lane and we were going over 55 miles per hour, whizzing past all those stopped cars! With all the cars stopped beside us, it felt like we were doing over a hundred! And in inner city Detroit there is always lots of trash in this lane, from strips of tire tread to glass, bottles, paper, etc. Well, all of that assorted trash went flying up into the air and all over the place as Werner ran over it. It rained down over the various lanes of the freeway as we whizzed over and past it. Lisa freaked! She turned white! Oh, my God! she murmured under her breath. Werner had a determined look on his kisser and he had white knuckles, but away we went! When we had gone for about 4 miles this way and hadn't yet entered eternity, Lisa began to calm down a bit. As for me, I was inured to this kind of driving after 12 years of it, and I merely sat back and went along for the ride, considering the fact that we hadn't crashed up yet, so he may know more of what he was doing than met the eye. Lisa thought this type of driving was outrageous and turned to me and said that she was going to buy him a license plate for the front of his car that said "I can drive this way, I'm German!". And she did too. Next Christmas, true to her word that was his present! Complete with a picture of Bear on the plate. She put Bear on the plate as a tongue in cheek joke as she was scared to death of him. Werner took Bear everywhere with him, much to the chagrin of strangers. When it came to putting strangers in the car with Bear we found that it only worked if you put the stranger in the car first, then Bear. If Bear was in first he considered the stranger to be an unwelcome interloper. If the stranger was already in the car he accepted that.

One day Tom Armbruster pulled up in his new little sports car when Werner first knew him and offered to take Werner for a spin. Werner looked at that teensy little car, but Tom boisterously talked him into getting in for a fast spin around town. Werner knew his bulk was going to take up about 80% of the car, but he decided to try packing himself into that car like a sardine. Bad idea. Werner was half in and half out of the car when his feet went out from under him and it doesn't take too much imagination on your part to guess what slammed full force into the running board. Owchee!!



Sandy in front of the Datsun B210

After that he was much more cautious about getting in and out of real small cars, often refusing outright. Until he met me and I was driving a Datsun. He made big time fun out of my car until he heard that I was getting over 40 miles per gallon. Then his attitude changed 180 degrees, and he felt "shut my mouth" as he was solidly behind anything that saved that much money. But what a production getting him in and out of that tiny car! He'd open the door, then hang his entire upper torso out the door, hanging onto the door for dear life as he eased his butt into the car. He would then swing one leg at a time into the car; that gyration completed, he would then scrunch his shoulders together as much as he could and force his upper torso into the car. Then, winter and summer, he would roll the window all the way down and hang his entire arm and right shoulder out the window. Then, without fail, he would say to me, "The only way I can get myself into this tiny car is if I hang my peter out the window!". When he heard that I bought the car for only \$3,000 out the door, he was even quieter with his insults. Then when that car had 98,000 miles on it, had only required two repairs, and I got \$1,400 for it when I sold it 5 years after I bought it, he was positively beaming with approval. When he calculated out the purchase price, selling price and good gas mileage, he said that the car had paid for itself.



Werner's baby blue Cadillac

He approved of me then buying 2 Hondas over the next 7 years, but for himself he said he had to have a Cadillac as he liked the comfort of driving one. He liked the size, suspension and custom features. He almost always drove a baby blue Cadillac. After his death a number of his friends felt that he wanted me to buy a new baby blue Cadillac so he could ride around in it with me, albeit in spirit.

He wasn't afraid of driving in horrendous conditions, either. Once in about 1977 the weather was so bad, with the temperatures well below zero Fahrenheit, ice on the ground so bad that the highway department's de-icer and salt did not melt it, that they declared a red alert and told everybody stay home. After two days of the red alert and staying home looking at four walls I had cabin fever, so I called Werner and told him how much I missed him. He then said he would come over to my house at 21 Mile and Sugarbush and take me to the local restaurant up the street. He slipped and slid his way to Chesterfield township, picked me up and we had a very nice date, although I was scared to death driving up the embankment over the freeway overpass on the way to Gratiot. But he just drove that stretch with grim determination and he handled it very well.

Another time we had several feet of snow and no one was moving. Get in the car he told me in 1981, we have to get to St. Anne's and pick up the help as they don't have enough nursing staff. Once we got there he gave me his car keys and

had the nursing staff call the girls and tell them to stand on the intersection of the main street nearest their house and I would soon be by. They then gave me a list of who was where, and he screamed at me not to drive on any side streets or to drive into any snow drifts and don't crash up the car. I had a number of very anxious moments. but within the hour I was back with a car full of nursing staff to run the floor.

About a year before he died he drove me to inner city Detroit on the near west side to pick up my car after it was repaired by one of those gas stations in the neighborhood of Woodmere Cemetery (they were good repair men and unbelievably cheap as they had almost no overhead.) After we picked up my car he took me to the local Mc Donald's for a hamburger and a coke. (I HATE Mc Donald's, but went there because it always made him very happy.) It was a new clean Mc Donald's and we were having a very nice conversation, when gradually I noticed that there were a lot of VERY big snowflakes coming down. We'd better start for home, I told him. Na, it won't amount to much, and don't rush me, I'm tired of being rushed and it's Saturday and it should be my day of rest. So we sat and talked some more, and I kept casting a wary eye on those big, beautiful snow flakes falling outside of our window. As a sudden Werner noticed that guys were slipping and sliding on the street outside and other guys in the parking lot were zzzing, trying to get free of the rapidly increasing piles of snow. Oh, oh, we'd better start for home, he said. So we each got in our cars and started off. Now don't drive off like a bat out of hell and leave me stranded in some snow drift, I growled at Werner. Stay by me in case I need help. So he stayed fairly close by as we got on I 75 and headed north for Utica. At I 75 and I 696 I could see that all the cars were pretty much stopped dead on I 75 in front of me, so I took I 696 instead. Werner remained on I 75 and zoomed off ahead of me, due north. I was sorry I took I 696 because there were cars everywhere smashed into one another, in ditches and the westbound lanes were full of cars every which way and stopped dead. But I managed to bobsled around all of the stuck and stopped cars and soon found myself on Van Dyke, which was also a horror. About an hour later I arrived home, expecting Werner to be in his bed with his feet up in the air giving me the horse laugh because he had been home for hours. But when I got home the garage door was down. Maybe he is in the nursing home, I said to myself. I went in, no Werner. I then went into the blue house and waited for him. 1 1/4 hours later he shows up, kind of tired, but none the worse for wear. Where have you been, I asked. He looked at me with "what a stupid question" look on his face. Driving home, he replied. You didn't stop anywhere, I asked. Again he looked at me with that "Are you some kind of dizzy broad" look on his face. I've been home for over an hour, I told him, what kept you? "Liar" was the look he gave me as he opened the garage door, went home and dropped into bed. I was just glad that we both made it home alive with no bent fenders.

One time his right front tire kept slowly going flat and so one day, tired of putting air in it, he bent down and looked at it. The reason he kept losing air was the fact

that he had run over so many curbs at top speed that he smashed a corner of his rim flat and that was what was letting the air slowly out of his tire. And so it was a fast trip to the junk yard to talk them out of a rim real cheap. Central Auto parts knew he was always low balling them and so they gave him a rim almost at cost without an argument. Werner might have been thrifty but he was by far Central's best customer. They always joked that they were going to have a bumper sticker made up for Werner which said "This car totally reconstructed by Central Auto Parts."

Then there was the time that his tire went flat in the mountains of West Virginia in a blinding snow storm in the middle of winter after dark at 1 am in the morning. Rrrr, bump, bump, bump. Oh Sh%^!, Werner says, slows down and pulls off onto the shoulder. The G%^ D%^& tire is flat, he bellows. And he just looks at it. We are in the middle of no where. Forget finding a gas station, let alone some sign of civilization. There ain't none. Werner just stands there looking so terribly woe begone. I confirm that the tire is totally flat, then wrench the car keys from his paw and open up the trunk of the car. Disaster city. Half of his life is stored in this trunk. Right up to the top of the trunk lid, so much so that I wonder if I will ever get the lid to close again. So I start pulling out his precious papers trying to find such mundane things as a jack, a tire iron, a jack stand, etc. What are you doing with my fu%^& papers, he screams!! Getting them out of the way so I can find the spare tire, the jack and the jack stand and the tire iron I bark back at him. I don't think I have one, he says quietly and pensively. Why, did you take them out? I ask. I don't remember, he truthfully replies, but I can't remember seeing them in there. How can you possibly see them in there with all that crap piled on top of them, I ask? They're my important papers he replies, don't call them crap. Lines of pure pain form on his face as I continue throwing out the papers on the side of the road. Voila! I find a spare tire. And a jack! and 20 minutes later a tire iron and a jack stand. Werner had a totally incredulous look on his face like I had just apported these objects onto the road from the nether world or something. I quickly assembled these tools in front of the flat tire and got to work. The bolts were rusted onto the rim. Finally in sheer desperation, I stand on the tire iron and creak! the bolt gives way. So I do the same to all the bolts and soon I have all 5 loose. I then jack up the tire and finish removing the bolts, remove the tire and put the spare on. Werner watches in total wonderment like it was the first time he ever saw a tire changed. Boy, you sure did that nice and easy, was his reply when all was back together again. But again we had a bit of a dust up over his papers lying in the roadway behind the car, but I told him I couldn't find the tools. Then he screams not to put the tools on his precious papers that are still in the car. At about that point I was beginning to wonder if maybe he would like to eat those precious papers, I was so sick of hearing about them. We then had to stop in the next gas station, miles away, of course as the spare had little air in it. Car maintenance and upkeep were never Werner's strong points. (When Werner said he was going to buy an airplane, I firmly told him that the way he keeps up maintenance I would never fly in an airplane that he maintained.)

By this time I am beginning to wonder why Werner is driving like a bat out of hell in a driving snowstorm after dark in the middle of winter. Why are we doing this, I asked with as much kindness and patience as I could muster. Because we got to get to Ann Arbor by 6 am. Why are we going to Ann Arbor at 6 am in the morning in the middle of the week, I ask? Because you are scheduled for surgery tomorrow. Scheduled for surgery, I screech, what in the devil are you talking about? There's nothing wrong with me!! I thought it would be a good idea for you to have exploratory surgery to see if there is any medical reason why you can't have a baby. My doctor says I am fine, it's your lousy sperm count that's the problem! I fling at him. Nope, he replied, my doctor says I have enough sperm to get anyone pregnant, so it must be your fault. You're going to pull into the next decent looking motel for the evening, I tell him with as much firmness as I could muster to my voice, and you are going to call the U of M hospital and cancel that surgery!!

He made the call. I enjoyed a very fine Holiday Inn room and the next day the weather was much better and we enjoyed a more leisurely ride back home to Michigan.

All the days I knew Werner he was highly allergic to walking. He would drive anywhere as far as he possibly could just to avoid a few steps. When he had to go to court in Mt. Clemens, it was no exception. Peggy, get in the car, he bellowed. Yes, sir, Peggy replied, and hopped in with him. He then drove to Mt. Clemens with such speed that he should have filed a flight plan first. Peggy is a race car driver and speed didn't phase her, but his driving sure did, especially when he was on both sides of the road and it was only a two lane highway and he had to keep weaving out of the way of the oncoming traffic. Oh, My God!! you almost hit that guy, Peggy, like all the rest of us who were dumb enough to drive with him, would holler. Werner would just give her his dirty look that said, without words, stupid woman! Well somehow they got to Gratiot Ave. in Mt. Clemens in one piece and Werner sees the courthouse on the other side of the street. He makes a nice wide U-turn, landing right in front of the steps on the south side of the courthouse. @#\$%^!!! Werner bellowed, look how far away the entrance to the courthouse is!! I can't walk that far! he screamed. Suddenly, grasping the steering wheel firmly, and with a look of grim determination on his face, in front of over 6 cops, on foot and in their cars, he jerks the steering wheel to the right, steps on the gas, jumps the curb with his car, drives over the sidewalk, through the pedestrian area on the south side, and right up to and on the stairs he goes! Peggy thought he was going to take all of the stairs in his Cadillac and braced herself for a very wild ride. But he quit on the first stair, jumped out of the car, screams @#\$%^!!! look at all those @#\$%^ stairs. Where's the handicapped facilities in this #%^& Communistic government building!! Then screams at Peggy to park the car and come into the court room. Peggy felt like an absolute fool driving the car backwards off the stair case, through the pedestrian zone and over the curb back onto the street. People are going to think I drove that car over there, Peggy groaned. But she parked it in the parking garage and went in. (By

the way, she ended up paying for the parking garage as Werner said she could have parked free on the street about 5 or 6 blocks away and walked back.) But we loved him dearly and did what we were told, went along for the ride where ever it took us, died of embarrassment at the time it was happening, but later (much later) we laughed our fool heads off over what we had experienced all in a days journey with Werner. Now that he has left us, life is very quiet, dull and boring at Wil Mar and all of us old timers freely admit how terribly much we miss him and all of his attendant circuses he would create to alleviate boredom.

Another time Mr. was weaving in and out of traffic, following the middle line by having one set of tires on one side of the line and the other set on the other side of the line. Peggy was having a fit, afraid that they were going to get into a head on crash. Werner, calm and unconcerned, explained to Peggy that he loved that big emblem on the middle of the hood of his Cadillac as it gave him something to steer by. He said he would simply line up the emblem on the hood of his car with the middle line.

However, when one of us would drive Werner around, he would bellow and scream like he was bleeding to death. He would scream at us to slow down, take the curves more carefully, don't turn so sharply, etc. I'm just driving normally, what's your problem response from us would just create more screaming and anxiety in Werner.

If you think his fast, erratic driving was bad, what I found far worse was when he would drive on the freeway at 30 to 35 miles per hour. He said he wanted to go slow enough to enjoy the scenery! BEEP!!! HONK!!! Swear words out the window as they passed by. Werner would give them the finger back, but usually held up the wrong finger. Then he would speed up, get along side of them and start heckling them, blowing his horn continually. I'm totally amazed that no one ever punched him. (One time Werner honked his horn so continually at a train that was stopping our car that his horn got laryngitis. He looked at me when the horn went blaah! and bust out laughing that he had worn out his horn!)



Werner, Bear in front of the resort with the Blucka Blucka van

He loved to take his German Shepherds with him and they usually loved to go for a car ride. (Being a dog, they probably had little sense of knowing what dire peril they were in.) He would take them to work, and on the way there and back feed them Mc Donald's hamburgers and Dairy Queen ice cream cones. In his later years Bear got scared of riding with Werner when things got rough with the driving antics, and Bear would look around him with the same anxiety level as

Dinora had going for a ride in the blucka blucka. (We called this van by that name as when we drove down the street the car would be very noisy, going "blucka, blucka, blam, blam!!", very loudly.) One time Bear was in the van with me and I couldn't get the darn thing going because we had had a rainy spell and it really fouled up the engine and the plugs. And now it was triply fouled up because Werner had flooded it trying to get it to go. I'm fu#\$%^ late and the G.D. thing just won't go, he screamed with a scarlet red face. I flipped him my keys and told him to use my van. He literally ran from one van to another, screaming profanities all the way. Give me the keys to the blucka, I screamed back, so I have something to drive. He flung the keys on the driveway screaming, ya, so you can go to your #\$%^ mother! He then threw my car into reverse, peeling tires all the way and he must have been doing close to 30 mph by the time he hit the street. (We're lucky he didn't hit anything else, cause he wasn't looking, just driving.) So now I'm trying to get the blucka going. I revved the thing for about 10 minutes in the driveway, trying to get the stupid thing to run somewhat smoothly. All I succeeded in doing was running the thing out of gas and producing big, billowing clouds of pure black soot from the tail pipe. Get going, @#\$%^, I hollered at the van. I've been sitting here for over 10 minutes and now I'm late, I pleaded with the car. Cut no ice. Blucka, blucka, blam blam! was the car's reply to me. You're gonna go, dammit, I told the car and slammed it into reverse. BLAM, BLAM, die, was the car's response. Boy was that sucker ever hard to restart once it died in the middle of a BLAM! I had to start it over 24 times before I got it into the street. By now it was half flooded again, and all fouled up beyond anybody's ability to repair that darn van. But I was bound and determined, that @#\$% van was going to take me the 1/2 mile across Van Dyke. I put the petal to the metal and then cranked her...and cranked her...and cranked her. Yup, she caught again. Boy, did she ever catch again. BLAM...BLAM...BLAM...BLAM!!! I never heard such a loud explosion in all my born days out of a car engine, but I was determined that that van was 1.) either going to take me where I wanted to go, or 2.) the engine was going to blow up under the hood and my blucka troubles would be over. Suddenly, in the midst of all that deafening noise and my total concentration in trying to get that thing going, I notice a lot of commotion on the block. Most of the neighbors were out of their houses, and most of them were examining their own houses. All of them thought that there was a series of explosions, and most of them thought that their own house was blowing up! People were looking at their chimneys to see if shrapnel was coming out of them! People were running up and down the street talking to each other. And my dog, old Bear, was so frightened out of his wits by the loud explosions that he pushed past me and jumped right through the drivers window and ran away down the road to the safety of the neighbor's arms.

Another time, before the blucka got that bad, I piled all of the old lady neighbors in it to go riding to see Christmas lights around town and do some caroling along the way. Blucka, blucka, blam we went mile after mile. Hey, we gotta sing kinda loud to be heard over all that engine racket, one of the old ladies mentioned. Quit bitching, its a free ride, I told them.

We had a cracked manifold that was the cause of the blucka blucka sound. Werner said it was too expensive to fix, so learn to live with it. One time we took it to Leland up north and as I was coming into this small town there was a cop car sitting there on the side of the road. So I took my foot off the gas and coasted past him, hoping I would get far enough beyond him before I had to put my foot back on the gas again.



Bear in front of my mini van

I HATED lending Werner my car for it always seemed to return in very sad shape indeed. He always said his cars were working cars, which they were indeed, and mine too when he got his paws on it. Upholstery would be ripped. Mats would be sliced and torn, and even the overhead covering would be ripped. Once he bought a motorcycle from the Department of Parks and Recreation at one of their auctions, then had to figure a way to get it home. We had my small hatchback Honda with us at the time and he decided that he could get it home in that little car. He rammed the thing into the hatch back at an angle, totally tearing the roof vinyl, making a big tear. When I told him I expected him to repair it, he just gave me a disgusted look and told me that the upholstery had nothing to do with the mechanics of the car and is therefore superfluous. He never did repair it either. I traded it in years later with the same rip prominently in place.

I got my last van back from one of his hauling trips with a tear in the seat and the set belt holder smashed to smithereens. Put tape over the seat and to hell with that damn seat belt was his reply. He HATED seat belts, saying that they made him nervous. He got Dr. Timban to write a letter that seat belt use was dangerous to his health as it made him nervous and as a consequence made his blood pressure increase to dangerous levels and therefore he should not wear one. To make sure that the cops would not make him wear a seat belt, he took a pair of scissors and cut the driver's seat belt right in two and threw the buckle in the garbage. Hey, I want to wear the seat belt when I drive your car, I replied. It's my car and I'll do what I want with that damn seat belt, was his reply.



Werner & Bear in front of the resort with the Blucka Van

One time Werner drove over to Rudi and Dinora's house and picked them up in the old blooka van (we called it the blooka blooka van because when he bought it the manifold had a crack in it and when you drove it it went blooka blooka real loud.) and took them to the Dairy Queen in Utica for a treat. The Dairy Queen is around the corner from my mother's house, where I was at the time, so Werner pulled up into her driveway and blew the horn. I went out and joined them. Afterwards Werner started driving them home again. We hadn't gone a mile when Dinora started getting near hysterical from his driving. Werner liked to drive with one tire on one side of the line and the other tire on the other side and then he would drift back and forth from lane to lane, driving all the other drivers nuts. HONK! HONK! was the usual chorus from the rear when Werner was driving. Dinora would look from side to side and then to the rear and back again. Her head swiveled around like it was on a pivot, she was so nervous. Finally Rudi got tired of her nervousness and said to her, look Dinora, Werner's driving is like rape. There's not a darn thing you can do about it, so you may as well lay back and enjoy the ride.

Werner used to shout at the top of his voice that he was a very good driver. Then how come you got all four sides of your Cadillac smashed up, I asked. He got real mad at that. Shortly afterwards Werner made an appointment with the Collex collision shop at 13 and Mound and his blue Cadillac came back better than new, with all the dents worked out.

One time we were in the parking lot of the Pickle Barrel at Greenfield and 12 Mile in a driving snowstorm and Werner was driving his Cadillac. The parking spot was real close so I told him to pull out first and I would wait outside and jump in when his door cleared the car next to him. He pulled back and ran right into an old lady that was standing behind the car she was about to get into. The two middle age people with her thought she had been hit by Werner's car, but in the confusion, the old lady insisted that she had merely fell on the ice. Werner slowly finished backing up after the old lady could get out of the way, I jumped into the car and he slowly pulled off, seeing if these people would stop him. They didn't, confused by the mother saying she wasn't hit, that she merely lost her footing. I sure got lucky that time, was his reply.

One time he got into such a bad accident that he knocked his face into the dash board and chipped his tooth in the process. He had real thick teeth or he would have knocked it clear out if his teeth were like the rest of ours. He was driving along in his Mercury which he had purchased new and which he was very proud of, when a fellow jumped the meridian and was air borne right into Werner's car sideways. Naturally, the man had no insurance and Werner had to end up paying for the damage. In that accident, Werner was totally innocent.

Another time Werner and I went to Lansing to the Health Department, again due to trouble, and when we were leaving the Health Department, it was 5 o'clock, snowing heavily, with snow all over the ground. The visibility was near zero.

Suddenly Maurice Reisen, Werner's arch enemy from the early days of Wil Mar when Reisen tried unsuccessfully to shut Wil Mar down, stepped behind Werner's car. Werner was wild with indecision. Should I run him down!, should I run him down!, Werner asked me several times in great agitation. I probably could get away with it in this snow storm. I could say I never saw him due to the swirling snow and my cataracts! Werner replied. No, I don't think that would be a very good idea, I replied. Let's not do it. On the way home, Werner suddenly burst forth with this reply, "I should have done it!" "That bastard!"



Werner Wilhelm

Another time Werner decided to play Santa Claus for Mali's kids when they were little. Well, actually, Mali begged him into doing it, for Werner was never fond of kids and even less fond of being Santa Claus. Well, we bought the Santa Claus suit and I helped him into it at Mali's apartment. Poured him into it, would be a better description. He's the only guy I knew who was too fat to fit into a Santa suit! He sure made a good looking Santa, with that blonde hair, blue eyes and bowl full of jelly, as the poem puts it. But he hated the job. Werner almost never drank, but when he did, it was substantial, as he only used booze as a means of fortification for his sagging spirits. This night, he drank a whole bottle of kalua, chug a lugged it would be a more apt description. Then after about 10 minutes he decided to get into his "sleigh" (alias baby blue Cadillac) and go over to Carleen's house in Southfield, about a mile away. It was a heavy snow storm, the roads were filled with snow and were icy, and Werner, fortified with a belly full of booze, was ready to take on all comers. He started driving over 45 miles per hour over all that ice and snow. I was near hysterical. SLOW DOWN! I screamed. Whee, this car runs like Santa Claus's sleigh!, Werner replied with sheer glee in his voice. Then he took a corner at least 35 miles per hour. I thought we bought the farm at that point, but due to the weight of the Cadillac, we stayed on the road, did not roll or slide out. I told you I had everything under good control, Werner replied. Ya, sure, I thought. But we and the car got there in one piece, thanks be to the saints and angels. God protects children and fools, the saying goes, and He sure came through for one drunken fool of a driver that night!

Another time we went to the St. Anne's Christmas party. Werner hated Christmas in general, ever since his Mama died, and Christmas parties in particular. They were such a strain on him, as he was emcee, host, etc. This particular party he found particularly nerve wracking, so to survive it in one piece he ended up drinking half a bottle of drambuie, his favorite drink at that time. His

behavior was outrageous at the party, which everyone loved, especially Irene when he played around with her breast trying to light up the Santa Claus she was wearing right on the tip of it. (Irene was very much in love with Werner to the point of worshipping the very ground he walked on.) After the party, the help piled up all the chairs Werner had borrowed from Utica in the trailer he was dragging behind his Cadillac and off he went, heading for home. I was driving right behind him, and I was appalled. He was driving from the right lane to the shoulder then back to the right lane, then to the middle lane, just merrily weaving all over the place. When he got home to Utica he pulled right in the garage, and still being drunk, forgot he had a trailer on the back of the car and let the garage door down, SMASH! right on the trailer. @#\$, what was that? Werner asked. Oh, the #\$\$^ trailer. I forgot all about it being up all full of chairs. Well, we had one fast repair on the garage door the next week to unbend the thing where it crashed into the trailer and the trunk always had an extra crease where the garage door tried to bend it in the middle.

Another time Werner drove into the garage with a load of chairs sticking high out of his trunk, forgot they were there, pulled into the garage, smashed the upper chairs into the top of the garage and totally bowed up in the air the middle of the trunk of his Cadillac. His cars were indeed working cars.

Some time after that Werner got too close to the wall of the garage next to the left hand side of the door and ran into the wall on his way out of the garage. He took the wall with him, pulling it about a foot out of the garage. And that's the way it remained until after his death.

Another time Werner was driving down Square Lake by Woodward just before Christmas in his Cadillac in a driving snowstorm, and when he got to Woodward he suddenly decided to turn right, veered sharply into the right hand turn lane, and the guy in that lane, due to the snowstorm was not able to stop in time and ran right into the rear of Werner's car. Werner hollered at the top of his lungs that it was the other guys fault because he hit him from the rear, but the cops sided with the other guy's story. Werner got real mad at that and told Kurt, who was in the car with him to claim a back and neck injury and to sue both Werner and the other guy. Kurt didn't think that was a good idea.

Then there was the time when Werner was driving the blooka blooka, which was registered and insured in my name. He got off at Dequindre, thinking it was Rochester Road. It is horrible trying to get back on the freeway at Dequindre as there is so much traffic and no signal light, and of course, Werner is ever short on patience. So Werner starts across the oncoming lanes of traffic, confident that they will get out of his way. Well one guy, driving a Waste Management Disposal company car, ticks Werner in the front end of the blooka as he is inching his way into this guy's lane. Werner howls that it is all this guy's fault as he hit him in the headlight and didn't stay out of his way when he could see he was trying to get across the road! Once again those dumb cops didn't agree with

Werner and sided with the other guy. The Waste Management guy had good insurance which paid for his damage, but now Waste Management is trying to collect the \$400 deductible from Werner as the cops said it was his fault. Well, whenever the Waste Management people called the nursing home, Werner instructed the staff what to say to them. First he moved to Florida, then he moved to Alaska, then to Texas. Then he was in the hospital getting his prostate operated on, then he was in Henry Ford cause his kidneys were shot and he couldn't pee. The Waste Management people attempted to chase him over the face of the globe for over 1 1/2 years before they got dizzy from the chase, and went to small claims court to attempt to capture their \$400 deductible. Werner got notice of this date and got it cancelled several times for supposed health reasons. Finally, he evidently ran out of health excuses, and one day he told me that I had a court date in Rochester for an accident with the blooka! What accident! I replied. Who did it? I don't see any damage to the van! Here's the notice, be there, he told me. Hey buddy, I told him, you'd better come with me and do some explaining in court. Don't ever call me buddy, he replied. But he came with me, I lost a case I knew nothing about, and it cost \$400 against my insurance record. I later found out it could and should have been paid by his insurance company as he was the driver of the vehicle but he didn't want it charged against him as it would raise his insurance rates! Thanks, Werner!

