

This autobiography by my mother, Marian Beth Ness Tucker, was an important focus for her in her late sixties, early seventies. After she wrote her story, she also completed a biography of my father, Thomas Allen Tucker.

I've now scanned her story to PDF, and am glad to share it beyond the few printed copies she made when she first shared it in 1992. She was very dedicated to this project. It was almost like another child of hers, as was my father's book. I wish I had been more gracious with her about it at the time, because now that I'm 66 I better understand it. According to psychologist Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development, 65 years up is "Integrity vs. Despair" stage. I can feel in my older bones how important it is to see your life as having meaning, especially in the shadow of our western culture where being of monetary value rather trumps all.

So I hope you enjoy the heartfelt words of a brilliant, kind, irascible 20th century woman who bested more challenges than many to create a meaningful life for herself, family and community. Especially for her eldest child Phil, now 75, who you will meet in the pages of this book.



Gail Tucker Whipple  
written from Spark Studio  
Belmont California  
June 2021



*"Bloom where you are planted"*

*The Autobiography of  
Marian Beth Ness Tucker  
written for  
her children and grandchildren*

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I dedicate this story of my life

- ◇ First of all to my dear grandchildren, Lucas Allen Whipple, Nicholas Brian Tucker, Andra Sophia-Beth Whipple, and the little grandson due next Spring as I write this dedication. I want you to know much more about your grandparents than I ever did...
- ◇ Next to Phil, Brian, Gail and Jim for being such delightful, interesting, different children to raise...
- ◇ To Cyd, Tim and Sumi for agreeing to love and share their lives with Brian, Gail and Jim...
- ◇ To Helen, my sister, whom I have loved since she was born, and whom I miss with a passion, as I do Brian who went before her...
- ◇ And last, but never least, and first in my heart, to Tom who has loved me through thick and through thin (emotionally and physically)...and never once faltered in his dedication to our marriage or to our family...and who always encouraged me in whatever it was I wanted to do — *even before we ever heard of Women's Lib.*

*Dear Lucas,  
you're 4 1/4 years as I write  
this note to you — already a most  
interesting individual. May your life  
be wonderfully happy and fulfilling.  
Love,  
Grandma Marian*

November 1991

*A note to the Tucker children and grandchildren:*

*I read Marian's biography with a great deal of emotion as well as interest. It is a very clear description of her life and family: growing up as part of the Thora/Harry Ness family in Chicago; growing even more as part of the Marian/Tom Tucker family of Detroit, Chicago and California.*

*Gordon and I have been privileged, along with our children, to have been part as siblings, in-laws, aunt and uncle and cousins, sharing to the extent that these relationships convey, the problems and the joys of extended family life.*

*As sisters, Marian and I have been fortunate to have learned the basic optimism of our parents. We have grown up in their beliefs, understanding in later years their restrictions, their failures, and their wonderful achievements, as they have evolved into our failures, frustrations and achievements. At this point in your lives you have had enough failure, frustration and joy to know the stress as well as the joy that holds family together in the face of overwhelming grief: the love that knits family together, time after time.*

*As sisters, Marian and I have been fortunate to have married men who have supported us and added to our concepts of life, over those periods when life has been very difficult as well as successful. So this tribute is not only to Marian, a person I love as well as someone I admire. It is also to Tom who has been a supportive and loving partner for all of the Tucker children, their families, and the extended families of their marriage.*

*Think hard about Marian's narrative: growing up in the 20's and 30's. Maturing in the 40's and 60's. Getting old in the 80's and 90's. Take her experience to heart, and learn from it the love which is passed on from generation to generation, along with the hopes and frustrations, the joy as well as the grief.*

*This is a tribute to Marian and Tom, and their lives spent in trying to make life better for all of us.*



Helen Ness Kingsley



Christmas 1988 - This story begins on the next page 91 years before this day - and this is how some of the family you are going to read about looked when they were grown and I was 68. Top picture, front row: Gordon, Helen, Kay and son Eric, Pat & Betsy Whipple (Tim's mom & sister), baby Lucas, Jane Kingsley Baughn, Cyd, Marian, Brian Baughn, Tom. Back row: Phil, Steve (well hidden), Gail, Tim, Jim Brian. Bottom picture: Tom, Marian, Tim, Lucas, Gail, Brian. In back: Sumi, Jim, Cyd, Phil.



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## Alpha...An Overview

**Gail, my daughter, says I write facts, not feelings.** I don't think this is a criticism, just a comment about the letters I write. She is right. I tend not to lay my feelings bare before the world because I don't want to feel naked in front of it. Whenever I was reprimanded as a child, that is precisely the feeling I had — standing naked and ashamed, with the whole world looking on.

No doubt Freud would make something of that. The truth is, we children were never made to feel ashamed of our bodies or our feelings. I felt loved, appreciated, worth-while. But certain things were expected of us — at least, I thought so — and perhaps that is why I felt stripped down if I didn't achieve.

The more I have thought about my parents since I began to write my story for our children, the more I realized the hard times and tragedies they endured in their lifetimes. Mother—Thora Sophia Grendahl Ness — was really quite a remarkable woman. Her parents, Peder and Gunhild Marie (Odegaard) Grendahl were immigrants, coming from Norway to Chicago to find their fortunes. Mother was their first child, born on March 30, 1898, the oldest of four children, and the only daughter. Like many young girls and boys at that time, she never had the chance to finish high school — one year was all she had before she took a job to help out with family finances — not unusual in those days. Still, her arithmetic, grammar, spelling, and command of language was better than that of many college students' today. But while she really enjoyed her job doing typing and general office work, when she was only seventeen she had to quit and stay home to take her mother's place in raising her three younger brothers, Arthur, 14, Norman, 12, and Philip, 10. Her mother died giving birth to twin daughters, still-born, who were buried with her.

Dad—Harry Elmore Ness — was born in Chicago, too, on February 8, 1895, the sixth of seven children of Nils and Beret Ness, also immigrants from Norway. From the oldest to the youngest there were Rheinie, Nicola, Bert, Lester, Gerda, Harry, and John. Like Mother, Dad had little education beyond grade school. But he had a wonderful talent for art which he developed into a profession, entering THE CHICAGO ART INSTITUTE at age 14. After graduation he worked as a retoucher and illustrator. He found a good friend and eventual partner in Walter Sabel, and within a few years they opened the ADVERTISING ART STUDIO on the 25th floor of the Mather Tower in downtown Chicago, the beginning of a very successful business. One of his big accounts was Schlitz, "the beer that made Milwaukee famous." We loved to visit Dad's studio, especially to stand on the outside balcony of the fire escape to stare way down to the street far below, marveling at how small

everything looked.

Mother and Dad met and courted at Emmanuel Lutheran Church where they were both confirmed. They eloped to Waukeegan, Ill. April 24, 1916 and soon after set up housekeeping in Chicago with her father and brothers. Within a year they bought the house at 3724 Sunnyside Avenue where Richard, my brother, was born on December 18, 1918. A year and a half later, on August 11, 1920, I came along. Just before I was two, about a year before Helen was born on December 16, 1923, Grandpa Grendahl was killed by a hit-and-run driver while standing on a street corner waiting for a bus to take him home from work. And so Harry and Thora, while in their early twenties, were raising three teen-age boys and had three children of their own!

I wish I could remember my grandparents, but they are only pictures in a box full of old snapshots. Mother told me how proud her father was of us and how, like a typical grandfather, he would bounce us on his knees when he came home from work. Since he was killed when I was so young, I can't recall that. And neither Helen nor I can remember Mother saying anything at all about his being lame, although our cousin, Audrey, Art's daughter, says that her Dad told her, before he died, how hard life had been for Peder because of his lameness... but how serious it was, or what caused it, she didn't know.

I do remember Mother telling how much Grandpa loved to hear her play the piano. She had learned as a young girl when some kind neighbor paid for her lessons in exchange for her practicing at his house so he could enjoy the music. (The radio hadn't been invented yet.) I don't remember when they bought our piano (the one I learned on), but I remember it as always being there — a big, solid upright. It must have cost a fortune for a young family in those days. Still, strange to remember, I saw more pianos in people's homes when I was young, even in poor homes, than I do now. I don't know if they treasured music more, or if it's because today's children have more options, such as TV, radio, and tapes. Mother was a good pianist and she played for our Sunday School until I took over in my teens. Dad enjoyed playing the piano, too, but he did something I never saw anyone else do — he played only the black keys! The melody was fine, but the harmony was a bit strange.

My father's father, Nils Ness, had passed away even earlier, and my father's mother, Beret Ness, soon afterward, both of them before Grandpa Grendahl was killed. So you can see that Richard, Helen, and I never knew even one of our grandparents. Mother said that Grandma Ness had told Grandpa Grendahl that when the trumpet sounded from heaven above she was going to rise from her grave and nod to Grandma Marie Grendahl and say, "How do you do?" ... and then tell her how glad she was to meet her...that she felt she knew her already, having heard so much



about her from her husband and daughter. And then they would have a cup of coffee together, the embodiment of real Scandinavian hospitality. (The Grendahl and Ness graves are all in the same plot at Mt. Olive Cemetery on Chicago's *northwest side.*)

I can recall some memories *hazily in detail*, but strong as far as mood is concerned. One of my favorite memories is of long walks with our family on warm summer evenings, shopping on Lawrence Avenue, or getting books at the library on Irving Park. We were all avid readers. On our way back it would already be dark, and Dad would tell us all about the heavens and the stars. We seemed to be the only ones in the whole big city. It was a lovely, magical time...followed by hot chocolate ...and then we would go, very tired, to bed.

We all enjoyed going to Aunt Gerdie's (Dad's sister) because we could play with Bob, Les, and Carole. It was there I first rode a bicycle. They were no better off than we were during the depression, I'm sure, but they had a bicycle, something we didn't have until we were in our mid-teens. No one taught me to ride. I just got on the bike one time when Les had left it at the curb...decided to try it, and found it was no trouble at all...you just had to go fast enough to make it stay up. Aunt Gerdie was fun, but a real character. She had two topics she could never let go of. One was what a saint President Roosevelt was (even if you agreed, it got to be a bit much)...and the other was how wrong Lutherans (and any other religion except the very fundamental ones) were. She always inquired if you...or any stranger she met on the street, was "saved". (She has proved to be the longest lived of all her family. She is still living as I write this, well over 90...has buried three husbands, two much younger than she.)<sup>1</sup>

We enjoyed going to Aunt Nick's (Dad's other sister) and Uncle George's, too, even though Howard, my cousin who was my age, was a real pest, always aiming his rubber band gun at me, too often successfully. But it was fun to visit with my older cousins, Ardis and Muriel. Later on, Howard and I became really good friends, but not until we had grown to young adulthood and he began to appreciate me as a friend. Aunt Nick died when I was thirteen, very unexpectedly. I felt terribly sad, and in school that morning when we had roll call, which we had to answer with a favorite saying, I remember startling the class with a very sober quote, "From the moment we are born, we begin to die."

I was ambiguous about going to see Auntie Inga and Uncle Hoem, Mother's aunt and uncle. They had a two-flat apartment with an open back porch on the second floor which I was always afraid I would fall from. Uncle Hoem was a nice old man who was always rocking in his chair and listening to the phonograph. But I hated his kiss which I could never escape. His mouth was always wet from chewing on a smelly old, very wet cigar. Yuck! But they did have

that phonograph/victrola with a record we loved — a man saying, "Stop your ticklin', Jack, " and then going into spasms of laughter which continued on, and on, and on.... until we laughed until we couldn't stop, too.

**My very first blurred memory is of my sister Helen's baptism**, although I was very young. I just remember that Helen was very sick with pneumonia and that Mother was very worried. The family stood around our dining room table which was covered with the red wool Norwegian cloth with tassels on it. The light shone down from the large, beautiful stained glass chandelier, while Pastor Alvestad sprinkled the baby with water. Luckily, shortly after that Helen recovered and became the picture of health. I also remember that Mother had chosen Eleanor for her name. For some reason, it was changed to Helen at baptism, and eventually on her birth certificate, too.

I also have a vague memory of sitting in a wagon with tall sides, surrounded by milk bottles, holding on for dear life, while Phil and Norman raced me down Sunnyside Avenue to Hamlin and then two more blocks to Montrose to Mrs. Frost's little grocery store to shop. I must have been three years old.

Norman and Philip are still firmly imbedded in my memory even after all these years. When I was in first grade at HELGE A. HAUGAN SCHOOL I told some big boys who were teasing me that they had better stop or I would have my big brother Norman beat up on them. I was crushed when he told me he wasn't my brother but my uncle. Norman tried to explain the difference, but I wouldn't accept that. Uncles were very special — but I certainly didn't see them every day, I reasoned. Norman, Phil and Art lived with us. They were brothers, as far as I was concerned. (Art later moved away to marry Louise Schultz, who became my cousin Audrey's<sup>2</sup> mother.) But Norman and Phil stayed with us for as long as they lived.

Sadly, for Phil that wasn't too long. He was such a dear, lovable person — tall, handsome, athletic, grey-eyed, musical. I loved to hear him strum his old banjo. Somehow he developed rheumatic fever in his teens. Today he would probably have lived a long life, but penicillin wasn't discovered until much later. Phil seemed to be getting along okay for few years after developing the fever, but then he became very ill and was an invalid for about a year before he died. I wasn't quite eight then, but I still remember how quiet and sad we were the morning in April that Mother told us Phil had died a few hours before we woke up. She had been up with him most of the night, she said. Toward morning she heard him call once again and she hurried over to him. He asked her if she didn't see Jesus there at the foot of his bed. Then he called out, "Jesus"... and he smiled and died, not quite twenty-two years old.

As was the custom then, Phil was laid out in the living room instead of in a funeral parlor, and a wreath was hung on the front door to let the neighbors know

there was a death in the house. Folks came by to pay their respects in the next two days. And then the undertaker came to take Philip to Emmanuel Lutheran Church, and he was buried from there. I loved Philip dearly. We named our first son after him. This Phil was sweet dispositioned, too...but he was born with the problem of mental retardation. But that's another story.

**We lived in a comfortable, middle-class, predominantly Jewish neighborhood** on Sunnyside Avenue from the time I was a baby until I was fifteen. It was a typical Chicago neighborhood, with single-family homes, two story apartments, even large apartments all mixed together. The large elementary school we attended was only a block away, with four huge playgrounds where several softball games were always in process, it seems — in the afternoon by the school kids who had just been let out. Dick, and often Helen, would have pick-up games. In the early evening, teams from the neighborhood, like Norman and his friends, would play several times a week with us kids always on hand to cheer them on.

Our house was frame, set right on the lot line so there were only a few feet between us and the next-door neighbor to the East, the Norrises. The small area between the two homes was a great place to hide when playing games with the other kids. We had a large side yard between us and the neighbors to the West, the Blaneys. It was big enough so we could play a game of pick-up ball or catch. Mother kept a pretty garden, and I remember many varieties of tulips, cosmos and iris...and currant bushes and grape vines growing along the fence. There was a cherry tree with a low branch which was easy to climb... and not too far from the ground if you were to fall, which I did occasionally. There was also a large, one-room playhouse which Dad built for Helen and me one summer, with two windows and a small front porch, and real furniture.

The front porch on our big house had a big swing, a great place for dreaming or reading. Through the porch door we entered into the front hall of our house. The large kitchen was straight ahead off the hall, featuring a big, round oak table for our large family. The stairs to the basement were there, too. It was a place we dreaded to go — so dark and scary with a dirt floor and tiny windows! The living room, to the right of the front hall, had lace curtains covering the large front window. The dining room was off the living room to the back with French doors leading to an unheated, closed-in back porch which ran the width of the house. We played on the porch during the summer. It had a couch where one of the boys sometimes slept — or one of us children if we were sick and needed a place to lie during the day. I went through whooping cough there, and suffered through many ear aches, the chicken-pox, measles, and a bout with infected ingrown toenails after I operated on them myself.

There was a door to the back porch from the kitchen, also, and our round ice-

box was located there. The inside of the ice-box was like a three-tiered lazy Susan, very practical because you didn't have to reach back to get anything... just turn it round and around. No one that we knew owned a refrigerator yet, so the iceman, driving a wagon pulled by an old horse clopping along, was a familiar figure. We placed a large square cardboard sign in the front window with either a 25 or 50 placed upright to designate how many pounds of ice we needed that day. Of course we sometimes came down to a wet floor in the morning because someone had forgotten to empty the ice pan before bedtime.

A landing and a staircase on the left of the hallway led upstairs to our three bedrooms and a bath. The tub was old-fashioned — high and oval-shaped, with claw feet. Helen and I shared the front bedroom. Dick slept in the alcove just off it. During a long seige of the chicken pox, Dick and I rigged up a rope communication system using the posters of our beds, which allowed us to pass notes back and forth. Mom and Dad had the bigger back bedroom. We could see down into the dining room from there because of the hot air register in the floor with a grille which opened or closed to regulate the heat coming in from downstairs. A great place for spying! Norman, Art, and Phil alternated in the other back bedroom or the back porch downstairs.

Sometimes mother's Auntie Ragna stayed with us and used the small back bedroom. Usually that was when Arthur, Norman, and Philip were visiting the farm in Wisconsin. Other times Auntie stayed with Uncle Ole and Aunt Mary, or with Margarethe Hatlen on her farm in Wisconsin. (These folks were all on mother's side of the family). Poor Aunt Ragna. I'm not sure what her problem was. Diagnoses were hard to come by in those days. She may have been slightly mentally retarded, but she might have been mentally ill. They just said she was "a little peculiar." Mother told me she had been "raped at the point of a knife" when she was a young girl in Norway. She had a baby girl, Selma, as a result. Selma died when she was about two or three, and Auntie "was never right after that." Wherever Ragna stayed, she helped with the housework and cooking. I remember she had one glass eye and was very placid and pleasant.<sup>3</sup> She also had a large, painful bunion on one foot, and Dad's brother, Les, who stayed with us occasionally after an alcoholic binge, would get furious with her when he would find her soaking her feet in the large kettle we used for soup. It's amazing what's important to people. He'd ignore the fact that he and Aunt Mildred would leave their three children alone for days at a time but he would get unhappy with Aunt Ragna for soaking her aching feet in our kettle (which could always be sterilized with very little trouble at all.)<sup>4</sup>

**I was the middle child**, a year and a half younger than Dick and three-and a half years older than Helen. We were all tow-headed and we all inherited mother's big blue, myopic eyes and had to wear glasses. Too bad we didn't inherit Dad's.

He didn't wear glasses until he was in his sixties, and then only for reading.

Dick and Helen, both excellent athletes, were kindred spirits in spite of the age difference between them. I, on the other hand, was a dedicated couch potato, a non-participant in strenuous sports on doctor's orders because I had been born with *a serious heart murmur*.

The neighborhood children often gathered just before dark in the summertime to play games. We loved RED ROVER, HIGHER THAN THE GROUND, OLE, OLE, OCEAN FREE, AND BABY STEPS GIANT STEPS. They were games that didn't take skill and everyone, big or little, boy or girl, could take part in them.

Johnson Park was only two blocks from our home. It wasn't a "tree and picnic" park. Just a huge playground across from the Jewish Synagogue. During all seasons except winter we could be found there hanging on the swinging bars or the rings, or sliding down the poles, or pulling ourselves up on the trapezes. In the wintertime we went to Johnson Park, too, to skate on the ice rink. That is, Dick and Helen would skate. I tried hard but usually ended up skating on my ankles.

**My closest friend in the neighborhood** was Adeline Gerlitz, the girl across the street, a first generation American whose father and mother had thick German accents. She lived with her parents on the first floor while her two grown brothers and their wives and a baby or two lived on the second. They were a loud family, always arguing so the whole neighborhood could hear them. We could also hear "Old Mr. Gerlitz," as we always called him, snoring all through the night every summer when he slept on his screened-in front porch. It was directly across from our bedroom at the front of the house so there was no escape.

Adeline and I would spend a lot of time walking to the "dime store" a mile away, or roller skating around the block, or going to Feldmans, the corner store, to buy bags of penny candy. For a penny we could buy a carmel (if it had a white spot in it after you bit into it, it was free) or a chocolate fudge bar with a vanilla baseball, or a candy banana. Sometimes we would play "house." I couldn't understand why her brothers and their wives would be so amused when we would give each other a baby for a present. The truth is we had nowhere near the sexual awareness that children of today have — even those much younger than we were then. There was no television, which probably explains our naivete. Radio had come into public use only a few years before, and TV wasn't heard of until many years later. Movies then had self-imposed censorship. No explicit sex...even married couples had to be shown sleeping in twin beds, never together. Such prudish standards are laughable today, but it would be a relief, I think, for the entertainment industry to impose a higher standard — as it once did all by itself! — than it does today. It might give youngsters an idea of all the wonderful things there

are to learn about in life before their childhood is taken away with the extreme sophistication and self-indulgence we see around. Greed is a lot to blame, I think, for the chaos we have created. Sex is big money for some people. It should be a precious gift for all.

My sister's best friend was Roslyn Stein who lived two doors to the East. She, too, lived with an extended family — her mother and father, sister Anita, uncles Harry, Benny, and Milton, and grandmother, Mrs. Krakover. They were a Jewish family from Poland. Even now I can recall the distrust between the families of our friends. The Steins were wary of the Gerlitzes and the Gerlitzes had little tolerance for the Steins. We enjoyed both families and could not understand the undercurrents. World War II made us much more aware!

All our families enjoyed wonderful home-cooking. Mrs. Gerlitz baked every Saturday, all day long. Her coffee cakes were delicious and the smell of baking bread was tantalizing. Mrs. Krakover made wonderful chicken soup (doesn't every Jewish mother?) and also wonderful borscht (beet soup.) She kept a Kosher kitchen and had two sets of dishes which had to be washed separately at all times. I thought this was very strange. My mother was no slouch as a cook and baker, either. We would come home from school to the most delicious smell of white and rye bread at least once a week, and spread it with her home-made grape or cherry jam from our own vines or tree in the back yard. Mother also made marvelous lemon chiffon pies as well as angel food and sunshine cakes, using a hand whisk, not an electric beater. Dick and Helen seem to have inherited that same talent. I'm not bad...just not interested.

Mrs. Krakover thought her granddaughter, Roslyn, was "sickly" and she had the notion that eating bacon would build up her strength. So she would buy a pound now and then and ask my mother to keep it and cook it for Roslyn because, of course, no Kosher family could have bacon in the house. I heard her say, however, that while she loved our family, she would never forgive us if we tried to make a Christian out of Roslyn.

In spite of that, Roslyn learned the Norwegian table prayer<sup>5</sup> we prayed before every meal. She impressed her Jewish friends when she went with them to the movie about the life of Knute Rockne, the great Notre Dame football coach. He was Norwegian, too, and the movie showed his family praying the same table prayer we always said. Roslyn joined in saying the prayer out loud in the theater and told us all that her friends turned to her in great surprise and said, (use a Jewish accent here) "Rozzie, how come?"

**My brother Dick smiled his way through school**, Mother always said. He was very bright, but this allowed him to coast along in school with little effort.

He was not really interested in being a scholar. He was an excellent softball and basketball player, always on some team in the neighborhood or church. Everyone liked Dick. A real salesman personality, he was a most affable person with a great sense of humor. Whenever we talked on the phone later on as adults, he would always start off the conversation with a new joke.

Helen was a very independent girl. She had a brilliant mind and a smile to match. She was an excellent student, even in grade school. Later on she had scholarships through North Park Jr. College and graduate school at the University of Wisconsin. She was also a first-class athlete, always the first to be chosen at any time, even on the boys' grade-school football team which she captained after school. For a while she insisted on being called Henry or Ralph, depending on which outfit of boy's clothing she was wearing at the time (only after school). In those days girls seldom wore pants, but Helen did, and high top boots, as well, with a Boy Scout knife in the pocket on the side of the boots! Dad was a bit concerned, but Mother felt that she should be indulged, even going so far as to cut her hair in a boy's cut (she was about nine or ten) which shocked everyone. The idea was that after her hair grew out, Helen would grow out of her boyish ways. However, that didn't happen. She was a real tomboy, much to my mortification (I was at an age when the least change from the norm was a cause for embarrassment) until she was a sophomore in high school. There she became best friends with a couple of up-to-the-minute, fashion-conscious girls, and she changed styles. This was even more mortifying because she began to have more boy friends than I did! One night I let one out the back door as another came in the front.

**Most of our social life centered around church.** Dad and mother had many friends at Emmanuel Lutheran Church. The Sunday School which we attended as children, beginning at age three, was a large one. We played around a long sand-box while the teacher told us stories from the Bible. It was there that I learned the BOOKS OF THE BIBLE in song from Mamie Pedersen, a wonderful woman who had never married, but who had an adopted daughter, Minnie. I can still reel off the books of the Old and New Testaments (with a little encouragement) and there must be well over a hundred other children who learned that song from me when I was responsible for the music in our church many years later in Detroit.

Emmanuel was more of an Evangelical church than Lutheran churches are today. Neither the pastor nor the choir wore robes and there was no liturgy except for a few "Amens" and a "Glory be to the Father" sung here and there. The music was great. (The organist and choir director was my piano teacher, Clara Anderson. Every Spring Clara had her pupils perform in her annual recital. One of her pupils was a niece of Knute Rockne. Rockne was a former Lutheran, who had been confirmed at Emmanuel with my Aunt Nick, Dad's oldest sister. Rockne had turned Catholic when he married (or perhaps when he coached for Notre Dame).

Whenever anyone at the church mentioned his name I had the feeling that they were very proud of him, but also a little concerned for the state of his soul.

We went to church every Sunday, first to Sunday School and then to regular services where Pastor Alvestad had an almost hypnotic effect on me — not with his sermons which were always much too long, I felt, but because he constantly rocked back and forth sideways on the balls of his feet while he was preaching. He was very absent-minded and once I remember the church saying a prayer for him because he landed in the hospital when he stepped out of his car after it had been hoisted up for servicing at the service station.

My best friend at church until I was fifteen or sixteen was Jean Thompson whom I had known since we were babies. Our families were part of a group of folks who got together for Sunday dinner or for picnics during the summer while the men golfed. Or we went on vacations together to Shawano, Wisconsin, or Benton Harbor, Michigan. We were all from Emmanuel, originally, but when I was about nine or ten we all transferred to Christ Church in Logan Square after a disagreement between two factions. Those who stayed were Fundamentalists. I can still see old Mr. Bjelland stand up to say that he wouldn't be able to worship in the new church because it was much too beautiful and it would take his mind off of God. Then about five years later, the church at Logan Square merged with one further west, and we all transferred to it. It changed its name from Parkside Lutheran to Christ Lutheran. Through it all, Jean and I and all these families remained good friends and fellow parishioners.

Jean and I lived about six miles apart and we took turns visiting each other on Saturdays by riding the streetcar and then transferring to the bus. I must have been about nine when I first started to take the bus alone and I was very nervous, afraid that I would miss the transfer stop. I'd send an urgent prayer heavenward that I would get there safely. I never dreamed the danger was not in getting lost but in something I couldn't even put a name to until years later. Some man chose to sit next to me as I sat by the window in one of the double seats, although he had many other choices. I became uncomfortable as he moved close to me, then horribly embarrassed, ashamed, and confused when he put his hand on my knee and started inching it upwards. I didn't want anyone to know what was happening. But more than that, I didn't want him to keep touching me. I finally yelled, "Stop that!" and jumped out of the seat and ran to the front of the car to the long bench where I felt I would be safe because everyone could see me — and anyone next to me — clearly. Child molestation was not a topic ever brought out in the open back then. (The first time I can recall it mentioned as a matter of public concern was many, many years later in 1977 when the first national child abuse committee was formed to study the problem. Campbell-Ewald, the agency Tom worked with in Detroit, took it on as one of their charitable efforts.)



Actually, I remember an earlier incident of an attempt at child molestation, too. I had been invited to the next-door neighbor's garage by Red, their son— he must have been in his late teens, early twenties. He asked me if I wanted to see their new puppy. I was greatly interested, of course. But when I got in there, there was no puppy. Red tried to get me onto the floor, but I felt something was terribly wrong. Fortunately, I was able to squirm away and ran home as fast as I could. As with the episode on the street car, I felt so ashamed, although I didn't know why, that I never told a soul until many years later when we were discussing the old neighborhood and I told Mother. "Norman should have known." she said. "He'd have taken care of Red."

**Every summer we would visit the farm in Wisconsin.** Mother would drive Helen, Dick, and me 120 miles north to Evansville to spend a few weeks with friends and relatives who had emigrated from Norway. Many immigrant folks had made their first home with mother's parents in Chicago while they looked for jobs, and many had become farmers around Evansville, Cooksville, and Stoughton. We would visit at Carrie and John Haakenson's farm with Mother for about a week. Then she would go home, leaving us for another week or so with them. When we got tired of staying there, we would call Grace Brunsell on the other side of town, and arrange to go there.

We had fun at both places, but felt completely unrestricted at Brunsell's. Grace was a widow. Her three sons, Robert, Mark, and Howard, were all around Dick's age (Robert two years older, Mark two days older, and Howard a year younger). Marion and Charlotte, her daughters, were Helen's and my age. They were quite poor, actually, although we didn't see it that way at all. We could do things there that we could never do at Haakenson's. Like driving the horse who pulled the whiffle tree which lifted the hay fork to the top of the barn. Like riding Ole Babe bareback. Like learning to drive their old Model T Ford.

They couldn't afford a hired man so all the work was done by Grace and her kids. Even so, she found time to bake the most marvelous soft chocolate cookies with white frosting. Just off the dining room was the small downstairs bedroom where Helen and I slept — on a feather bed. Today we might complain that the bed was too soft...but then, I felt it was like sleeping on a cloud. Grace and her family didn't have running water, only a pump in the kitchen... and no inside bathroom, either. I can still feel the harsh, slippery paper from Sears-Roebuck's catalog instead of store-bought toilet paper. We would fight to be first to use the wooden tub for Saturday night baths. Heaven help the last one. The water got colder and dirtier by the person. It's true that Grace and her family didn't have many amenities. There were no rugs, just weathered boards for the floor and also for the outside of the house. But oh, what a wonderful time we had there.

I had a crush on Spud (Howard). He had such a nice sense of humor and twinkling eyes, and didn't treat me condescendingly the way his older brothers and Dick did. He always had time to explain the mysteries of the farm to me, or just sit and jabber away. I flirted with him outrageously one summer, letting my blond hair fall Veronica Lake style to cover one eye...but to no avail. I think he liked me as much as I liked him, but we were too shy to do anything about it, especially with our older brothers only too eager to find something to tease us about.

At Carrie's we girls helped with the boring work... dishes and more dishes...taking coffee and donuts both mid-morning and mid-afternoon to the men in the fields (the chaff was so itchy and the sun was so hot)...helping feed the threshing crews (how farm hands can eat!) ...and hanging up loads of laundry which were enormous. Helen and I still drool over Carrie's wonderful big molasses cookies and her canned pork which was such a delicacy. Carrie's daughter, Borghild, was my age, so we chummed around together. Helen was left to the company of Johnnie and Haakie, the two younger boys. Dick buddied with Omar, the oldest Haakenson son, who was also just his age.

One year when we were playing in the hay loft, Dick fell right down the hay chute onto his arm. There was no doubt it was broken. The bone came right through his skin. He was so excited he dashed out of the barn, and with only one hand to assist him, he jumped a fence that was as tall as he was, and rushed in to show it to mother who had just come back from Chicago to collect her family. He couldn't play softball for the rest of the summer.

For all that we visited the farm so much, we still kept our innocence about sex. Even Borghild, a farm girl, was quite unsophisticated. We shared the same room whenever I visited, and she was the one who whispered her new-found information to me one dark night about boys. We must have been thirteen then. "They put it into you and move around and around." People of my children's generation cannot imagine how little most of us knew. It really was a more innocent and carefree time. I strongly believe that early and ongoing sex education is absolutely essential. Ignorance is not bliss. But I can't help but remember how little pressure we had from our peers, even as teen-agers...and how a "No" was respected. I feel that the moral upbringing we had at Sunday School and church, the fear of disappointing our folks if we went astray, and the lack of peer pressure kept many of us on a straight and narrow path that is too often ignored today. It did for me!

Our vacations to Brunsells and Haakensons lasted until our late teens. We would stop off, later on, when driving to St. Olaf College in Minnesota, which I attended as a junior and senior. Borghild married Lyle Viney on Thanksgiving Day during my senior year (1940) and I went there from school to be her attendant

at their wedding in the small Lutheran church in Cooksville. It was the beginning of her married life, and a sort of farewell to my farm days. With her new life as a farmer's wife and with mine, later, as a school teacher and then a married woman far away in Michigan, our paths did not cross often, although we are still Christmas card friends.

Grace Brunsell and Carrie Haakenson always kept in touch with Mother. Several times, during her visits back to Michigan, Mother went with me or Helen on short trips to Wisconsin. Carrie died some years before Mother did, but Grace retired to a comfortable, cozy apartment in town and lived a long life. Even after Mother died Grace would write long letters to me all about her children, herself, and the people I knew. Her last letter — about eleven pages long — came to me in early 1983, when she was well into her eighties, with newspaper clippings of how Borghild's and Lyle's barn had been hit by a tornado (they survived and rebuilt the barn). Shortly after that I heard from Marion that Grace had died. Now I have only my Christmas correspondence with Marion from Milwaukee to remind me of all those lovely days.

**The Stock Market Crash of 1929** is just a mention in the history books to most people today...but the crash and the ensuing Depression was dire reality to all of us living at the time. Vagrants would stop by at the back door and ask for something to eat. Mother fed them, either at the kitchen table or, if it was nice weather, on the back steps, picnic style. They were always treated kindly and they always thanked us politely and went on their way. Today we seem to expect soup kitchens to do that duty for us. We don't expect to come into contact in our own homes with those who are so unfortunate today. Of course the terrible drug problem and the resulting crime rate in today's world — something we didn't have then — has much to do with that attitude.