Then there was the time where Werner almost wiped out a whole row of cars with a dump truck! What a riot that was! We were at an auction where cars and trucks were being auctioned off. There was a whole row of dump trucks to be auctioned off and Werner was toying with the idea of buying one. So he looked at a nice red one, and saw that the keys were in the truck. He turned the key in the ignition, the truck started on the first turn, and being it was in gear, it was off and running, heading right for a whole row of late model cars. I started to run along side the truck to jump in and stop it, but a man who was a little closer than I saw what was happening and jumped in and pulled it out of gear, put the brakes on, then drove it back into its original position. Werner, to hide his acute embarrassment, said loudly for all around us to here, "those stupid women, they know nothing about a truck so they should keep their hands off them so they don't cause an accident!" I looked at him in such a way that if looks could kill, he'd be dead on the pavement. But then I saw the humor in the situation and had a darn good horse laugh.

And then there was the time that I left my car overnight at St. Anne's in the winter and the next day it wouldn't start. I called AAA towing and found out that only the first mile is free, after that you pay. No, one never pays for anything unless there is no avoiding it, was Werner's philosophy, and the reason he was rich and we are not. His solution to my dilemma? Out comes a big, thick sturdy tow rope. Tie one end onto the back of my car and the other onto the front of your car, he commands. Thus done, off he goes at his usual break neck pace. Tell me, have you ever been towed in a weaving pattern over all three lanes of the freeway and the service lane too, doing 70 mph or better? Well I have, and believe me, its an

experience you can relate to your grandchildren! To my relief at 12 Mile and I-94 I popped the clutch and discovered that the car jump started, much to my relief. I beeped my horn till it had laryngitis, then he finally caught on, stopped his car and I removed that darn tow rope from both cars. It sort of felt like I had gotten a new lease on life! To be able to drive the rest of the way home at my own speed, in one lane and on my own power. That is definitely one definition of heaven.

Then there was the time that Mali's car was disabled and he called Werner after dark for help. Werner sped over there, assessed the situation, saw Mali was stuck solid and got him out of there without spending money on a tow truck by lifting up the whole front end of the car and thus getting it out of the ditch. Mali told that story to anyone who would listen for years afterwards. The retelling of it never impressed Werner. He felt it was all in a day's work and saved a \$30 tow bill by tying his trusty old tow rope to Mali's car and pulling it out of the ditch.

In the winter of 1991 Wil Mar got a call from Werner to come pick him up at 21 mile near Van Dyke, he was stuck in a ditch. I ran right over there for by now he was a quite ill man and in shorts and sandals and bare feet should not be exposed to the elements for too long a period of time as it was December and bitter cold, even with my warm winter coat on. What I found defies retelling. Boy, was he ever in a ditch. The ditch was very narrow and about 5 feet deep and his car was in it on its passenger side almost straight up in the air. I never could figure out how, in his weakened condition, he ever got out of the car! One door was facing straight down into the water filled ditch, the other was facing the sky! But somehow he got himself out of the upper door and walked across the highway and used some one's phone. The woman, seeing his bare feet, let him stay in the warm house for awhile. I then picked him up in my warm car, and since he called a tow truck, we waited in my warm car for the truck to come. He told me he had called over hell and gone for the cheapest price on tow trucks and 21 and Van Dyke Sunoco was it. But the tow truck never came. But what did come was the Shelby Police who called the tow truck at Amoco at 23 and Van Dyke as they have a contract with them for towing. The tow truck came out, looked at the car firmly enmired in the ditch & declared that this was not an ordinary tow and that he wanted another \$80 in cash on the spot to pull it out. Werner howled! I have AAA! (Translation: Sandy has AAA as she is dumb enough to pay for the insurance, so we will use hers.) They don't pay for this kind of wear and tear on my truck, the driver replied. I'm calling AAA & reporting you! Werner bellowed. Do it! The truck driver replied. I knew Werner had hundreds of dollars in his wallet that day but he said he was broke. I had no money on me, but I had a magic line teller card. Werner had been standing out in the bitter cold in sandals and shorts and no socks for over 45 minutes now and I was very afraid he'd get frostbite, so I jumped into my van, tore over to the all night magic teller window and got out \$100, then tore back to the scene. Werner was standing out in the middle of the street in the pitch black, almost getting hit by the fast moving traffic who couldn't see him in the dark, and he was on the

verge of getting arrested as the cop had enough of him, was frozen to the bone despite heavy outerwear and boots, and he knew Werner was going about to get run over if he stood out there much longer. The tow truck had his line over the road and was about to unhook and take off as he had enough of this eccentric old codger. The cop told him to either pay up the \$80 or he was going to impound Werner's car as it was a traffic hazard sitting in the ditch of a major thoroughfare. I started to bring the \$100 out of my pocket and Werner almost karate chopped my arm off. How much does it cost to get the car out of hock if you impound it? Werner asked the cop. \$65 the cop replied. Is that the total charge, Werner replied? Yup, the cop said. Then I save \$15 if I let you impound it? Yup. How do I get my car out of hock? Werner asked him? By paying the \$65 to the Amoco station, bringing the bill to the police pound and we then release your car. Okay, let's do it! Werner said with satisfaction. I howled! I had driven over to get him out of the ditch at 4:45 p.m. It was now 8:45 p.m., I was starved to death, I was frozen and my nerves were shot worrying about him getting run over, arrested, or punched in the mouth by the tow truck driver or the cop, both of who had enough of him for one lifetime. And I wanted desperately wanted to get him home and check him over for signs of frost bite as his exposed legs were already blue and badly swollen up and therefore at risk before he stood out in the bitter cold for half a night. And if I had to take him to the hospital and spend a whole night starving, freezing and worrying, just so he could save \$15.00, I think I might have punched him one! By the way, I do believe in the end it was my \$65 that got his car out of hock. I think we put it on my charge card to save his cash. You might think I was nuts putting up with all that but I loved the guy, was used to his little games and my overwhelming concern that night was his health. We paid the Amoco, took the receipt to the police station, had a long delay in getting into the pound due to some crisis on their part, finally got into the locked pound, found Werner's car. which was well hidden, and then I cringed mightily watching him maneuver it among all those late model cars in the snow storm, but he got out all right and he barreled on home. He immediately crawled into bed and got under his Garfield comforter. I checked his feet, which miraculously were okay, and then went to my mother's for a cold but very welcomed dinner. The cause of the accident? He started out at 4:40 p.m. to get to Theut's in Mt. Clemens, who close at 5 p.m. and who take about a half hour to get there. He figured that by driving like a bat out of hell in a snowstorm he'd make it just before closing. But a lady on 21 Mile Rd stopped dead to make a left hand turn and on the ice he couldn't stop in time and decided it was better to try to go around her. In the twilight he did not see the ditch. But remember, the real moral of this story is that he saved \$15, and if you put that money in the bank for 10 years at 7 1/2 % interest, you will have \$_____ amount of money saved (you fill in the blank and let's see how good your arithmetic is. Werner's was outstanding, he would have given you this answer at the drop of a hat.) And remember, when you are done howling with laughter over this story, just remember it is because of many such incidents such as this that Werner is a rich man and we are not.

Another time an Arab friend asked to borrow Werner's Mercury to run an errand. While driving Werner's car he had an accident. He later sued Werner, saying he got hurt in the accident and that it was all Werner's fault as Werner knew the Arab didn't have a license and he shouldn't have allowed Werner to drive the car!

Another time Werner drove over to his apartment building in Dearborn to check on what his maintenance man was doing. Dearborn had a warrant out for Werner's arrest because he didn't fix the broken things in the apartment building and someone called the police when they saw his car out in the alley behind the apartment building. When Werner saw the cops pull up in front and in back of his car, he rolled up the windows, locked the doors and refused to let the cops get at him. The cops retaliated by pulling his spark plug wires so that he couldn't drive away. When he got hot enough, he left the car and they arrested him and his people bailed him out. He later went to court to listen to what he was supposed to repair now. Werner said things got a lot better in the Dearborn court when Judge Guy got on the bench. Judge Guy was a real straight shooter and he called them as he saw them, without letting any bull shit politics get in between. When Werner was in court on this charge he watched the cases ahead of him and was impressed with the fairness of this new judge. The case that tickled him the most was a truck driver who was arrested for moving his equipment across Dearborn from one of his locations to another. The cops arrested him for not having a trucker's permit. The judge asked the guy whether he knew that he needed a trucker's permit. Yes, your honor, was the reply. Then why didn't you get one, the judge asked. I tried to real hard your honor, but the city wouldn't give me one. Every time I applied, they denied me. They only give out a few trucker's licenses, and only to their friends. Is it true that he applied many times for a trucker's license, the judge asked the City of Dearborn. Yes, your honor was the reply. **CASE DISMISSED!**, bellowed the judge. As long as I am a judge on this bench, America is still a free country. After hearing this case, Judge Guy was Werner's friend for life.



Werner's Cadillac Eldorado

When I first met Werner he was driving a very old, very beat up brown Eldorado with front wheel drive. He drove around corners like a bat out of hell. Like the old lady in the "Where's the beef" hamburger commercials, you went clear across the car if you didn't hang on and brace yourself. Whoa, I'd better not take the turns that sharp or that fast Werner suddenly said and slowed down. He then explained to me that he had over 250,000 miles on the car, that the front ball joints were long since shot due to all the weight on the front end, that the ball joints could not be replaced, and that if he took one too many curves at that speed the whole front end would come apart and would go bobsledding instead

of rolling on wheels. That was the only car where he voluntarily gave it up while the engine and transmission would still operate.

One time I drove him over to the Sunoco Station on Auburn near Durham Road to pick up that old Eldorado. The repairman laughed at Werner and told him he could have bought a new car for what he had paid out in repairs for that old car over the past 2 years.



inside of burned out Eldorado

Another time Werner had taken me to Vic Tanny to go swimming with him and when we got back home he had left his favorite bathing suit in the back seat of the car and the next day when he went out to the car the entire interior was totally charred black! He had had some type of a short and it burnt out the whole interior. He then went to Central Auto Parts junk yard on Central south of Michigan and bought a white leather Cadillac seat for the old brown Eldorado. It really looked terrible in that brown car. And boy, did that car ever stink of smoke! He drove in that smoky joe for another year before giving it up due to the front end. But he couldn't bear to give the car up so he parked it in the blue house back yard by the back fence where it stayed for about 5 years before the cops told him to either get rid of it or they were going to arrest him. He had a real car park going in his back yard at that time. Not only did he have the brown Cadillac there, but also his light blue Cadillac and a dump truck he bought at an auction and just parked in the nursing home back yard in front of the day room window. Later he moved the dump truck to the blue house back yard when the patients needed to look out that window. Then one day several years later the police told him he either had to license all those vehicles or get them off his property. Licensing cost money so Werner didn't want to do that. He also didn't want to move them. The police decided to tow the vehicles away, but they needed vehicle identification numbers in order to fill out the paperwork. Werner lost the titles to all of the vehicles, so they had to find the numbers on the cars. So Charlie started crawling under all the cars to find the numbers. Did he find the numbers? Nope. But guess what he did find under those cars – wasps! Hundreds of them! Charlie spent the afternoon at the nurse's station getting his wasp stings attended to. They did find the VIN number for the truck so the police tow truck came into the yard, hitched up the truck and ---- away they did not go -- - the truck brakes had permanently locked over the years and the tow truck was not powerful enough to drag the huge dump truck on the bottom of its tires. They were able to get the light blue Cadillac out of there, much to Werner's distress. Werner personified his cars and formed a real attachment to each of them and was not able to let them go emotionally. So when they died from old

age he found a permanent resting place for them in his back yard. Werner later was forced to donate his old autos to charity.

Then there was the story about him driving his car through the back road on his property at Barbeau in the UP that he accessed from 15 mile rd. He had been with the fellow from the DNR all morning and most of the afternoon, going through his property on both sides looking at all the trees, deciding which were good enough to be in the forestry program and which were scrub. After the forestry man left Werner then drove once again to the back of his property to look at his Christmas trees. I told him to stop and get out when he reached the crest of the hill because if he went down the steep hill his car would get stuck at the bottom as the ravine was so v shaped that it would grab the car and bottom it. Well, Werner was always so lazy and so dead set against walking that he would always drive his car as far forward as he could to cut the walk short. In fact, I always said that if the garage wasn't in the way he would have driven his car right into his bedroom to save the few steps walking. Well, it was the same thing here. #\$\$%^, he shouted at me and drove the car full speed ahead, figuring if he had enough speed he would jump the ditch! Ya, sure. Boy, were we ever stuck solid in the bottom of that ravine! And it was real cold and getting dark rapidly. Gee, I guess you were right, Werner said. Small consolation that is when you are stuck good out in the middle of nowhere and may have to sleep in the wilderness because somebody we know was just so sure he could jump the ditch and save a few steps! I started to pop the trunk to see what I may have put in there for just such an emergency. (His trunk was packed solid tight, but I always managed to put in a few emergency items for just such occasions.) Just as I was rummaging through the trunk, lo and behold the DNR man comes down the road in his 4 wheel drive truck. What a sight for sore eyes! I knew that he would know what to do as in his job there are plenty of times when he finds himself in just such a predicament, and of course, I was right. He looked at the car, told Werner he did a real good job, then brought out his come along, fastened one end on the car and the other around the tree. Then he started ratcheting the come along and in short order the car was out of the ravine and back on high ground. But then Werner had to drive his car up a real steep hill backwards and then drive backwards for about 1/8 of a mile. It was a wild ride, but we made it! Was I ever grateful for the arrival of that DNR man! (At least Werner was able to back up a car better than he could back up a trailer on the back of a car – like in upper Georgia at 1 am when he insisted on driving his car forward over an 1/8th of a mile with me hollering at him not to do that, that at a Knight's Inn this road almost always comes to a dead end. Well, yes this road also dead ended and now he would have to back up almost the whole way. @#\$\$% was Werner's first reaction to such a predicament. The he started to back up. O boy! Lots of cars parked on both sides and Werner jackknifing the trailer into them, first right then left. @#\$\$% Werner let me try, I have had some experience doing this, I told him. @#\$\$%% was Werner's reply. Finally in sheer frustration he let me behind the driver's wheel so he could holler at me and tell me I couldn't do any better. Well, it was trial and error, but with a lot of start and stop I got that thing out of there

and we were again on our way, 15 minutes lost due to Werner's feeling absolutely sure that there was an exit up ahead.)



1600 acres, Barbeau



Deer Lake, Barbeau



Werner at Deer Lake



Cabin at entrance to Deer Lake

Another story from the same day. We originally met the DNR man on the front of the property at the main entrance. He had a nice high 4 wheel drive truck. We were driving a low chassied Cadillac. The DNR man took one look at Werner's Cadillac and declined Werner's invitation to drive into the property in that. Instead he said we should all pile in his truck. The truck only had a front seat and there were 4 of us, the DNR man, Werner, Uncle Kurt and I. I volunteered to ride in the back of the pick up and let Kurt and Werner ride up front. Hell no, Werner bellowed, let Kurt ride in the back if he wants to come with us. Otherwise he can stay in the Cadillac. So he told Kurt he had to ride in the back of the open pickup or he could stay in the Cadillac till we got back. Kurt wanted to see the interior of the land and the lake, Deer Lake, so he agreed to ride in the back of the pickup, and got into it without too much difficulty, a remarkable feat for a man of his age and girth. Werner, I and the DNR man rode in the heated cab of the pickup. It took over 15 minutes to get to the lake and when we got there and I looked at Uncle Kurt, I was really concerned about him for he was beet red. Are you all right, I asked Kurt. Ya, Ya, he replied. We walked around for about 15 minutes, looking at trees, then we got back in the pickup. I again offered to ride in the back because Kurt looked frozen through. Werner again became angry with me, saying Kurt could ride in the back, for after all, he wanted to come along for the ride. So we drove another 20 minutes back to the entrance with Kurt in the open back of the pickup. When we got to the street and Kurt climbed out, I was shocked. He was totally purple, I kid you not!



Kurt & Sandy in the DNR truck at Deer Lake

Kurt, are you okay? I asked again. This time he did not pro offer an answer. Are you okay, I asked again. It was like Kurt came out of a trance. He slowly

moved his head upward, then looked at me and said, Ya, I'm okay. After you've been in a prisoner of war camp in Siberia as long as I have, everything is okay, for no matter what happens to you during the course of a day, you know that when the sun sets you'll have a decent meal and a warm bed. He did thaw out in about 20 minutes once the Cadillac heater started working. Kurt, Werner & I went to a delicious dinner at the Robin's Nest Restaurant in Sault Ste Marie that night.

Car break downs were also a regular occurrence due to the fact that he seldom owned a car with less than 100,000 miles on it. He was always calling Charlie at Wil Mar to pick him up when the car quit. They would then pull out Werner's trusty old sturdy tow rope and away they would go down the road to whatever was Werner's favorite repair shop at the time. It was amazing who Werner would get to drive him home if Charlie was not available. He would get some poor soul without a penny in his pocket to drive him 20 or 30 miles and never give the hapless guy one penny for his trouble.

I remember Christmas eve about 1983 when the temperature suddenly dove to about 15 below zero. We were invited (or maybe Werner invited himself) to Christmas eve dinner at Rudi and Dinora's on Florida Street in Livonia. But we couldn't get out of St. Anne's that night as the temperature plummeted to about 50 degrees Fahrenheit on the 3rd floor and we couldn't get it to go higher. Werner bought an electric heater for each room and turned them on. We then started out late to Rudi's. We had an excellent dinner and a nice sociable evening. Werner played chess with Rudi and I was so exhausted from the day's work at the nursing home that I fell asleep on their most comfortable sectional couch. Werner woke me up about 1:30 am and told me we were heading home. Werner's Cadillac was a diesel and it was now about 20 below zero and that Cadillac barely started and it sounded very strange when it ran. The car never got above 20 miles per hour and by the time we got to Telegraph and I-96, the car was dying. We stopped at the Tel-96 motel and got a room as Werner did not want to bother Rudi at that hour. Boy, what a room that was. It never got above 50 degrees in that room and the water ran all night. And what made it unbearably cold was that Werner was starting with his bad prostate problems at that time and due to a constant overfull bladder, his urine leaked out while he was sleeping and he was sleeping in a wet bed in 50 degree cold. He thought he was going to freeze to death due to the wet cold. The next day we called Wil Mar and some one came and picked us up, so I got to go to Christmas dinner at my mother's house. I didn't bother to tell anybody over dinner what a wonderful Christmas morning I had had. Later on in the day, Werner realized that he forgot to turn in the key and that he had a \$5 deposit on the key. He told Rudi he would mail him the key and that Rudi was to get the \$5 back. The motel refused to give Rudi the \$5 saying he was not the one who rented the room. Rudi reiterated what a horrible time we had with no heat and dripping water and that if they didn't give him his \$5 back, he was going to call the health department on the place. They promptly refunded the \$5.



Dr jur Horst Fenge, Christa Brehmer Fenge & Werner Wilhelm II

That last Blue Cadillac was a diesel so it gave us lots of unusual problems not encountered by a gas engine. One time Werner was real busy at Wil Mar so he told me to drive with his second cousin Holger and Holger's father Horst to Florida with the blue Cadillac and that he would fly down and meet us in Fort Lauderdale and we would all drive from there to the Keys. Dr. Fenge was not too sure about taking that Cadillac all the way to Florida as it had over 100,000 miles on it. Werner got real aggravated over this and told him that that was a good car and made it everywhere. So the Germans and myself packed up and off we went, Florida bound. We made it to Florida in good time and by 9 p.m. the next night we were in St. Augustine. We got motel rooms and then walked a mile to the restaurant to eat, getting there just at their closing time. We told them we only wanted something simple, so they accommodated us. Holger ate quickly and took off to see some sights that night. After we ate Holger came back and we all started the mile walk home at 11 p.m. in the dark. We were approached by two seedy, shifty looking big black guys about half way home, asking us if we knew where a drug store was. The boy and his father were seriously thinking if they had seen one, and I replied immediately, "ya, there's one right on this street about six blocks down." I then motioned the men to get a step on and follow me. Very puzzled, they went with me, and when the Negroes were out of sight they said to me, "There's no drugstore on this street". I know that, you know that, and those black boys know that too. They were merely talking to you to see how much in the way of valuables you had on, how easy of a mark you might be and whether they could quickly strip you clean of jewelry and wallet and be on their way without too much fuss. We had to interrupt their train of thought and get out of there. The two men, both slight of build and never having had to work a hard day in their life, protested how they could hold their own. I said to them, look, if Werner was here, we would have had no worries, because he is built like a dock worker and could have just sat on their diaphragm and that would be it. The guy wouldn't be able to breathe. But you two are professional men and look too gentle. Anyway, the next day we were back into the car and on our way to Fort Lauderdale to pick up Werner from the airport as he landed in the early evening. We were making good time when suddenly Holger, who was driving, announced on the freeway, that he was losing power. The Cadillac started going slower, slower, now top speed only 35 miles per hr. Holger asked me to take over the wheel. What am I supposed to do about it, I thought, but I drove the car into Palm Beach which was the closest to us. The car died just short of a Holiday Inn so I had a tow truck tow it the rest of the way. Next to the Holiday Inn was a gas station, so I asked him to look at it. He knew what it was immediately, saying

that that eventually goes wrong on every Cadillac diesel, and that it would cost about \$500.00 and would take a day or two to repair. I could no longer call Werner as he was now in flight. I remembered that his plane was landing in Tampa before going on to Fort Lauderdale so I called Delta and had them leave a message for him when he landed to get off that plane and take one to West Palm as that was where we were stranded. We had my dog Old Bear with us at the time, and when we had the car towed we left Old Bear in the car with the windows partially down. Old Bear was absolutely panic stricken when the car took off with only him inside and me left standing on the pavement. You could see the look of sheer terror in his eyes, and in fact, in his whole face.

And you could hear the sound of sheer disgust and anger in Warner's voice as he called me from Tampa. What the f#\$% is going on there, he screamed. What did you idiots do to my fine Cadillac? Your fine Cadillac just died all on its own, I told him. Like f\$%^ it did! You abused that fine car. Let's quit arguing, I said. Just hop on a plane to West Palm Beach, then rent a car and come to the Holiday Inn right off the freeway, get a decent night sleep and in the morning we will get the car to the Cadillac dealer in West Palm. @#\$%, was Werner's answer.



Werner sleeping on his briefcase

Later I get a phone call from the airport. I am beginning to worry about Werner as he should have been at the motel by now. I can't get a F\$%^# car for rent, he tells me. I don't have a \$%^&* credit card and they won't rent me a car without a credit card! I have over \$2,000 cash in my wallet, but they won't take cash as a security, it's a credit card or nothing. Let me talk to the clerk at the car rental counter, I told him, I'll read him my credit card number over the phone. I called the clerk, he can't take the numbers over the phone, he needs to imprint the card, he tells me. I can't get down there, I tell him, I have no car and that is why Werner has to rent one. No dice. No card, no car. I talk to Werner again, boy is he ever hot by now! @#\$%^, I hear for 15 minutes. Call a cab, I tell him and then you can sleep with me, at least. G#\$% D%^&* F\$%^&*(peasant, he screams at me, spending money like it's water!) He then tells me he found a park bench in the airport and he is going to put his brief case under his head and sleep there, cause that's free. He'll see me in the morning. I felt so bad that evening, thinking he was spending the night on a park bench in the airport when he had so many health problems. But there was no convincing him to do things otherwise, especially if it cost money. So I sneaked Bear out of the Holiday Inn, then back in again and went to sleep. I was scared about taking Bear out in the

open as I was afraid that I might end up sleeping under the stars with Bear as I didn't know if pets were allowed in that hotel or not.

The next morning Werner found that the Holiday Inn courtesy limousine would take him to the Holiday Inn for free so he got to us without having to empty his wallet. He then called the Cadillac repair service and their truck picked up Werner, me and Bear and hooked our Cadillac on the back end of their truck, and off we went, Bear in the middle and thinking of nipping the guys hand as he changed gears. A quick inspection told them that it was the part that the gas station by the Holiday Inn told us it was. It took most of the day, but they fixed it and by 3 p.m. we were back in the Cadillac, \$700 poorer. We picked up the Germans and we were off to Fort Lauderdale.

Horst did not want to think of breaking down in the Keys, so he decided to rent a car in Fort Lauderdale and go to the Keys with his son while Werner stayed behind in the Holiday Inn in Lauderdale by the Sea. Werner went with them as they went to the rental desk in case they had trouble with the English. They didn't. Both Horst and Holger spoke very good English. Horst then says he wants to take out car insurance. Werner goes wild as he hates insurance of any kind, thinking of them as a waste of money. Don't take insurance, he tells Horst, you are paying for the car with the American Express Gold Card and that automatically insures the car. Nope, Horst wants to buy the insurance. A big loud discussion ensues. The louder Werner gets, the softer Horst gets, hoping to diffuse and calm down Werner. Werner gets real hot under the collar, him wasting all that money. Horst tells Werner through gritted teeth that he is a grown man, capable of handling his own affairs and he would thank Werner to keep his nose out of Horst's business. Werner is miffed. He steps back a few steps, then says out nice and loud in the Holiday Inn lobby for the whole world to hear, "Boy, with that kind of insurance you can hit every telephone pole from here to Key West and make out like a bandit." Horst was upset and he probably would have liked to kill Werner at that point.

And then about a year before he died the Lincoln died on I-696 and Dequindre after midnight on a snowy winter night. We had been to the racetrack with Carleen and Hari Mali and were now on our way back home. Hari gave Werner the Lincoln to keep him appeased when Hari was not able to make his payments on St. Anne's. He had shown Werner the car when we got off the boat of a pharmacist from Frank's Pharmacy who wanted to get nursing home accounts and had taken us for a cruise from Metropolitan Beach to the Officer's club at Selfridge for lunch and then back to Metro again. Werner said he liked the car and would like to have it. It was month's later before Werner got the car, from September to January of 1992, but Werner was glad to get the car as he was driving the blooka blooka, which was wildly undependable, as he had driven his Cadillac to Florida to use there. However, once Werner got the Lincoln he wore a path between Wil Mar and the Crest Lincoln Mercury dealer in Sterling Heights, that car broke down so often. When one of the Wil Mar staff went down to Royal

Nursing Home to pick up the paperwork for the Lincoln, the staff said, boy, are we glad he got rid of that Lincoln, it gave us nothing but trouble! So much about gifts from friends. I guess the old adage about not looking a gift horse in the mouth applies here, huh? (Or was that looking a gift car under the hood?) Anyway, the darn Lincoln broke down again that snowy night and here we were at midnight standing out on I-696, with Werner with no jacket and sandals. Well, very shortly, along comes a man and stops and offers us a ride. Werner asked him to drive us to the donut shop at I-696 and Van Dyke and he would get someone from Wil Mar to drive us the rest of the way home. So the guy, obviously poor, drives us the 4 miles. Werner even has the guy drag the spare tire along in his car as he wanted the maintenance man to have a look at it. And then he doesn't pay the guy a red cent for his trouble. I guess maybe we lost too much money on the ponies that night and Werner only had enough money left for donuts and coffee as he waited for a ride. Well, he calls over to Wil Mar and guess what? Only Mrs. Dexter has a car that night. You have to know Mrs. Dexter to know how funny this statement is. Mrs. Dexter was a top notch RN in her day, but in her 40's she developed a brain tumor and the doctors removed 1/3 of her brain. Afterwards thinking processes were never quite the same and Mrs. Dexter got easily mixed up. And directions on how to get somewhere was never one of her strong points, unfortunately. When she was hired at Wil Mar she had to bring her 84 year old mother along to help her find the way. She never found the way. She called us from a phone booth in Pontiac and one of our staff went and rescued her. So now she was supposed to find and rescue us in a strange neighborhood after midnight. Yup. Sure. Werner gave her the directions S-L-O-W-. He repeated them four times, nice and S-L-O-W-. I figured I was going to be eating a lot of greasy donuts between now and 7 am when the next shift came on at Wil Mar and I could try calling again for someone else with a full brain to pick us up. But guess what? 30 minutes later old Dexter shows up, not even missing the donut shop on the first try. Amazing! And she was a good driver too. Got us and the spare tire home safe and sound. In one piece. A whole lot better than Werner's driving.

The last accident that I know of was the time he decided to attend an auction in Sebring. Edna and I decided to come along and he decided to take my van, and he was going to drive as he was in an all fire hurry. Bad move, lending your only means of transportation to someone who drives like a demon out of hell when he's in a hurry. Boy, did he ever go! Vroom! Right down the wrong street! Werner. where do you think you're going, I timidly asked? When he told me, I told him, you made the wrong turn back there at the Fairmont shopping center. We are heading back home. @%&*@! (Guess who said that?) We're so \$#%^&*! late now we are going to miss the whole #\$\$%^@! auction. He then slammed on the brakes, jammed the gear shift into reverse and tore backwards into someone's driveway, intending to turn around. But we didn't turn around. When we put the car into drive all we did was totally tear up this man's gorgeously manicured lawn with our tire which was not resting firmly on the ground. It seems when we backed up we went off the driveway and one of our

tires was sitting in mid air. @#\$\$%^&*!, why didn't you watch where I was going, he bellowed. We got out of the car, and with the help of another driver was able to rock the car off the cement abutment and get it back onto the pavement. Fortunately the owner of the house was not home for when he saw his lawn he might well have taken a tire iron to dear little Werner's skull.

There was the time when we were in the hills of West Virginia in a driving snow storm, and its getting dark out, when suddenly the stop engine sign flashes on. Werner stops as he feared that to go on would destroy the engine. We let the car cool down some then lift the hood. A fan belt broke. We have no replacement, so we stop several time to let the car cool down until at last we reach a gas station. Werner finds that it is manned by a real cocky, smart mouthed hillbilly. Werner starts returning the smart mouth stuff. The kid tells Werner he can talk like that all he wants, but then the kid won't fix his car. I pull Werner by the shirttails and tell him to shut his @#\$\$%^&* mouth and let the kid fix the car or we will never get out of here. Werner shuts up, the kid fixes the car, Werner pays the bill, and then verbally abuses the hell out of the kid on his way out of the gas station. I told Werner we had better fly out of that gas station before that kid uses an ice pick on our tires.

And we always had disasters with second class parts, and 3rd class hillbilly repairmen working on our car. When you need parts for the car, you shop around and get the cheapest you can, irregardless of quality. Boy, what a disaster that can turn out to be sometimes. Once we bought some steel belted radial tires as they proved to be the cheapest way to go, an we put them on the blue Cadillac. We then went to the upper peninsula and our way back to the Drummond Island road on the path to Pickford, I suddenly noticed that as we were driving the car was rolling sideways on the tires. We stopped in an old fashioned gas station on the way to Drummond island and he told us that the belts had shifted and we were indeed "rolling over" on the slipped belts as we rode. The "we were rolling along" song had real meaning that day – we rolled sideways on those slipped belts all the way home. When Werner paid close attention to how the car kept getting a little higher, then rolling sideways and getting a little lower, etc and etc on that UP road, he looked at me and started laughing with a scrunched up look on his face. That was one of those situations where you could either laugh or cry over your predicament.

And he always ran out of gas! Without fail. One time I was all dressed up after dark at Sixth street and Howard in a really crummy section of downtown Detroit. Chugga, chugga, spit, spit, conk, die. Ah, @#\$\$%^&*!, I ran out of gas, guess who announces. Ah, no, not here! I wail. There's not a gas station for miles around here! Werner sees a very fancy conversion van full of fancy jived up blacks coming off the freeway heading in our direction. Out of the car he jumps and waves them down. Wearing a 2 1/3 carat diamond ring and a wallet full of \$100 bills. They talk jive talk to him and let him in. They all look so high that their feet don't touch the ground. I seriously wonder if I will ever see him again

on the face of this earth as he tools away with those hep cats. But son of a gun if not 15 minutes later he doesn't pull up with a can full of gas and a smile from ear to ear on his kisser. He fills up the tank and lets me prime the carburetor as he cranks and swears till it turns over. Another crisis averted.

Another time we had just picked up Uncle Kurt from the airport for his annual winter visit to us in Utica. It was one of his first visits to us in Utica, and except for not being able to keep his hands off the girls, Kurt was always the perfect gentleman. Well, we are downtown Detroit on Michigan avenue when we hear some funny noises coming from the engine and we seem to be going slower and slower, with a lot of jerking motion. @#\$\$%^&! , we are out of gas, @#\$\$%^&*. It is snowing a blizzard, and there is at least 5 inches of slushy snow on the ground. I can't walk to a gas station, I got on sandals and no socks, guess who announces. So I start getting out of the car. Kurt has a fit. You don't let a girl go get the gas, especially not in this kind of neighborhood. Werner gives me some tips on which direction is most likely to have a gas station, but no money to buy it with. So I pull a \$5 out of my purse and start on a rather long trek. It was the better part of a mile before I found a station. And the walk back was the tough one. But I got the gas in the tank, primed the carburetor, and we were off. We handed the gas can back, got our deposit and roared off into the sunset. Aren't we going to get some gas, I naively asked. Hell no, was the reply, its 2 pennies per gallon cheaper in Utica. Oh, okay, I reply.

Next day, Werner tells me I can't go with them as I have to get some work done on the Wil Mar books and takes Kurt with him as he runs around town doing his errands. Guess who forgot to put some more gas in the tank? Oh, you guessed, huh? Guess who had to walk through the slush and snow to get a can of gas as the other party didn't speak English? Guess who cussed and swore because he 1. forgot to fill up, and 2. didn't take Sandy with him that day. Kurt laughed and laughed till he couldn't get his breath. He thought it was so funny that Werner in a fit of temper did not take me with them and therefore he was forced to walk for gas himself!

But the best running out of gas story concerns the times he ran out of gas at the M-59 Freeway and the Ryan Rd. overpass, would you believe, 3 days in a row? Yup. First day, he flies out of Wil Mar in a royal rage because he's way late for where he's going. (A normal everyday occurrence for Werner, did I hear you say?) Well, anyway as he is approaching the Ryan Road overpass, he starts getting a bucking bronco ride, except that he's slowing down rather than speeding up. Sputter, sputter, clonk, die. Oh, @#\$\$%^&* I'm out of gas and now I'll never make it. And he doesn't feel so good and he's sitting on the top of an overpass. He gets out of his car, slides carefully down the embankment so as not to fall and break a leg. When at the bottom he sees a house near the freeway and goes there, rings the bell and asks the lady if he could use her phone as he ran out of gas. She is gracious, lets him use the phone and he calls Peggy at Wil Mar. Bring me some @#\$\$%^&* gas. I just ran out. I'm at Ryan

and the M-59 freeway. And don't buy the @\$%^& expensive stuff, either. Get the cheapest you can find at the pump. Check the 2 gas stations down the street and see you get the cheapest. And get here, @\$%^&, right away. I'm late! Peggy finds the cheapest gas, fills the can, remembers to get a receipt, and is off pony express style, to where Werner is standing, having apoplexy. Peggy puts the gas in the car, primes the carburetor, and Werner is off in a flash. Peggy returns the gas can and gets her refund. Meanwhile, Werner drives all around Southfield and Bloomfield on 2 gallons of gas, and then back home. Next day, he takes off like a bat out of hell from his driveway, heading back to Southfield. Guess who forgot to fill the tank and runs out of gas in the exact same spot he did yesterday? And guess who goes to the same lady's house and asks to use her phone to call Wil Mar. You're out of gas AGAIN!, asks the housewife? Well, she hands him the phone, he calls Peggy and screams at her to get her ass over here to the same place I ran out of gas yesterday, and get here on the double (as if its Peggy's fault he ran out of gas again!) Oh, okay, Peggy says. Same cheap gas today? I'm on my way. Peggy gets the 2 gallons of gas, gets there, fills the bottom of the tank, and he's off in a flash. Peggy returns to the gas station, gives the can back, then goes to Wil Mar, laughing that he actually ran out of gas twice in 2 days in the exact same spot. Can you believe that, she asks her fellow workers.

Nope, this story isn't over yet. The third day Peggy gets another call from Werner. Get over here on the double and that's an order! I ran out of gas at the same spot on M-59 and Ryan. And, oh by the way, only get 1 1/2 gallons this time of the cheapest gas you can find, because I heard on the radio as I was driving here that gas is going down in price tomorrow. Oh, okay, boss, Peggy says. After choking to death with laughter, Peggy heads out for Werner's most favorite rest stop on M-59. The lady who owns the phone, looks at Werner real funny, shakes her head, and tells him she will be calling Bell Telephone this afternoon and having them install a phone on the side of her garage for Werner. Werner didn't think that was funny till much later.

About two years before Werner died he couldn't breathe and he couldn't walk as that took away what little breath he had left. Well, one day he was driving from Wil Mar going to the west side, when as a sudden, chugga chugga, spit, die. @\$%^&*, out of gas. But now he was real scared as he was on the bottom of an embankment and the only phones were up an 8 foot hill. He slowly walked up the hill and was really proud of himself as he made the hill without being totally winded. Sandy, get over here with a can of gas, was what I heard through my end of the line.

Then there was the hilarious story about the time Rudi agreed to drive us to the airport, park our car in his drive while we were in Germany so we would save the parking fees, and then pick us up when we returned. Rudi looked at the gas gauge in Birmingham and said to Werner that there was no gas in the car. Werner looked at the gas gauge, eye balled it from several angles and

announced that we were indeed just about out of gas. Rudi then pulled in to a gas station and asked Werner, should I fill it up? Hell no, bellowed Werner, gas is two cents cheaper a gallon in Utica, we'll wait till we get there to fill up. Well, then how much should I put in, Rudi asked. Werner stared at that gas gauge for a minute or so, eyeballing it from several angles. \$3.35 was the reply from Werner. That should get us there and back. Rudi really blew up at this point as that amount of gas would be cutting it real close to him to be able to get there and back. Getting stuck at a few too many stop lights would do the trick and leave you standing on a street corner somewhere. God damn it, Werner, Rudi bellowed. When I first met you you were so God damned cheap, I just knew you couldn't get any cheaper. But somehow, over the past 5 years, you managed it. Rudi angrily told Werner that if the car ran out of gas he was just going to leave it on the side of the road and not even tell Werner where he left it!

And then there was the frustration of getting gas on a long trip on a freeway when Werner was with me. If the gas was one or two cents higher than the signs he had been seeing on the road, Werner would tell me to put in \$2 worth. When I am trying to make time to get home at a decent hour, and Werner is stopping every 5 or 10 miles at a gas station to find a cheaper price, I go wild! @#\$%^&*, Werner, this is ridiculous! I want to get home timely. You're just fucking labor class, Werner would holler at me. Never learned the value of a dollar saved. Blow everything, you have no idea that a penny saved is a penny earned. Fucking labor class never had anything, never will have anything and they're broke now too. I save my money and that's how I got to where I am today. No body gave me one penny. I earned everything I have and then I hang on to what I make. When we stopped at the next station and he said put \$5.00 in I just started pumping. He started hollering that he thought it was more then \$5.00 worth of gas. I told him to calm down, I was filling the tank on my credit card. He quietly thought that one over.

Then there was the real fun story about the time I was driving to Ohio and Werner urgently tells me to stop, he has to take a crap. So then he hollers, there's a Holiday Inn, stop there, I like to take a crap in style. So I pulled up in front of the Holiday Inn and he barrels into the men's room full speed, then later comes leisurely sauntering out and back into the car. I get behind the wheel again and off we go. We were no more than 1 mile down the road when he says, Oh, good, there's a rest stop. Pull in there. Why are we pulling in at a rest stop, I asked, we just stopped at the Holiday Inn. I gotta take a crap, he says. That what we pulled into the Holiday Inn for, I exclaimed in a puzzled tone. Yea, I know, Werner said. You gotta go again, huh? I said. Nope, he said. What do you mean, nope? I asked. With a real sheepish look on his face, Werner said to me, "when I went into the toilet at the Holiday Inn I peed, then I forgot to shit. So now I gotta shit."



Werner with Oil rig



Werner at Oil well



Werner bei Oil Tank



Werner & Kurt Wilhelm



Sandy Wilhelm – Oil Well

Once we had a huge engine from our drilling rig, a Bucyrus Eyrie, go bad, and when Werner tried to get it repaired in the Logan Ohio area, he was appalled at the stupidity of the local hillbillies and was also astounded at what they wanted to charge, so he had the engine shipped to his friends in inner city Detroit by the Ambassador bridge. They did a really fine job of repairing it at a very reasonable price. When the job was done the men called to get a check so they could ship it back down to the oil well. No, Werner said, it costs too much to ship. I'll drive it down in a trailer on the back of my Cadillac. So he shows up at Cass trailer rental, his old buddies at 8 Mile and I-75 and tells them he wants the cheapest trailer they got, but that it better have 4 wheels instead of the usual two as he will be hauling a little heavier load than usual. Then there was the usual dickering over the price and after Werner whines, pleads and begs a little, they rent him the 4 wheeler for the price of two. They hitch it up for him and Werner roars off their lot, the trailer bouncing and jumping up in mid air behind us as he cuts off half the traffic on 8 Mile Rd, hitting all the pot holes square, it seems, flying across all lanes and making a U-turn to get back on the freeway. Its lots of fun weaving back and forth between lanes on the freeway with a trailer on the back. HONK! HONK! ,we hear every time he drives that way, then as the other cars pass you, they scream something very angry but unintelligible out their car windows at Werner. Werner always honks back and gives them the finger, but more often than not, he holds up the wrong finger. Sometimes he tail gates the guy and keeps honking back. I'm absolutely astounded that some weight lifting guy hasn't pulled him out of the car and did a number on his facial bones. Sometimes Werner and some young punk will drive along on the freeway for miles, trading 4 letter words and insults back and forth at the top of their lungs. I'm jabbing Werner in the side telling him to cut it out, but the more he knows it bugs me, the more he revels in doing it. I could've just killed him when he started that.

Any way, we show up at Bond Bailey, the engine repair shop by the Ambassador Bridge, with the light duty trailer on the back of the old Cadillac, whose engine is so old that almost all of the compression is missing. The repair men take a look at the light, but very old trailer, and say to Werner, "you really don't intend to have me put the 6,000 plus pound engine in that trailer, do you?" Sure, Werner says, I don't have far to go and I'll drive carefully. Drive carefully, all the way to Ohio, he did. We didn't get above 35 miles per hour all the way down there. Now, before you go giving Werner credit for having a lot of common sense this time around, you have to know that the rig's engine was so heavy, and the car engine so old and decrepit, that 35 miles per hour was the car's top speed,

especially considering that the transmission was slipping like crazy, too. We didn't weave from lane to lane that much either, probably because we were going so slow that the steering was easier to control, and the engine was so heavy that the car was kind of riveted to the right lane. We get half way down to Logan when I suddenly smelled something funny. I think I smell something burning, I said to Werner. Probably something in the air, was his reply. Ya, it was something in the air all right, in the car, that was. Werner, something's burning in this car, I holler. Na, says Werner. Werner, it's getting so bad I can't even breathe anymore! I holler. Hmm..., I do smell something strong, Werner says, and pulls over to the shoulder of the freeway. He gets out of the car and sees smoke pouring from his trunk. Oh my God, the trunk's on fire! Werner hollers, in a state of extreme agitation. Where's something to put it out with? he asks. Well, we have two quarts of water in the front seat in case the car overheated, I suggested. Werner grabbed the two quarts of water, gingerly popped open the trunk, and lots of smoke comes rolling out of there. Oh, no, Werner hollers, all my important papers are on fire. It wasn't actually a fire yet, just everything smoldering. With almost tears in his eyes over having to do this to his important papers, but not wanting the car to blow up, Werner pours the two quarts of water over the smoldering papers, located mostly in the passenger side of the trunk. Werner then figured out what caused the fire to start. It was the fact that the exhaust system was so overheated from the engine being so overheated from dragging that load in second gear all that way. (Third gear couldn't handle the load, so he used second.) Anyway, now that his important papers were swimming in water, the crisis was over. We sat at the side of the road until the engine and trunk cooled off, then started off again. We didn't get another 10 miles down the road until clouds of smoke came billowing out of the trunk this time. Oh my God, where's a gas station, Werner shrieks! There's one over there on the left just up ahead, I tell him. He pulls off the freeway, drives into the gas station and brings his two quart jugs in with him and asks where he can find water. The guy points him to the men's room and Werner dashes off, fills the jugs with water and pops open the trunk. This time we have a blazing fire roaring there. Werner, with a beet red blood pressure face, dumps both pitchers on the fire, then hollers at me to get more water. We filled those pitchers 3 times and totally flooded the trunk. So much for those real important papers, but at least the car did not blow up. The gas station owner was having fits, with a trunk fire right near his gas pumps. But the crisis was now averted, and after sitting there for awhile to let the car cool off, we then started off with the 6000 pound engine in the trailer and a swimming pool in the trunk. Maybe all that weight in the trunk gave us better traction? Anyway, believe it or not, we arrived in Logan in one piece, with no further incidents. The fact that we had to have the engine overhauled on our next trip to Lancaster may have had some connection with that hauling expedition, but again, there's no telling. But we did save over \$300 in hauling costs!



Werner & his Cadillac at the oil well site

Running up those high, slick, wet mud covered oil well hills were another experience! Werner would back up the car down the asphalt road, explaining that you had to get up speed before tackling the slick straight up into the sky oil well "road". Then Vroom!, full speed ahead we would go, heading at a very fast angle toward the oil well "road". Then slip, slide, forwards, now right sideways, now left sideways, now fishtailing, up the road we would go. It was a very exciting ride for if you fishtailed off the oil well "road" it was a straight sheer drop back onto the county road. But all in all, you had to admit that Werner was a very skillful driver, for no one else could have pulled all those shenanigans and come out of it as well as Werner did.

But the only experience worse than fishtailing it up an oil well road was to walk up and down it in the winter when it was a solid sheet of ice. I walked up once with Werner and my guts turned to water at the fear of walking down such a high, steep ice covered hill, which was about 15 feet high. Would you like a ride down in my 4 wheel drive, an oil man asked? Boy, did I ever want that ride down! And Werner too. I still have nightmares about trying to get down that hill.

Later on, before fishtailing it up an oil well road, Werner would have me get out of the car and walk up the road and tell him where there were spots where it was either impossible or treacherous to get by. We would then sit there in the car making a plan of action as to how we were going to get up that hill in one piece without having to call a tow truck. Then he would go full speed up the hill with me hollering, get right, get right, okay, now left, now left, now the middle. Then whoa, stop, that's as far as you can go. Whoa, dammit, we're going to go straight down over the side!



Werner Wilhelm & Kurt Wilhelm

Until the last year or so of his life, Werner was always very warm blooded and wouldn't wear a coat or shoes or socks, only sandals and a shirt. When it got real cold he would put on a long sleeve shirt, and if it was below zero, maybe a sweater. Sometimes he would put on tennis shoes in the last 10 years of his life if his feet were freezing. And he didn't keep too much heat in his car, and if the

heater was turned on, he would open the window for air. I used to dress in my warmest coat, bring a lap robe with me and still freeze to death. When Uncle Kurt came he would drive all around town with Werner, keeping him company. Poor Uncle Kurt froze to death with that darn window open in sub zero temperatures. One day Kurt remarked as we were tooling along and he was sitting in the back getting the full force of the sub zero breeze, that he had been observing all the cars on the freeway and he noticed that out of 100 cars we had passed 99 had all the windows up and one had the window down and he had to have the misfortune of being in the one with the window down! Werner did not take the hint. The window remained down for the duration of the winter. Kurt learned to put extra clothing on when he went car riding. The reason Werner kept the window down was because he had a very bad heart and had a hard time breathing. Keeping the window open gave him fresh air and made it much easier to catch his breath.

When ever we go riding in a new area, Werner made me take down a description of every property for sale and the number and name of the real estate agent. He would then spend the evening calling these numbers and seeing what real estate was going for in that area. He especially did this while driving the coast line of Florida, making sure I got every piece of for sale property jotted down. In order to get this info, the driver has to slow down to about 25 to 30 miles per hour. Can you imagine how happy the drivers were behind us as Werner never pulled off the road to do this? HONK!! CURSE!! Get off the road, you stupid old man! Werner would honk back and curse back and they would have running arguments as they drove down the road. The middle finger would always end up getting prominently displayed, often by both parties. But we got every number down, and Werner was aghast at how expensive real estate was along the Atlantic coast.

Once we visited my sister and brother in law in California and being we came by air we had no transportation. Werner did not wish to spend money by having to rent a car so he sheepishly asked Don if he had something we could drive. Don said that he could spare one of his delivery trucks, but that he hesitated to even offer it as it had 199,000 miles on it, was 10 years old, didn't run too well, and the fenders flapped in the breeze as you drove down the street. We'll take it! Werner declared. The first trip in the van was to a doctor just outside of Beverly Hills. Werner was not about to pay for parking, so we drove into a very fine residential area with 2 million dollar homes trying to find free, unrestricted parking. We found it. In an area with palatial homes and king palm trees waving hundreds of feet in the air. And we parked that rust bucket in front of the very finest home in the area and hoofed it a half mile to the doctor's office. We were late for the appointment, hot and tired from the long walk, but we saved over \$5 in parking fees.

After the doctor we went to a deli in a Jewish section of town, and it was packed with clientele. Werner was not about to stand there waiting for a booth to clear,

so he stood at the entrance studying all the patrons who were sitting and eating. Then he said to me, "there's a very intelligent looking Jewish man sitting alone over there, and he even appears to me to be European born. I'm going to ask him if we can sit with him. He looks like someone I would like to talk to". Oh, Werner! was my reply. What do you mean, oh, Werner, he said to me. We do that all the time in Europe. Its just the Americans who never share a table at the restaurants. When you ask an American if you can share a table, they act like you are about to rape them. Werner asked the man if we could sit with him and he gave a very friendly favorable reply. Werner then sat down and told me what to buy for him at the counter. We did have a most interesting, cosmopolitan conversation with that man. And he was European born and had been through many of the horrors that Werner had experienced. The man was from the area of Breslau that Uncle Herbert was from and also had to flee to the west when the Russians rolled into Breslau in their tanks and huge army vehicles. Werner mentioned to this man that Uncle Herbert was surprised that he never again met any of his farm workers. This other man replied that he also didn't meet any of his workers as the Russians tied the workers to poles, threw gas on them and set them on fire.

After we finished eating we began the long trek back to the free parking spot in Beverly Hills. When we reached the car the man who owned the house came out and approached Werner. O boy! Here comes some more fire works, I thought. But when the man approached Werner, Werner told him he noticed the for sale sign on the front lawn and how much did the guy want for the house? 1 Million, 2 hundred thousand, was the answer. Werner got excited and told me that that was cheap for that size house in this neighborhood. The two then exchanged names and when the guy told him his name was Mintz, Werner told him one of his CPA's was named Mintz and was he related? The guy then got real interested, figuring if Werner had a CPA he had some money. We were then given a royal tour of the house. It had a swimming pool right smack dab in the middle, but even that didn't impress me. The home was quite old and had no improvements made to it in over 40 years, that was for sure. Almost everything was wood paneling, and quite drab and unappealing. Even the swimming pool looked dirty with no interesting accoutrements. I soon realized that the entire house would have to be redone. Werner really liked that drab, dingy place. Get real, was my reply to his enthusiasm.

We then drove on, fenders aflapping, to a hole in the wall used jewelry store in Beverly Hills. The store was small and unprepossessing, but the estate jewelry was dazzling. So many very fine works of art in that case. But Werner was not impressed. He preferred modern pieces. Somehow that surprised me.

Then there was the time last year that Dinora was afraid she was going to lose her \$17 an hour job as an interpreter for a disposal company because she was having an awful time balancing the books, not having had previous experience with this. So Werner offered to take her to our CPA, Dan Abramson, and let his

girl teach Dinora the basics of debits, credits and how to keep ledgers. Werner told Dinora to be at the front entrance of her office at 4:45 p.m. sharp because he was paying the girl to stay overtime so he wanted her to be prompt. Besides he didn't feel so good so he wanted to limit his time in Dan's office. Dinora did not show up in front of the building till after 5:15 p.m., which made Werner absolutely furious because he was paying Joyce 1/2 hour overtime for doing nothing but waiting, and he was tired of sitting in front of that glass and brick monstrosity doing nothing waiting for Dinora. Finally Dinora walked out of the building toward Werner's car. She was very sharply dressed and looked quite elegant. Werner was civil to her but very impatient. She said hello to both of us and got in the back seat of the car and we were off to Dan's office. We had some difficulty getting on the freeway which is just around the corner from her office due to rush hour traffic. And when we started heading south on I-75 it was bumper to bumper in all 3 lanes and no one was moving very fast. Werner went wild. He started growling about how much Joyce was costing him while he sat here in traffic and that the traffic wouldn't have been that heavy if Dinora had gotten out on time. Then Werner's driving got progressively more aggressive, which was bad as there was no place to go. He pulled into the outer lane and started driving fast and right on the other guy's bumper. Dinora got exceedingly agitated and started being out of her skin nervous with his driving. I was well used to his aggressiveness in driving and as he hadn't sent me through the windshield yet after 16 years, I figured he wasn't about to now either, so I sat back and only half paid attention to what was transpiring out the front windshield. Dinora, however, was looking out all four windows and everything she saw got her ever more frightened. Suddenly Werner was speeding up and the other traffic in the outer lane was slowing down. I hollered at Werner to brake. He braked, but the cars in front of us were coming ever closer to us very fast, too. Werner now got a concerned look on his face and then he put his entire weight behind the brakes and our car swerved almost straight sideways with a lot of squealing of rubber, but I do have to admit that Werner did literally stop his car on a dime. Oh, mon jour, I hear from the back seat. Werner, please, I only want to live long enough to raise my son, Dinora declared to him. Please drive a little more sensibly. I think that that fast sideways maneuver kind of scared Werner a little too, for he did slow down and drive a little more sensibly and we did get to Dan's office in one piece and our nerves were not that frazzled. Dan's accountant Joyce went over debits and credits with Dinora and helped her set up her accounts and books, and told her she could call her anytime she was stuck and didn't know what to do. Werner told me I should be there so I could learn something too, but I told Werner afterwards when he asked that I knew all that she had demonstrated. Werner said I could then help Dinora whenever she needed help with the books, but I reminded him of how I balanced the accounts and check book in less than one hour while he played chess with Rudi and that I didn't think that Rudi and Dinora appreciated that as they had been working on that darn thing for several days and couldn't get it to balance. Werner smiled and said he thought that that was real cute when I balanced the whole darn thing before he got through playing chess.