Every Sunday afternoon for several years my father and his friends from the "Keh-nah'-keh-neh-goo' " Club (that's phonetic spelling...it probably meant something in Norwegian) had their wives make sandwiches and coffee, and they would go together to neighborhoods where they knew homeless people gathered and spend some time feeding and chatting with them.

After a while, some of these friends from church lost their jobs, too. My father would always help out with a loan. Mother said that while the members of the church always said, "The Lord will provide," she began to feel that much of the time they meant Harry Ness.

Then the Depression which had begun a few years before came down full force on Dad's ADVERTISING ART STUDIO. The business folded, a common story

in those tragic days. Things changed quite a bit for our family, too.

Many people jumped off of tall buildings. Others, fortunately, were stronger. Although my parents must often have felt helpless or lost, they didn't make us feel that way. There was always someone worse off than we were. Moreover, most people felt comradeship and a certain responsibility for those who were feeling the brunt of the Depression. It was a terribly hard time for many people, but folks seemed to care about each other.

**A few years into the depression another tragedy occurred.** Norman drowned. His death was a terrible blow to us all, especially to me.

It happened on a beautiful sunny Sunday afternoon in mid-July 1934. We were vacationing at Mrs. Frost's cottage outside Benton Harbor, Michigan. Mother had taken Dad to town to catch the boat back to Chicago, and she picked up our cousin, Marie Hatlen,<sup>6</sup> who had come to spend a week with us. I can't remember who all went swimming in Lake Michigan that day while she was gone, but Norman, my cousin Muriel, and I walked out to the sandbar together. We started to swim back, but since I had so little endurance because of my heart problem I became breathless and I put my feet down to walk the rest of the way. We had forgotten how treacherous the strong undertow in Lake Michigan can be. The sand had shifted, and although we had walked out to the bar just a few minutes before, the water was now above our heads. I became panic-stricken and yelled for help. Norman appeared beside me one moment and was gone the next. Some man who had heard my cries of distress appeared miraculously from the shore to help me in. But Norman was gone.

After twenty of the longest minutes I ever spent, looking to find some sign of a head bobbing in the water, some of the men holding hands and walking into the water in a long line so an unconscious body couldn't slip past, the waves washed Norman up on the shore. By this time Mother and Marie had arrived. Men from the beach applied artificial respiration and someone showed up with a kit of adrenalin. Marie, a nurse, injected Norman with it, but he just lay there, so still. It dawned on us finally....Norman was dead. Dead! He was thirty! At the time I thought that was old, I was so young myself. But I have often thought of him throughout the years, comparing my age to his when he died. It was a sad funeral cortege that followed the hearse that came up from Chicago to get Norman's body and bring it back home. It seemed like the trip would never end.

Norman deserves so much more than a few lines in my memoirs. I remember him as a good-looking older brother, dark brown eyes, slim, an avid softball player. Little snapshots of him go through my mind. I see him papering our dining room walls (he was a painter and decorator)...making his next day's

sandwiches, wrapping them in the evening newspaper... piecing together quilts for Mother on her sewing machine (to keep him busy when he wasn't working during the depression)...managing the softball team for Christ Church...going "down to the corner" for a beer with his friend, Dave...dating my cousin, Muriel...trying to outlast Audrey, our younger cousin, who was a hyperactive kid, and getting himself worn out long before she did... listening to the Barn Dance music every Saturday evening on our first radio. Tears still come to my eyes when I think of him. For a year, whenever someone came to the front door, I thought it was Norman coming home. And then I remembered he would never come home again. Even after we moved within a year from Sunnyside to the two-flat on Henderson Street, I kept hearing his footsteps coming up the stairs, although he had never lived with us there.

Looking back now, I can see how our children have escaped having to deal with death, and people's reaction to it, as a part of their lives. So much has happened in the field of medicine that rheumatic fever, measles, polio, and epilepsy have lost much of their terror. By the time I was fifteen we had lost both Norman and Philip. Our friends had similar experiences.

Mrs. Krakover's son, Milton, died when in his early twenties. He had epilepsy, an illness which did not then have the understanding it has today. We heard a terrible cry outside that morning. It was Mrs. Krakover running around, shrieking, moaning, and crying, "Milton, mine Milton." She beat her chest and threw herself on the ground. All the neighbors ran out to see what had happened. I don't remember going to his funeral, but I do remember the unveiling of his gravestone a month later when the same wailing and mourning recurred. As soon as the crepe covering the stone was removed and Milton's picture was revealed, Mrs. Krakover went through the same devastating grieving process all over again. It was typical of the Jewish-European way. We were of stoic Norwegian stock, and it certainly unnerved me!

Then, when Adeline was fifteen, her mother died of cancer. We had moved away from Sunnyside the year before, and I hadn't seen her more than a time or two since. She called one morning to tell me her mother was very ill and asked me to come over to keep her company. I took the streetcar to the old neighborhood, expecting to spend a quiet day just talking to keep her mind off her troubles. But I could tell it was more than just a little illness, hearing the heavy gasping sounds coming from the bedroom just a few feet away from the living room where we sat. It was agonizing to hear the bed shake and know what she was going through. Mr. Gerlitz was with her while Adeline and I sat alone and the rest of the family sat in the kitchen. Finally, after an hour or so, her breathing just stopped. It was all over. The whole family assembled in the dining room to hear the news from Mr. Gerlitz...and then they disappeared again into the kitchen. I felt very much in the

way and thought I should go, but Adeline asked me to stay. We couldn't think of much to say to each other. I became more and more aware of the piano directly across from us, so after a half hour I went over and began to play softly. Music has always been a way of expression for me, and it seemed such a natural thing to do. Suddenly everyone descended on us. I was told in no uncertain terms that no one ever made music where there had just been a death in the family. I felt terrible, having made such a dreadful faux pas. But it points out how differently families react to different circumstances. When Norman had died about two years before, I played the piano incessantly and everyone seemed grateful for the sense of life it brought into the house and the sense of relief it gave to me.

**My most vivid memories of the Depression were that we lost our home** on Sunnyside Avenue when the bank foreclosed on it, and that I had a severely limited wardrobe of one skirt and two blouses, and a hand-me-down blue winter coat with a fur collar that some friend of Mother's had given to me.

Dad and his partner had kept their agency afloat as long as they could, but they lost it and all their assets at the same time. All of Dad's money had gone into the business, so the bank foreclosed on our house and we had to move out. We became renters of a second story flat on Henderson Street close enough to Christ Church (the one we had merged with after our move to Logan Square from Emmanuel) to walk to. A good thing, too. We no longer owned a car.

While we still lived on Sunnyside, Mother worked part-time whenever she could find something. Often it was evening work, keeping track of cereal box tops that people sent in to redeem for dimes or quarters — advertising gimmicks. Later on, and for many years, she worked on a weekly newspaper, THE NORTHWESTOWN BOOSTER, owned by Paul Triebel, her cousin Ethel's husband. She loved the work. That and Dad's free-lance work kept us going.

With a working mother, Dick, Helen, and I had responsibilities around the house like many children have today. Around five o'clock in the evening we would become dynamos of energy because we hadn't done much work all day during vacation or we had spent the time after school just "goofing off." Helen and I would tear around straightening up the house, making beds and doing dishes while Dick started supper. He became an excellent cook and baker — far better than I ever did.

We moved several more times in the next few years, always in the same neighborhood— Chicago's northwest side, around Belmont and Central, close to Christ Lutheran Church, the hub of our social life. It was great having a big brother...the house was always filled with his friends, a great advantage to a teenage girl.

The last move we made in Chicago was when I was a junior at St. Olaf — to 3826 Lowell where Tom and I did our courting. It was a period of transition for all of us. Permanent jobs were difficult to come by, so Dad was still free-lancing between Chicago, Detroit, and Cleveland. Dick had finished high school in 1936 and found a job as a salesman with a carpet company. Few of his friends went to college and it didn't seem strange that he never expressed a desire to go, either. A college degree didn't hinder or help a person at that time. Besides, he was going steady by then with Shirley Stockseth, my best friend from high school, and they were already planning their future together.

Terrible things were happening in Europe. Everyone was afraid of the events that were taking place in Germany, Poland, and Russia. We despised Hitler and Stalin, but few of us could grasp the diabolical fiendishness that we later came to know had really occurred. Through it all, most of us never seriously thought our country would become involved. Certainly I was politically naive. Communism and Naziism were just different names for very bad political systems to me. Paul Triebel, mother's boss, differentiated more. He didn't like Hitler any better than the rest of us did, but warned us that the main devil to fear was Stalin. Strange for us to remember now, but Stalin soon became our country's ally. What strange bedfellows we cultivate in dire times! <sup>7</sup>

I had finished college (North Park Jr. College in Chicago, and St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota) before this country came face to face with the reality of war. Dick and Shirley were married in August 1941, four months before Japan attacked us at Pearl Harbor...and had their first child, Michael, before Dick was drafted. Helen had a scholarship at North Park Junior College in Chicago where she was voted the "Friendliest" and the "Best Student."

I have the feeling that people who didn't live through the Depression think of it as a period lasting for only a few years. It lasted much longer than that. The crash had come in 1929. Dad didn't lose his business until several years later, and we lost our house about 1935. The economy didn't really pick up until the war industries started revving up. Ammunitions factories were in the Arms business before Pearl Harbor (1941), but after that attack, they really got going. All the major car manufacturers went into the war business, making tanks, ammunition, jeeps, trucks. Building cars for pleasure was suspended for the duration. Commercial Art became big business again, too. Artists were needed to illustrate tanks, guns, and other materials of war and describe how to put them together and use them. 1929 to 1940-41 is a long time to live in the economic doldrums. What irony that good economic times came from such tragic events.

Tom and I were married April 25, 1943. On April 26th, Mom and Dad moved to Detroit where Dad had found his first permanent job since losing the

studio seven or eight years before. After Helen finished the first semester of her junior year at St. Olaf, she went to Detroit, too, and entered Wayne State University. After she received her B.A. degree, she entered the University of Wisconsin in Madison on a two-year fellowship to study Food Chemistry (which she finished in a year-and-a-half.) It was there she met Gordon Kingsley who was getting his degree in medicine courtesy of the United States Army. They were married in June 1946 at Salem Lutheran Church, Detroit and went back to Wisconsin until Gordon finished med school.

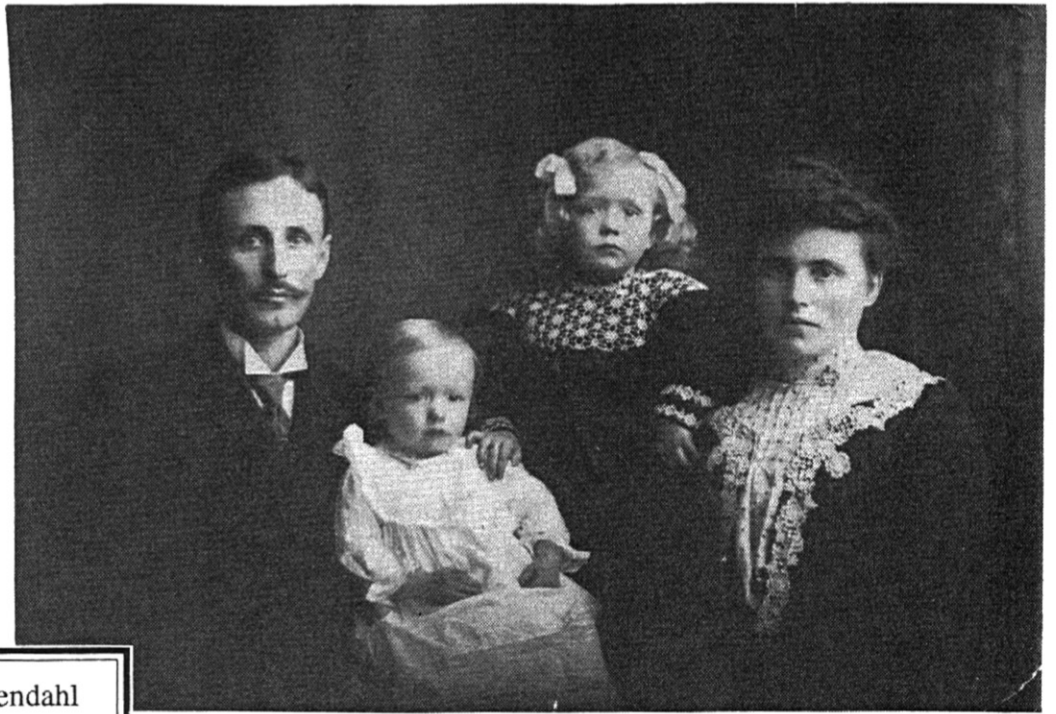
**Dad had changed during this long period of Depression.** It isn't surprising. Losing a house and a thriving business were tragedies that had caused many men to commit suicide. "Prosperity is just around the corner" was the motto the government had tried to instill in us, but the most popular song of the era was, "Brother, can you spare a dime?" A dreary prospect for proud men.

Dad came from a family that had a problem with alcohol. His brothers had the problem in varying degrees. Dad did, too, although we never saw him "under the influence" and did not recognize it as alcoholism. He worked hard and late. Art jobs always had to be done "yesterday." There were times when he didn't show up at home at all, and Mother would get one of her sick headaches. This became a steady pattern with time. She never spoke harshly of Dad...and he never explained, but he would stop off for a drink occasionally after work... and when the whole situation became too much for him every few months, he would not come home for several nights in a row. Then he would call and say he was sorry...could he be forgiven? And he would be perfectly all right for several months after which the pattern would be repeated. This pattern lasted until he was in his early seventies. Then he had a slight accident in which his car sideswiped a parked car. Afterward, I learned from Mother that Helen had been quite firm with him, telling him he'd better shape up, or he would lose late in life all that he had worked so hard for all these years...including the admiration of his grandchildren. That seemed to do the trick for him, and his and mother's last years were finally peaceful ones.

Why some people succumb to this problem of alcohol is still a mystery. Medical news today points in some way to genetics. I remember telling my children to be careful about drinking because "it runs in the family." So far, so good...and I hope it remains that way. <sup>8</sup>

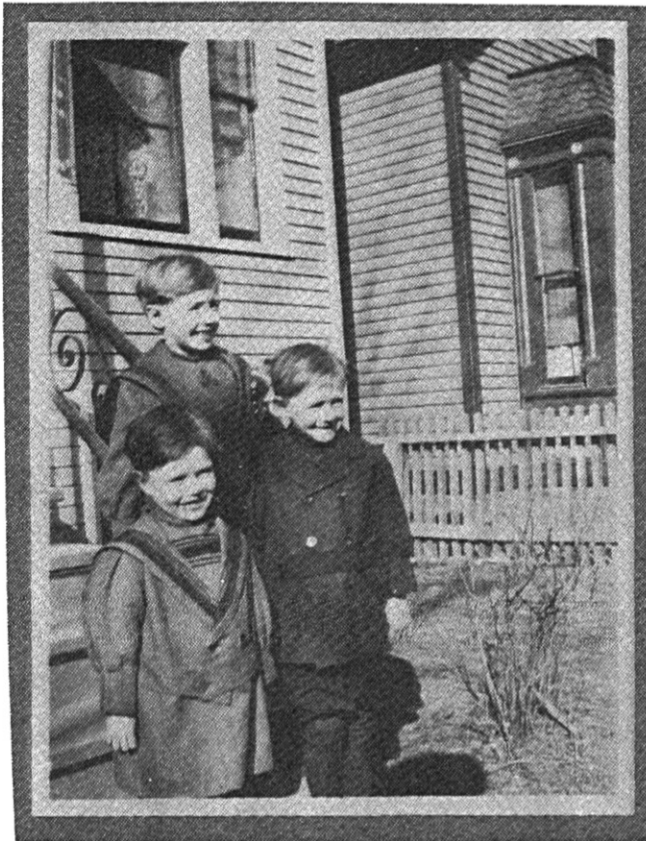
Dad was a good father for all of that. He worked hard and supported us always. He loved us and was proud of everything we did...Helen's excellence in school...Dick's friendliness and reliability... my musical aptitude at the piano. He was always asking me to play THE MOONLIGHT SONATA and everything else I knew. After I exhausted my repertoire he would sigh and say, "And now how about TO THE RISING SUN? Then I'll be satisfied." □





Peder Grendahl  
and family  
Around 1900

Above: Peder, Arthur, Thora, Mary (Marie)  
Bottom left: Philip Miles, Arthur Bertram, Norman Thorleif  
Bottom right: Thora Sophia