Then there was the time when Werner was driving around Detroit in the crummy sections of town running various errands for the nursing home. We ended up driving down Mt. Elliott street and I pointed out where my ancestors were buried. Then we drove back north on Mt. Elliott and made a left hand turn onto the I-94 freeway. Right away we were confronted with a policeman who pulled Werner over and told him he just made an illegal left hand turn. It seems there was a rusty old sign, very inconspicuous, saying no left hand turn. This cop had 6 cars pulled over in a line for the same infraction. 5 were waiting to be ticketed. Werner was fit to be tied as we were late for a car auction and he just had to find a car today as the one we were driving in was breaking down (more than usual, that is). The cop was way far up the road with the first car in line and very busy writing the ticket. Do I dare go?, Werner asked me? Should I go? Do you think I should go? Should I pull away? What do you think? O, Lord, I moaned. I knew that we were real late for the auction, and that it would take forever for the cop to get through with 6 cars, but on the other hand we would be even later if Werner got himself arrested. Before I could answer him, I thought I felt the car slowly in motion. Were we moving? Yup, the scenery outside the car was slowly passing by. We were stealthily heading right for the I-94 entrance ramp. Just as we were entering the ramp, the cop caught on to what we were doing and he ran his fat little legs full speed ahead to try and stop Werner. Werner kept driving very slowly down the ramp. The cop jumped 2 feet off the ground when he saw Werner getting away from him. Werner then proceeded at 55 miles per hour when he got onto the freeway. Werner, I think you'd better get off at the next exit if you want to outrun that cop, because he is so hot I'm sure he'll be coming after you. Werner looked in the rear view mirror, and replied: there is a good bend in the road here so he can't see me when he looks straight ahead. I think I'll just keep going straight. The next exit was I-75, the one Werner wanted. Werner drove his car over the I-75 overpass and as we were travelling over I-94, I suddenly see the cop flying down I-94 at full speed, with his flashers and siren on full force. It was such a humorous sight to see him heading west while we were directly overhead heading south. I didn't let my breath out until we were out of Detroit. I told Werner that he had better not drive I-94 for awhile for sure as shooting, that fat old cop would be gunning for him. But that very day Werner bought his 1981 Cadillac from a private party and felt very safe for he had a different car and a different license plate. I wouldn't be surprised if that old cop isn't still sitting on I-94, looking for that fat old German with brown glasses in a Cadillac! (He'll have to look upward now, for a ghost rider in the sky).

Another time it was a Saturday about 1 p.m. and we had a lot of errands to run in the Dearborn area. We left home about 8:30 am and Werner had diabetes at the time, so by now he really had a full bladder. He forgot to use the lavatory at the attorney's office and his bladder felt like it was going to bust. So he jumps into his trusty old 1981 Cadillac and starts barreling to his next stop, where he knows they have a toilet. We are doing 55 in a 35 zone, and he is taking all the twists and turns in the Hines Drive area on two wheels, burning rubber all the way.

@#\$\$%^ it, I gotta take a PISS! screams Werner. My kidneys are half shot now and all this urine back up is going to finish the @#\$\$%^ job! Just about then, we see blue and red flashing lights in the review mirror and hear a wailing siren. Oh, @#\$\$%^! shouts Werner. I'm not going to bust my kidneys for no f@#\$\$% cop! Werner dashes out of the car, runs in the direction of the cop, grabs his license out of his wallet, and sails it Frisbee style to the cop, screaming, "My kidneys are shot and the reason I was driving so fast is that I gotta take a piss!" He then barrels up the hill and runs into a thick copse of bushes and relieves himself. He came down to find the cop had written him a ticket. The @#\$\$% bastard actually wrote me a ticket when all I was doing was trying to make it to a toilet, bellows Werner.

Ohio is notorious for cops waiting to ambush out of state drivers, and this day was no exception. Werner was driving his architect, Gerry Stawowy, and me to Ohio to look at something he was thinking of building. In the south Toledo area there were 4 cops hiding around the bend and one of them stopped Werner. @#\$\$%^ Ohio cops, screams Werner. Werner got out of the car and walked back to the cop. Stawowy and I stayed in the car and looked out the rear window to see what was happening. Werner pulls out his wallet and opens it real wide, showing about 20 \$100 bills. The cop was a real no nonsense, hard nosed guy. Werner just stands there in the road, looking at his \$100 bills. Oh, Jesus, Stawowy exclaims, Werner is going to try to bribe the cop and that cop is going to throw his ass in jail! I sat there helpless in the car, watching the scenario unfold itself. Werner suddenly came out of his trance like state and fished through his plastic until he found the license. The ticket was written, Werner was out of his skull with anger, and we went merrily on our way, the anger of the moment soon dissipated.

Another time we were stopped by the cops in my van in Ohio, and Werner jumped out of the van, pulled the German Shepherd out of the van and sicced him on the cop. The cop jumped back in the patrol car, totally pissed off, screaming at Werner to get the dog back in the van and then get his ass in the patrol car. I thought that would be the end of Werner for awhile, but the cop merely wrote the ticket, verbally abused Werner, and we were off again. That is, after I grabbed Bear and pulled him back into the car with me.

Then there was the time we were stopped in Lancaster, Ohio by the cops due to another episode of Werner's heavy foot. You either pay up on the spot or they take you to the local courthouse. Werner had no credit cards, so I offered to pay with mine so we wouldn't have to take a trip to the local courthouse. The cop had a credit card apparatus in his car and he wrote the charge and had me sign it. Werner told me to sign it screwy. When we got to the motel that night he called the secretary at Wil Mar and told her to report my credit card stolen so he wouldn't have to pay the charge. The secretary didn't know which credit card I had used, so she cancelled both of them. The ticket showed up on my bill and I refused to say that the card was used by a thief. So I ended up paying for his

ticket on my bill, which he refused to pay, as well as a \$25 per card reinstatement fee.

On another occasion he was stopped in Ohio for speeding at 4 am and they wouldn't take my credit card. Werner had cash on him, but the cop wouldn't take cash, either. So we ended up driving to the local jail in Findlay at 4:30 am to give them the cash and take the receipt. These points never got on Werner's driving record from all the Ohio tickets as Ohio was known by the Michigan Secretary of State to be a tourist trap.

In 1982 we were visiting my sister in California when we went to see Newport Beach. Werner had his handicap sticker prominently displayed and parked his car to view the ocean from the car as he was too ill to walk the boardwalk. A surly cop came along and gave Werner's car a ticket for illegally parking. This was a rental car so Werner was not concerned about the traffic ticket. In fact, he was so PO'd over that cop's rotten attitude that right in front of the cop he tore the ticket up into little tiny pieces, threw it over his shoulder and let the pieces flutter over the cop's boots. Oh, Lord, here's where Werner goes to jail! I thought. But miraculously, the cop looked at the pieces, then walked away without comment.



Grand Canyon



Sandy Wilhelm at the Grand Canyon

Another time we were in a rental car going to the Grand Canyon when I got caught doing 20 over by helicopter radar. I incurred a \$69 ticket for the infraction. Werner grabbed the ticket and was going to shred it and drop it on the pavement in front of the cops in Arizona. I grabbed the ticket back, told him I thought not, that I didn't feel I had the same good luck as him and I didn't want to end up in jail, either now or later for an unpaid ticket. He was very disgusted with me.

Another time Werner was parked in my driveway at the blue house when he suddenly remembered that he was late for an urgent appointment. He had to stop back at the blue house first to pick up his brief case. He flew 50 mph backing out of my driveway, slammed his car into forward gear, then drove 50 mph northbound on the southbound lane of Cass Ave. Edna's sister and her husband were driving south in the southbound lane, when suddenly Edna's brother in law cries out who is that crazy fool who is barreling up Cass Ave in his lane? Oh, my goodness, that's Mr. Wilhelm, Edna's boss, Blanche declared. Blanche then cried out loud, "Mr. Wilhelm, get over on your own side of the road. He didn't, but when he got to Mc Clellan, he was airborne, flying around the corner on two wheels, heading for the main entrance of the nursing home.

Blanche's husband, observing Mr. Wilhelm's driving, said to Blanche, he ain't going to be Edna's boss for long if he keeps up with that kind of driving, for he's going to get himself killed!

Then there was the time Werner was late again (does that surprise you?) and backed up out of his driveway full throttle open. The horrible neighbors to the south started screaming at him about his driving, saying that he could have backed over their little kids on their tricycles. Werner, who had just about enough of these people's chronic complaining, decided to totally aggravate them for the whole day by saying tongue in cheek to them as he flew by – "there'll be more Pollocks where those came from".

Another time we were driving home from Florida, heading for Michigan. Our first leg of the journey is up US 27, then to the turnpike to I-75. When we got to the turnpike, Werner was driving and he drove right past the turnpike. You missed the turnpike, I hollered. Decided to take the surface road to Ocala, Werner announces. I started wailing, if we drive that slow molasses drive through Ocala we'll never get home! Why are we driving that slow boat ride through Ocala? I ask Werner? So we can avoid paying that \$1.80 toll road fee, he announces. I'll drive fast and we won't lose any time. One mile or so down the road and we see blue and red flashers behind us. He collected a \$110 ticket trying to save the \$1.80 toll road fee.

We were often losing parts to the Cadillac and the other cars. One time we were driving on the rough road on his 1600 acres when a low slung ditch rips off our muffler. I felt so bad as that was a fairly new muffler. But not Werner, he was happy as a lark that day. Said that the car ran better without a muffler, as he scrunched up his face in a mirthful way.

Then there was the time when his catalytic converter fell off and he had his maintenance man replace it with a straight pipe to save money. We sure had a devil of a time trying to get that car to pass its next emissions test. But we finally found a gas station that registered it in the passing range after our maintenance crew dabbled around with it.

Pheasants seemed to like his Cadillac. When we went on his 1600 acres up north, he would drive through the woods with his windows down and the pheasants would fly in the windows and we would have to stop and shoo them out.



Werner Wilhelm at Deer Lake in the UP

Another time the real estate man took us to Deer Lake and we encountered a porcupine near the car. Forbes shooed the porcupine away, saying that those animals liked the salt in the tires and would eat the tire right off the car. If you're going to park in the area over night he told us, put a bowl of salt next to your car so they will eat that instead of the tires.

One time Werner was standing in the middle of the street with a raw maintenance man and almost got run over by a car. Get out of the road before you get run over, I hollered at Werner as I grabbed him by the shirt and started pulling him out of the road. The skinny maintenance guy looked over Werner's huge girth, and said to himself, they might run on him, but never over him.

Werner loved his horn when people aggravated him. He would blow and blow and blow until the other guy was ready to wrap it around his dear little neck. One time Werner blew it for over 5 minutes and the other guy pretended he was blissfully unaware of what Werner was doing. Suddenly the horn got laryngitis and sounded pathetically funny. Werner crinkled up his facial expression, looked at me, said the horn had laryngitis and would have to see a doctor, then laughed like the devil.

Tires were always another bone of contention with Werner and me. I would tell him that the threads were showing through and we would have to get a new tire. Werner would look at the tire critically and then declare that it had a bit more life left in it. We drove on totally bald tires with the threads all exposed until the tire would not hold air anymore. When Werner had to put air in the tire daily, then he bought a "new" used tire, usually a recap where we would lose all the rubber as we drove down the freeway. But we got those tires for \$10 a piece and saved thousands of dollars in tires over a lifetime.

Gas was another fight. Werner always bought the cheapest brand and grade available. When Mali gave him the Lincoln he warned him that the Lincoln would not run on the cheap crap, that it needed the highest grade of premium. Guess what Werner put in the car. Yup, 87 grade for 99 cents a gallon. The towing was free, thanks to my AAA card. Time after time, we had to have the car "unfouled" at Crest Mercury due to the damage caused by the cheap gas. When I started filling the tank, I used premium, and knock on wood, we haven't had to have a repair since.

Oil change? What's that? Bet you never knew a Cadillac could go 250,000 without an oil change. But Werner's Cadillac was always living proof that it was possible.

Car wash? What a waste of money. In the 17 years I knew Werner his car had two car washes, one the day my dad was buried and the other I paid for when his Lincoln was filthy from sitting under an elm tree and I wanted it to look nice when he was flying in from Florida. How much money did Werner save by not washing his car at a car wash? At \$4 per week times 52 weeks in a year equals \$208 x 40 years = \$8,320, when interest is added and compounded on this money you have over \$24,000. Yup, Werner was so cheap he squeaked, and that is why all of us inherited so much from him after his death.

Werner worked very hard at General Motors all day and his apartment complexes after work and on weekends. And to make matters worse, Werner took all the overtime he could at General Motors so he would have extra money to salt away for future investments. But Werner said that he did not make his fortune by work, one will never get rich from one's paycheck, Werner declared. It was his real estate investments that gave Werner his wealth, he always told me. He seldom went wrong with his real estate, he told me.

1919 Wyoming had some very unique and interesting door knockers. When Mutti visited Werner he gave her one of them and when he visited her many years later in Muehldorf she returned it to him. He presently has these two residual door knockers sitting in his living room in Utica. One is an elephant and one is a tiger.

Speaking of tigers, I had a very interesting observation one day while I was with Werner in a private petting zoo in Ohio near Lancaster. Werner is seldom frightened by anything in life, but I discovered that he is very frightened of large cats, e.g. tigers, lions, pumas. etc. They had Siberian tigers in the cages there and Werner was visibly frightened by them. So much so that I laughingly suggested to Werner that maybe he was eaten by one in a previous life. Werner did not think that was a laughing matter! On the other hand, he just loved Bears of any kind or variety, and while at the petting zoo he walked up to and liberally petted a baby bear.



Astrid Wilhelm Diebl

When Werner went to Germany he would visit his sister Astrid at the University of Heidelberg in Heidelberg, Germany. One time she met him as he got off the plane with great enthusiasm. Werner had been drinking champagne in the plane on the way over to Germany because it was free and he had had enough of champagne for the entire trip. When he got off and met his sister she wanted him to take her to a fine restaurant, which he did. And what did she order to drink for the both of them? Champagne! This is what she thought would be an apropos imbibment for such a joyous occasion. But don't tell Vati! So champagne they had, much to Werner's chagrin, but he could not tell his overly enthusiastic baby sister, who was so happy and so wanting to celebrate with her big brother, that he had had it with champagne at that point. So he drank along with her. He got so ill on that darn bottle of champagne that for the rest of his life when he saw a champagne bottle he felt the old feeling of illness suddenly creeping back in. (But he did continue to drink champagne at appropriate moments in his life because Asti Spumonti is cheap, only about \$2.88 a bottle.)

Astrid also had a secret to tell Werner, she met and fell in love with an actor. Werner was not impressed. Forget about him, Werner said with great force, Vati will never approve of you going out with, let alone marrying, an actor. Uh, uh. No way.

And boy, was Werner correct. Vati went off like a Roman Candle hearing she was in love with an actor! Especially when he heard that the fellow was from behind the iron curtain! Talk about a double whammy. That was the end of that romance.



Astrid Wilhelm & Dr med Kurt Diebl

Put a woman seeking husband ad in one of my medical journals, Vati said to Astrid. This way all, or most all, of the applicants will be doctors of medicine. (This was a common and accepted practice at that time in Germany.) So that's what Astrid did. And one of her replies was from a Dr. med Kurt Diebl, a handsome, blue eyed, blond curly haired psychiatrist who lived and practiced in Alt Otting in Bavaria, about 90 miles east of Munich. She replied back, they met, and it was love at first sight for both of them. They didn't date for very long at all before they decided they wanted to get married.

Kurt had a problem in that he was engaged for a long time to a girl named Melanie, but somehow he could never quite make the final step as he didn't feel she was entirely right for him. So it became a perpetual engagement instead of a

marriage. Not so with Astrid. He just knew she was the one for him and he was overly ready at age 36 for marriage. When he broke off his engagement with Melanie in order to become engaged to Astrid, Melanie sued him for breach of promise. Kurt felt real bad about the whole situation, but he just felt that Astrid was the better partner for him, so he quietly reached a monetary settlement with Melanie and was now free to marry Astrid.

Dr. Diebl, being an honorable man from a good family, approached Dr. med Werner Wilhelm, Astrid's father, for her hand in marriage. (This was also the acceptable practice among better families in Germany at that time.) What a maelstrom poor innocent, unknowing Dr. Diebl walked into. The 3rd degree in no way explains what he went through in that meeting. Herr Doctor, how many years have you been practicing now? (12 years.) And how much money do you have saved up? (Almost nothing.) What do you mean, almost nothing! You want to marry my daughter and you don't have the foggiest notion of how to handle money? How many brothers and sisters do you have? (1 brother). Not too bad, but the better families quit having children after their first son is born. Were you born in Alt Otting? (No, I was not.) Then where were you born? (In Czechoslovakia). In Czechoslovakia! Then you are not German? (I lived in the German section of Czechoslovakia and am descended from German stock.) But still, you're not a real German, your a Czech! What's your religion? (Catholic). Catholic! What a disaster! My daughter wanting to marry a Catholic, and from Bavaria, no less. Marrying a Bavarian was like marrying a hillbilly, as far as Dr. Wilhelm was concerned. Which was worse, him being a Czech or a Bavarian was hard to discern, as far as Dr. Wilhelm was concerned; both were a disaster! And so the interview went, from bad to worse. It certainly did not leave a good taste in poor Dr. Diebl's mouth and certainly started off very badly the future father - son-in-law relationship. He left that initial meeting with Dr. Wilhelm with his head spinning.

The only thing that kept Dr. Diebl from walking that day and forgetting the whole affair is that he truly loved Astrid, who was very beautiful of face and figure, highly intelligent, and who had an outgoing and sunny disposition. So he and Astrid discussed this most distressing interview, Astrid apologized for what he had been put through, and they reiterated their firm resolve to marry one another. Dr. Wilhelm blew up when he realized that he was not going to be able to break up this affair as he had the other. He was extremely depressed that she was going to marry a Catholic Czech with no real savings after having been a practicing physician for over 10 years.

He said he wasn't going to attend the wedding, it was just too depressing to bear. But Mutti and Astrid put a lot of pressure to bear on the Doctor, and so he attended the wedding. But he was unbelievably depressed and grief stricken. He cried through the wedding, and believe me, it was not tears of happiness.

They decided that the wedding was to take place in Alt Otting, rather than Kassel, as they were being married in the Dr.'s religion, and being Astrid was not Catholic, they had to marry in his church, and therefore in his home town. Besides, the Cathedral in Alt Otting was breathtakingly beautiful, and all of her life, Astrid went for show, pomp and circumstance, and this Cathedral certainly fit the bill as just the right place to get married in and have your pictures taken there. A better spot could not be found, beauty wise. And this Church also has a world wide reputation for being a pilgrimage spot and many people come there to make a pilgrimage and pray for their needs.

So Astrid, Vati and Mutti came to Kurt Diebl's house the night before the wedding and stayed with him overnight. They all had supper together in his house and afterwards sat around and conversed. Mutti wandered off during this period and went to Dr. Diebl's medical office. She then fleeced his entire office, breaking into locked drawers, cupboards, etc. and read everything she got her hands on. She finally came across the paperwork on his breach of contract lawsuit with Melanie. Mutti came storming back into the living room with this paperwork, saying the marriage was off and that they were all packing up this night and going back home. I'm sure hope sprung eternal in Dr. Wilhelm's bosom at this declaration, but his hopes were soon dashed when Astrid said, "I think not. I am going to stay and marry Kurt tomorrow." So that was that. Astrid could not be induced to leave and forget this marriage business. Dr. Diebl was outraged and in a state of shock over this gross invasion of his privacy, but he kept his mouth shut out of respect and love for Astrid, but inside he was seething with rage.



Dr Wilhelm,?, Kurt Diebl, Charlotte Wilhelm,Astrid, Mr Diebl



Dr Wilhelm & Kurt Diebl



Astrid & Dr med Kurt Diebl

So on a lovely June day in 1964, Astrid and Dr. Kurt Diebl went to the local courthouse and were married there. And then the next day they went to the Cathedral at Alt Otting and were joined by the Catholic Church together as man and wife. (In Germany, you always have to first be married in a civil ceremony in the Rathaus before celebrating with a religious ceremony.) It was a most lovely bride and groom and a most lovely ceremony, marred only by Dr. Wilhelm's black mood and tears.



Astrid Diebl



Dr med Kurt Diebl



Astrid Diebl

Afterwards they went off to a very happy honeymoon and Dr. Wilhelm and Charlotte went back to Kassel. Astrid and Kurt were a very happy, charming and playful couple on that honeymoon and had a beautiful start together in life those few weeks.

When Astrid and Kurt came back from their honeymoon, Astrid had been given specific instructions from her father as to how to proceed to build up a financial empire for herself and her new husband. Astrid and her father felt that the relatives and staff of Dr. Diebl were robbing him blind and living very high off the fat of the hog, so Dr. Wilhelm said that this was to come to an immediate end. And it did. Astrid, in her first few weeks there, fired the hired help and took over the complete management of her new husband's practice.

And at home the friendship between her and Kurt's family came to an abrupt end, also. Kurt owned a duplex, which he had built, and he lived in one end and his family in the other. There was a partition separating the two basements, with a pass through door in the partition. There was a washer and a dryer on Kurt's side, belonging to him, which both sides used. Astrid soon put a padlock on the connecting door and told them to stay out of her side of the basement, thus ending the mother's use of the washer and dryer. The family relationship went steadily down hill after that incident. Astrid had very little respect or regard for his family and made that feeling very well known. Kurt was very close to and loved his mother very much, so this behavior on the part of his new wife cut him to the quick, but he said he kept the peace by going along with his wife, and he felt that this was out of great love for his wife that he did this. However, in 1992, when he was out walking the Boxer dog with me, he rethought his earlier actions and was totally distraught over the way he had treated his mother by going along with this, and was overwhelmed by the knowledge that now that his mother was dead and gone, there was no way in this life that he could make up to her the way he had treated her in the last years of her life.

Astrid soon created a total rift between Kurt and his family, and after Kurt moved out of Alt Otting home and went to Muehldorf to live, and his brother Eddie, an engineer, built his own home, the parents moved in with Eddie and Kurt and Astrid were no longer welcome in Eddie's home, not even to visit the parents. One time in 1980 Werner came to visit Kurt and Astrid and wanted to see Eddie and his new wife. Kurt had to drop Werner off at the curb and pick him up later as he was not welcome in the house. It was a very sad day when two friendly, decent brothers could no longer visit or talk to one another.

Astrid worked very hard day and night getting the practice up to snuff. Using the principles she had learned in running her father's practice, as well as her own excellent business sense, and her training as a physician's technical assistant, the practice soon prospered beyond her wildest dreams. Money rolled in once she handled the finances. It was very obvious to her that Kurt had only seen a small fraction of his earnings because the rest of it was being skimmed off by his relatives and office help. Well, now those days were over and she was settling in in earnest to build up their fortunes, and build it up she did. For by 1990 they were earning over 500,000 Marks a year in an economy where medicine was almost totally socialized and the payment poor.

One comment by Dinora regarding Astrid's handling of the practice. When Astrid married Kurt, Dinora said, he preferred rich, elegant neurotic patients. Astrid soon sent this kind packing for fear of competition, and the possibility that the doctor would become attracted to one of them and leave her. So instead Astrid filled the practice with lower class physically and mentally deficient patients who would pose no threat.

Dr. Diebl is a wonderfully kind, understanding man with a fantastic bedside manner. The best I have ever met, in fact. And his reputation soon spread far and wide throughout Germany and by 1970 his practice consisted of many patients who would tolerate a 3 and 4 hour train ride in order to be seen by this wonderful doctor. His waiting room is always packed jam full; they have to have patients sitting all up and down the halls in order to accommodate them all. The patients adore Dr. Diebl and await their visit with him with almost a reverence in their hearts.

Meanwhile, Astrid also has a good rapport with them from a business standpoint. She gets them in and out as swiftly as possible in order to accommodate the most amount of patients possible in one day. But while they are in there, she makes sure she runs every test known to man that she can get away with from a medical standpoint in order to maximize their profits. Astrid and Kurt are multi millionaires in their own right due solely to Astrid's astute business and money management.

In order to maximize their profits and to simplify their life, Astrid and Kurt live in the same building that they work in. This way they only need to climb the stairs to the 3rd floor to eat, sleep and take a brief respite from work. This has saved them hundreds of thousands of dollars throughout the past 30 years in saved house payments, utilities, insurances and travelling expenses.



Dr Kurt Diebl & Dr Werner Diebl



Dr Werner Diebl



Astrid Diebl & Dr Werner Diebl

Getting back to the time immediately after their wedding, Vati made both of them promise that there would be no child for at least another 5 years till they got on their feet financially as Astrid would be needed full time in the practice to straighten out the money situation, and would have no time to bear and raise a child. Astrid and Kurt did make this promise to Vati and intended to keep it, at least for awhile, anyway. However, as the German saying goes, "Man denkt, aber Gott linkt", man makes his plans however God does things in his own way and in his own time. This blissfully newly wedded couple made it through the first menstrual cycle but not the second. Astrid was frantic with fear. We promised Vati! What are we going to do? I can't tell him what happened! I will have to have an abortion! This time Kurt quietly asserted himself, a rare occurrence in this marriage. He said, "That is my son you are carrying and I will not have him killed". So Astrid carried this child to term, very frightened of the wrath of her father when he found out. But she was able to continually keep putting this moment of confrontation off as he was in Kassel and she was 6 hours away and they did not visit back and forth. But now Christmas was upon them and they were slated to go and visit her parents in Kassel and there was no hiding the pregnancy as she was 5 months along. She almost died of fright on the train ride to Kassel. How was she ever going to bear up under her father's wrath when he found out? But to her utter amazement, he was pleased when he found out and was eagerly awaiting the birth of his first grandchild. What a relief and a surprise that was to Astrid!

But it was very unwelcome news to Werner when he found out that his sister was about to have a baby as he was in the worst possible relationship with his father at that time and he was well aware that he was about to be completely replaced by that new born baby in his father's affections, especially if the baby turned out to be a boy. First to be replaced by his sister in the father's affections throughout the years, and now to be even further removed by his sister's son was a very hard blow for Werner to take, one he never got over. He was very resentful of that child all through the years and never established a relationship with that child due to the many negative undercurrents going on in that family that had nothing to do with the innocent new born child.



Martha Brehmer Wilhelm Klodmann

Werner's Mama looked after his apartment at 1919 Wyoming while he was away at work. And she had a lot of help from Carl Schneider, a drunken, but very loyal maintenance man.

Because Werner was so busy working two jobs and was seldom home for very long, and because he saw his Mama day in and day out, he did not at first notice that her health appeared to be rapidly going down hill. The first hint he had of that was when he looked at his mother's last birthday pictures. He noticed in these that she looked kind of haggard, but in his heart of hearts, he hoped it was merely fatigue from overwork. He started noticing that his mom was seldom eating meat any more, and when she did, it was in very small quantities. She would push the meat all around on her plate, and then tell him how much she enjoyed the meat and how much she ate. But Werner soon caught on that his mother was merely putting the meat on a different pile, not really eating it. Soon all her food consumption lessened. Werner chalked it up to her being older and having less need for food.

Then the dreaded day came when she started losing blood through her intestinal tract, and Werner soon persuaded/forced her to go to a doctor. First he took her to Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, then later he took her to Dr. Childs in Ann Arbor. Dr. Childs took many tests, then gave Werner the shock of his life. It was cancer, he told Werner. Probably colon cancer. Werner called his dad, who was a very knowledgeable doctor of medicine, and told him what the doctor in Ann Arbor said. "Why not stomach cancer", Dr. Wilhelm told his son. That's what her father died of, and also her father's mother (Wilhelmina Werner) and those things tend to run in families.

Werner never told his mother it was cancer. He felt that if he told her the truth, she couldn't handle it too well and would give up. So he merely told her she had to have a hemorrhage repaired. He then asked her who she wanted to have the surgery done by, Dr. Childs in Ann Arbor or by a chief of staff in Heidelberg, a well known medical school in Germany. Mama replied that she liked Dr. Childs very much as he reminded her so much of her father, but that she thought she would prefer to be operated on in Germany because she could speak the language there much better than she could English, and therefore she could make her needs known in German after the surgery much more proficiently than in English. And besides, Vati is near by and I can see him and ask him his advise. (Mama was very much in love with Vati all the days of her life, always

wanted to be near him, and settled for any scraps of affection and attention she could procure from him.) And she would also be close to her brother Otto Brehmer and her other relatives.



Martha Elisabeth Brehmer Wilhelm Klodmann in Munden, Germany

Werner was told that there was not much time to waste, that Mama had lost a lot of blood and would not live much longer as she was very anemic unless they stanch the flow through surgery. So Werner obtained tickets from BOAC for his mother and himself, and in a short period of time, was airborne, heading for the University of Heidelberg Medical School. Vati met Mama and Werner in Heidelberg with an ambulance, and Mama was rushed by ambulance to the University of Heidelberg Hospital, where she was admitted for an emergency gastrectomy. Vati didn't like Mama's appearance and felt that she had had the cancer for at least two years, and felt that it was probably quite advanced by now.

Martha was admitted to the hospital, a few more tests were run, then they did emergency surgery. Vati wanted the surgery performed in Germany rather than in Detroit, for he said that the surgeons in Germany performed much faster than the surgeons in Detroit. In America, Vati would say, they are much more thorough and observe and treat everything, but they are often so thorough, that the patient dies on the operating table as their body cannot take the stress of the prolonged surgery. In Germany, on the other hand, they go in quickly, are not as thorough, but the patient is subjected to less stress and therefore is more prone to survive the surgery and live to see another day.

They operated on Martha for hours, and when they came out of surgery they had very grim news for Werner. Mama had a gelatinous cancer of the pancreas, liver and stomach. They feel that it originated in the stomach and later spread. They were not able to get it all due to the invasiveness of this type of cancer. They had to remove almost all of her stomach to stop the bleeding. She wanted only soups and liquids afterwards as she could not tolerate normal types and amounts of food.

After the surgery was over, Werner went to Vati's to eat dinner. Werner then asked Vati how much longer Mama was going to live with this condition. Vati said without thought or hesitation, "3 months". Werner almost fell off his chair with shock. He had no idea that he was going to lose his beloved Mama that quick.

Mama went to a private nursing home in Munden, north of Heidelberg once she was released from the hospital. She liked it in that nursing home. She had a private room with a private sitting room attached. It was very pleasant surroundings, and had very lovely grounds. Mama soon recovered from the surgery itself, but for the rest of her life could not eat much in the way of solid food. She did like soups that were mostly broth. When family would bring her a very tasty solid food dish, she would eat a few spoonfuls, smile and say how wonderful the food tasted, then put the rest of the uneaten food on the window ledge and say she would finish it later. Later never came. The food would rot on the ledge.

Mama soon gained back some of her strength and would ask to be allowed to take a stroll on the lovely grounds surrounding the nursing home. An attendant would always accompany her in case she lost her strength and could not get back by herself. The more Martha walked, the further she could walk. This pleased her very much. See, I'm gradually getting my strength back, she would tell the attendant. She would be so grateful for her progress and would thank God for helping to make her well again.

Mama always had great faith in her Creator, would pray to him daily and thank him for all the blessings he had bestowed upon her. That made Werner furious. Werner was very angry with God that he made his mother suffer from stomach cancer and that he was taking her out of this world and away from him at what Werner felt was a very young age. His mother had been very vigorous until a year earlier and Werner felt that she would have lived into her 90s like Uncle Herbert, who died just 4 months before his 100th birthday, if it had not been for the cancer.

Werner had to go back home to Detroit to his job at General Motors, and his mother was unable to fly back to Detroit due to her rapidly developing frail condition. Werner very frequently wrote to his mother and told her how things were going here in Detroit. And she wrote back and told him how well she was progressing, which Werner knew, that due to the death sentence meted out from the cancer, that this was nothing more than self delusion.

One day Werner got a letter from the attendant that while his mother was out on her daily walk, she collapsed due to her rapidly weakening condition. He carried her back and put her to bed.

A little while later Werner received a telegram from the nursing home that his mother lay near death, and was in a coma. Werner had nothing but trouble trying to get to his mother before she died. His passport had expired and he had to fly to Chicago to get a new one reissued. Werner had called his dad in Germany and told his dad he wanted to put his mother in a solid copper casket as he intended at some later date to fly her body to America to be buried with him.

Copper would stand up much better over the years than any other material, Werner told his dad. Werner's dad exploded, telling Werner he was crazy, at a time like his, with so much to do in so little time, to go out looking for copper sheeting to build a home made casket. Nuts! screamed Dr. Wilhelm.

Werner then went to his boss at General Motors and told him that his mother was dying and he had to fly to Germany. The boss told him he could only have 3 days funeral leave. That's insane, spouted Werner, my mother is in Germany, and she is not even dead yet! Then wait until she dies before going, the boss helpfully suggested. Werner took his 3 days funeral leave, his new passport and headed to the airport, hoping to see his Mama alive one last time, even if she was in a coma by now. Now he ran headlong into another brick wall. He couldn't get a flight out of Detroit to Germany! He contacted the top officials at BOAC, explained his crisis, and they found him a seat on the plane. He was most grateful for this assistance and wrote them a most gracious thank you letter afterwards. Due to BOAC's most competent handling of this crisis, Werner was able to get to Germany in time to see his mother before she died, albeit she was in a very deep coma by that time.



Martha Brehmer Klodmann's Sarg

Mama died the next day, the 16th of March, 1966. Werner and his dad got into such a dust up over that rolled copper for the casket that Werner told off his father and his whole family for Werner was seething mad that his father had made no inquiries about the copper and now Werner had to do it all in a short period of time. In Detroit he would know just where to get it, but in Germany he was starting from scratch. Should I come to the funeral, Vati asked? No! was Werner's reply. Werner found the rolled copper, had the casket made up and then was all alone during his mother's entire wake as he told his father and Mutti and Astrid to stay away and he had not told the other relatives of his mother's demise. Vati sent Werner's cousin Elke to accompany him on the last walk as they took the body from the cemetery chapel on the last day, the 25th of March, 1966. Werner was very surprised to see Elke but he did not throw her out. She followed at a distance behind Werner on the walk to the crypt among the arches of princes in the city cemetery in Frankfurt. Werner had some nice pictures taken of that funeral so we can see today that ceremony in some detail. Werner had his mother's casket welded shut with all the proper accoutrements so that it would be eligible to be shipped to America at a later time. He even had the American Consulate check the casket out and certify in writing as to its fitness to be removed to America at a later date. (Werner's decision to make his mother's casket out of pure rolled copper was a sound one, for when it was removed from

the crypt under the arches in the city cemetery in Frankfort the casket was still fully intact and showed no signs of aging or breaking down. It arrived in Detroit on the 13th of February, 1993 in the same shape as the day she was buried, some 27 years later.)

Later we opened Martha Klodman's casket and put her in a new copper casket when we placed her in the crypt below her son Werner in the Holy Sepulchre mausoleum. Her body was in the exact same condition as the day they buried her. There was absolutely no decay of any sort!



Margarete & Willy Eberlein

Werner was devastated by the loss of his mother. He loved her very much; for the last 10 years she had been his whole life. After her death Werner was in no shape to hop the plane and return to work at GM. Instead, he took the train to Munich, intending to transfer to Muehldorf to visit his sister. Somehow Uncle Willy Eberlein, Werner's 24 million dollar cousin, was alerted that Werner was coming to Munich by train, and he met Werner, took him off that train and took him to his house in Oberschleissheim for awhile. Werner then went on to his sister Astrid's house in Muehldorf. Astrid told him it was time to get a wife; that that would alleviate his loneliness. So Astrid put an ad in a German newspaper for Werner, listing his attributes and advertising that he was looking for a suitable wife.



Dinora Boulgarian Wilhelm

Beatrice Dinora Boulgarian, a young 24 year old woman from Alexandria, Egypt, answered his ad. Dinora was visiting in Padua, Italy at the time, so Werner took a train first to Switzerland, then on to Italy in order to meet Dinora. Werner spent the majority of his 6 weeks with Dinora in Italy, getting to know her.

He then traveled back to Detroit and 6 weeks later, walked into General Motors, reporting back to work after his "3 day funeral leave". No one said a word to him as he once again started to fall into his daily work routine. But Werner often said that it was at this point in his life that he firmly decided to quit working for others and go to work entirely for himself, for never again was another person going to

try to wield such control over him that they would dare to try to keep him from his dying mother, and from having some time to grieve for her afterwards.

Werner soured on the General Motors job after this incident. His heart was no longer in it. Werner often said that 7 years was the turning point in a job, that after 7 years was up you either stayed on as a long term employee or you moved on to another job. Both in Ford and General Motors, 7 years was the turning point in Werner's career and he never stayed beyond 7 years in any job to this point in his life. In the summer of 1966 the management above Werner completely turned over and Werner did not get along with either of the new men above him. It was a very tumultuous summer and in October, 1966 this explosive situation came to a head and Werner decided that it would be better to devote himself full time to his investments, so he did not look for another position. He then took to managing his apartment buildings and acquiring others as well. Looking for decent investments became his full time occupation. He would find interesting investments in the paper and would then drive around almost every day checking these investments out. In this period of his life he purchased two types of investments: apartment buildings in Detroit and the older neighborhood of Dearborn, and vacant land from the highway department. People used to criticize him for buying apartments in Detroit, citing location as the most important factor in purchasing an investment. Werner would scoff at this "free" advise. Sure, you could buy in Birmingham, if you had the capitol, said Werner, but if you don't have scads of money from your papa, then you buy what you can afford. And for Werner at that point in his life, Detroit was what was affordable. The highway department vacant land also turned out to be a good buy for Werner. He bought cheap, but for all cash. This land has appreciated quite a bit over the past 30 some years.

Werner did entertain the idea of taking two different jobs after he left General Motors, but neither position panned out for him. The first job he entertained taking was becoming a stock broker for a firm based in downtown Detroit. He loved stocks and he liked the dark wood paneled offices downtown and thought he would be happy in this kind of position. He went for his interview, feeling quite sure of himself and confident that he would make a good impression. They asked him why he chose to be a stock broker and he answered that he thought it would be an interesting and pleasant way to make a living. They asked him how he would handle his customers. They asked him what was the most important part of being a stock broker. Werner gave them several answers, all of which seemed to increase the aggravation apparent in the facade of the interviewer. Finally the interviewer blew up at Werner, stood up, pounded his fist on the desk and hollered "YOU MUST SELL!!" Werner left that interview with second thoughts about becoming a stockbroker, especially since they refused to put him in a wood paneled office in Detroit, but rather would have placed him in an office in the new building in Northland, at that time a new shopping and office complex in the northern suburbs. That didn't please him at all.

Another job that Werner courted with enthusiasm for a number of years was becoming the chief of the tank plant if it got a big government contract it was fishing for in the 1960's and 70's. The big contract was never landed so Werner never got the job he dreamed about.

One day in the late 1970's Werner was driving along the waterfront north of Algonac looking at properties when he figuratively ran into an old work buddy of his from General Motors, De Vito. He had a friendly talk with him and noted to me afterwards that De Vito was a long time GM employee and had to keep his job at all costs as he had 7 children, being a good, devout Catholic.

Werner worked with a very intelligent, clean cut Japanese fellow, who had first studied in America and now landed himself a good job. Werner talked to his father at length about this Japanese fellow. Fear not, that fellow will return to Japan in a few years when he has saved up a considerable amount of money, Dr. Wilhelm said. Japanese have a strong attachment to their home and family, so if he is over here all alone, he will return to the family. And later, that is precisely what he did. Dr. Wilhelm also stated that in his estimation one day the yellow race will indeed rule the world as they are intelligent, hard working and how can the west compete with a race of people who can survive year after year on one scoop of rice a day?

Werner met a new friend, Lou Lautermilch through one of the singles clubs he had joined. Lou was tall and distinguished looking, with blue eyes and blond hair. All the girls were dying to meet the handsome fellow. Lou never had any trouble getting a first dance with any girl. It's just that he never could get a second or third dance with anyone. Lou was BORING with a capital "B". Werner used to double date with him on occasion and Lou would spend the whole date describing to the girl some engineering problem at work. Like she really wanted to hear that! Even Werner was bored out of his skull hearing it. Werner always said that if Lou had an ounce of competence in his bones, he wouldn't have these horrendous, unsolvable engineering problems. One day Lou came out to visit Werner in Wil Mar when Werner had first took over the place and he had just completed a 1 in 12 slope entrance ramp to the new front entrance for handicap purposes. Lou marveled at that fine piece of engineering and asked Werner how long it took him to complete the plans for the ramp. Werner stared at Lou to see if he was pulling his leg. Lou then volunteered that he had to make just such a ramp and that he had been working on the design for over a month now. You are working on a simple ramp design for over a month? Werner bellowed. I just had the bags of concrete delivered and a handrail, then I took my measuring tape, figured out that I had a 6 inch drop, so I needed a 6 foot long ramp, and then I measured 6 feet out, framed up the area to be poured, and started pouring, embedding the hand rail in the cement as we went along. I then put up a barrier to keep people out for 24 hours, then I had a ramp that has lasted for the next 20 years or better. Amazing! said Lou. Amazing that you ever kept a job for so long! said Werner. (Lou was in trouble with his job when Werner first

met him, and Werner minced no words with Lou, he told him, that he was highly incompetent for a professional engineer and that he should get a job with the tank plant as that is the only employer who would put up with him year in and year out as the government is famous for keeping dead wood on. Lou took Werner's advise and joined the tank plant, who did indeed keep on a guy who took a whole month to design a 1 in 12 slope ramp.)

Lou had a hilarious reputation for being even cheaper than Werner, if that was possible. Lou was a real big guy with a good appetite, but his pocket book was a bigger concern than his belly. So when he would go to the Beef Carver, he would order child's portions on everything. The employees there used to snigger when they saw him coming.

Lou was frightened out of his mind that he might get stuck with the bill when ever he went out to eat with some one. He had an absolute phobia about having to pay for a food bill. So Lou developed a real cute strategy when in a restaurant. He ran as fast as he could to get a seat and he made sure his seat faced the direction that the waiter or waitress would come from. Then when he would see the wait person coming with the bill, he would suddenly have to skedaddle off to the bathroom and then linger there until the bill was paid. One day Werner and I met Lou at a genealogy seminar and Werner invited Lou to dinner afterwards. Lou chose the IHOP, the cheapest place on Woodward Ave., just in case on the odd chance that he might be stuck with the bill. So Werner and I got in Werner's car and Lou followed us in his car. Werner was a bit perturbed, telling me that he had gone to dinner 12 times with Lou and not once had Lou picked up the tab or even gone dutch. Werner then explained Lou's trick with the seating and Werner told me very sternly that I was to defeat his seating trick today buy running right to a booth, picking the side that faced the waitress, then sitting in the booth right on the outside edge so that Lou could not sit on my side with me. I did as I was told and Lou did everything in his power to pick another booth as I had destroyed his seating plan in that booth I was in, but no, Werner said, that was exactly the booth he wanted. Lou was totally crestfallen. I'm sure the pancakes stuck in his throat, especially as he watched how well Werner and I ordered. Lou kept trying to steer us to the cheap items, with no success. Werner kept up a lively conversation all through the meal, and afterwards when Werner saw the waitress coming, he grabbed me by the blouse and pulled me out of the booth, saying to Lou, ah, hear comes the waitress with the bill, but we got to go to the bathroom, so you can get the bill while we 're gone. Lou went into such a state of shock that he looked like he might need the EMS. When we came back from the bathrooms, Lou was holding the bill in BOTH hands! Both hands palms up, the bill floated on top. He walked so slowly to the register it reminded me of a funeral dirge. His head and shoulders hung like a whipped puppy. All the joy had gone out of his soul, maybe never to return. Werner got so worked up looking at that poor, pathetic lost soul that he couldn't stand it any longer, and said, Oh @#\$%^&, give me the #\$%^&@ thing and I'll pay it. I can't stand to watch all the pain you're going through! Werner whipped \$13.00 out of his wallet to pay for 3

dinners and the tip, and was gratified to see that Lou had made a swift and complete recovery, now standing his full 6' 2" tall, shoulders and head back. #@\$%^&, what a cheap SOB, Werner said to me. I got stuck 13 times now with his food bill. That's the last time I dine out with him. And it was.

Lou always had an interesting living arrangement, too. At a time when most apartment rents were about \$265.00 a month, Lou would rent a carriage house in Grosse Pointe for \$110.00 a month. Lou was a snob and had to have a Grosse Pointe address, but he wasn't about to pay for it. Rich people who were often out of town liked renting to that stodgy old gentleman who was born about 65 years old, because he was almost always home and kept an eye on the place for them and made about as much noise as a cemetery after dark. And he just LOVED to spy on their teenage kids for them and then call them in Florida, the Cayman Islands, etc, (collect naturally) and tell them what their little darlings were up to while the parents were away.

The apartments gave Werner the seed money to start buying nursing homes in 1972, but they were a very rough chapter in Werner's life story. He was renting to very low class ADC type tenants, who would break things faster than you could fix them. And the hillbilly maintenance men were motivated to work hard only as long as the boss was around, but let him go to work and the maintenance department was at ease until Werner showed up on the property again. Once Werner terminated his job at General Motors, he ran the extensive maintenance department at the Dix - Ford and at the Lincoln Apartments by means of walkie talkies. This way Werner had some idea where his maintenance men were at any given moment. That still didn't guarantee that the job would be done right, and often Werner had to get the same job repaired 2 and 3 times before it was right.

Werner corresponded with Dinora for the better part of a year, then decided to try to get her to America to further their relationship and see if it would lead to marriage or not. Werner had a real hard time trying to get Dinora over here. A number of times Dinora's application was turned down because they had a very small quota from Egypt and also they were afraid of diseases that people from this country might bring into the United States. Dinora got the necessary health certificates and then moved to Italy with her family, where it would be easier to emigrate from. Werner filled out the necessary sponsorship papers and after much haggling with the government, permission for her to enter this country was granted.

Werner had in mind for Dinora to take over where his mother left off with the work and management of 1919 Wyoming. Dinora had in mind to marry, have two children, and settle down to be a housewife. Somehow, each did not understand the other's expectations and a rift soon developed afterwards.



Werner & Dinora Wilhelm



Edith Dickenson, Beatrice Boulgarian, Werner Wilhelm & Ralph

Werner was always allergic to marriage, and it was no exception with Dinora. Werner went to Mr. Hamborski, his HUD attorney, and a few days before his marriage a prenuptial agreement was drawn up between Werner and Dinora. Then on the 2 of November, 1968 Werner Wilhelm, aged 40, married Beatrice Dinora Boulgarian in the Grosse Pointe Memorial Church in Grosse Pointe. Dinora stated later in a legal document that they were married Catholic. They then went to the Ponchartrain Hotel for their reception. Edith Dickenson was their matron of honor and Ralph was their best man. They had a lovely set of wedding pictures taken that day.

The marriage was soon in trouble, mainly due to the differences in expectations. Dinora wanted to stay home, have two children and be an at home mother raising her children and caring for her family. Werner wanted someone to take over with the cleaning and managing of the apartments like his mother had done in the past. Dinora said that there was a ton of confusion and noise attendant with the running of the rooming house, and it drove her half crazy. She said there never seemed to be a moments peace, or privacy. Her apartment was like grand central station day and night with tenants and help dropping in all hours of the day and night.

Werner thrived in such confusion, Dinora did not. They were just two different kind of persons. By May it was all over. Dinora moved into the YWCA and got a job to support herself. Werner tried very hard to get her back, but to no avail. He would meet her outside of work in downtown Detroit on her lunch hour and would woo her with flowers in his hand. Dinora said her fellow workers seemed to enjoy the show, but she did not and was highly embarrassed by it.

Dinora filed for divorce just before Christmas of 1969 and Werner was served with his papers on the 8th of January, 1970. He did not want the divorce. He wrote on the cover of his wedding album that there would only be one Mopi and one Mopsi. On the other cover he wrote what God has joined together let no man put asunder. He was obviously very hurt by this divorce. It is obvious that both of them did not adjust very well to the divorce as they were often visiting each other for years afterwards. Dinora said Werner pursued her for years and would make quite a scene if he found she was going out with another man.

Dinora said their relationship was rocky from the beginning due to Werner's game playing. Dinora came to America from Italy, which was quite a culture shock, and doubly so since she was here all alone without family or friends. When Werner first took her out he took her over to his old girlfriend Anne's house for dinner. Dinora was quite confused as Werner introduced her as a relative. When Werner left the room, and then later in the week, Anne and her mother pumped Dinora for information as to how rich Werner really was. Dinora did not know the answer to this question, and was quite confused as she did not know at this time that Anne was Werner's girlfriend too. She was so upset and humiliated later when she pieced this incident together in her mind.

Werner often wrote for help from Dinora's family that year of their marriage every time things were rocky. The family was friendly to Werner but did not interfere in the marriage.

Werner wanted Dinora's mother, father and brother to come over here to live, and they contemplated making such a move, but decided against it. Werner was very disappointed. Werner had ideas of her family members working for him, but that was not a good idea, although Werner could not agree with that.

Just before he died, Werner told Dinora that he should have bought that little house on Crooks Rd for her after the divorce, and in retrospect, he's sorry he didn't do it at the time. But just before he died Werner was also upset that they divorced and felt that they should have remained together through thick and thin regardless of the hardships or problems. Dinora said that was not possible; that all the circus Werner creates would have driven her right over the brink. She said she needed a normal, calm life with a normal husband and children.

Dinora said she had a friend Luc in Canada who was an engineer and who she liked very much, and who was in love with her. She had broken off with Werner before the marriage, had met and fell in love with Luc and was planning to marry him and start a family. She said Werner came over to Canada, told Dinora to get in his car and they would ride around Windsor and discuss their differences and then he would drop her off back home. Luc told her not to go with Werner, that something might happen. Luc had Dinora's passport so he felt secure that Werner could not take her across the border. Well, he underestimated Werner. Werner persuaded Dinora to get in the car with him, and as soon as she was in the car, he went roaring off to the US- Canadian border. He drove up to the custom's booth and when it was his turn to talk to the border crossing guard, he just stepped on the gas and roared on through. Dinora figures he must have paid the guy off because no one pursued them and they had a leisurely ride over to the east side of Detroit. Werner then checked them into the Whittier hotel and talked over their differences at leisure. Dinora said she still preferred Luc over Werner, but Werner was so persuasive and forceful.

Dinora tells a cute, but outrageous story concerning Werner and her matron of honor, Edith Dickenson. Edith was in love with Werner and one day she tried proposing marriage to Werner as he was not proposing to her. "Why would I want to marry an old woman like you?", Werner replied back to her. Needless to say, Edith must have been devastated.

Edith also gave Dinora some tips on how to catch a good man. She told her when driving around in a car in the summer time, never put your windows down or the fellows will know that you are low class because you do not have air conditioning in your car.

It was during these years that Werner went on some very fine cruises and some fun vacations to Miami Beach, Florida. He was a young, handsome, up and coming young engineer in those days and he did attract the girls. In fact, during one of his Florida vacations, he had two girls along with him!



Werner Wilhelm

We have some very nice pictures of Werner in his dapper red and white captain's top and his white bathing trunks. I just gave away his red and white top today, now that I finally got up enough nerve to tackle the disposing of his clothing 7 months after his death, and I was amazed at how small that top is. I was also amazed to find that his shirts were 15 1/2 from the 1950's and his pants were normal sized also. He had a poor self image all his life of being fat, but in fact, when he stepped off the boat in Toronto in May, 1951 he was quite a thin fellow. And with very fine clothing, I might add. He wore some of the best brand names of that day and the clothing was in almost as good a shape today as when he wore it some 40 years ago.

Speaking of old clothing, it was very interesting to me to note that in reference to his real old clothing, he had both German and American clothing in his closet, and whereas the American good brand names were in very good shape, all of the German clothing was discolored and falling apart. Regardless of the shape of his clothing, he was very upset at it being thrown away; he appeared to Edna and me in his Lincoln Town Car this afternoon and he threw things in the house while Harrigan and I were sitting in the back yard with Ann and Barney. Smash! Bang! we heard in the house.

A cute story about his first vacation to Miami Beach as a dapper young man in his forties. Werner checked out all the finer hotels and found them much too rich

for his pocketbook. But he sure did like their restaurants and their beaches! So he did a compromise and got himself the best of both worlds. He liked the Deauville and the Caroline but they cost an arm and a leg. So he stayed at an affordable small mom and pop place across the street from the Deauville, then dressed up real dapper with his bathing suit under his clothes, walked across the street and had breakfast at the fancy hotel's restaurant. After breakfast he walked out to the Deauville's beach like he owned the place, and then rented their equipment for the day. He had lunch and supper at the Deauville, then retired back to his cheap hotel.

Werner was so attached to the Deauville that many years later toward the end of his life he returned there and found to his surprise that they were refurbishing the rooms and selling them off as condominiums for only \$10,000 a unit. He was fascinated by the concept and was tempted to bite, but somehow did not buy one. He was getting weak from kidney failure then and he lost his balance and fell in their very fine lobby. I helped him back up on his feet. He said he would have liked to buy a condo in Florida for our use, but that he was so tied up with Wil Mar in Michigan and Sun N Lake Towers in Florida that we would seldom have a chance to go there. He most likely would have purchased one in Pelican Bay by Naples rather than in Miami Beach as the Atlantic coast was getting too seedy with lower class people and a high crime rate.

Werner always scrimped and saved wherever he could to save a buck and thus further his financial goals in life, but there was one thing he never skimmed on, and that was fine food. Werner loved to go to the finest of restaurants and have a nice dinner, but always from towards the bottom of the menu. His favorite was an end cut on the prime rib.

Werner drove a Ford in Canada and then a new Mercury while working for General Motors, but his real love was Cadillacs. When he left Ford Motor Company and got a job at the General Motors Tech Center, he was told by one of his bosses that that Mercury sitting on GM's lot was an embarrassment to the company. So Werner took advantage of the company's employee's new car plan and bought himself a baby blue Cadillac. For the rest of his life his idea of the perfect car for himself was a baby blue Cadillac. Once, when he was married to Dinora, he even had a baby blue Cadillac with a white convertible top. A very sad picture taken of that car was on Michigan Ave one day someone rammed into that beautiful car and Werner took a picture on the scene of the accident, showing substantial damage to that car.

From the moment he bought his first Cadillac while working at GM, he was faithful to GM and Cadillacs for the rest of his life. At present his last baby blue Cadillac is sitting in Sebring, albeit in very poor shape due to severe abuse on the part of the hired help, and in Michigan in my driveway sits a Lincoln Continental, only because he got it for free from Mali when Mali was behind in his nursing home payments. 4 people who knew and loved Werner have all told me

independently that they had a strong psychic impression that Werner wants me to buy him a new baby blue Cadillac so he can ride around in it with me.