← Thora Grendahl and Harry Ness  
about 1916 when they married

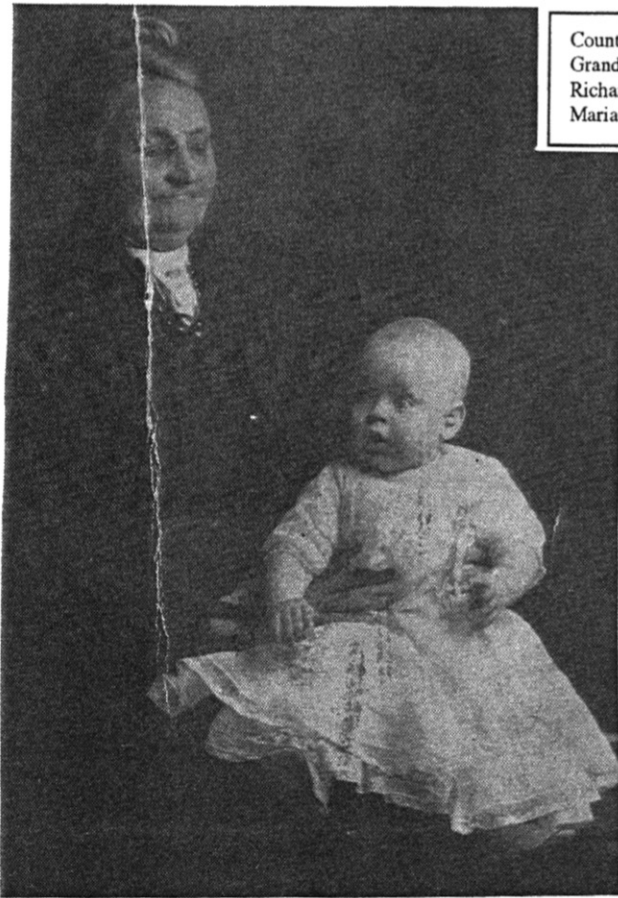
Thora with Richard  
(born Dec. 18, 1918)



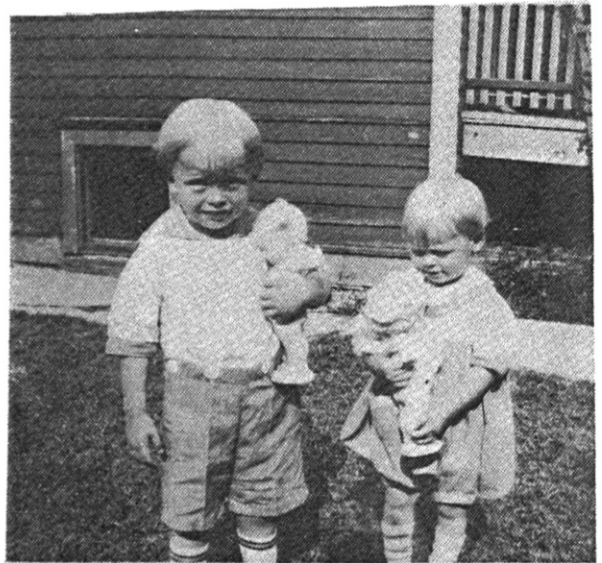
Above:  
Norman

Above: Thora, Peder,  
and Richard

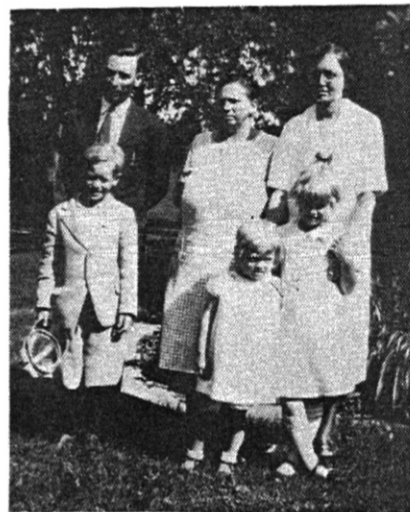
Right: Arthur (standing)  
with Philip

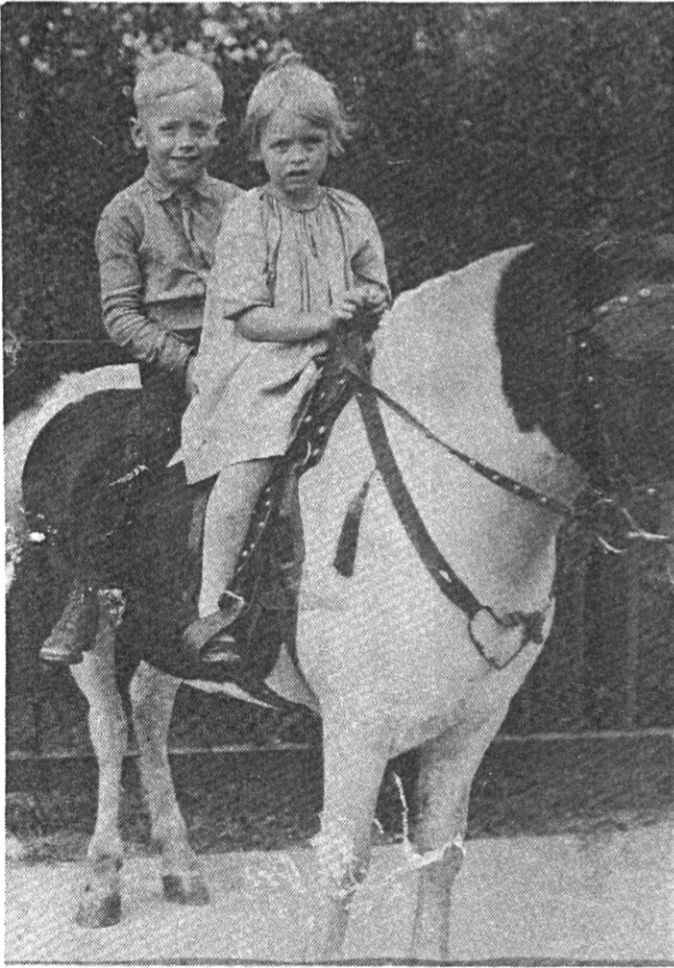


Counter clockwise from bottom left: Marian...  
Grandma Beret (Bergetta Ness) with Richard or Marian ( not sure which)...  
Richard with Uncle Phil...Richard and Marian...Richard, Helen and  
Marian in front, with Dad, ?, and Mom in back



**Harry and Thora's Family  
in the 1920's**





**The  
1930's**

Clockwise from top:  
 ◦ Dick & Marian on horse  
 ◦ Marian, Haakie, Johnnie, Helen, Borghild on Haakenson's farm  
 ◦ Helen, Mother, Marian, Dick  
 ◦ Mother accompanying Helen, practising the Brahm's Clarinet Concerto  
 ◦ Marian, Jean & Lois Thompson, Dick...and Helen in her boy's outfit.  
 ◦ Dick, Mom, Norman in back; Helen, Auntie Ragna, Marian in front with our playhouse in the background.



Ness Family Reunion (about 1934) Seated on ground: Helen, Jack Ness, Lester Kelgard, Dick, Bob & Carol Kelgard, Billy Ness, Clifford (Clara's son) 2nd Row: Babe Reinel, her dad, Uncle John Ness, Ruth Reinel (Dad's cousin), Howard Benson, Marian... 3rd Row: Tanta Mina (Dad's Aung), Clara (Tanta's daughter), Einard Kelgard, Clara's husband, Aunt Hazel (John Ness's wife), Uncle George Benson (Nicola Ness's husband), Aunt Margaret (Bert Ness's wife), Aunt Gertie (Ness) Kelgard, Muriel Benson, Aunt Nick Benson, Dorothy Bernitz, Thora, Don Glass, Ardis Benson Glass holding Bobby. (Jack & Billy are John's children; Howard, Muriel and Ardis are Nick's children), Bob, Les and Carol are Aunt Gertie's. Tanta Mina was probably Grandma Ness's sister.

July 15, 1935 —  
In Benton Harbor, MI, the  
morning of the day Norman  
drowned.

1st row: Muriel Benson,  
Gordon Carlson, Dave  
Kloepfer, Norman, Buddy  
Carlson, Dick and me  
In back: Helen, Dad and  
Roy Carlson



Far left: Helen...  
Helen, Dick, Marian...  
Helen & Marian

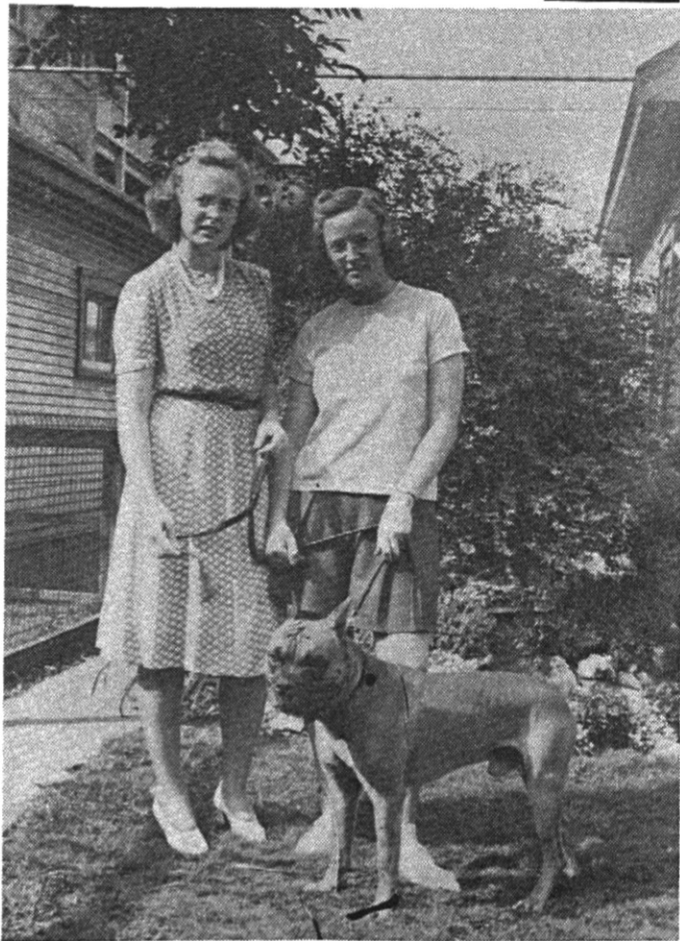


The  
Later  
1930's

Above: Mother, Me, Dick, Helen, Dad  
in our living room about 1936

Below: Marian, Helen at Brunsell's  
farm...

Right: Marian & Helen with  
Colonel Nero von Gladshiem





## Tribute to Mother and Dad

Dad died in California in 1975 at the age of eighty. He and mother had lived there since Spring of 1949 when his friend, Bill Hyde, had called and urged him to come because the studio he was working for in San Francisco needed someone with Dad's expertise. Mother hated to leave Detroit where she had made many friends and had a job she liked so well. She especially hated to leave Philip, our mentally retarded son. She suspected we would have a difficult time of it in the years to come and she felt very close to him. However, Dad was so enthusiastic about this opportunity to make a wonderful new life for them that she agreed to go. I was teaching 2 1/2 days a week, so she stayed with us until the term was over.

Dad had rented a nice house for them in San Bruno and was already working in San Francisco. Tom insisted that he could get along without his family for the summer, so Mother and I drove out West with Philip and Brian in 1949, stopping on the way to visit with Shirley and Dick in Denver, and then Helen and Gordon in Albuquerque where Gordon was doing his internship. Tom came out later to have his vacation and to share the driving home.

It was the first time out West for both Mother and me, and the beginning of an entirely new life for her. She found a job very much like the one she had left at the NORTHWESTOWN BOOSTER with a newspaper in Burlingame. They lived first in San Bruno, then later in Mountain View, then Palo Alto, and finally in La Selva Beach where they retired — but only when Dad was in his seventies — and only after Auntie Inga (Ethel's mother) had lived with them in Mountain View for several years after Ethel died.

Dad loved California so much you might have thought he discovered it. He thoroughly enjoyed everything about it. He had a heart attack when he was in his fifties, but he lived a good life for many years after that. He died while on a trip to Napa Valley with Mother, Helen, and Muriel who was visiting from Detroit. He was tasting the wine at Christian Brothers Winery when he told Helen he really liked the sherry he had just finished...and would she please get him another one? Those were his last words. Helen had turned away when she heard a loud noise, turned around, and saw that Dad had fallen. His life ended that quickly.

Mother became increasingly afflicted after Dad's death. She had vertigo and also lost a lot of the strength in her small muscles — a form of Parkinson's Syndrome. She lived for several years with Helen and Gordon after Dad's death and then, because she needed so much physical attention, went into a convalescent home in Salinas. Her life slowly ebbed away, and she died in December 1978 at

the age of eighty.

Mother never lost her courage nor her remarkable drive — in spite of losing her mother, father, and two brothers so early in life...in spite of the Depression and losing her home and the security of Dad's business...in spite of Dad's problems. She never complained nor lost her sense of humor, her appreciation of others, nor her love of life. She was human, no saint...sometimes short tempered. But she was wonderfully resilient, always interested in the world around her, forgiving and understanding, a doting grandmother to each of her grandchildren, and a rock of strength to Tom and me...a loving, remarkable woman with the bluest eyes I have ever seen.

And Dad always kept his sense of humor and his sense of pride in himself, along with his love of all things beautiful — in spite of losing his business and his home...in spite of being disappointed in himself for the hard times he had given Mother. I think of him whenever I hear a clever pun, see a lovely cloudy sky, a particularly beautiful piece of driftwood, or a charming child. Those were all things he especially enjoyed. Above all he loved his wife, his children and grandchildren deeply. He was human, no saint...but wonderfully resilient... a remarkable man with deep laugh lines around his beautiful, light blue-grey eyes.

I loved them both and miss them still. □

*This is an overview of our family life that I have written for all of Harry's and Thora's grandchildren. After World War II ended our family scattered in an ever-changing geographic pattern. As too often happens, cousins don't keep in as much touch as they should. Maybe, years from now, one of the family will see this copy on a stranger's book shelf or coffee table and discover that the stranger is family! Then you can exchange stories, and raise a glass of wine in toast to us all. Skoal! **Han ska live!***

*I continue on with my life in more detail for Phil, Brian, Gail, and Jim and their families. At first I was not going to send this to all the grandchildren, but decided that sometimes your families would be mentioned in this part, too. So read on — or don't — as you wish. Whatever you do, I hope this story will give all of you — Dick's, Helen's, and my children — the incentive to write down your stories for your children. Good luck!*

I thought you all might enjoy a letter Grandpa Harry wrote to all his grandchildren a few years before he died. I found it again when rummaging through my files. See it on the next page.



## AN OPEN LETTER TO MY GRANDCHILDREN

by HARRY NESS to all his grandchildren (Michael, Margit, Tina, Jane, Kay, Steven, Paul, Philip, Brian, Gail, Jim) — February 7, 1968

Grandmother and I often talk of how fortunate we are in having such wonderful grandchildren and we have thanked God so many times for our many blessings. These blessings are also due to your mothers and fathers who have been an inspiration to you and a blessing to us.

As I write this letter I have a piece of driftwood before me which sets me reminiscing as to how it took shape and became so beautiful in the final stage. It started out as a tree with roots set either in a lush forest or possibly in a desert area where it had to sink its roots deep for survival. Eventually it had to succumb to the inevitable and passed on to be buried in the earth or washed away in a stream or tossed into the ocean where it was picked up. All its soft surfaces had scraped away and only the substantial hard core and firm wood remained to be fashioned into a beautiful piece of driftwood to be admired by all.

So it is with our lives...

We are born and raised in environments which give us all the things necessary in life — good homes, education and nice surroundings...or perhaps some have to struggle with unhappy homes, unloved, and struggle to survive. Again it's the paradox of the driftwood — what we do to survive and to overcome various temptations and desires which sometimes scar our personalities.

In the final analysis, no doubt, we will wish we hadn't enmeshed or embroiled ourselves in many things. But whatever happens, it's how we finally emerge from discouragements, disillusionments and frustrations. It's how we weigh them against the plus side of our lives — integrity, love for others, and our ever abiding faith in God which always pulls us back. In the end, the strong and the beautiful side and character of our lives will leave the strong imprint that cannot be taken from us.

Education and learning is good, but many a learned person does not enjoy the fruits of their opportunities as one who has had experiences that has left them with the wisdom some of the less learned have. The point is — take advantage of your educational opportunities, but do not let them lift you above and away from your responsibilities and duties to your less fortunate friend or neighbor, for then you, too, will be beautiful in the eyes of all who behold you.