At the end of his life, Werner's dress and personal hygiene left something to be desired. Earlier, I used to try to talk him into, force him into, shame him into, cleaning up and dressing nicer. I bought him a closet full of nicer clothes than he was wearing. Mali bought him a fine pair of \$150 shoes from Florsheim, a half dozen \$100 shirts from Harry's or Kosin's Big & Tall, and a \$350.00 charcoal gray suit. But to no avail. He wore little of what I bought him, and nothing of what Mali bought him. Bath time was big time fight time, and I was always the loser in that battle.

In talking to Dinora I found out that in his 40's and before he was a very fine dresser and he took a bath on a regular basis. He also wore fine suits, white shirts, ties and expensive shoes. It was only in the last 15 years or so of his life that his personal hygiene and clothing habits deteriorated. He always said to me to not blame his mother or Mutti for his appearance or hygiene as they had taught him better and that his mother would just die if she saw him now. Werner was sick, very tired due to his heart and kidney failure and dressing up was just too much effort for him.

Astrid used to greatly contribute to Werner's hygiene until the last 10 years. She used to buy him real nice, expensive German clothing, including shirts, suits, jackets and dress pants with expandable side clips so that they would always fit comfortable even if he gained or lost weight. When he came to visit her in Muehldorf she used to bathe him and wash his hair so he would look and smell nice. She used to give him \$5 and \$10 bars of soap, and also gave him fine shaving materials costing an arm and a leg. And she would die of embarrassment and would have a fit when Werner started off for town in an old pair of shorts and broken down sandals. "Oh Gott, oh Gott!!", she would say, all the people in town know you are my brother! she would wail, you've got to dress better than that! Grown men just do not wear knee pants in Germany! Werner would growl and carry on and then walk down stairs and out the door in his comfortable clothes, while his sister Astrid would bite her lip, with tears in her eyes over her brother's attire and how it would degrade her reputation in the community.

When Werner really wanted to send Astrid right through the roof, he would not only refuse to change out of his shorts and sandals but he would come out of the bathroom with a pee spot on the front of his outer shorts for all the world to see. Astrid would go into orbit with a spastic seizure! She would jump around and squawk like a chicken with its head freshly cut off. Then she would physically detain Werner while running into the bathroom real quick before he escaped down the stairs and into her practice waiting room where everyone sitting there would see his wet pants. (Germans are very observant about a person's attire, far more than Americans.) Astrid would come shooting out of the bathroom, her

face all red and her coat tails a-flying, with a hair dryer in her hand. She would then grab Werner by the arm, pull him over near a plug, plug in the hair dryer and run the thing full heat and full force up and down the wet spot till it dried and disappeared. She would then bite her lip looking at the spot making sure that the urine stain did not show. She would then shake her head in total disapproval of him while he would tease her, ruffle her hair and be on his way down and out, heading to town.

The very first time Werner and I went to Muehldorf it was in 1980. Werner gave them no advance notice we were coming as he said it would send Astrid into spasms of work. He said she would have hired a whole crew of workmen and would have redone the entire interior of her living quarters. To save her hours of agonizing over the arrival of Werner's newest fiancée, he arrived "unperson". We took the plane to Frankfurt, Germany and arrived at about 7 p.m. We were due to arrive in the morning but for some unspoken reason there was a 5 hour delay before the plane took off down the runway in Detroit. The train station sold all manner of food, and Werner and I settled on a large wiener schnitzel for only about \$5.00 a piece. It was delicious. The train station was also a wondrous sight, so large, spacious with so many trains coming in and out. And the people coming and going was also an interesting sight. Werner was going to hop right on the next train out to Muhldorf, ride all night and arrive on her doorstep in the am. I put my foot down over that one. I was already dead tired from having been up for over 24 hours with no sleep and I refused to meet his family all bedraggled from two nights of no sleep and my clothes and hair all messed up and dirty from travelling. This was one of the very few times in our life together that I absolutely put my foot down.

So Werner went to a hotel in Frankfurt to get a room for the night. The hotel only had one room and that was reserved. Werner told them it was his reservation, and believe it or not, this flew. They gave us the reserved room. I dropped into that bed and slept like the dead, awaking quite refreshed the next day and ready to take on his family. After a fresh shower in a community shower down the hall, and some new unwrinkled clothes, I felt much better. We rode the train all day, arriving in Muhldorf about 6 p.m. The train ride was delightful. The countryside was really picturesque and we rode the dining car for most of the way, ordering one delicious dish after another. In Munich we bought a bouquet of flowers for Mutti and then caught the side train to Muehldorf. When we arrived in Muehldorf we collected our luggage and hailed a taxi in the front of the station. We then were driven the short mile down the steep hill to Dr. Diebl's practice in Katherinen Platz next to St. Catherine's church just outside of the walled town. Before we even got out of the taxi, Dr. Diebl looked to see who was coming up his drive and when he saw Werner he went running into the practice and through the house just as fast as his legs would carry him, screaming "Besucher von Amerika!" (visitors from America!). Astrid went wild. Mutti went wild. Astrid came running down in her bathrobe, explaining frantically that I could not go upstairs yet as Mutti was in her night gown and did not want to receive visitors in

this way. Werner was amused by the circus. We stayed downstairs in the great room until Mutti was presentable, then went up to the upper living room. We ate a typical German dinner together, Astrid apologizing that it was not elaborate enough because she did not know she was getting visitors. Astrid really tried to go all out for me. I thought it was all rather humorous because I am a most unpretentious sort of person, and certainly one that no one would have to go out of the way for, as my tastes are very simple and my needs are few.

The next day Astrid showed me all the fine things in her wardrobe and asked my complicity that the material and cut of her clothing were very fine indeed. The clothing was of the best quality as to cut and quality of material, but she did not know she was not talking to a clothes horse, and after having had Werner for a tutor for the past 5 years, my tastes in clothing was becoming ever simpler and cheaper.

Mutti talked an arm and a leg off me, but I understood very little of what she said as all my German is self taught and at that point I had studied very little German. In fact, I was still learning how to eat with my left hand, something that Werner was very strict in insisting on as he said Germans just stare at Americans who keep switching their fork from their left hand to their right. Germans consider this to be barbaric.

My first two visits to Germany in Astrid's house I was placed in the bedroom on the second floor in the practice area and therefore had to be out of bed, bathed and dressed before 7 am. Not my idea of waking time on vacation. And the bathroom on the second floor had only cold water, no hot water tap on the sink. Brr!

Werner soon clued me in to bring my clothing upstairs and bathe in the 3rd floor bathroom which had hot water and much more modern and complete bathing facilities. Astrid made fun of the fact that I wanted to shower every morning. (I later learned that most German's hygienic standards are different than ours.) I then told Werner that if I didn't bathe every day and started to smell like some of the German ladies I passed in town, they would talk about that too. Germans, I found, discuss people to no end, to the point of dissecting them. This was something I was never very comfortable with. When they talked someone right into the ground, I told Werner, as soon as we were out of earshot, they did the same thing about us.



Werner Wilhelm

In later visits Werner and I asked to be placed both together in Wernerli's bedroom in separate beds. Werner got Wernerli's bed in the comfortable corner of the room, and the first time around they brought me their dog's bed. (Don't laugh, it was very comfortable.) While it lasted, that is. Three days later Astrid came and took back the top of the bed as she said that the dog could not adjust to not having at least part of his bed back. He got the comfortable mattress. I got the equivalent of the box spring, although it was softer than ours here in America. But now the bed was just off the floor and it sure was miserable getting up from that low position. I soon found it was best to roll out of bed and onto your hands and knees and then raise up from that position. In later visits they gave us a cot, which we were just too heavy for and so we hit the springs and I was just so miserable all night. However several times, including our last visit in March, 1992 Werner decided he was more comfortable in the cot and so we traded, to my delight.



Werner Wilhelm II

The last time we were there was my first experience with German households in the winter, and believe me, it was no fun. Only the bedroom and the living/dining room are heated, and then only to about 60 degrees, and only in the daytime. Come evening, the heat was turned off at 9 p.m. and we froze until 6 am when the heat came back on. The only reason the heat came back on was the fact that the patients started arriving at 5:45 am and wanted to be comfortable, especially when they had to take their clothes off for examination. The halls were all marble floors so when you walked the unheated halls to the bathroom in the middle of the night, you froze. And when you took a shower in the morning, the bathroom had no heat and they left the bathroom window open for fresh air. BRR!!! We Americans are really spoiled by their standards. Werner was disgusted by the lack of heat and told Astrid point blank to turn up the heat. She said that was impossible as she had automatic climate control and it changed automatically. Werner told her bullshit, he wasn't stupid about those things, all you had to do was move the beginning and ending pointer to a different degree and the heat would automatically be readjusted to the new values. Astrid ignored him. No one ignores Werner for long. He was real sick, and he was really out of sorts over his feeling that she had cheated him out of their father's inheritance, and he really let her know it for the first time since the father died. (It was also the first time since Mutti died, so she was no longer around to control him.) He let Astrid have it with both barrels. Everything she did was not right. He hollered, bellowed,. grumbled, complained, made faces and gave her dirty

looks. She felt real bad as he had never before consistently treated her this way. He always used to turn on his charm and tease her and show her a great deal of affection as his baby sister. He used to call her Hasse (which means little rabbit) and she would reply that she was no longer a cute little rabbit, but rather an old tough hare. He would then rebut this, saying she was still young and cute and shapely. But on the last visit no compliments, love or teasing was forthcoming. Just anger and temper tantrums and growling. And at 9 p.m. he would abruptly go off to bed, putting on a quilt lined blue plaid shirt against the cold and then he would put a coon skin cap on his head for warmth. Astrid has absolutely no sense of humor and this behavior would drive her up the wall, especially every night when Kurt, Werner and I would sing our favorite song about the cold conditions in her home: "If my mother only knew, how lost and forlorn I've become, my pants and shirt are torn & missing buttons and zippers, and through my jacket whistles the wind." Then Werner would add a new line "my ears are frozen through" She would take that song personally and would get very upset, frown and wave her hand in disgust. I would howl with laughter and she would tell me that that song was against me too and I didn't care at all as Werner liked wearing his old comfortable torn clothes and I was not about to mend and darn them. When the clothes looked bad, I would buy new. Astrid darned and mended. She was very domesticated, I am not. If he wanted someone to run both of his businesses with him, dig ditches, run the oil wells, and drive a truck cross country, then he was right when he married me. If he wanted someone to cook and sew he could marry a housewife, or let me quit everything else and play Susie Homemaker. I can laugh at myself and make merry of my shortcomings. Astrid cannot.

Astrid works very hard in the medical practice. She goes downstairs about 7 am, (Kurt goes down often at 6 am), gets the traffic flowing through Kurt's office, then they take a break about 9 am and have breakfast, usually consisting of hard rolls, lunch meat, cheeses, and coffee. Lunch is the main meal, which they eat about 1 p.m. Mutti used to cook fine food in her earlier days, but about the last 7 years of her life she was too arthritic and too feeble to do it on her own. For awhile one of the girls from the practice would come up and help her get lunch together, then Astrid gave up on that and would start ordering in from the local restaurants in town, usually the Wienerwald She would send one of the medical aides into town to fetch it after she would call in her order. We had very nice meals that way with a minimum bother to Astrid. Poor Werner could no longer eat the nice meals the last few trips to his sister's house as he was very sick to his stomach due to kidney failure. That was so sad to watch him eyeball the very fine expensive lunch meats, and especially the cheeses, and not be able to eat them. Supper was the same fare as breakfast and was usually eaten about 6:30 p.m. while watching the news on TV.

One time Astrid ordered a very fine tray full of fish which she boiled and served to Werner and I. But the problem was that Werner told me we had to choke this meal down really fast or we would miss our train. As I put my fork into the fish,

not with any great enthusiasm as I am not a fish eater, I found that fish was loaded chock full of huge bones. And I was supposed to wolf it down? Uh, uh.

Whenever we left Astrid's to catch the train, she would make us a sack full of sandwiches to take with us to eat on our journey. This was very practical as we would often travel over night on the train and the dining car would not be open. Other times in east Germany especially, there was no dining car. And the dining car was very expensive so you could shave expenses by eating food from home.

When we would travel overnight Werner would try to find an empty compartment so we could pull the seats flat and sleep on the bed they made into. Often we would get away with this, at least for part of the journey. But when the train would fill the obnoxious German matrons would push their way into our compartment and tell Werner to move over. A shouting, screaming and sometimes shoving match would follow. But Werner would always lose as the ladies had the conductor on their side and Werner knew it. But he never gave up without a fight and a good deal of verbal abuse being slung back and forth.

Astrid felt that she had a good deal of respect and standing in her community and so she was very conscious of every move her bull in the china shop brother would make. One episode she would have just died if she knew about occurred at the train station. The train station is Dr. Diebl's life blood, bringing all his patients to and from his office. His patients, therefore are always on that train station, coming to his practice on virtually every train during his office hours. And everyone of his long term patients know Astrid's brother as they see him coming and going from the living quarters upstairs. Well, Werner and I are waiting to depart on a train from Muehldorf to Munich and Werner, true to style, starts pushing and shoving against the fat middle aged ladies to get past them to get in the front of the line so he can get the best seat when the train pulls in, as he is getting easily motion sick and has to ride facing forward. Well the fat old ladies want to get the best seat too, so they shove him right back. Then the train comes in as Werner just got shoved by two fat ladies, so he shoves them right back, pushing them practically right into the moving train! That sure gave me a few anxious moments until I saw that they caught their balance just in time. Werner topped off his rude action by calling them fat old cows!

Speaking of Astrid's standing in the community, once she and I went to the fruit and vegetable store in town and Astrid was acting high and mighty in her dealings with the hired help in that store, holding her nose high in the air and acting, see how important I am. The hired help did not know I was with Astrid and as she was acting so uppity the two women stepped behind Astrid's back and made a little paradigm of her actions. I found that highly amusing.

The last night of our last stay at her house Werner was ornerier than ever, saying they were trying to kill him by feeding him all wrong and that he wanted soup for supper. Kurt Diebl also thought soup for supper was a wonderful idea. I liked

the idea myself and Astrid said she hadn't had soup for a long time and that she would like some too. It sounded like a winner of an idea until the question was raised, "What kind of soup should we get?" I'm in the mood for pea soup, Werner said. "Oh no you don't", Astrid told him. One does not eat a gassy soup and then get on the train the next day and burp for hours all the way to your destination, gassing out all the fellow travelers in your compartment. #\$\$%^ with the other passengers, Werner bellowed, I want pea soup. Well, you aren't getting it, Astrid growled back. I'll get you asparagus soup, you love that. Werner liked that idea and quieted down. I'll have mushroom soup, Kurt replied. I don't like either kind, I'll have potato soup I said. Astrid said she didn't like any of the choices and bought herself a fourth kind of soup. We then brought the soup home and she got out 4 pots and then started reading the directions on the 4 soups. One had to be started hot, one luke warm, one cold. One had to sit in the juice for 10 minutes before cooking. Astrid then started cooking all 4 at once and they got totally out of hand. Some had to boil, some could not boil. Some had to just simmer. And everything started to threaten to boil. And she kept forgetting which should do which and which soup was in which pot. Oh Gott, oh Gott!! Astrid squeaked as things got totally out of control. But they all got done reasonably well and we all enjoyed our own pot of soup that night.



Werner Wilhelm & Charlotte Wilhelm

We usually went to Germany at the end of May, just in time to surprise Mutti for her birthday. This pleased her to no end. Mutti had a usual pattern to her birthdays. The night before she was all radiant and happy. The entire birthday she was morose and melancholy and cried the entire day. Werner would always bring her a bouquet of lilies of the valley from his garden in Utica, having me pick them, put them in plastic, put some water in, then wrapping them in tin foil. She loved this flower best of all, even placing them on her parents' graves when she visited Rosslau as lilies of the valley was her mother's favorite flowers .



Burgermeister, Werner, Kurt, Astrid



Werner & Charlotte



Charlotte



Sr. Anna & Charlotte



Werner & Charlotte

One birthday we were not able to get there the night before, and by the time we got into Muehldorf it was noon, time for the big birthday meal. We got off the

train and Werner went directly to the phone booth there and called Mutti, telling her he was in Utica and so sorry he could not attend her 80th birthday. Charlotte started to cry with disappointment, saying she was sure he would not miss her 80th birthday. He apologized profusely, and told her maybe next birthday he could make it. Charlotte said tearfully that maybe there would be no next birthday. (There wasn't, she died the following January.) Werner then wished her happy birthday one more time, then got off the phone. We collected our luggage, then hailed a taxi and drove directly to Astrid's house and went directly to the great room and sat down for the birthday dinner. Mutti cried copious tears of joy at having her Wernerchen with her for the birthday dinner. It was a most joyous birthday celebration. Later in the day the mayor of Muehldorf came over and had a drink to celebrate the 80th birthday. Mutti and Astrid were honored to have his presence in their home. Werner found it all highly amusing and had me take pictures of the occasion.

I loved going to Muehldorf. Astrid and Kurt have a very comfortable house and they treated us very well, despite the fact that we would get on their nerves after a few days of being there. We would come and go during the course of our trips to Germany, so they had a rest from us in between stoppings off. You could feel them sigh with relief when we left their home at 4:30 am to catch a train to some distant part of Germany. When Mutti was alive, the entire visit would consist of all the Wilhelms talking a mile a minute and screaming at one another at the top of their lungs. We non Wilhelms would sit there and be amazed at all the screaming and yelling going on at the dining room table. What amazed me was the fact that I don't think that any one of the Wilhelm's heard or digested more than 20% of what the others were shouting. They were too busy formulating their next plan of attack. We 4 Daxes (Kurt Diebl, Wernerli, myself and the dog) would just sit there on the couch at the back end of the dining room table with our chins level with the table top, listening to and watching the Wilhelm pugilism go on for hours and hours.

Mutti especially was no respecter of bed time. At 11 p.m. I am absolutely ready for bed. If I stay up beyond midnight I don't feel good the next day. And in Germany I had had that 12 hour plane ride over, a 8 to 9 hour train ride from Frankfurt to Muehldorf, and then the "fern" coming over the mountains from Italy makes one very tired feeling all while one is in Muehldorf. So by 11 p.m. one is definitely reading to hit the sack. But with Mutti around, getting a good night's sleep is just a fond memory. Mutti stays up till 3 am on a regular basis, then sleeps in till 11 am in the morning. Mutti, I am exhausted, I would plead. Cut no ice with her. Oh, you are young, and I am an old woman and this may be the last time we see each other on the face of the earth, she would say, then launch into another long diatribe of fancy German, most of which I did not understand. I soon learned the best way to handle that situation. Just keep agreeing with her, just say "Ya" whenever she looks at you with that bold, glassy eyed look in her eyes. Most of the time that worked just fine. Once in awhile, "No" should have been the appropriate answer, and then she would jump all over you for saying

yes, so you immediately altered your answer to "no" and then you were back in her good graces again for awhile at least. Astrid would see the far away look in my eyes as I was listening to the torrent of strange, foreign German college level words spewing forth from Mutti's mouth, and she would wave her hands disgustedly and say to her mother, she doesn't understand a word you're saying. Mutti's eyes would really shine then and she would tell Astrid that I understood every word she said, and would then look at me with a glassy eyed, belligerent look on her face and make me confirm that I understood every word of her German. Believe me, it was much more comfortable for me to say yes than to say no. Astrid knew the score and she was totally disgusted that I was pretending to understand and in fact, did not. Astrid would then translate into English for me the gist of what was being said, then Mutti would blow up and say that they were to speak only German in the house as I had to learn the language, and besides, this is Germany, not America. Astrid would growl and grumble that unless she spoke English I would not understand a word of what was being said.

When I was totally in the dark as to the gist of the conversation and it sounded like it might be interesting, I would ask Werner to fill me in briefly as to the discussion on the table. Werner would growl at me and tell me to pay closer attention. I could pay attention until hell freezes over and if I don't know the words, then I don't know what's being said, I told Werner. He was a lousy, very lazy translator, and every time he would speak to me in English, Mutti would howl her fool head off, then Werner would growl at her that he had to let me in on the gist of the conversation, then she would assure him that I understood every word they said, that I just pretended not to understand so that I could eavesdrop on them by pretending not to understand and giving them a false sense of security.

All that screaming and hollering was beyond the psychiatrist's tolerance level, so as soon as the dinner was finished he would pretend to have to go down to his practice and dictate, however, when a family member would tip toe downstairs they would find Kurt in an easy chair reading the German newspaper, enjoying a few rare moments of peace. He would point to us 4 Daxes sitting at the dinner table and he would say that a Dax must always marry a Wilhelm, because if you got two Wilhelm types together, they would kill one another!

I loved going shopping in Muhldorf and so did Werner until he got sick. Our favorite store was Schmiederer's, a Woolworth type discount store that sold a little bit of everything. When Astrid first heard that we 1. went into Schmiederer's, and 2. bought something there and then dragged it home, prominently displaying it in one of their bags all through the town, she could have died of mortification. People in their walk of life simply do not go into Schmiederer's for anything, Astrid told Werner. If you need something from there, you send the hired help, you simply do not step into a Woolworth's type of establishment yourself, she told us in no uncertain terms. But Werner and I liked shopping there and looking at all the little this's and that's for sale and buying souvenirs to take back home. When Astrid found out we were buying cheap crystal and

silverware to take back home she just died. You buy crystal and silverware at a fine jeweler shop in town, not at Schmiederer's, Astrid informed us.



Charlotte Wilhelm & Werner Wilhelm

One day Astrid took us to a very fine restaurant on a cliff in Muehldorf for dinner to celebrate Mutti's birthday. The prices were astronomical, but Astrid wanted to put on the dog, so that's what we did. Speaking of dogs, Astrid took her dog with her in the fine restaurant, for in Germany taking a well behaved dog to a restaurant is an acceptable practice. The dog walked in like he owned the place and then went immediately under the table and stayed there, waiting for his wurst and table scraps. In the meanwhile the owners of Schmiederer's come into the same restaurant with their impressive looking German Shepherd in tow and he goes under the table cloth at the next table. Suddenly both dogs get a whiff of one another and we almost have a dog fight on our hands until both owners brought their dogs under stern control. Astrid then told Werner that the people at the next table are the owners of Schmiederer's. Bad move, Astrid. Werner gets up, goes over to the Schmiederer's table, introduces himself, shakes hands, and tells them that Schmiederer's is his store. Astrid wished she could crawl under the table with the dog she is so humiliated that her brother told the Schmiederers that shopping in their low class dime store type atmosphere was his favorite.

Another time Astrid took Werner to a high class restaurant during the time they were having an Oktoberfest. Astrid orders in her best high class attitude, taking items from the top of the menu. Werner looks the menu over and orders the \$5 special, pork hocks and sauerkraut. Astrid could have died. You just don't order such a cheap labor class dinner, she wails at Werner. We have our reputation to uphold in this town! What Astrid was not astute enough to notice, however, was the fact that the fun loving, light living Bavarians just loved her fat brother with his short pants and friendly attitude, while not liking his high class, elegantly dressed sister half as well.

One time Werner, Dr. Diebl and I went to an Austrian festival in a town near Alt Otting, Kurt's home town. It was a wonderful festival. The beer tent was packed jam full of people. The music was marvelous and the food excellent. We sat at a picnic table under a tent with a dozen other Germans also enjoying the festival. Between beer and food runs Werner decided to look the selling booths over and he came across one that was selling canes. He had a bad knee and was in the market for a good cane, and he found just the right one there. It had a whiskey flask and a horn attached to it. Every time Werner walked around the beer tent he would carry the cane with him, honking the horn with all his force. Dr. Diebl

said that these people knew him, would think that Werner did not have 'em all together, and that going to a festival with such a clown would have a bad reflection on the doctor. Werner didn't care who thought what. He was having a grand old time in that beer tent.

Astrid and Kurt used to take their dogs for a walk in the wilderness and would often ask us if we wanted to join them for the walk. Werner, naturally, always said no, and would stay at home and enjoy Mutti's company as she couldn't walk either. I would always say yes, and they were always fine walks indeed. At first Astrid or Kurt would take me into the woods right behind their house that abutted on the Inn river. It was an ideal setting for a peaceful walk. Later on they didn't go that way anymore, saying that off breeds from the Balkans moved in that neighborhood and would let their mean dogs run free, at peril to the humans and dogs walking there. The Inn river also had bad memories for the Diebls as their dog Doni drank water from the Inn river, got real sick, and when Dr. Diebl gave Doni an antibiotic injection, he collapsed and died right after the shot. I had told Werner that the dog probably died of anaphylactic shock due to an antibiotic allergy. Dumb Werner tells the Diebls what I said. They felt real bad about the thought that they may have killed their own dog with that antibiotic injection, but they readily conceded that that may well have been the case.

My big fat mouth got me into more trouble in regard to Doni. I noticed that Doni was losing much of his very short hair and indeed, was bare in spots. After watching his diet, in which they fed him salami sandwiches, I told Werner that it was my opinion that the dog was suffering from malnutrition, and that was what was causing his baldness. Werner told them what I said. They looked at me with anger in their eyes, but they did alter his diet and soon all of his hair grew back in.

Later we get a hysterical letter from Astrid that they almost lost their new Boxer, Pami. They all went for a ride, with Astrid and Pami in the back seat and Kurt driving. Kurt gets into one devil of a smash up, which seems to be a biannual occurrence in that family. Kurt and Astrid get out of the car in a daze and leave the car door open. Pami, who is a coward and a nervous dog in the best of circumstances, jumps out of the car in a total panic after the accident and in blind fear races into the woods and is totally lost. They call, look for her and forage through the woods, with no results. When it turned dark they gave up the search. They then advertised for their lost dog over the radio, and several days later a stranger found their dog through the radio ad. They had a joyful reunion with Pami and bandaged her cut foot and fed her very well to make up for her 72 hour fast. She was a nervous wreck for about a week more, then settled down into her old routine of eating, sleeping, and going for short walks with Astrid or Kurt.



Dr med Kurt Diebl & „Pami“

Once I had brought a child's squeak toy for Jenny, one of their boxers who was in between Doni and Pami. The dog seemed interested in the toy and started to play with me as I squeaked the toy, but I guess the noise was just too much for Astrid and Kurt's nerves and they went off the wall hearing the squeak. Astrid grabbed the toy, saying that the dog could not have it as it would cause her to go into a false pregnancy and would cause all kind of medical complications. Werner and I laughed at this because the only complications that the squeak toy would cause was to their nerves. The dog loved the toy.

Another time Werner and I were walking down the main street in downtown Muehldorf, a very classy little city, when we saw a gorgeous German Shepherd. Werner stopped to talk to the dog's owner. The dog, it turned out, was very skillfully trained. The man took the leash off the dog, told it to stay, then walked off and around the corner. You could see that the dog was very nervous about losing his master, but despite his high anxiety he stayed as he was told. The master then came right back, to the great relief of the dog. The master then put the dog through a whole series of commands, which the dog executed with the utmost skill. We were very impressed.



Dr med Kurt Diebl & Dr med Werner Diebl

Once in awhile Werner and I would see their son, Kurt Werner, better known in the family as Wernerli, when he was home from boarding school and later, from college. It was so obvious to me and Werner how much Astrid and Kurt must have talked bad about us behind our backs, for when the kid came home he couldn't even look us in the face and did everything possible to dodge us. Being young and naive, the kid did not know how to dissemble and did not know how to handle socializing with persons that his parents had designated as enemies.

As he got older and entered college he was better able to handle socializing with his Uncle Werner, but again only in the presence of his parents and usually for short periods of time. The longest he was ever with us was for about 4 hours when Werner, Kurt, Wernerli and I went to the Lake together and Astrid and Mutti

stayed home. Astrid stated that she did not want to leave Mutti alone, but I think she just enjoyed a few moments peace alone in the house with us gone as we did get on her nerves. All 4 of us had a very pleasant outing that day. Kurt had a heart to heart talk with Werner and I in the car on the way to the lake. He told us what a hard time the Wilhelms had given him throughout all of his married life. He told us the story of Mutti rummaging through his personal papers in his desk at the practice and how she found the breach of contract suit that Melanie had brought against him and how she told Astrid that the wedding was off and that they were all going back home, and how Astrid said, "I think not". He told me about the big arguments that Dr. Wilhelm provoked in his house, and how when Dr. Wilhelm had insulted Werner to the bones in Kurt's house, Kurt stood up to the Doctor and told him he was not going to talk that way to Werner in his house. The doctor got steaming mad at Kurt for talking to him like this and he packed up and started walking to the train station. Mutti got all lathered up over the doctor being so upset and leaving that she grabbed the luggage and followed him up the hill.

Werner never forgot that Dr Diebl stuck up for him against Dr. Wilhelm, a very difficult thing to do as Dr. Wilhelm was a very strong minded, powerful individual. Werner and Kurt became fast friends after that incident. Werner always greatly liked and admired Dr. Diebl and talked very well of him. He never had a bad word to say about him.

There was one more row between Dr. Diebl and Dr. Wilhelm in Dr. Diebl's house and a big blow up again ensued, and again Dr. Wilhelm headed for the train station, but this time Mutti ran after him, cooled him down and brought him back to Astrid's house. Years and years later after the death of Dr. Wilhelm there was still a great deal of built up frustration and anger inside of Dr. Diebl over the way Dr. Wilhelm treated him. Dr. Diebl was a very gentle, passive, lovable person. He is truly a friend to all who make his acquaintance. I have never known anyone to dislike Dr. Diebl. He was brought up by a very devout Catholic mother whom he loved very much. He also had a decent father. Kurt, until the last time I visited him, was a very happy, smiling, friendly peace loving soul. The last time Werner and I were in his house in March, 1992, he was strained beyond his endurance, and spoke often of how he mistreated his mother by not standing up to Astrid in his early years of marriage and how horrible he feels about all the bad things that happened to his mother as a result of how Astrid treated her, and how he can not make it up to his mother because she is dead and gone. He used to say that he gave up his mother out of great love for his wife, but now in his later years, he wonders what kind of love it was to have abandoned his mother in her last years.

I thought Kurt would be happier once Charlotte was out of his house and he and Astrid were alone, but just the opposite seems to have occurred. It hurt me so much to see this change in their relationship as they always seemed to be such a happy couple.

The last time we were in Muehldorf, Wernerli told us he would get special permission to cut several of his classes in medical school in order to see his Uncle Werner off to America. He met us at the Munich train station at the Muehldorf Gleis which is outside the main Munich train station, loaded our luggage onto a luggage cart, pushed it to the Frankfurt Gleis in Munchen, then got on the train with one bag in hand and talked to Werner until it was time for the train to depart. They had an interesting conversation, but Werner was never very attached to his nephew, through no fault of Wernerli's as this problem came long before Wernerli was aware of its existence. Many people said that Werner was very jealous of Wernerli and very hurt as he felt that his parents had used Wernerli to replace Werner in their affections. Werner felt that Mutti and Vati had felt "out of sight, out of mind", once Werner went to America, and had placed all their hopes on Wernerli instead. So poor Wernerli was an innocent victim, and was sandwiched between two generations who had never resolved their problems.

On the last visit to Muehldorf, Astrid took me clothes shopping down the side streets of town. Her idea of very fine clothing left me flat. And when I gandered at the price tags, it also left me hysterical. Also I am sure that they did not have my size and I had no intentions to pay \$200 for something that did not fit well. She was most disappointed that I did not share her enthusiasm for that type of clothing.

We also went shopping for a hand knit lace table cloth for Edna, my dog's babysitter. We went to every shop in Muehldorf, with no luck. We bought Edna a hand stitched solid one instead, which she liked very much.



Werner & Sandy Wilhelm

Every time I went to Muehldorf Astrid always bought me or gave me a very fine, expensive going away present. She bought me several angels, old and very fine workmanship. She and Mutti gave me a very fine bracelet that Vati gave to Charlotte. Astrid also gave me this last time a very fine gold necklace with three diamonds. Mutti used to give me 500 marks to spend for clothing. One of those times I bought a very fine, but rather old fashioned lady's heavy wool gray winter suit. I loved that thing but in a few years I grew out of it, unfortunately.

Mutti always used to reimburse Werner for his plane fare over, but would whisper to him not to tell Astrid. She would take the money out of the stack of bills she had accumulated in her dresser drawer from her monthly social security checks. Werner had very mixed feelings about taking this money. He didn't want to take from her personal funds, on the other hand, he was very resentful that she and Astrid had stolen his entire inheritance from his father and were now throwing him a few crumbs and expected him to be very grateful.

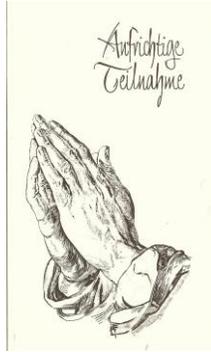
Mutti used to talk us to death whenever we would come to visit. My bedtime is 11 p.m., and certainly no later than midnight, no matter who the company may be. But Mutti was no respecter of bedtimes. She would go high until 3 am with no problem. One night I was just dead to the world, so I went to the bathroom, then sneaked off to our bedroom, put on my nightgown and slipped into bed. About a half hour later in comes Werner with Mutti in tow. Mutti talks a mile a minute to Werner. He drops his drawers, pulls off his shirt and climbs into bed in his undershorts. Within 5 minutes he is snoring soundly, but Mutti, undaunted, just keeps on talking. I stayed laying down for another 1/2 hour, figuring she would take the hint and leave. Nope. Talk, talk, talk, yak, yak, yak, ad nauseum. Oh, Mutti, I am so tired, I say. Cuts no ice with her. I may be dead before you come back, so we should take this time to talk while we are together. Yay, yippee. Why can't we go to bed now, get up at a decent hour and talk some more over breakfast? I guess that would make too much sense. So on and on she went, stopping her diatribe long enough to tell me I should be sitting up while I am listening to her. Oh, Great. WERNER!!! I scream at him in English, wake up!! If I have to suffer through this, so should you. When you are in enough pain from putting up with this horse sh%^, maybe you will tell her to go to bed. Werner mumbles something to the effect that he is sleeping and I shouldn't disturb him as he is tired, and that I should be good to Mutti because she is an old lady and we may never see her again. WERNER!!! Dammit, do something, I'm dropping in my tracks with this old lady talking at me like a waterfall in a language that's so highfalutin that I barely understand 15%. SNORE! GASP! SNORE! is all the response I get from Werner. Wonderful. It's now 3 am, she hasn't even come up for air yet in the past 4 hours, my ears are ringing from all the snoring going on in the corner from one of us who is enjoying a good night's sleep, and as a sudden I was fascinated as the entire room started to spin around me. That hadn't happened to me since I was five years old and the ether did that to me as I was having my tonsils removed. The room is actually going around me like a merry go round, I said to myself. I have totally tuned Mutti out with my fascination of what the room is doing right in front of my eyes. Suddenly I refocus and notice that Mutti is coming straight for me with a queer look on her face and asking me something I don't understand. What is she trying to say to me? I ask her to repeat what she said twice and she is now very angry with me as she insists that I understand every word that she is saying. I'm still greatly distracted by the room which keeps winding itself around my head. Suddenly she sticks her fingers in my mouth and pulls on my teeth! She is saying that she wants to know if my teeth are real or not! WERNER!!! Huh? What now? Your

stepmother has her fingers in my mouth!!! Oh, you should consider that as a compliment. She always was very interested in teeth in Vati's practice. I should be happy that she has a hand full of fingers in my mouth at 3 am while the world is spinning around me? Ya, sure. Everybody I tell this story to says I should have chomped down real hard at this point.

After removing her fingers from my mouth, she became very disgusted with me as I laid back down on my cot and closed my eyes hoping she and her fingers would just go away and let me have a few hours sleep before Astrid calls us to get up for breakfast. What kind of a rude woman did Werner pick up, who cannot even carry on a good social discourse with a dear old lady in the last years of her life!, thought Charlotte as she walked stiffly out of my room and into her own.

Mutti was a real scrapper. She was definitely a survivor in this world. She was highly intelligent and helped Vati side by side every day in his practice until his retirement shortly before his death. Her vocabulary was that of a college graduate. And she was a real talker. I have no doubt that she entered this world in Rosslau talking, and that is the way she departed from this world as well. Astrid was sitting on the side of Mutti's bed one very cold day at the end of January and Mutti was talking up a blue storm as usual. She stopped to take a breath, and when her diatribe did not pick up where she had left off Astrid took a closer look at her. She had actually died in mid sentence! What a fitting way to go.

Mutti had almost died a few years earlier and Astrid had called Werner in an absolute fit of hysterics. Mutti is dying, Mutti is dying, she screamed over the telephone. Werner was in the midst of a crisis in the nursing home and could not get away to Germany at the time of the earlier crisis. Mutti was put into intensive care and within a week she was much better and the crisis had ended. Werner had talked to Mutti on the phone several times while she was in the hospital. On the first call she sounded very weak, but later on she started sounding like her old self again. When Mutti went back home they figured that there must have been some brain damage as she wasn't quite the same and started showing signs of forgetfulness. It got worse as the time went on, and the constant repeating of the same thought or sentence started driving Kurt to distraction. So when Mutti finally died, her death had been preceded by a number of instances of confusion and forgetfulness, which was getting on both of their nerves, so when Mutti died, it had seemed to Astrid that it was the right time to go and she accepted her mother's passing with great equanimity, which she never could have done earlier.



Werner flew to Germany for Mutti's funeral. As usual he was detained by one nursing home crisis after another, and he ended up flying into Frankfurt at the very last minute, renting a small car, then taking a Paul Revere ride from Frankfurt to Kassel and he got there just as the funeral services were beginning. He was quite ticked off at Wernerli that he couldn't have driven into the Frankfurt airport, picked him up and driven him to the funeral.

A funny thing happened at the very time that the funeral was occurring in Kassel. I was at my blue house in Utica and I knew that the funeral was taking place at that very moment and I was wondering if Mutti was going to give some sign of her having survived death. As a sudden a helium balloon that had been sitting in one spot on the ceiling in the dining room suddenly started moving, floating slowly but surely toward me and it later came to rest right next to me. That balloon never moved before or after this one incident. Werner spent about a week there then came back home to Utica and told me all about what a fine funeral Mutti had. After the funeral there is not any mention of money, Vati's, Mutti's or otherwise, and later a paper surfaces, stating that per a private will written by Charlotte Nael, Astrid is the sole inheritor. Real slick trick. But Astrid underplayed her hand. Had she shared either upon the father's or the mother's death, she would have been a major inheritor of part of Werner's estate upon his demise, but being she cheated him out of all of his father's inheritance, he repeatedly disinherited her from his estate, which was far larger than his father's or his stepmothers. Werner often said that Astrid badly miscalculated – that she should have played straight with Vati's inheritance as Werner's was far greater than Vati's and had she given Werner his rightful share then she would have gotten from Werner after his death far more than she had received from both their shares of Vati's.



Werner Wilhelm bei Dr Wilhelm's Ruhestätte

Mutti was a firm believer that when you're dead, you're dead, so when she survived death it must have been a real surprise to her, but knowing Mutti she was back on her feet, albeit astral feet, in no time and was up and running. And that was no doubt the end of Vati's peace. (When Vati first passed away in Kassel on the 3rd of October, 1970 Mutti went to his grave every day and spent all day there, sitting on a bench and talking to his grave non stop. Rain or shine she was there. The Kassel neighbors called Astrid and said she had better come and get Mutti or she would get pneumonia from sitting beside that grave. Vati no doubt got earsful when he first went into eternity and then again when Mutti arrived there.)

On our second last trip to Muehldorf we had oodles of baggage, and Werner couldn't handle it due to his failing health, so I had to handle it myself. But in Muehldorf Wernerli saw us off to the train and he handled the baggage. Normally everyone has to drag the baggage down a whole flight of stairs, through the tunnel that goes under the tracks until you get to the right set of tracks, then drag the luggage back up the stairs again. Werner just looked at those stairs with such a woe begone look that the station master had pity on the old guy and told him he could put them into the train right from the tracks. So someone opened the window of the train and then they started shoving all the luggage through the window. Someone was catching the luggage inside the train and was stacking it neatly. That was a real break. But Werner was hopping, spitting mad at his sister and her family as they could have driven us to the Munich airport if they wanted to, but they didn't. So we were forced to take the train and we had to transfer 4 times before we got to the airport and we had to handle all that luggage on each transfer. And on the last transfer we had to walk right out of the train station and catch a city bus. And I had to drag all that luggage by hand. I would carry two suitcases so far, then go back and get two more. And when all the suitcases got 10 feet forward, I would go to the head of the line and start over for another ten feet. What was in all those suitcases? Would you believe left over Hershey chocolate bars and life savers? Don't get me started about how hopping mad I got when I discovered what I was lugging all over the face of Germany. It certainly wasn't clothes for Werner, that's for sure. He wore one set the entire time, like a uniform. (His ghost has the same hygiene habits. Everyone sees the ghost wearing the same clothes, a blue and white plaid shirt with little red lines running through it, dark colored shorts and a pair of sandals. But maybe things are looking up on the other side. I saw him today in a blue and white pin stripe jacket, dark blue dress pants and socks on his feet, but he was wearing his beloved sandals still.)

When we got off the bus Werner was totally fagged out from travelling and he was at the end of his endurance. I was busy looking at the sights around the airport. There were police everywhere and each policeman was carrying an automatic rifle on his back as a guard against would be hijackers. Sure didn't make me feel too good about being there, especially since his sister told us about the time a short while earlier when an terrorist bombed an Oktoberfest in

Munich. Anyway, I looked around desperately for something to sit Werner in, even if it was a luggage cart as Wernerli had done for him. (Wernerli had Werner step up on the shopping cart like luggage cart, then pushed him at full speed like a child in a shopping cart and thus got him to his train connection in the nick of time.) Suddenly I spotted a wheelchair, and then I knew we were going to make it okay. I got the wheelchair while Werner sat on the curb and waited for me. I then plunked him in it, piled all the luggage up on top of him (I was hoping he could still breathe under all that) and away we went to the right departure gate. Being in a wheelchair put Werner at no disadvantage when it came to arguing around with customs, no siree. He was at his screaming, roaring best that day when she tried to get him to put his film through the x-ray machine. One stubborn big mouthed German broad against one stubborn old Dutchman. Let me tell you, no one ever won a shouting contest with Werner. And neither did this obnoxious old custom's broad. He had her in tears by the time he cleared customs. And my nerves were frazzled and I was embarrassed to tears, but that was standard when Werner got him self wound up for the pitch. MUCH later, some of these episodes were funny.

The worst customs fiasco with Werner was the time he loaded himself up with chocolates with liqueur inside. Very fine German candy, that was. When he gets up to customs they tell him that because it had some booze in it, he can't take it on the plane. He threw a royal 5 year old temper tantrum, red face, screaming fits and all. Still, they didn't budge. The plane is ready to depart, and if you want to get on it, you have to surrender the chocolate. #\$\$%^& if I'm going to give it to you fat pigs to eat, he screams, then tears the chocolates into little pieces, throws it all on the carpet and stomps all over it, leaving a gooey, syrupy slimy mess at the boarding area. They blew up at him and told him to either clean up that mess or they were going to throw his dear little ass in jail. I'm too fat to get down and clean it up, he tells them. Tough #\$\$% they tell him back. Either clean it up or we are carting you off. So he cleaned it up and I took the verbal abuse over that one for about a month. Why didn't I clean it up for my adorable little 5 year old brat? I wasn't there, Charlie, I only heard about this one from the horse's mouth.

Astrid's house was the most comfortable one I have been in in Germany, except when they turn the heat off at 9 p.m. every night, that is. In the living room and the bathroom they leave the big beautiful windows open on most days. It gives a very airy, fresh feeling to the house. But in Germany they do not have the bug problems that we have in America so they don't put screens on their windows. I never once met a mosquito in Germany and in her home no bugs came in with one exception. One year in particular, honey bees kept flying in one or two at a time. Klappa, klappa, klappa (fly swatter)! whoever saw the bee first would cry, and off they would go chasing the bee with the fly swatter. And I have to admit, they always got him. They had a real good aim, I guess after a lot of practice it made them perfect. Werner used to be disgustingly amazed at how emotional they would get over the appearance of each bee. But I thought it was a real fun

method of diversion. The son Wernerli was the best showman in the group. He really loved being the first to spot the darn bee and to be the one to zap it!

On one of his visits to Germany without me Kurt gave him a wheat germ type cereal to try to lose weight. When you ate that in place of a meal, it filled you up, it was low in calories and had no cholesterol or fat. But when Werner got into customs and they checked his bags, they wanted to take the cereal away as it was an agricultural product. But Werner begged, pleaded, and sweet talked them into letting him keep it for health reasons. He pointed out how he was 290 lbs. and was desperately in need of losing weight. They let him keep the box of cereal. He must not have been too impressed with the results of the stuff, for 9 years later when he died I just threw out the box. He never ate more than 1/4 of the stuff.

Every advent until she got too old Mutti would write Werner and I a letter saying "Advent is at the door". I thought that that was a nice slogan. Werner said Mutti always made an advent wreath and every Sunday he and she would light one more candle and then have cake and coffee while watching it burn. He begged me to do the same the last two years of his life. In 1991 I was just too busy, sick and stressed out from chemotherapy to be able to do it, but in 1992 I made him a fine one in which when you lit the candles the angels spun around on top of the candles. This all came about due to the heat of the candles rotating the angels. He liked that. He made tea and cooked up some kind of frozen cake he had in the freezer. He also served some Mogan David wine. It was one of the nicest festive occasions he had provided for us in our many years together. We both enjoyed it very much.

Kurt and Astrid brought their dog with them almost everywhere they went. On occasion they even sneak the dog in the local mental hospital when they go to visit Kurt's patients. The dog also went with us to our weekend vacation sojourns. And on the way back we invariably stopped at some nice tavern for a Sunday afternoon lunch, and the dog goes in with us, naturally. Their dogs are always well behaved and they go in on a leash and upon sitting at a table, the dog immediately goes under the table cloth and is seen no more. But the owner knows he's there, and more often than not, after serving our order, he provides one extra wurst for the dog. The wurst is handed under the tablecloth and has a way of immediately disappearing.

I loved to sit in a tavern on a Sunday afternoon and watch the local patrons order up a slew of beers and play Scot together. They play with such great enthusiasm, slamming the cards down on the table and roaring with emotion when something interesting happens during the course of play. (Scot is very much like Euchre.)

One time, on my first visit to Muehldorf, we were all talking about how grateful Werner should be to Kurt's Uncle Edgar. As Edgar lay dying he was reading in

the paper that the last date that you could file for reparations for lost East German properties was fast approaching, so he called Kurt and told Kurt to immediately contact Werner in America and tell him to file a claim post haste. Forget getting in the documentation, just file a bare bones claim to get yourself on file. So that's what Werner did and had thus gained over \$300,000 in future years due to that claim having been filed before the deadline. So he was very grateful to Uncle Edgar and we were all very sorrowful over his recent demise shortly before we got to Germany. They all agreed he was a very good man.

Werner was a riot on Astrid's phone. She did everything in her power to keep him off her phone, saying it was a business phone and that the German IRS would have a hemorrhage if they saw hundred of Marks in American phone calls on a business phone. So Werner often went to the Muehldorf post office and made his calls there in peace and quiet and privacy, but at times he would wait until Astrid and Kurt were at the hospital making rounds and then he would sneak downstairs to the practice and start dialing America, especially the nursing homes. He would talk at a leisurely pace when they were not home. I took an adorable picture of him on the phone looking skyward as the meter went clicking like a racing car. Normally on a local call the meter goes CLICK.....CLICK.....CLICK. But for an American call the meter goes CLICKCLICKCLICKCLICK!!! Boy, I would have given anything to see Astrid's face when she got that bill. Or better yet, I would have loved to have been there when she would come back into the practice and hear that meter going CLICKCLICKCLICK!! before even knowing who was on the phone. I bet she wanted to make her dear little shorts and sandals brother eat that phone bill when she got it!



Astrid, Charlotte, Dr Kurt Diebl & Werner Wilhelm

Astrid and Kurt have a very small but very nice back yard off of Kurt's practice. Their yard is butted on one side by St. Katherine's church, which is over 500 years old, on another side by their house, and on the third side by the neighbors. The fourth side has the iron fence and gate keeping out the outside world. They often set up a nice picnic table and chairs in the garden and eat out there. It is a most pleasant afternoon when we sit there and eat at leisure.

On more formal occasions, we eat in the great room, a very fine formal dining room on the second floor. This was on the same floor as her practice, so she kept it securely locked so her patients couldn't get into it. She keeps most of her

most prized possessions there, including her fine Meissen china, her silver and her fine furniture, including pieces from her father's practice. We only use that room several times per year, and only for very special occasions. There is some china that is so expensive that Astrid has never brought it out of the cupboard to be eaten on. She has oriental rugs that her father carried over the East German border nights to bring them to the west. She also has priceless Medieval statues and paintings that a Catholic nun purloins away from the Church and gives to her.

Astrid is an immaculate housekeeper. You will never find anything out of order or dirty in her home. She has hired help from the practice but she also keeps much of it in order herself. She loves fine china, silverware and collectibles and keeps these safe and in good order in her china and other cabinets.

Kurt Diebl has many psychiatric patients that had mental problems from the day they were born and some of these people are potentially a danger to him and his family, especially the paranoid schizophrenics. Some of these patients even frighten Kurt, who does not frighten easily. One patient in particular Kurt was profoundly affected by, as Kurt says that man was so evil Kurt was convinced that he was face to face with the devil himself. He could literally see the evil shine out of that man's eyes. So to protect himself Kurt has a number of loaded guns hidden in his living quarters, which he hopes he never has to use as Kurt is a very peaceful friendly man.

I have never heard anyone speak one bad word about Kurt in all the years he was married to Astrid. No one, that is, but me. For I cannot understand how a psychiatrist, who knows how evil and deceit can wear on a person till through the years it can drive you half crazy, could allow his wife to so cheat her brother Werner and her Uncle Kurt. Every time we would come to visit her, she would jump out of her skin with worry, anxiety and nerves. Especially the first time I came to her house and she thought I was going to confront her about her brother's inheritance. And Werner would have liked to have put me up to it, too, but I told Werner right out that that occurred long before I ever met him, I don't know a thing about it, and I'm staying out of it as this is between him and his sister.

In looking back, my first visit was in 1980 and maybe I should have caused one big blow up over this until we cleared the air and came to some kind of settlement, so that Werner and his sister could have had it out once and for all and then we could have all settled down to enjoy one another's company without this festering boil eating at everyone's soul. However, if they refused to give him anything, it might have permanently severed his ties with Mutti and his sister and this he was not prepared to risk. His emotional ties to these people were far too strong.

One time Kurt took Werner and I to a famous resort in Austria, the focal point of which was a 500 year old Catholic Church. We went inside and one is awed over the interior, regardless of one's faith. You were not allowed to take any pictures inside, if you wanted one you could buy souvenir picture post cards in the adjoining shops. I wanted to take a picture of a 3 foot devil painted on the wall 500 years ago in the worst way as he was the happiest, neatest looking devil I had ever set eyes upon. He was not one of those big, mean, ugly looking devils we have all seen. Rather, he was quite child like and had the cutest expression on his face. I would have followed that little guy anywhere! Unfortunately, there were no postcards of this devil and the church closed by the time we got out of the shops. Next time I go there, you better believe I will return with that little guy's picture.

Another time we were driving through Austria, Kurt suddenly turned off the main road and took a short detour, then parked in front of a very small unimpressive Church. We got out of the car and went inside the modest little church. Werner then explained to me the reason why we stopped is because the most famous Christmas song, "Silent Night" was composed and sang here many years ago when a mouse ate through the chords on the organ and in order to have something appropriate to sing on Christmas Eve, this song was born.



Werner & Dr. Werner on Wolfgang See

We also went a number of times to St. Bartholomei Church on Wolfgang See. This is also a very famous resort town and is impressively beautiful. In the 1200's this area was a hunting lodge for the German nobility. We also drove by Salzburg, Austria another time and Kurt explained that Salzburg was spared from being attacked by Napoleon's army because it is the city down under, that is, it is completely hidden from the main road. We in fact drove by without me having even a clue that a town was there. It was totally invisible from the main road.

Several times when I was in Muehldorf, Astrid would go alone with me to a rustic tavern like structure or to an ice cream parlor. She tried very hard to give me a nice time and to see that she entertained me as well as she was able. If it was not for the father's stolen inheritance looming large between us, we all would have had a marvelous time every time we went there. But everyone was like a cat on a hot time roof waiting for the inheritance issue to blow up in their face. And Werner was so hurt by this that it showed.

Another time Astrid took me to a very ancient museum in one of the towers. It was a fascinating experience for the paintings and the artifacts there were ancient and well preserved.

Every time Werner and I went to Muehldorf, we would always stop in the St. Katherine Church right next store to Dr. Diebl's house and say a prayer or two. The church is closed and no real services are conducted there anymore, and the main body of the church is closed off by iron bars, but Werner and I liked that church and made a visit there often. Dr. Diebl slips in there to pray now and again, but makes sure he does not get caught going to mass, otherwise he would have to pay over \$10,000 in Catholic taxes, which Astrid refuses to do. (Astrid had Kurt Diebl go into court and divorce himself from the Catholic Church so he would not have to pay the Catholic tax every year.)

When Astrid and Kurt learned that Werner was dead, they had a memorial requiem mass said for him in this church and all the neighbors attended. This gesture pleased me very much as this church meant something to Werner and me. And on every anniversary of his death Astrid, Kurt and Wernerli have a remembrance mass said in this church for Werner.

Every time we went to Germany we would go to Astrid's first, especially when Mutti was alive as Werner was very attached to Charlotte whether he wanted to admit it to himself or not. And he loved Astrid too. Werner would bask in the attention and affection they would shower him with. He turned into like a little boy when he was there. Those two women had the power to totally bowl him over. It was an utter amazement to me that this strong, bellowing, determined man would turn into a little 5 year old boy as soon as he stepped foot in that house. But when they stepped on him too much, he also turned into a screaming, hollering, temper tantrum throwing little kid, too. And they would respond by screaming back, and soon all the Wilhelms would be screaming their heads off at the top of their lungs, no one listening to anyone, while we non-Wilhelms listened in amazement.

After 4 or 5 days there, they would have had enough of us, and usually Astrid managed to get a severe migraine and would be suffering awful. That was Werner's cue that it was time to travel on for a bit. We usually then took off to East Germany. On every trip to Germany, we always ended up in East Germany, for 1 day and sometimes for 3 or 4 days, and after the wall fell, for a whole week. We always tried to let Astrid know when we were going in and when we were due back out so in the event that they kept us she could start action to get us out of there. One time we forgot to tell her and when we got over to the East Berlin side, Werner decided we had better call her and tell her where we were and when we would be coming out. There was a row of over 12 telephone booths in the East Berlin side of the pass through area, so Werner walked over to a phone booth and tried to put through a call to Astrid. Nothing got through. He ended up trying over 7 of the phone booths before he gave up in

disgust, realizing that there was no way to get through. So we went on our way and took our chances. A phone call from East Germany to the west or vice versa would not go through unless there was someone within the government available to listen in on the call. When Werner would call from his home to East Germany the only time he would be able to get through, and then not too often, was at 4:30 am our time.