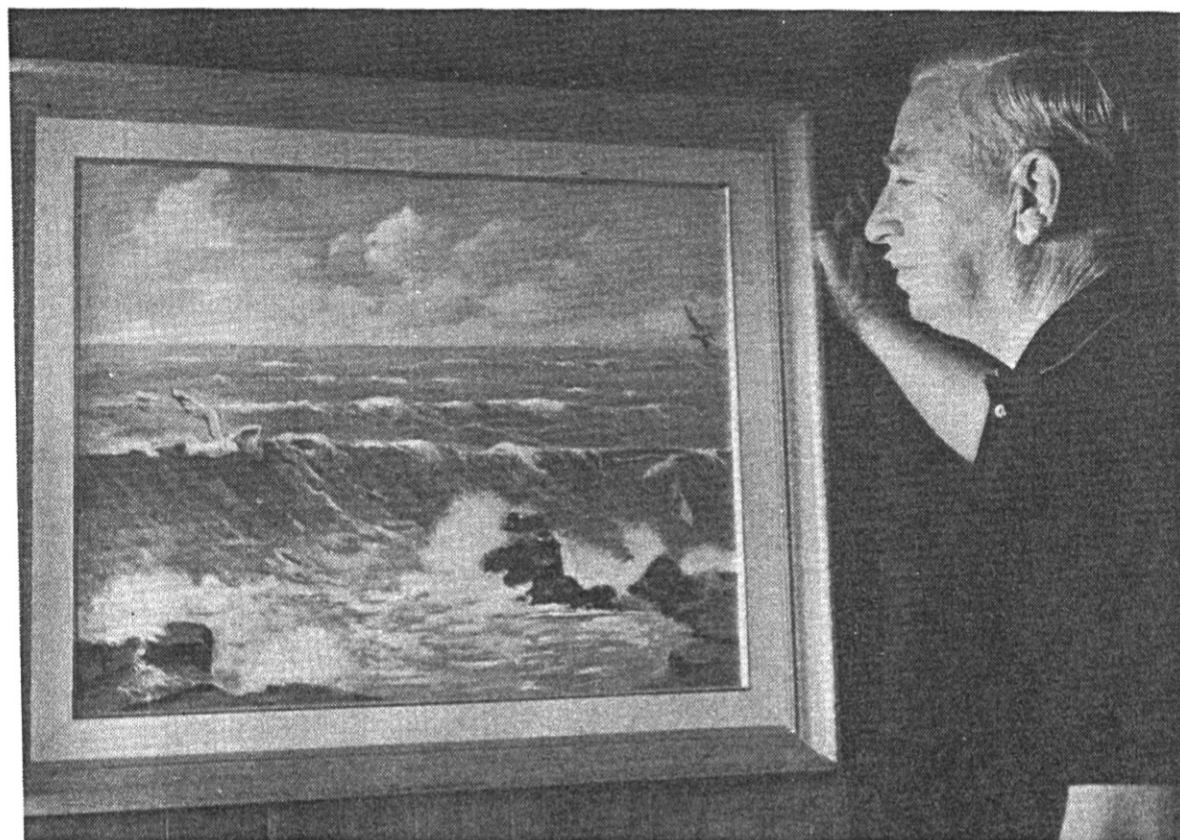
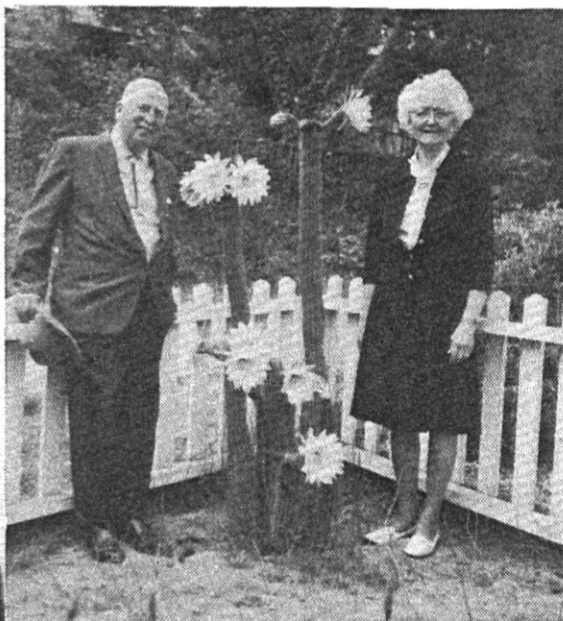
I met a University of Chicago professor who used to say, "God and I walked and talked together today." I thought he was being satirical at first, but I finally decided that it was in his weakness that he called on God to walk and talk to him, and I'm sure that many of his problems were solved even as He has solved many of mine. May you also find the time the walk and talk with God.

Sincerely,

*Your Grandfather*



Harry and Thora in their back yard in La Selva Beach, CA.....and Dad posing in front of one of his seascapes. He painted a picture for each of his grandchildren before he died. He truly enjoyed and was very good at this hobby and was active in the Santa Cruz Art League.





## School Days

**I was always good at school work.** Reading, writing and arithmetic were a breeze. What wasn't easy was that aching, lonesome feeling I remember so vividly, even now, that consumed me every year around my birthday, the middle of August, when I knew vacation days were coming to an end and I would have to return to school. The first few weeks in September were absolute misery. Mother would walk me to Haugan Elementary every day and sort of push me in the door. The next day would be just as bad. I had to get the feeling of the new teacher before I could settle down and enjoy school.

My problem was shyness. I was so shy that each experience where new people were involved was an agony. Even going to a party at Eunice's house across the alley from us was hard for me. When I mentioned a few years ago to a staff person at an agency I was dealing with on a professional, not parental, level she just hooted..."You, shy? I can't believe it!" I guess I am living proof that one can modify behavior, or at least camouflage the outward signs, to a great degree.

I remember some of my teachers very well, even now. Miss O'Reilly and Miss Leonard taught kindergarten where we made butter by shaking up cream in a jar...passing it all around the room, each of us shaking it a few times. It ended up as butter for our morning treat of graham crackers and milk. In first grade we began to write cursively using the Palmer Method push/pull system...and we began to learn to read phonetically, sounding out every syllable. My mother's cousin, Ethel Hoem Triebel, a counselor at Schurz High School, made sure I practiced phonetics, too. She made me pronounce not only the A B C's, but the ah, buh, cuh, duhs all the way through zzzz. Mrs. Stevens was our cooking and sewing teacher and had all the girls make their dresses for eighth grade graduation. They were all cut from the same pattern using the same kind of material — white dotted swiss with a yolk and tie of blue organdy. Mother helped me finish mine or I would be finishing it yet. My sewing hasn't improved much with the years.

My relationships with my classmates were excellent, as they were with the teachers. One of my nicest memories of first grade was being chosen as the "prettiest one on the playground" by the bigger girls. I was delighted, but shocked! How could I be the prettiest when I didn't have curly hair? Mine was so straight, and cut short, at that. In my view one had to have long, curly hair to be considered pretty. ( I remember feeling so glamorous once when I played dress-up because I had at my disposal those long wooden "curls" that were left after carpenters were finished planing a piece of wood.)

I felt I always had to be the best that I could be at everything. Once when I was in second grade I came home feeling terrible. I had received an 88 on a test. I was used to getting 100 or something very close to it like 98 or 96. Mother calmed me down and told me not to worry...we don't always get 100... if I hadn't tried that would be a different story...but since I tried to do my best, forget it. She had me thoroughly convinced it was okay. When my father came home from work I dashed up to him and announced happily, "I got 88 on my test today." And my father said solemnly, "Why, Marian, you can do better than that!" Needless to say, I broke down in tears. I can still remember how angry mother became with Dad. "Harry Ness, if you only knew how much talking it took to get her to feel all right about that. I could just shoot you!" Poor Dad felt terrible. He hadn't meant to be unkind, just teasing. He certainly was not the kind of person who wouldn't tolerate a low mark. In fact, he thought we were just about perfect, an erroneous notion he carried around with him all of his life.

When I was in elementary school, the teachers would seat their pupils according to their standing in the class. From 1st grade through 8th, the four first seats in the first row were always occupied by Marvin Levine, Charlotte Heitlinger, Marvin Fleischman, and me...usually with Charlotte or me in the first two and the two Marvins coming up third and fourth. When we would get new report card marks (every six weeks) we would change seats. It was humiliating enough to have to change from seat 1 to 2 — what about the poor guy who would have seat 48? That's right...we had six rows with eight seats in each of them, and most of the time they were all filled. Discipline was rarely a problem, in spite of the large class size.

Gym classes were mostly tabu for me because I had been born with a heart condition. I was a "blue baby" (patent ductus, in medical parlance.) Before birth, while in utero, the lungs are inoperative, so the blood which normally goes from the heart to the lungs to be oxygenated is shunted right back to the heart. When the baby is born, the shunt is supposed to close, but mine closed only partially. This was the cause of a dreadful heart murmur, and every doctor I ever went to was very concerned about it and restricted my activities severely. Once or twice the doctor relented and let me take gym class for a semester or so, probably to test my staying ability. At these times I did quite well, had fine coordination, won some foot races, and had a great time. I never did well on the trapeze or rings, but was great at walking up the ladder against the gym wall, with my arms held straight out. Usually, however, while I was in grade school, I was ordered by the doctor to stay home for a month's rest each Spring. And even when I got to college, I was never allowed to participate in gym classes.

Music was a great outlet for me. I began weekly piano lessons when I was seven years old, after nagging for several years at my parents. My teacher, Clara

Anderson, was our church organist. Sometimes she would demonstrate how a certain passage was to be played and I would get a good look at her hands and think how old and wrinkled they were. (Today when I look at my hands I think immediately of Clara — they look just as old and wrinkled.) Sometimes, when my brother would fail to show up (in favor of softball) I had to take a double lesson so as not to waste Clara's time or my folks' money. I think we paid \$1.25 a lesson. That sounds cheap now. But it made a good living for Clara back in 1927.

I had a problem with school choruses. The trouble, if it can be called that, was that I had an excellent ear. I could read music well and hold my own part against all competition. I can still remember walking with Charlotte to the library every week after school, singing "There's music in the air when the infant morn is nigh, And faint its blush is seen on the bright and laughing sky, Many a lark's ecstatic sound, With its thrill of joy profound, While we list, enchanted there, To the music in the air." I sang alto, as usual. Sometimes the teacher even had me sing tenor. The problem was that my soprano voice didn't keep the range necessary for a fine singer. Later, when I went to Junior College, I took voice lessons which enabled me, somewhat, to regain that range. Even there they needed — guess what — a good strong alto leader.

**My first two years of high school** were spent at Roosevelt High, about a six block walk from our house. I had skipped both 3B and 4B of grade school, so I was a year younger than most of my classmates when I began my freshman year in the Fall of 1933. "Schoolitis" had stayed with me all that time. Miraculously, when I became a sophomore, it left. I'm not sure why...but as I think of it now, it was just six weeks after Norman had drowned. Perhaps the tragedy was so uppermost in my mind that nothing else was important.

Just as Dick and I had been a Scandinavian-Protestant minority in grade school, so we were at Roosevelt, also a predominantly Jewish school. We loved Jewish holidays. Since there were so few of us in attendance on those days, they were like holidays for us, too. Anti-semitic prejudice was something I had not been really aware of in grade school, but it became more evident in high school. I didn't really have a well-developed social consciousness, but a seed started to sprout about this time. One of my classmates asked me, "Would you ever date a Jew?" Frankly, I had not had a date up to this point, but it had never occurred to me that I wouldn't date a Jewish boy. If I hadn't had Jewish friends I would have been mighty lonesome in my neighborhood. Without thinking, I said, "Of course. I'm Jewish myself." Shortly after that I did have my first date — with a Jewish boy named Sheldon. We went to a show at the Argosy, the same neighborhood theater we had attended all our lives, but somehow it seemed different, going with a date. My biggest worry that night was would he get off the street-car first and then turn around and help me off (the proper way) — or would he act really dumb and let

me off first (thinking this was the polite thing to do.) I confess I still have this problem of worrying about small things which are of absolutely no consequence at all.

This first date with Sheldon was not the start of a hectic dating career, however. Most of my social life during high school days centered around Luther League and the people we met at basketball and softball games where our church teams played.

My favorite studies at Roosevelt were English literature where we read Silas Marner...Algebra where we had a dynamo of a teacher named Miss Hart...and Music where I accompanied the large mixed chorus. My least favorite class was Latin, but I must admit it was the one whose influence I have felt the most throughout my life. It's a wonderful background and building block for almost any language, certainly for the study of English grammar and literature.

**In the Fall of 1935 I started my junior year in a new high school.** As I told about earlier, Norman had drowned the summer of '34 and the following summer the bank foreclosed on our house and we moved to a new neighborhood. It was hard on all of us. Helen had to finish grammar school in a new environment, and Dick and I entered Foreman High, as a senior and junior respectively.. Luckily we were able to rent a nice second floor flat in Chicago's Belmont-Central neighborhood...5309 Henderson Street. It was a typical Chicago two-flat. The stairway to our second floor apartment led up to a hallway which opened onto the living-room. Dick's bedroom was in the front, off the living room, Helen's and mine off the dining room in the middle of the house, with a bathroom and kitchen (with my folks' bedroom off it) next, and a back porch at the rear.

Once again we were a minority. Chicago (and maybe most big cities) was made up of ethnic neighborhoods. Negroes (they were not called Blacks then) lived in very segregated neighborhoods, typically on the South side of Chicago. We were most aware of them when we traveled downtown or went to inter-high school music festivals. This time the neighborhood was Polish-Catholic and the church and parochial school were directly across the street from us. I don't know why I keep emphasizing the fact that we were always in the minority in our neighborhoods and schools. We didn't feel strange or out-of-place. But later, when World War II came along, I realized how drastic the outcome can be for those who are ostracized for belonging to what is perceived as the "wrong" ethnic background. And later on in Detroit, race riots broke out and whole neighborhoods were burned down and stores looted all because of trouble between whites and the minority group (blacks) at that time. The trouble didn't come as far as our neighborhood, but the effect on the whole city of Detroit was felt by everyone for years to come. What wonderful things can come from having pride in nationality or race. And what terrible things can come for having too much. Then we can't see

the beauty in cultural and ethnic diversity.

**Our introduction to the Polish-Catholic neighborhood** happened the first morning we awoke there. We were awakened at six a.m. on Sunday morning by the loudest church bells we had ever heard. They clanged incessantly on Sundays — every hour on the hour from 6 a.m. til 1 p.m. On school days they rang only three times — morning, noon and night.

Foreman High was a good school and I soon made friends. One of the first was Shirley Stockseth, also Norwegian-Lutheran, who much later on was to become Dick's wife. We met in Chemistry class where we had a lot of fun but learned very little about chemistry. Mr. Keating was a pleasant teacher and gave all the girls a good mark. I don't know about the boys. We were impressed because he told us he was the brother of Sheila Graham, an up-and-coming Hollywood gossip columnist at that time. (Her claim to fame later on was that she had slept her way to her position of esteem between the sheets of many of Hollywood's elite and wrote a book to prove it.)

I met my first serious boyfriend when Shirley and I went to Bible Camp the summer we were sixteen, between my junior and senior high school years. Don Olsen was one day older than I and one year behind me in school since I had skipped a year. He was a track star from Austin High and he took me to many track meets around the city where he would run both the high and low hurdles. I thought he was quite romantic — a football player as well as a track star, and good-looking to boot. He introduced me to the notion of attending St. Olaf College when I finished high school. He intended to go there and his sister was already a student there. In fact, the first St. Olaf Choir concert I ever heard in my life was with Don at Orchestra Hall in Chicago. I had never heard a more beautiful choir and thought seriously that St. Olaf might be a good school for me to attend since I would probably major in Public School Music. Don would be a part of my life for the next five or six years.

Memories of my high school days at Foreman include: eating liver sausage on rye every day for lunch...helping to edit the Foremanual, our year book...my first taste of choir conducting when Miss Nelson gave me the privilege of directing the combined choruses in a grand finale performance in my senior year. Unfortunately, I ended up in the hospital the next day with a serious ear infection — but got out in time to attend graduation.

**Instead of going to St. Olaf in September 1937** I matriculated at North Park Junior College in Chicago. It was about a forty minute ride on the bus from our house. My parents felt they could afford to have me attend college only if I lived at home, so St. Olaf was put on hold. The Depression was still going on so it was

a miracle we could think about college at all. In fact, my parents were quite unusual for their time in making college a must for their daughters. Usually if anyone were to attend it would be their sons. Since my brother never made college a priority item for himself, my parents didn't push him. But they were concerned, as always, about my heart problems and wanted me to be able to earn a good living (and one with a long vacation for recuperative purposes, I suppose) if making it on my own would be a necessity for me.

I loved every minute I spent at North Park. I made wonderful friends, had marvelous teachers, and became a more social being. I had always been a serious student and a very shy person but I made a conscious decision to become more outgoing. Somehow or other this translated into paying less attention to my studies and spending more time in the Social Room in the basement of one of the dormitories, and only occasionally in the library.

North Park was a Swedish Mission Covenant church school with an excellent Chapel Choir which would perform many concerts throughout Chicago during the year and travel around the midwestern states every Spring to get publicity for the college. The purpose was to interest high school graduates and their families in the school. I tried out for it and made it, much to my delight. It was here that I met Jean Reeves, a young man in spite of the spelling of his name (which he claimed his mother got from reading French novels). I was still dating Don, but we weren't going steady. I became very interested in Jean for several reasons. First, he was very smart as well as good-looking. Second, we had music in common, singing not only in the Chapel Choir together but also in a quartette which sometimes sang on Sunday mornings over a small radio station. In addition, the pretty soprano choir soloist announced to everyone that Jean was *her man* and no one was to touch him with a ten-foot pole. I loved a challenge.

Jean and I had an off-again-on-again relationship that was to last the two years we spent in junior college. We studied together for our English and history classes, sang, went to movies, and attended most of the North Park functions together and argued constantly.