Uncle Kurt, who lived in East Germany in Derenburg am Harz, at Halberstrasse 11, almost always met us at the border crossing point and gave us a conducted tour of the Communist zone. Kurt was easy going, fun loving and would do almost anything for you. And he loved to travel, especially if he had some company. The first time we went over we were allowed to stay there only for the day and had to be back out before midnight. So Kurt met us at the train station restaurant and we ate there for hours while we had a most delightful visit together. It was hard for me as I knew very little German at the time and understood very little of the conversation and Werner was always a very reluctant translator. (In fact, he was very proud of the fact that he gave me very little assistance with the German language and that almost all of my German was self taught.) Prior to our meeting in East Berlin, we got to West Berlin via the East German train tracks as the West German railroad did travel through Werner's old home land and Werner was dying to see some of it again, even if only from a fast moving train. So on our first train trip to East Germany Werner deliberately chose to go into Germany over Bebra, Eisenach, Erfurt as this track went right through the Weimar area where he grew up.

The second trip to East Germany, Werner got braver and applied for a two day pass, which we received. At first he tried to apply for a pass to see the Leipzig Trade Fair as he thought that that sounded like a safe reason to get into East Germany, but with a bored expression on their face they told him that the Trade Fair was over. He then swallowed his bubble gum and said he wanted a 2 days pass, "just because." Werner was scared to death to go into East Germany as he had had a warrant out for his arrest, and had escaped East Germany under gunfire at 4 am. But his desire to see his homeland once again outweighed both of our fears, and so we plunged ahead blindly. We soon realized that the Communists were so well entrenched in East Germany that they had no interest in Werner, that he was no longer any threat to them. He was just a fat cat American with big bucks in his pocket that he would be spending and thus helping their sad economy out a bit.

Uncle Kurt gave us a 100 Mark East German bill to spend in the two days we were in his country. We spent the entire time on the train so that Werner could see the maximum amount of his old country. We soon found out that the East German train also had a very fine dining car with delicious food. Werner wore a path back and forth from the dining car to our compartment. Boy, did we ever have real fine food and lots of it! Finally by the end of the second day Werner asked me if I wanted anything more. No way! I couldn't eat another thing if I

tried, I told him, holding my stomach. Me neither! Werner averred, with a smile on his face. I've eaten so much I don't feel so well, he said with a mirthful tone to his voice. When we left East Germany, we still had almost half of Uncle Kurt's 100 Mark bill left. A funny episode happened on that trip. In the dining car there was a bar up front with stools. There were 4 young East German men sitting on the stools around the bar, liberally imbibing. Werner had to walk past them in order to get up front to place and pick up his food order. Werner went back and forth very often, sometimes ordering a milk, sometimes a browse and sometimes a wiener schnitzel. He had to have gone back and forth over 12 times. And each time Werner went up there the young guys got rowdier and rowdier. The noise was deafening as Werner ordered, then would die down somewhat till the next time Werner went up there with a fresh order. Toward the end of our train ride Werner asked one of the fellows what all the uproar was about. The guy heartily laughed and said they were having an uproarious time placing bets on what Werner would order next. One of the fellows handed Werner a 10 Mark bill, telling Werner that he had made a lot of money guessing what Werner would order next and so he wanted to share his largesse with Werner!

Another time we were in East Germany for about a week and we were travelling from East Berlin to Weimar with Uncle Kurt. Werner was tired and he shoved all of our belongings that I couldn't lift carelessly onto the overhead rack, then slouched down on the seat. When we were almost to Weimar the train lurched around a corner and suddenly Werner's big thermos came flying out of the overhead rack and almost hit an East German young guy on the head. The East Germans had figured out from our dress that we were from America, so when the thermos came flying at him, he shouted "Its a rocket out of Vienna!" All his young friends laughed over the thought of being attacked by a rocket out of the west. It really struck me that they had fears of being attacked by the Austrians. We in the west had been thinking of ourselves as such peaceful people and in contrast were constantly worried about being attacked with rockets out of Russia.

For several days we stayed at Bad Kostritz, a beautiful resort in East Germany the next train stop from Naumburg. This was my very favorite hotel in all of East Germany in all of the trips we had taken. Unfortunately, after our first stay there this hotel was no longer on the list of approved places to stay for Americans so I was never able to go there again. This was kind of off Werner's list too, as he had to walk a mile to get to the train station and this didn't please him one little bit. But to me this place held a kind of romantic enchantment. It had been a famous resort in Werner's parents' time and Werner's parents did go there on their honeymoon. It was in a very pretty setting, with a small town charm, set on the wide, flowing river and on the way to the train station one walked through a most enchanting zoo. The hotel name was Hotel Forwarts. But the phone was not working in the train station, and thus Werner could not call a cab, which may not have come anyway, as things are so hilariously undependable in East Germany. Every day Werner reported the out of order phone to the Station master, and every time he tried it it still didn't work. By the end of the week

Werner was fit to be tied. His cousin just smiled at his impatience to get the phone fixed. Suddenly realization of the situation dawned on Werner. How long has the phone been out of order? Werner asked his cousin. About 6 months. Why don't they get the @#\$% fixed? Why bother fixing it. No one in East Germany has a phone anyway, so why would a phone be needed here. Who would you want to call? A @#\$%^ taxi, that's who!!! Oh, you want a taxi, why didn't you say so. The taxi is right across the street from the station. The taxi driver doesn't have a phone; you just walk over and engage him!

Hotel Forwards had some rather wild, modern western records for the kids to dance to. And dance they did. They just loved the English words and sang along to the record. Their favorite was "High, high, high society". Werner and I laughed at this choice as their favorite. Living in East Germany they wouldn't have the foggiest notion as to what "High Society" means.

The next day we took the bus to Naumburg instead of the train as the bus was cheaper and besides Werner wanted to see some different scenery now that he was back in the birthplace of the Wilhelm family. Werner insisted on keeping mine and his passports as he was afraid I would lose mine. We got off the bus in Naumburg after having had a delightful conversation with the bus driver and several of the passengers. We then went to Aunt Martha's house, spent the whole day there and when we were about to get back on the train to go back to Bad Kostritz, Werner discovers that he lost his briefcase with our passports in! Now we are in the middle of East Germany with no passports! Kurt Bamberg, Werner's cousin, then drives to the local police station and tells them that we lost our briefcase with the passports inside. I was scared to death, because in a Communist country a foreigner does not want to call attention to himself, especially if he left the country with an arrest warrant over his head and was shot at as he crossed the border. But the police told Kurt that a man had called and reported that he had found it and left his name and address with the police. So we had to go home without it as it was now almost 11 p.m. and the next day we would meet the man and get our briefcase back. (The guy was holding on to it in order to get a nice reward from the rich Americans. Werner gave the guy \$50 and we sent him a package at Christmas time.)

Kurt was hurrying us to the train station as the last train for the night was about to depart any minute. By the time we got to the platform the train started to pull away. Quick! Jump into the moving train, Werner shouts to me! Then he takes a flying leap and lands spread eagle across the metal steps and quick grabs the handrail. He's kind of in my way, and I'm scared to death to jump into a moving train, but its jump or be stranded. So I held my breath and leaned forward and jumped. The train was picking up speed now and Werner was getting out of my way, so I grabbed for anything I could get my hands on and soon I scrambled my way up the steps and into the safety of the interior of the train. Whew!!

This reminds me of another of our train experiences. We got off the train from East Germany and the train going through West Germany was going to take off in one minute, Werner started throwing his briefcase and suitcases on the train. German trains are punctual to the minute and nothing holds them up, so when the clock hand hit 12, the train started to take off without Werner or I on it, but with half of our luggage on and half still on the platform. Werner started screaming his head off, and the conductor on the train started throwing all of the luggage back off, scattering it on down the tracks as the train was ever further away. Werner wasn't too mad at this one as he knew that would happen. I told you German trains are always punctual to the minute, he said to me as he had me pick up his scattered luggage.

@#\$%, he said, that would have been a real good connection. Too bad we missed it due to all that #\$%@ luggage. (Well, Werner, if you weren't carrying 10 suitcases full of chocolate, cocoa and coffee, we could have made that connection.)

Once in the train I was faced with another problem. With no briefcase we had no train tickets. We were riding for free. Until we get caught, that is. Don't fret cousin Andrea tells us. They never ask for tickets on this stretch. They always get you just before you get into Jena, but not here. We made the stretch from Naumburg to Bad Kostritz without running into a conductor. This would never happen in West Germany!

Later on, I saw what Andrea was talking about. We were taking the train to Jena and between Jena and Gera the conductor magically appeared for the first time in all our travels in East Germany and asked for tickets. When he asked a woman near us, she had no money and no ticket. Boy, did he ever throw her off the train fast, a running screaming fight between the two of them the whole time. As the train took off, she was still on the pavement screaming. I bet she hopped the next train and finished her freebee journey.

Going into and out of East Germany was always a frightening experience. We always hit the East-West German border after midnight. We would be half dozing on the train, when as a sudden the train would slow down and then stop. Suddenly the entire train was filled with an intensely bright blinding white light, like the bible stories of the angels, but believe me, these East German communists were anything but angels! Then the Communists would board the train and examine everything with a fine tooth comb. They would also walk the entire length of the train with flashlights, examining the undercarriage of the train seeing if East Germans were under there trying to escape to the west, which many had successfully done over the years. The big Berthas would then come on board, ready to start a fight with anyone who tried to gainsay them. There was no charming these women, uh, uh! Your best bet was to keep your mouth shut and your backside out of jail. They would examine your luggage, all of it by pushing up on it as it sat in the luggage rack to see how heavy it was, then opening anything that struck their fancy. They mostly hassled East German

residents, not people from the west. But Charlotte Nael Wilhelm sure got into it with these border crossing guards as she was built the same as them and no one pushed Charlotte around! She got as belligerent as they, and they had a field day pushing her around as they knew they were going to win this contest. The Wilhelm family tried to cool her jets as they really did not want to have to bail her out of jail. They wanted Mutti to give up all her East German money, saying that their money was far too valuable to leave their socialistic paradise. Mutti replied, "Ha!, your money is nothing, it isn't worth the paper it's written on!" She had two choices, big Bertha told her. Either buy something from a case full of souvenirs she was carrying with her, or put the money in an envelope and address it to someone in East Germany. Ha! Mutti replied. Your trinkets are all a bunch of junk, not worth even as much as your garbage money, and if I put that money in an envelope, it won't end up with a relative, it'll end up lining your pocket, you thieving scum! Believe it or not, Mutti got out of there without a detour into the hoosecow first.

Werner was always very scared at the crossing. But he always told me that we were much more secure in a train full of people than if we were to drive over that border alone by car. Rudi seconded that, saying he went over to the East once by car and they detained him and his car in a locked garage for over 5 hours before releasing him. He drove over to the East, got very tired driving, pulled over to the side of the road and slept for several hours, then got back on the Autobahn and finished his journey. The Communists went wild, asking what happened during those two extra hours. They wouldn't believe that Rudi just fell asleep during that time.

Werner was very polite during border crossings, giving both of our passports to the guards and answering for me when they asked me a question. He often played the part of the nice, friendly, retired old man, wearing old shorts, an old dirty shirt, sandals with no socks and a 3 day growth of beard. He would walk with a cane and they would rush to help him along. When he wanted to be, he was the best actor in town.

When the train would get over to the free zone, it would immediately stop again, looking for people under the wheels. Once in awhile someone would slip past the East German border crossing guards and make their way to freedom.

The East German police used to walk the train stations with German Shepherd guard dogs with a muzzle on their face. When I looked into the eyes of those dogs I would see only kindness in their eyes. (The west German Shepherds, on the other hand, had a mean sharp look to their faces.) When the wall fell, the German government begged the people to adopt a East German guard dog. Werner felt real sorry for those dogs and asked me to adopt one, but I told him that at the time old Bear was old and sick and would not have taken well to a strange Shepherd in the house.

Werner had it against Aunt Martha Wilhelm Bamberg as she had said in 1945 that it was good that the Communists took Zschippach away from Werner's Mama. Werner never forgot that and held it against her for the rest of their lives. Uncle Kurt Wilhelm told Werner to forget and forgive as Martha was too stupid to know what she said and she is always making such stupid remarks and that the family has learned to ignore her. Well, we went to visit Aunt Martha in Rosbacher Strasse 2a a number of times when we were in Naumburg. She was always one of those stiff, quiet, discontented, resentful types, where nothing could please them. Werner would tell her what day we were coming by train. Martha, well into her 70's and suffering from bone cancer, would walk the 1/2 mile to the train station and check the arrival times for trains from the West, then she would walk back down to the train station and meet every train, looking for her nephew Werner. It never worked out that we met her there for Werner always somehow ended up on a later train when she had all but given up hope of seeing him. She would always have a real nice supper in readiness for us, awaiting our arrival. The supper meal is usually a cold one in Germany, but she would have something hot for us as a treat. That was especially touching when one considers that all of Martha's life since her husband was killed by a bomb in Apolda in 1944 she had no money, growing all her own food and living on a very meager pension. So feeding us was a burden on her. While she put supper on the table, Werner and I would always stroll through her back garden, admiring her flowers and vegetables, and her rabbits. She always kept at least 8 or 9 rabbits, eating the older ones as the babies were born. Several times a day she would go into the back yard, cut some real tall grass with a sickle, and stuff the tall grass into the cages for the rabbits. Werner would always whisper to me that the garden was much finer when his grandmother Rosa Muller Wilhelm kept it, and there were many more rabbits. Things really kind of slid downhill when Rosa got sick and died.

As we walked through the Naumburg back yard Werner would examine the garages in the back of the lot and get real upset. These garages used to be Grandpa Wilhelm's work shop for his stone cutting, Werner told us, and now Kurt Bamberg built even more and rents them out to his neighbors and pockets the rents even though this is our property. The garages are more lucrative than the apartments, it turns out, as there are rent controls on the apartments and not on the garages. We also found out that Uncle Kurt had played around with the bank accounts for the rents and also played around with the deeds to this property so that Martha and her children could collect the rents, even though the property and the rents therefrom belonged to Werner and his sister Astrid. This backfired on the Bamberg family once. The Russians were coming through town for a grand parade, so all the people along the parade route, including the Bambergs, were told that they had to stucco the fronts of their buildings so that it would look nice along the parade route! You didn't have to stucco the sides or back, just the front where it showed to passersby! So that's what happened, the front was prettied up and the stucco is falling off the back of the house.



Wilhelm Familie Rossbacher Strasse 2 a Haus

Werner used to often take the trolley to Aunt Martha's although we did sometimes walk to save the 10 cents and for sentimental reasons as he often walked this route with his ancestors. There were always huge banners proclaiming Communistic slogans erected right outside the train station in Naumburg, and Werner and I used to read them with a smile on our faces. Werner and I were in and out of this train station many a time on the way to and from the house of his ancestors. (His great grandfather August built the home together with his son August. Werner's father and all his brothers and sisters were born here. And the house belongs to Werner's father Dr. med Werner Wilhelm as he bought out the other children at the time of his parent's death. In fact, he bought Martha out 3 times, giving her the money again every time she was in dire straits.) So it was very fitting that the first dream I had of Werner after his death, he was standing on the front steps of the train station in Naumburg, on the way to the house of his Wilhelm ancestors, telling me that I had to write and let Astrid know he was dead. In my dream I told him that he looked very fit and able to me, so why didn't he tell her himself. (I wouldn't be one bit surprised if he did just that, knowing him. He always loved being the first bearer of important news.)

In earlier times I used to bring a big parcel of new clothing for Suzanna and Andrea, but just as Astrid said, it was never good enough and they were always looking for something more, so I gave up the clothes bearing project in exasperation. One time I brought clothing for both, but unbeknownst to me, Andrea had put on a lot of weight and was no longer the same size as Susanna so it turned out that most of the clothing fit Susanna and only a few items fit Andrea. Andrea was sad but her father Kurt Bamberg, who was becoming drunker by the hour, was downright miffed about his daughter getting the short end of the stick and he showed it openly. With every passing hour he got more sullen and more drunk. It was a most unpleasant evening for me, but it all rolled over Werner's head and he didn't notice a thing, besides Aunt Martha's good cooking, that is. Anne Rosa also got a bit tight that night too, which I found uncomfortable.

Once Aunt Martha took Werner and I to the Naumburger Dom on our first visit there in 1980. She walked up the very steep hill on the other side of her house,

which surprised me as she was over 70 years old, considerably overweight and not in the best of health. But all through the years she was used to walking everywhere to save the precious little bit of money. I was even more surprised when Werner acquiesced to walk up that long steep hill without a peep. You ask him to walk more than 10 feet on an even grade and he howls to the high heavens! That particular day he was very quiet, polite and meekly followed Aunt Martha up that long steep grade. When Martha got on even ground she took off like a shot ahead of us, leaving us to trail far behind. I could see that Martha was emotionally affected by Werner visiting her after such a long absence, so I told him to catch up to his Aunt Martha Bamberg and to walk with her and put his arm around her. This he immediately did and one could see that Aunt Martha was visibly pleased by his show of affection, although she had a hard time dealing with it as she is a nondemonstrative person and doesn't know how to deal very well with shows of affection. We soon arrived at the Naumburger Dom. It was extremely impressive, to say the least. On the outside it is a magnificent piece of architecture out of the middle ages, but inside, after having been in the magnificent Catholic Churches of Bavaria, it is unbelievably bare. In the Catholic Churches there is the Altar which is the focal point of the Church, in this church there is no focal point and I had to look all around to try and figure out which way to face, which I never did ascertain. There is something interesting to look at in all directions, and nothing that you could say was the front or back of the Church. The most interesting part of that Church is the statue of the Ute and her husband, which was carved in the late 11 hundreds. The face of the Ute was smashed by vandals in the beginning of this century, so the German government took bids and examined the workmanship of many sculptors throughout Germany, and finally awarded the contract to restore the face of the Ute to Werner's Grandfather, August Wilhelm II who was a master sculptor. This was a very great honor which the family cherishes to this day.

The Naumburger Dom is a very impressive Cathedral dating back to the 1100's. It has a very impressive row of arches all along the two inner courtyard sides of the cathedral. Werner was very emotionally taken by these arches, stating that his father walked under these arches every day going to school at the Naumburger Dom, to the Real (pronounced ree-AI) Gymnasium. Werner's father being able to attend this school was a real honor for only the children of the wealthy and the nobility were able to attend a Cathedral Gymnasium in those days. A very rare exception was made for Werner's father in those times because the young lad was so exceptionally brilliant, a fact which the teachers picked up on at a very young age.

Another interesting fact about the Naumburger Dom. Naturally it was Catholic until the time of the reformation. Around this time a member of the church commented that maybe the Naumburger Dom might be lost to the Catholic Church, that it might become Lutheran. The listening party scoffed at this thought, saying that it would be more likely for a cat to be on the extremely high roof of the Cathedral than this church turn Lutheran. So when the Church was

lost to the Lutherans a short time later, the Lutherans put a metal cat on the edge of the roof, which has remained there till the present day. Werner pointed the cat out to me, saying wasn't that a nasty thing for them to do. It was as though the Lutherans were gloating over their victory.

The cemetery is only a short distance away from the Dom, so after we went inside and admired the architecture and the Ute and her husband and the other carved figures, we went on foot to the cemetery. One last word about the carved figures high on the wall of the Dom, these were life size figures, and they are only about 4 foot tall. Mankind got over 1 foot taller on an average in these past 900 years.



The cemetery is very old, and typically very Germanic. They do not have grass like our cemeteries. Rather they have rows of dirt paths, and the graves lie in straight rows along these paths. They have upright grave stones and in front of the stones are usually perennial vines or flowers. The grave stones often have more than one name on them for the graves are dug 3 bodies deep, and the bodies are then placed one on top of the other. They do not have cement vaults, so the bare wooden casket is placed in the grave. The casket disintegrates after about 7 to 10 years and the grave then sinks in. The family then knows that they now have one more burial plot available. When a person dies, the cemetery digs down until they either hit a casket or a lot of bones. They then quit at that level. So the hole can be one, two or three persons deep, depending on how many caskets have fallen together and how well the bones have disintegrated over the years. The Wilhelms have 3 graves side by side and they had 3 bodies in each grave, with the names engraved 3 per stone. Aunt Martha is now buried there in one of those graves so we now have 4 in one of those graves. The family only owns the grave for 20 years, so they have to rebuy the plot every 20 years. If they do not rebuy the plot the cemetery pulls the headstones off the plots and throws them away and then resells the plot to someone else.

On our way out of the cemetery, Suzanne, Annerose's 14 year old daughter, met us on her bicycle as she just got out of school for the day. Werner had enough of walking so we all waited just outside of the cemetery till the streetcar arrived and took us right across the street from Aunt Martha's house on Rossbacher Strasse 2a. A funny story about the streetcar in Naumburg. For years and years, since its inception, it went around in a circle, starting and ending at the train station.

Then one day in the 1980's the sewer pipe broke under the street in the street car's path and they were afraid to run the street car over the broken pipe for fear the street might collapse and swallow the street car. They tried to replace the under the street sewage pipe but found out that no such thing existed in East Germany. So they couldn't repair it. As a result their solution to the dilemma was to run two street cars in a half circle, coming together where the broken street pipe was. You then got off the one street car, walked across the broken pipe, and then got onto the other streetcar. Just before the wall fell the communists solved this problem by putting 4 small pipes inside the big broken pipe.

Werner and I often walked the way from the train station to his grandfather's house in memory of Werner's childhood days when he would walk this way with his family. Whenever he saw the streetcar pass the Wilhelm home on Rossbacher Strasse, he would tell me the story of the time his grandfather babysat him all day and how restless he was and always asking when his grandmother was coming back. Grandpa Wilhelm got sick of answering all those questions, so he took little Werner in his lap and had him count the street cars that went by and had him watch each one real close to see if his grandmother was going to get off one of them. To Grandpa Wilhelm's relief, his wife finally stepped down out of one of those cars and took little Werner off his weary hands.

The Naumburg train station was one of nostalgic fond memories for Werner. He always felt like he was back home again when he stepped off the train and back into that station. In fact, right after he died I had a dream of him, that he was standing on the front steps of that train station, looking down to his grandparent's house and telling me that I had to let Astrid know that he was dead. It would be very typical of him to go back to the home of his forefathers where he felt so wanted, comfortable and at home. Werner especially loved the affection he received from his grandmother Rosa Mueller Wilhelm and his uncle Erhard Wilhelm.



Werner Wilhelm & Eberhard Seibicke in Mertendorf

We used to get off the train there with Uncle Kurt. One time we had luggage with us and Kurt and I carried the luggage and Werner carried the briefcase. Werner then went to the phone to try to call the Seibickes. He had the phone number but not the area code so he called the operator and asked for the area code. The operator hadn't a clue as to what the area code for Mertendorf would be. It's near Eisenburg, Werner told them. That meant nothing to the operator. They

had no phone books and if you didn't know what the area code was, there was no way of finding out. Why don't you ask the Seibickes what their area code is, the operator asked Werner , trying to be helpful. How can I call them and ask them if I don't know the area code, Werner says explosively! Well, go visit them and ask them in person, was the operator's solution as to how to get the area code. Yup. Real helpful. Typical communism. Total run around in circles incompetence. I don't give a damn attitude, so don't bother me. We don't make phone calls in this country, so if you feel you should have to make one, you have the problem, not me.

While Werner was screaming down the plaster off the walls of the train station, I was looking around, counting how many people were staring at Werner in amazement. Seeing someone get that hot over a phone call was a real novelty to the people in East Germany. That phone was just a decoration, like a flower pot to these people. No one has a phone, so what would you ever need a phone for? The Seibickes have a phone as they are the village post office, so the government put the phone in their house for the convenience of the government, not for the Seibicke's benefit. While looking around, I saw Werner's cousin Kurt Bamberg, drunk as a skunk, stumbling through the arches coming toward us. When Kurt saw Werner, he did a rapid about face and ran the other way, getting lost for the entire evening. When he did come home to the Wilhelm residence about 11:30 p.m. Werner confronted him with the fact that I saw him run away from Werner in the train station. Kurt Bamberg denied he ran away, saying he suddenly remembered that he had a meeting with a fellow about repairing the roof. Ya, sure.

But the last time we were in Naumburg Kurt treated Werner and me like a million dollars. He especially cooked rabbit for us and served Werner his best beer. He stoked the tile oven full of coal and had it so warm in the living room for Werner that you could hardly breathe. But in the adjoining bedroom I nearly froze to death in the mostly unheated room. Believe me, you REALLY had to go to the bathroom real bad before you would climb out from under that feather blanket and walk through the unheated house to get to the outside to use the community toilet shared with 5 other families.



Erhard Wilhelm

On one visit to the Bamberg residence while Martha was still alive I mentioned to Werner that the house hadn't had a coat of paint on any of its interior walls since Uncle Erhard died in 1942 and that the living room wall was positively gray with age and soot from the tile stove. Werner, big mouth that he often was, relayed this to the Bambergs. The next time we came there, there was fresh new wallpaper on the living room walls.

On one visit to the Bambergs Uncle Kurt mentioned to them that I was interested in genealogy and would like to see pictures of Wilhelm ancestors. Aunt Martha brought out the Wilhelm album and they allowed me to photograph all of the old pictures. I later turned them into 8 X 10s after Werner's death.

The Bambergs had wonderful paintings on the walls, some of them painted by August Wilhelm. They also had marble columns carved by August in his younger years. Astrid really wanted to get a hold of these treasures but as she was not in favor with the Bamberg family I doubt very much if they would be willing to part with any of these.



Rosa Mueller Wilhelm

Grandma Rosa Wilhelm's piano sat in the living room on one wall and it brought me back in time to when Rosa would sit in front of that piano and play "Lobe der Herr" on all festive occasions. Dr Wilhelm also played that piano in his childhood years.

The sculpture in this house was of the finest quality and was done by the younger and elder August Wilhelm. There was a carving of the Last Supper at the entranceway to the house in the front, and on the back porch was a carved statue of an owl. Young little Werner always wanted to own that owl statue.



Werner Wilhelm an Rosbacher Strasse in Naumburg

There was a very modern pleasant treat that awaited Werner and me the last time we got off the train and went outside the train station on the way to the Wilhelm house. Right next to the train station was a new, very modern glass garden like addition in which they sold wurst, beer and pop. I had three wurst on a bun and Werner had two they were so delicious. And besides we had no idea if we were going to get anything to eat as the standard Bamberg greeting to the Wilhelms through the years was a plaintive, crying "Ah, we have nothing to eat in the house!" And outside the wurst Stube was another new sight to behold. Right across the street stood 6 brand new Mercedes taxis. Under the communists you couldn't get a taxi to save your life and if you did manage to snag one, they were a two cylinder Wachtberg or Trabi that went bluka,bluka, bluka and belched out so much raw gas and blue smoke that it was a rare passenger that didn't end up sick to their stomach!



Anne Rose Hahn, Susanne Hahn Weber, Werner Wilhelm, Martha Bamberg & Kurt Wilhelm