**I graduated from North Park in June 1939 and went to St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota, as planned.** Don, however, had received an athletic scholarship to the University of Illinois and had been going there for a year while I was still at North Park. I had visited him in Champaign where he had wanted me to see for myself what a wonderful school it was and what fun we could have if I decided to go there. But I resisted doing that for what seemed like good reasons to me. I felt that I would not fit into that large university atmosphere, especially where he was already a member of a fraternity and I could not afford to be a member of a sorority. There was still a bad depression going on. Also, around that



time both fraternities and sororities were getting reputations as being very snobbish, undemocratic clubs and some colleges were even talking of banning them. I felt strangely independent for me at the time, and I wouldn't consider making such a serious change in my plans to accommodate a boy when we hadn't made any formal commitments to each other.

That decision reached, I went to St. Olaf — about 411 miles north of Chicago — and became as homesick as I have ever been in my life. I missed my family, I missed Don. I would hear the train whistle blow every night about 11 p.m. and fervently wish I were on the train to Chicago where all my troubles would magically vanish. In the midst of this, my new roommate, Mordella Dahl, became ill. She refused to get out of bed, so for three days I brought her meals to her, worried about her, but thought she would soon get over what ailed her. But then, when she told me that she just couldn't see the point of ever getting out of bed again, decided there was something seriously wrong and notified the Dean of Women. Mordella was sent home to Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, to recover from a nervous breakdown.

This was a difficult beginning for me in a new school. Here I was a transfer student with no roommate...a very shy person once again, surrounded by people who, for the most part, had made their friends two years before. I would call home every week-end to tell my mother that I wanted to come home...and she would tell me to stick it out a little bit longer. Finally she told me she would come to see me on the week-end. "Great," I thought. "I get to go home when she sees how miserable I am." When what do you know...the breakthrough came. Somebody asked me for a date to the next football game... someone else asked me to go to a movie...Mordella came back from Wisconsin recovered from her temporary breakdown. By the time Mom arrived, I met her at the depot all smiles saying, "I'm so glad to see you...but how come you came?" She probably would have liked to wring my neck. But she was wonderfully patient...not a word about how worried she had been about me, how insistent I had been about leaving school, how expensive it had been for her to come, how hard to get time off from work. She was just glad I had come out of my depression so well.

I enjoyed St. Olaf as much after that as I had North Park. I tried out for the choir but didn't make it, I was so scared. Still, I did very well with Choir Conducting. It was the last year of teaching for F. Melius Christiansen. I was so fortunate to be in his class. He was considered the absolute, final, creme-de-la-creme of choir conductors in *the world*. And besides being so talented, demanding and creative, he had a wonderful sense of humor. In those days no one ever dared to clap hands in a church, even for such thing as a concert. So when we all went across town to the chapel at Carlton College (another outstanding liberal arts college in the same small Minnesota town) to hear our choir in concert, we didn't know quite what to

do. On the one hand, the choir was used to the loud acclaim of Carnegie Hall audiences in New York and Orchestra Hall in Chicago. Still, this was a church, so no one clapped. After uncomfortable murmurings and mutterings going through the audience, Christy turned around and said in his lilting Norwegian accent, "In the Bible it says, 'Clap your hands, ye people, and re-voice.' " And so we did.

Since my major was Public School Music (with a minor in English Ed.) I had to take Ear Training, Counterpoint, Music Teaching and Theory, mostly from Oscar Overby. He was a whimsical man with a penchant for starting in one one subject and ending up far afield on another. I was terrified when I had to report in class about my experiences in practice teaching (six weeks at Maine Township, Park Ridge, Illinois during my senior year.) To my surprise, my report turned out to be very humorous and the class very appreciative. Whatever I said sounded witty and wise although I hadn't intended it to be that way. It was a great feeling. I wish now I had been inspired to take Public Speaking and become good at it.

It was at St. Olaf that I experienced my first and only failure in school. It was in Cooking! I blamed it on the fact that I made a lousy carrot souffle and that I didn't repeat the textbook word for word. In all honesty, however, I didn't take the class seriously. I took the class to fulfill a Science requirement that the counselor said I needed. But when I requested that they look again at my transcript from North Park, they found out they had goofed. My record showed a survey of Physical Sciences (zoology, physics and chemistry) so I dropped it with relief and chagrin.

Somewhere between my junior and senior years, Jean Reeves and I began disagreeing more and liking it less. I had a letter from him after I went back to school in that terrible handwriting of his, but I simply could not decipher what he was saying. I couldn't tell if he was apologizing or telling me to get lost. I never answered him, and I never heard from him again. I often wondered what happened to him after he graduated from Northwestern. World War II came shortly after that time. I hope he lived through it.

It was at St. Olaf that I met Tom. We were in a couple of education classes together. He was also from Chicago. After his sophomore year he had gone back to the Windy City to work full time in order to be able to finance his last two years of school. So we didn't meet until my senior year when he returned to college for his junior year. We didn't go around with the same crowd at all. He was a B.M.O.C. (Big Man on Campus)...a football player who didn't ever cross paths with the music crowd (but who wrote poetry, someone informed me.) I wasn't part of the music crowd, either, but he didn't know that. He thought I was from a socially elite family in Chicago, not in the same stratosphere as he was, and that I was interested in someone else. For my part, I thought he was "going steady" with

Marilyn, a girl from Texas.

However, towards the end of school — in May of 1941 — I knew that Tom had been absent from our Psychology of Education class for a week because he had gone home to see his sick father and that his father had died. When he returned, I saw him outside the Administration Building walking with a friend, and although I felt shy about talking to this big man on campus football player whom I didn't really know, I felt sorry for him in the loss of his father. So, conquering my shyness, I waited for him and expressed my sympathy and then went quickly on my way. He was dumbfounded, he told me later, that I would deign to speak with him. So much for realistic impressions!

Mother and Helen came up for my senior recital, stopping off in Evansville to bring along Carrie Haakenson who had always wanted to see the St. Olaf campus. I played the Grieg Concerto in A Minor with Margaret Boe, daughter of the president of the college, playing the second piano part. It went off very well...so well, in fact, that Mrs. Wold, my piano teacher, picked me to play for baccalaureate services. ( I played Chopin's Impromptu in A.) The rest of the Spring of 1941 was a series of exams, preparations for graduation, and packing up to go home, with sad farewells to friends who had become so dear.

### **The Summer of '41... "The Interim"**

My next meeting with Tom was in Chicago the summer after graduation. I was terribly homesick once again, this time for school and Keith, another boy I had been dating and left behind. Don was still vaguely in the picture, but he was spending the summer working at Estes National Park in Colorado. So when I went to the church softball game (at the insistence of my mother who was tired of having me mope around) there was Tom, playing for the other team. Tom was lonesome for his girlfriend who was back home in Texas so he was in the mood for some cheering up, too. His first remark to me was, "It's so good to see a pair of dirty saddle shoes again." (Dirty saddle shoes were as "in" as Brian's white shirt hanging over his pants in high school, or Gail's patched blue jeans, or Jim's Adidas shoes.) And so we started to date and fill in the empty spaces in our lives.. We had some pleasant times going to a few plays at the downtown theaters, dining at a few nice restaurants, and going to the All-Star football game at Soldiers' Field. I've never been crazy about football but it was that game that finally gave impetus to our romance. You'll see what I mean later.

I spent that summer doing office work for the Murine Company, and looking for a job teaching school. The teachers' employment agency where I was registered sent me on a few interviews in small towns nearby. I ignored others that

were too far away. The Depression was alleviating somewhat. America was into the business of supplying war material to the Allied Powers so people were being hired once again. Dad's business seemed to be mostly in Detroit and Cleveland, only occasionally in Chicago (although he did a lot of Sears Catalog business.) He would be gone for weeks at a time, staying in rooming houses or small hotels while we kept the home fires burning in Chicago.

Helen was attending North Park Junior College (later going away to St. Olaf, too, but staying for only a semester before she transferred to Wayne in Detroit and later to the U. of Wisconsin for her Master's Degree.)

Dick and Shirley were married the summer of '41, too, and they began their migration from one city to another (Grand Rapids, then in turn to Indianapolis, Chicago, Salt Lake City, Denver, Atlanta, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, and eventually settling back in Atlanta where they stayed for good...and where all their children and grandchildren now live.)

Mother wasn't too well. She suffered from migraine headaches constantly and was also having problems with her gall bladder, so when she had to have an operation in late August, it seemed logical that I postpone looking for a teaching job until she had recovered from surgery. Dad's work, as I said, was not necessarily in Chicago and we didn't want her to be alone. To be frank, I wasn't looking forward to leaving Chicago to head into some unknown town to begin teaching — and teaching in Chicago was out of the question because one had to be a graduate of Chicago Normal College to teach there at that time.

Then one late September or early October evening, I came home from a date with Don who was home for a week-end from Champaign, to be greeted by my mother with the big news that the teachers' agency had called with an emergency situation and I had been offered a job in a little town in Wisconsin, and she had accepted for me! ☐



## Small Town Teacher

I had never heard of Wauzeka, Wisconsin, nor for that matter, neither had the majority of the people in Wisconsin. The population, I found out later, was 513. It was a whistle stop on the railroad between Madison and Prairie du Chien — it sounds nice, but it means *Dog Prairie*. I told Mother I had no intention of burying myself in some little place no one had ever heard of. But the school board was desperate for someone to take the music teacher's place. While the United States was not at war in October 1941, Congress and President Roosevelt had decided that we needed to be prepared for that eventuality and had begun drafting young men. Europe had been at war for several years and England was taking a drastic beating at the hands of the Germans. England had not been invaded, but her cities and countryside were being devastated by both air raids and buzz-bombs. Wauzeka's music teacher had drawn No.1 in the U.S.A. draft Hit Parade. I reluctantly agreed to take his place, but only until someone else could be found.

Few young women of twenty-one (and few young men, for that matter) owned cars in those days, so it didn't seem unusual to pack a couple of suitcases, head for the Northwestern Depot, and ride the train to Wisconsin the next afternoon. After a six or seven hour ride behind a noisy steam engine, in a car that was heated with an old wood stove during the winter months, I arrived in Wauzeka. Hank Hootenberg (the agriculture teacher, I was to learn) met the train to help me with my bags and show me where I was to live. He was a six-foot-five, good-looking farm boy who greeted me, "Are you the gal from Chicago who's going to teach school here? Ha! Ha! Ha!" Some introduction! Some town!

I took over the room where the former music teacher had lived — the upstairs of a house owned by Isabel and Bob, a young couple with a small child. Fortunately most of the other teachers lived next door, so I didn't feel too lonesome.

Bertha, the woman who taught first and second grades, was twenty-seven. She was engaged to be married after the school year to a man in the next town, so we didn't see much of her on week-ends, but she became a good and trusted friend. Mary Jane, the third and fourth grade teacher, was friendly, tall, gawky, very slow and deliberate. It took her hours to eat a sandwich and drink a cup of coffee. Inez taught math and history. She was cute and quick and already had a boyfriend, Herb, who owned the general store a block away — the place where everyone gathered to talk around the cracker-barrel (they really did). There were others, too, but these were my main friends.

My firm intention had been to stay only a few weeks. But music teachers were

a rare commodity then and now, not easily found. As time went by, I became interested in the town and its people and decided I would make the best of the situation and learn from it what I could. Meanwhile, I would have a year's experience by the time I went looking for a different job the next year.

Wauzeka was a most unpretentious town. People called it "Was, Wisconsin." It was so small that a person coming in from one end could say, "This is a nice town" as they approached the main drag, finishing with "wasn't it?" by the time they were on their way to the next town. Teaching there was quite different from what one could expect in a big city. Everyone knew who you were, even if you had no idea of who they were. Most folks had preconceived ideas about newcomers, especially if that person was a "city girl." I had learned from my experiences in Evansville that small towns with little to offer in the form of amusement have more than their share of road houses and bars. This town didn't even have a movie within fifteen miles. What is probably more strange to people who have grown up with television, there was no such thing back in those dark days. It had been invented, I am sure, but no one — NO ONE — whether in Chicago, New York, or L. A. had one.

So what did we do? We ate lunches and suppers during the week at the house next door where most of the teachers lived. Mrs. Malone was the wife of the head banker in town, probably one of the best-off families around. Even so, she kept the boarding house and made all our meals except on week-ends. Then we were at the mercy of one restaurant where we could get a full meal, and a coffee shop where we could get just that and maybe a sweet roll. Noon meals during the week were rushed because we all had to get back to school. But evening meals were very relaxed. We sat around a large oak table in the dining room sharing good, plain food. And we never left a crumb. Someone would always take a potato chip "to get the taste of that pickle out of my mouth," or have the last piece of bread "to get the taste of that pie out." It got to be quite a joke. Mrs. Malone didn't make much money feeding that gang.

I had my first introduction to mentally retarded people in Wauzeka. Janet Brown, one of my super pupils, had a sister, Ruth, who was a Down Syndrome child. They were daughters of one of the nicest families in town. In fact, their Aunt Laura was the County Superintendent of Schools and lived with the Brown family in a large old house around the corner. Ruth must have been about fourteen. She spent her time walking around town, muttering under her breath. I was a bit afraid of her because I would see her shaking her hand at me — and everyone else, for that matter — but no one paid much attention to her one way or another. It was only after we had our retarded son and I came to know many Down Syndrome people that I realized how lonesome she must have been. At that time there were no schools for retarded children. Most were sent to live in institutions, so families

had no resource to any services. Ruth spent most of her time alone, just wandering around. Of course she was never in danger of being lost because the town was so small everyone knew where she lived.

The other retarded person was a young boy about the same age as Ruth. George was a very friendly young man and he lived with his family directly across the street from where I roomed. He was one of those savants who knew the birthday of every person he had ever met in his whole life. Bertha said that if I walked into town years from then and told him who I was, he'd remember that my birthday was August 11th.

My main job was to teach English to the four classes which made up the high school, as well as Social Studies to the freshman class, and direct the band, girls' glee club, and choir after school. I also taught elementary school music to grades 1-8, but only one day a week for each of the four classes into which they were divided. It was quite a schedule!

I loved the freshman, sophomore, and junior classes. There were only about six juniors and we were studying Shakespeare's As You Like It. We would read through the play, each pupil taking more than one part, as I did, too. It was surprising how they really enjoyed it and responded so well to something so foreign to them. I remember especially Leon, a tall, strong farm boy, very shy. If he knew the answer to something he would raise one thumb slightly, as if he didn't want anyone else to know he knew the answer, it was too embarrassing! Janet Brown was in that class, a wonderful girl and a challenging pupil. A year after I left town, I was so pleased to hear from her that she was entering St. Olaf because she and her family had thought so much of me and what she had learned while I was her teacher.

I didn't start out to teach Forensics (speech) and Drama, but later on Inez and I took on that job together and it was great fun. We would go with our debate team to different towns around the county to compete. Janet Brown was on the team, and she was also a winner. I was proud to have been her coach. There are always a few outstanding pupils to make teaching worthwhile.

My glee club was very good, too. Coming directly from St. Olaf I was infused with the idea of doing mostly *a capella* work which was foreign to them. But they responded well and we had many compliments after the Christmas and Spring concerts.

I did not enjoy my senior English class too well. Those kids were so hip, so blase, and thought they knew so much more than anyone else in the world that they were the bane of my existence. There were about ten of them, all sitting in one row

with their backs to the window in that small, narrow room. I fantasized that I had a long sword and could lop off their heads with one long swoop (and me a non-believer in capital punishment.)

Since you have read this far you know that even though I came from the big city of Chicago, I was a very proper person, well-behaved, non-drinking, non-smoking. But to the family from whom I rented a room I was the embodiment of big-city life. Isabel was, without a doubt, the most prim and proper small-town girl ever to be raised in Wauzeka, population 513. I'm sure she was always afraid that I was going to come home drunk or do something improper, although I'll never know where she got that impression. Unfortunately, one night in late Spring, Mary Jane, who was staying over night with me because every one at her house was gone for the week-end, got sick in the middle of the night from something she ate, and threw up on the little bathroom rug which I then put on the outside porch. Isabel found it in the morning before I could tell her about it. She told me in no uncertain terms how disgusted she was with me and my drunken friends. Probably the whole town heard about it before noon.

I had been hired, mainly, to direct the band. The town just loved the high school band. We were expected to play a couple of concerts during the year (remember, there were no movie shows or anything else going on in town.) And, of course, we had to parade around the town on several occasions with ME leading them! The fact was I really didn't know anything about instruments except the piano, and here I was giving lessons on the accordin, the trombone, and the coronet. If they played it, I taught it. Thank heaven for my ear training class with Overby. That got me through one year, but it wouldn't have helped the next. There was nothing further I could teach the players who were already in the band, and I surely wouldn't know how to suggest what instruments to which pupils coming in as newcomers to the band.

We had one tuba player. I can hardly blame him for not wanting to carry that heavy thing while marching around the town, but I expected him to do it, nevertheless. Imagine a marching band without a tuba! When he told me he wouldn't, I pleaded with him. He was adamant. NO. Finally I was so exasperated that I took the notebook I was holding and with my two hands brought it up over his head and banged it down on him and told him, "You're playing." He must have known I meant it because he did it with no more arguments. Immediately after bopping him, and for many long nights thereafter while I lay in bed, I prayed two things — that I hadn't hurt him (I hadn't) and that he wouldn't tell his mom or dad (I never heard from them, so I guess he didn't.)

It was right after Christmas vacation in 1941 that I had a letter from Don. I had returned to Wauzeka after a wonderful time when we had discussed our futures



quite seriously. But this letter cancelled all those thoughts and plans because it said he was truly sorry, but he had just pinned a girl he had been dating all year. This was truly a surprise to me, and being all alone in that dreary town made it very tough going. The only one I felt I could talk to about it was Bertha. I had some very bad weeks, but I learned a lot about myself. I could keep at my job even though it took all my strength to do it. I could turn my thoughts to other things at will. One foot still went in front of the other. My world did not fall apart!

**Tom and I had become good friends since I started teaching at Wauzeka.** He had gone back to St. Olaf for his last semester shortly after we had attended the All-Star football game together in August. As an alumna of the college, I received a copy of the college newspaper and read the sports column Tom had written about the game. Seems he had taken a "dumb blond" to the game and had to spend the whole time explaining it to her. He ended by breaking an umbrella over her head, he was so exasperated. In a simulated huff, I wrote to him telling him what I thought about such a macho attitude. And so our correspondence began and a romance started to grow.

As it happened, Wauzeka was a round-about stop-off place on his way to visit his mother in Chicago on the several occasions he did that. Tom had a rattle-trap kind of car that barely got him back and forth. He came through town one Friday night in December and we dropped in on a dance being held in Brown's tavern, the big monthly event around there. Tom was a reluctant dancer (still is.) He didn't know it, but he made quite a stir. Everyone had to take a look at the music teacher's boy friend from out of town. Poor Tom, he not only had to dance with me that night, but he had to drive another eight hours or so to Chicago in a terrible snow storm. It's easy while living here in California to forget how cold the winters can be in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Illinois. For a fact, that winter I taught in Wisconsin, the temperature stayed around twenty-seven below zero for almost a week. I got the feeling that Tom was really interested in me when he went out of his way in that weather to stop off and go to some country dance.

Dances there were different from any I attended elsewhere. For one thing, everyone in town went, young or old. Everyone danced — kids, old-timers, young people, girls with girls (never did see boys with boys). Janet's brother, Dick, who was working the family farm, was the main attraction for me. Not romantically — I just had never seen anyone who loved to dance so much, and no one who went at it with such a vengeance. He was a quiet, raw-boned, deeply tanned, young farmer. He would dance every dance with a different girl. His technique was strictly his own. He would grasp his partner firmly with his right fist, his huge ring in the small of her back, with his left hand holding her hand tightly. He would stay in one corner of the large room for about twenty steps, then push her arm straight out and hold it rigid while he would lead with long strides kitty-corner across the

whole floor. At the other end of the room he would repeat the procedure. Everyone admired his style of dancing, or perhaps they just admired his strength. At any rate, everyone stayed clear of him.

To give you an idea of salaries then and the difference between men's and women's pay, I was hired at \$75 a month. What they offered me the following year I can't remember. I simply was not interested. At the same time, Hoot, the agriculture teacher, was making \$130. When Tom was hired to teach and coach basketball in International Falls, Minnesota (a big town with a population of 12,000) in January 1942, he started at \$140! The assumption was that all women would get married and have children. Men were the head of the family and would always work. Women, however, were expected to retire when they became pregnant. In fact, a woman had to let the school board know immediately (I mean as soon as she told her husband) when she was pregnant, and she was expected to stop teaching before she "showed."

The school board asked me to renew my contract, but even though I had no job in mind, I said thanks, but no thanks. It was too much of a fishbowl existence, and while I liked most of the people in town, Wauzeka offered absolutely nothing in the way of excitement or culture. So I packed up my belongings, including the muskrat coat I had purchased with my first pay checks (salaries were low, but so were prices). I returned to the family, now moved to Lowell Avenue in Chicago, and began looking for another job. It was 1942 and I was almost twenty-two years old.

All in all, my two semesters in Wauzeka did me a lot of good. It had made me stand on my own two feet, really alone for the first time in my life. I had to stay through good times and very bad times, and there was no getting away from anyone or anything. The town was too small to hide yourself in, so you had to straighten up the shoulders and throw out the chin. I didn't find the right words to describe being in this position until a long time later. If everyone would take to heart that marvelous motto, "Bloom where you are planted," what unhappy times they could avoid. Other good mottoes to have on hand are "When life gives you lemons, make lemonade." "There's always another day."

But perhaps the best knowledge one can have — and that can be applied to almost any situation — and which my sons and daughter have heard me say hundreds of times — is "There is a plus and a minus to everything." □

## he War Years

**It was June 1942.** Helen was attending North Park Junior College. (She would later go to St. Olaf, but would stay only one semester.) Dick was engaged to marry Shirley Stockseth in August. (Later they would move to Grand Rapids and Indianapolis and then back to Chicago where Shirley would live while Dick was in the service during World War II.) Dad was still doing free-lance work in Detroit, Cleveland, and Chicago. Mother was lady-of-all work at the Northwestown Booster, the community newspaper in Chicago owned by Ethel (Mom's cousin) and her husband, Paul Triebel, and I returned to Chicago to look for a job.

I found one immediately — writing dunning letters for a bank. I hated it so much that I quit within a week. I soon found a better one as a record clerk for the Union Tank Car Company. Previously UTLX hired men only for that job, but as the men became drafted, only women were left to take their places. We kept track of tank cars which carried gasoline from refineries to towns all over the country, where it was then carried by truck to filling stations. UTLX headquarters was in a large downtown building. I rode the Northwestern train system with a six-block walk at either end which was great exercise.

President Roosevelt (FDR) had declared war on Japan immediately after its attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941. There had been a noticeable change in Wauzeka in the months that followed, but there was a much more visible change in Chicago. Men in uniform were everywhere. Some women joined the service, too, to take the place of men who were being transferred to active duty. Everyone in the service had to be in uniform at all times. The only civilian men were those who had not been drafted yet, were 4F (unfit physically for service), workers in war plants, men past draft age, or those mentally unfit for military duty.

Tom and his mother had returned to Chicago after living for a semester in International Falls where he coached basketball and taught General Science in high school after graduating from St. Olaf. It took him only one semester to learn that teaching was not going to be his life's work. He had enlisted in the Marine Corps while still at college, but after his father's death in 1941 he had been allowed to resign because he was his mother's only means of support. However, after war was declared six months later, he enlisted in the navy and had been accepted. He had to wait, however, to enter officers' training school at Tower Hall in Chicago until he completed courses in spherical trigonometry and analytical algebra.

Tom had a heavy schedule that summer, working the night shift at his summer

stand-by, The Chicago Screw Company (*"It pays to choose Chicago Screws"*), attending Wright Jr. College every morning for his math courses, and trying to find time to do his homework and still date me in his spare time. We spent some lovely evenings at the Lincoln Park Zoo. Even at midnight it was not completely deserted. Someone was always around and crime was not a problem. It was a lovely place for a courtship. The weather was very hot and humid in summertime Chicago, but the breeze from Lake Michigan would reach to the North side and cool the evening air.

Tom had expected to be called into service as soon as he finished his courses, but his papers had been lost in a file somewhere and he wasn't called to report to Tower Hall until December 31, 1942. Mordella Dahl, visiting from St. Olaf where she taught speech, celebrated New Year's Eve with me.

There were not nearly enough officers being graduated from the various United States military academies to fill the need demanded by a country now at war with both Germany and Japan, so men with college degrees were able to receive commissions after a three-month intensive training course at one of several specialized schools. They were called "90-day Wonders."<sup>9</sup> They were supposed to be the glamour boys of the navy, but someone had started a nasty rumor that men who wore white sailor hats banded in black were restricted because of venereal disease. Life became rather embarrassing for those of us who were dating midshipmen! On top of that, every Saturday morning before week-end liberty, midshipmen received shots in both arms with various anti-toxins to ward off diseases they might encounter in the countries to which they were being shipped. Poor Tom would come on week-ends tired from the week's drills and studies, barely able to raise his arms.

Neither Tom nor I remember that he made a formal proposal. Rather, there was a gradual dawning that this was real love for both of us. War time didn't allow anyone the luxury of long-term dreaming and planning. How long we would be able to be together we just didn't know. So we picked April 25, 1943 for our wedding date, just two days after his graduation as an ensign. (Mom's and Dad's anniversary was the 24th, as was Shirley's birthday). Tom was assigned to PT Boats (Patrol Torpedo Boats Squadron 25). PT's were very fast, small boats which were used to attack Japanese boats carrying troops from island to island in the Pacific. Their speed was supposed to allow them to get away quickly from these attacks. Tom was pleased (he had requested PT or submarine duty) although I worried with his mother the first time either of us visited aboard one. "What do you hang onto?" was her only question. There was no such thing as a railing. Just luck.

**We were married in Ethel and Paul Triebel's lovely home** on Natoma Ave. on Easter Sunday 1943. Tom was very handsome in his new navy blue officer's

uniform with the gold braid. Mom and Dad, Helen (my attendant) Tom's mother, Paul and Ethel, Norma and Jim Trebbin, Pastor Orv Running and his wife were present, with my cousin Muriel there to help Auntie Inga serve the wedding dinner. Jim was Tom's classmate and fellow football player from both Kelvyn Park High and St. Olaf. He had taken Dick's place as best man after Dick had gone into the hospital for an emergency appendectomy several days before in Indianapolis. Mother and Dad held a reception for relatives and friends at our home later on that evening.

We were married before an altar, kneeling at a rail that Paul had borrowed from a funeral director friend of his, after I had marched down the stairs to Bach's *Air on a G String* while John Charles Thomas, the world-famous tenor, sang *The Lord's Prayer* courtesy of a recording. I was dressed in a lovely sea-green linen and rayon two-piece suit with a small shawl collar. Helen wore a similar suit in soft yellow gabardine.

It was an exciting time because we were all going to go our separate ways the following week. Tom was now an Ensign in the United States Navy. He had sold his car and we were going to Portsmouth, Rhode Island by train where he would enter PT training, stopping first to visit Shirley and Dick on our way. Helen would go back to St. Olaf to finish the semester before transferring to Wayne University in Detroit. She liked St. Olaf, but didn't feel it offered the best courses for what she decided her major would be — food chemistry. Mother and Dad moved to Detroit the day after our wedding. Dad had finally found an apartment after being steadily employed for many months. With defense contracts booming, he had all the work he could handle there and more, doing instruction catalogues for the Air Force and for General Motors and its defense contracts.

After a short visit with Shirley and Dick in Indianapolis, we had our first taste of New York City where we stayed at the Belmont Hotel, just across from the world-famous Waldorf. The next day we boarded another train, this time heading for Newport.

### **And so began my years as a War Bride.**

The PT base was located at Melville, Rhode Island...just outside the tiny town of Portsmouth, which was just a few miles from Newport, the fabled summer home of the very, very rich. Before settling on a permanent (three month) home, we rented a room in a large, old house on Main Street in Newport. It was here I first started to play bridge. We seldom played cards in my house, but Tom's family played all kinds of card games. Tom loved all of them, especially bridge. So I decided to give it a try. I learned the basic rudiments of the game, but found out

that playing is by far the best teacher. There were three other ensigns living in the house. The first time I played with them I was set up with a hand with all the spades. I was so new to the game I didn't know what to do with that kind of hand...or even that it had to be a set-up.

Since I was the only women in that house, I couldn't figure out who would have wanted to claim my white satin bridal night gown which disappeared from the bathroom where I had forgotten it. Fortunately I didn't lose anything else...and we were there only one week because Tom met up with three ensigns from his class at Tower Hall. They had found two cottages to rent in Portsmouth, just three miles from the base, and needed one more couple to share.

Unfortunately, the commanding officer at the base had just decided that his men were no longer going to be allowed to return home each night, but only on week-ends. The two couples from the South, John and Ruth from Atlanta and Julius and Libby from Alabama, shared one cottage. George and Dottie Doolittle from Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Tom and I shared the other. Ruth and Libby stayed with Dottie and me during the week because we felt more secure with four of us banded together in that rather secluded area.

The cottage was primitive, but nice. We had only cold running water so we swam in the Sakonnet River every day to keep clean. The river was really an arm of the ocean. Tides came in and went out twice a day, just like in Narragansett Bay, and the water was sea water, buoyant and refreshing, but without the waves. It was great for swimming. Mrs. Cramm, the lady who owned the cottage, was an artist who had decorated almost every inch of every wall with her lovely water colors, mostly seascapes or flowers. She brought us quahogs (large clams) for chowder, and pudding made from seaweed. (It tasted like the Rennet custard I later made for the children's desserts and was quite good.)

The cottage had once had a spacious lawn going all the way down to the sea, but during the terrible hurricane of 1939 four years earlier, most of the land had been ripped away. The front porch of the cottage, as we knew it, rested on tall stilts. The view below us changed with the tides. Sometimes we were surrounded on three sides by water. Other times we could walk beneath the porch on the rocky New England shore.

Ruth and John were the oldest — all of 27 and 29 — an old married couple of five years. Libby and Julius were younger, but already the parents of a baby daughter, Penney, whom they had left at home with her parents while she accompanied him for a last fling before he went overseas. All four of them had thick Southern accents which were very difficult to understand, particularly the Alabaman diction.

A big adjustment for me was the different life style they had from mine. They were very nice, but they were all practiced drinkers and chain smokers. Ruth was the most sophisticated. Libby was very earthy, and if her husband wasn't around on some week-ends, it didn't bother her too much. She made do with someone else who would turn up to share the hours and sometimes her bed. Once or twice, when we had too much company and not enough beds, Doo and Dottie would give up their bedroom and share a twin bed in our room while Tom and I would scrunch up in the other bed — which made Doo proclaim that he "knew the Tuckers intimately."

Every month a new class would come and another would go. We heard that John Kennedy, son of the Ambassador to England, was also a product of the same PT base. Tom's claim to fame later on became that he was the only PT officer who never knew John Kennedy!<sup>10</sup> Kennedy and Tom were quite typical of men who became PT officers. Most were either rich men's sons who had a lot of experience with small boats, or trained athletes who could stand the rigors of life at sea on a small boat that tended to knock them around.

After three months at Melville, Tom was transferred to the Brooklyn, N.Y. Navy Yard where he was on duty while his squadron was being fitted out and where he would receive assignment for overseas duty. We sublet a very "New Yorkish" apartment in Manhattan from an actor named Eric Brotherson who was on the road in a play, *Lady in the Dark*, which starred Gertrude Lawrence, one of the most famous Broadway actresses of that time. We were living at 17 W. 73rd Street, about a block from Central Park, next door to a Jewish Synagogue where we could hear the cantor serenade us every day with his beautiful voice.

It was quite an experience getting around New York on the subway, seeing plays (Mary Martin's career was just beginning), going to stage shows (we saw Jimmy Durante and the Rockettes), dinner dancing (to Tommy Tucker's band), and being part of the radio studio audience (Fred Waring was going strong.)

Tom went on a shake-down cruise in September as executive officer on PT 355, Hell's Angels. During this time I went to visit my parents and to see Detroit for the first time. I certainly didn't suspect I would spend most of the rest of my life there! Then I returned to New York for as long a time as Tom would be there before going overseas. It turned out to be ten days. We had given up our apartment, so those last days were spent at the Prince George Hotel in Brooklyn.

I had come down with a most miserable cold, so I spent most of my time in bed drinking rye, then pulling the covers over my head in a desperate attempt to sweat the cold out of my system. A very sweet maid saw the bottle by my bedside and was sure I was a lush. She subtly tried to tell me about the evils of liquor. I'm sure

she didn't buy my story that I was just trying to get rid of my cold. I was just beginning to feel better when Tom came home with his orders. He was sailing immediately. The next morning, in fact.

I can still clearly see Tom put on his uniform that morning, so young — only twenty-four on his birthday in just a few days — so handsome, packing all his things in his sea bag, and then leaving. It was a sad parting. We didn't know when he would return. We didn't even dare to think *if* he would return.

So it was a train ride back to Mom and Dad in Detroit for me. This time it was to start a strange kind of life...married, but with no husband around. Just one somewhere in the Southwest Pacific. You never knew where....just "somewhere."

I decided to try teaching again.

### My Detroit Life Begins

**Housing was becoming very difficult to find** no matter where you lived in this country because no new building was allowed, except for defense purposes. Dad had been lucky to locate an apartment just one block from the Fisher and General Motors Buildings, small but nice. It was perfect for them. He had a short ride to his studio, as did Helen to Wayne University. Mother could walk to the job she had found in the office of a beautiful dress shop in the Fisher Building. It was also a very convenient location for a person who never knew from one day to the next where she would be called upon to teach.

Today, as I write this, Chicago and Detroit have school systems which, like so many large city systems, have deteriorated badly. But then they were models of which they could be justifiably proud. They both were part of the "Normal College" system. These colleges had demanding curriculae and requirements necessary for graduation. On the down side, it also meant a closed school system. One had to be a graduate of the local college (in Detroit that meant Wayne University) in order to teach in Detroit.

Although it was almost unheard of for an outsider to get into the Detroit School System, I decided to try to enter it so I could live with my family while Tom was overseas. In my favor, music teachers were always at a premium — then and now — so I had no trouble being accepted as a substitute. My only problem was that I had to teach elementary school (masters' degrees were required for a high school position) and all my training had been in secondary schools. In Wauzeka I had had only four periods a week of elementary experience.

I could walk to the front of the General Motors building, only a short block



away, and catch a bus to any part of town. It was rather intimidating. I was used to Chicago where one would ride a bus in one direction only, then transfer to change directions. It was an excellent, simple system. Busses were never more than four short blocks from home or destination and you always knew from looking at the numbers on the buildings how far North, South, or West you were. (East didn't count...more than a block or two and you would be inside Lake Michigan.) In Detroit, however, busses wandered all over the place. I was always afraid I would never end up where I was supposed to be.

Substitute teaching was the "pits." I hated never knowing if I would be called; having to be ready every day "just in case;" being all dressed up and not getting called; and then, if called, what kind of school would it be? And how far away? Detroit was a large city, after all, and I was subject to go to any neighborhood, near or far. I dreaded substitute teaching. In fact, I had decided one day in early November that I had had it. The next day I would resign.

On what I decided was my last day, I rode through a busy city section, through Hamtramck (a suburb within the city itself) through spacious Palmer Park, past some of the most beautiful houses I had ever seen. I got off in the middle of a lovely neighborhood where the garages looked more like houses than those in the area I was living in at the time. I arrived at Hampton Elementary School to be met by a beautiful, but formidable, looking supervisor, Mrs. O'Hara, who told me that the music teacher there had just retired to have a baby, and that I had come highly recommended because of the things I had done while subbing at Cooley High earlier in the month (they must have had a spy system.) Hampton was to be my new school! I was thrilled to be assigned to such a beautiful school. When Mrs. O'Hara asked me how old I was, I was afraid that she would think I was too young, so I hesitatingly told her "twenty-three" — and then quickly added "and a half" — feeling at once like a bumbling, unsophisticated child.

I taught in many schools after Hampton, but never one as nice. It was a public school, but so highly rated that few of the residents of that wealthy area sent their children to private schools. My pupils included the children of the president of American Motors who later became the governor of the state; Richard, the son of radio's Lone Ranger; Mary Ann, daughter of the head of Cunningham Drug Stores; Gary, the son of the mayor; and Doug, the son of the president of America's Olympic Committee.

Rhoda Montgomery Lechler, principal of the school, was a remarkable woman. Firm, but fair, she was undaunted by the powers-that-be who were the parents of her school children. One day she caught a group of boys gambling on the back playground, playing with rather high stakes. She just gathered up all of their money and told them, "The first thing you learn about gambling is that you

always lose." And she never gave back the money. What's more, they never asked for it, nor did the parents. I guess that is what became wrong with the school system later on. If that had happened twenty years later, the parents would have been up in arms...or the school kids would not have been as chastened as they were then. But at that time, the principal and teachers had power to discipline if they used it wisely.

That was good, of course, as long as the teachers and administrators were fair. Now we have too many bad school systems with plenty of blame for them to go around. Some teachers are not as good as others; some parents excuse their children's behavior too much; many school boards are too political; city systems are too large to keep in touch with pupils and teachers alike; curriculum standards are weak; many teachers lack imagination and pupils lack motivation. But at that time, Detroit schools were excellent.

There were very few men around because of the war, so there were plenty of women friends around with no dates. My next-door neighbor at school was Jane Jackson, the literature teacher, who was my age and took me under her sheltering wing and introduced me to all of her friends. Most of them were teachers she had gone to school with at Wayne.

We went to the plays which came through Detroit on their way to Broadway. I remember especially well *Othello* which starred Paul Robeson as the Moor, Uta Hagen as Desdemona, and Jose Ferrer as Iago. What a fabulous cast. Robeson was particularly impressive. He was known for his gorgeous bass singing voice, and here, in a play in which he didn't sing a note, one simply could not miss his musical background. He entered the stage saying, "Oh, Desdemona." It might as well have been sung, the timbre in his voice was so musical, so rich, so deep. Unfortunately, because of his efforts against racism (he was black, and I think he joined the Communist party at this time, too) his career after this play went down hill and he lived much of his life out of this country by choice and wasn't recognized by the public as well as he should have been for his marvelous achievements and talent.

At this time I also joined the bridge club which Jane and her friends had started. I felt that learning to play bridge well was the best present I could give to Tom upon his return from overseas. I was to belong to that same club for forty years!

I taught at Hampton for a little more than a year when, at a teacher's Christmas party, Mrs. Lechler told me she knew for certain Tom was coming home within the week — she had dreamt it. She said I was not to worry about finishing out the semester, but to go with him with no second thoughts about teaching.

This was my second bout with ESP that year. Months before, in April or May,

in my dreams I was awakened by a paper boy running down the street early one morning shouting, "Extra, Extra. Get your Free Press. Get your Detroit Free Press. Today is D-Day." Now D-Day was something the whole world was speculating about. We knew that our troops would have to land on European soil in order to win the war, but of course no one knew when—and no one *would* know until it had happened because the date had to be kept from the enemy. In my dream I had the presence of mind to open the window and yell out to the news boy, "What day is it today?" He shouted back, "June 6, 1944." I told the story to the rest of the teachers at lunch the next day, so we were stunned and thrilled when June 6th came and it turned out to be The Big Day.!

Mrs. Lechler was right, too. Just before Christmas Tom called from San Francisco to say that he was in the States and had been able to get space on a train and would be home Christmas Day. He got there, looking very handsome, but very thin. We celebrated by staying at the Book Cadillac, Detroit's finest hotel at the time. We spent the day after Christmas shopping for presents to buy for the family. He bought me a lovely wrist watch to match my wedding rings. His mother surprised us by returning all the money he had sent to her while overseas, about a thousand dollars. With that, we had money to buy a car (second hand, of course... there were no new cars built during the war years.) I had my own surprise for Tom—a grand piano I had bought while he was fighting the war in the southwest Pacific. Somehow he wasn't as thrilled as I was with my purchase.

Tom had been gone from September 1943 to Christmas Day 1944 — a short tour of duty for PT officers. He had come home earlier than most because he had given up R & R (rest and relaxation) in Australia when most of the other officers had taken it. He expected to be home for a few months and then be shipped out again to another tour of the Southwest Pacific.

### **Back to "Dear Little Rhode Island...Smallest of the 48"**

This time we drove a 1940 Ford Convertible when we returned to Rhode Island. It wasn't the greatest choice for the minus 20° weather we were having. It was coooooold outside, and the window didn't roll up quite all the way. On top of that, the heater was a gas heater, something we didn't dare use indiscriminately since gas rationing was in effect (along with meat and sugar rationing) throughout the country. We had to make sure we had enough to get to Rhode Island. So we just bundled up well and used the heater every half hour or so for five minutes at a time. We didn't freeze...just *felt* like ice cubes.

We found a home on Water and Power Streets in Portsmouth — this time with a real bath and hot water. Also a grand piano. Out of tune, but fun to play. The kitchen table where we sat to eat most of our meals looked right down the hill, over

the red roofs of some small homes, to the Sakonnet River a half block away. Across the bay we could see Fall River, Massachusetts.

Tom was assigned to Personnel and we settled down to Navy life again. Newport was an interesting historical town. The Vikings had left traces there dating from the time of Eric the Red. Many Jews had settled there early on, to get away from religious persecution. The Quakers had roots there, also. The main streets in the town were very narrow, almost too narrow to drive on. The buildings abutted onto narrow sidewalks and some were very, very old. The cemeteries were fascinating, with epitaphs and markers that we could hardly make out at times, they were so old. Some were amusing, others so sad. Many children were buried there, a commentary on how much the life span had changed since the days of the early settlers.

At the very tip of Newport were the fabulous homes of the multi-millionaires who had made Newport their summer playground. The homes were immense, set on vast lawns. We could walk by the ocean and look up at the place where the movie *Rebecca* had been filmed and others where the Vanderbilts and the Astors and their ilk wined and dined each other. No expense had been spared in any of these homes. One man had seen the home of his dreams somewhere in Europe. He bought the marble mansion, had it taken apart piece by piece, and shipped to Newport where it was put together again! <sup>11</sup>

Tom was expecting to return to sea duty after a few months ashore, but events were to change that. President Roosevelt died in April 1945 of a cerebral hemorrhage and the country was still in mourning when Germany gave up in defeat. V-E Day (Victory in Europe) was declared on May 7, 1945, causing the whole country to erupt in wild celebration. The elation at the PT base was dampened somewhat because most of the men were slated to return to the SW Pacific where the Japanese were still putting up a ferocious battle. Then, out of the blue, the biggest shock of the war was dropped upon the world.

**With no forewarning, Hiroshima was leveled by the first atomic bomb** ever used. The date was August 6, 1945. President Harry Truman had been sworn into office not much more than three months before, and he had never been aware of such a bomb until then. He decided, for better or worse, to use this new weapon to keep more American men from dying in the war. No one had ever dreamed that such utter destruction could come from an entire squadron let alone just one airplane. Three days later our planes also bombed Nagasaki, causing the same hellish, undreamed of damage. Not only did the war with Japan end immediately, but the direction of the whole world was changed forever. No one realized at first the impact this stunning new weapon of war would have upon the whole world. There are folks today, forty-six years later, who simply cannot comprehend the

devastation that nuclear bombs or weapons can wreak world-wide. Why else do we refuse to put as much energy, time, money, and thought into researching Peace?

The war didn't shut down for everyone at once, although it was surprising how quickly the men were brought home from Europe to return to civilian life. Uniforms had been mandatory dress even when not on duty. But now civvies were allowed and, of course, preferred by men who were sick and tired of war. Some PT men still left for Japan, but Tom was kept at the PT base to help shut it down. Busy Melville soon became a ghost town, with ships and men disappearing daily. In November we left for civilian life ourselves, only this time we were to call Detroit home. I was pregnant with our first child and there was no place to settle down except in a second floor apartment with Mom and Dad until we could find a place of our own.

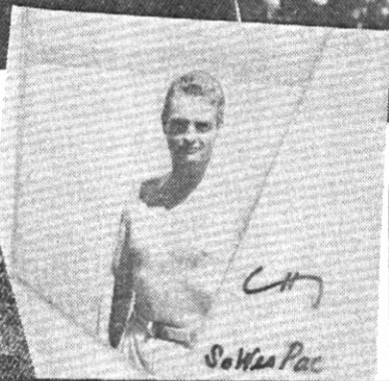
That was easier said than done. There was a major housing shortage. There had been no home building for about four years. In the meantime, thousands of new families had been started and the population had shifted. Young folks had to live with their parents and hope against hope that something would turn up. We didn't go to Chicago because Tom's mother had sold their house and she was living in a tiny apartment with barely room enough for her.

Mom's and Dad's landlord was extremely upset that more people were living there than he had bargained for. Some people were thoughtful and kind, understanding the problems that returning veterans were having. Others, like the Pattersons, were unreasonable and surly. However, that worked out to our advantage in the long run. They were so determined to be rid of us — especially with a baby due soon — that they practically bribed their ex-daughter-in-law to rent the soon-to-be vacant upper flat in her building to us.

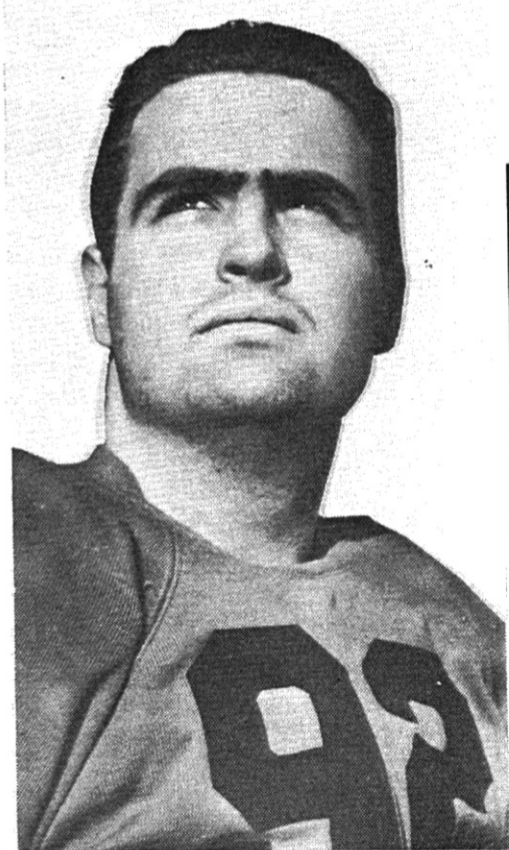
Tom found an interim job as editor on the Ecorse-River Rouge Advertiser, a weekly suburban newspaper. He loved the job and would have been happy there forever, I think, but even then \$50 a week was a starvation salary. In a few months he started his advertising career at Campbell-Ewald in personnel, using skills he had learned during his last tour of duty in Melville, but not in writing as he had anticipated. His management skills and way of dealing with people became stepping stones which allowed him to take on ever increasing responsibilities at CeCo where he was to spend most of his working years. □



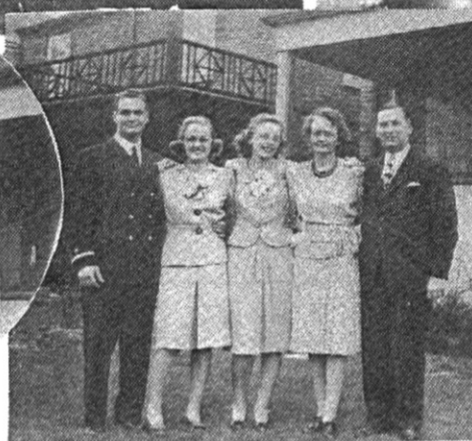
Clockwise, starting above:  
° Tom & Bill Lipscomb in front of their quonset hut in the SW Pacific.. ° Tom at the helm of his PT boat... PT boat... ° Marian at Hampton school in Detroit... ° Dick in his army uniform. ... ° Helen & Gordon in Madison... ° Marian (aiming at Tom who is in the Pacific) ° Tom & Marian on the lawn of their house in Portsmouth, Rhode Island...



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World War II began while Tom was playing football for St. Olaf. We married a year and a half later, lived together for four-and-a-half months before he was sent to sea duty in the Southwest Pacific for a year and-and-a-half. During that time Mom and Dad had moved to Detroit...Marian joined them and taught school there... Helen finished Wayne University and then left for the University of Wisconsin (where she met Gordon) to get her master's degree...Dick was drafted into the army and moved his little family to Chicago for the interim.



Counter clockwise starting from top right:  
 ° Tom playing football at St. Olaf  
 ° Tom and Marian on their wedding day  
 ° The wedding party, with Jim Trebbin Tom's high school and college friend) as best man and Helen as maid-of-honor  
 ° With Mom Tucker °With Mom and Dad  
 ° H and M enjoyed a vacation away from Wayne University and teaching school



## The Tucker Family Grows

**Philip Alan Tucker was born January 31, 1946, six weeks earlier than expected.** His head was misshapen, the first time I saw him, but the doctor said not to worry, that would straighten out before he went home. And it did. He was a pretty child — dark blue eyes, blond hair, and a long, lean body. He would start the morning happily, but get increasingly irritable as the day wore on. He never slept through the night until he was seven months old. We tried rocking, walking, driving him in the car — anything to get him to sleep — only to have him wake up screaming the minute we put him to bed. He had colic and there was nothing we could do for him, nor anything the doctor could suggest. His stomach was absolutely rigid, and then his milk would spew out of him like a fountain and he would be hungry once more, and the whole process would start over again.

Our first pediatrician had seen him in the hospital and we made an appointment to see him again in six weeks. He refused — or his nurse did — to give us an appointment before that time in spite of the problems we were having. (This was the start of the baby boom and pediatricians were quite arrogant in their decisions, at least in our experience with Phil). We were frantic and couldn't wait for six weeks, so we finally took him to a general practitioner who tried to change his formula to agree with him. Nothing seemed to help, but at least the doctor would see us and keep on trying. We didn't feel so alone.

When Phil finally got over the colic, we settled down to enjoy him. By this time, however, everyone seemed concerned that he wasn't sitting up by himself or doing the things that seven-month-old babies do. In fact, Phil never crawled and he didn't walk until he was seventeen months old and I was pregnant with Brian. I was exhausted! Since he was our first child, we weren't aware what he should be doing at certain ages, and books weren't too helpful because there was always so much leeway in what to expect. The doctor would say, "Well, I have ten children and each one is different." Finally that didn't suit us anymore so we decided to try a woman pediatrician we had heard about. She, too, was vague...but an excellent, sympathetic doctor. Finally, realizing we were getting desperate, she sent us to a neurologist (by this time he was three years old and wasn't talking.) Dr. Webster diagnosed him as mentally retarded, a dreadful confirmation of what we suspected by then, but softened somewhat when he said that love, time and education would make a world of difference. When I asked Dr. Schooten, the pediatrician, why she hadn't told us, she said she just didn't have the heart. We learned from this that no matter how bad the news is, we would rather know from the beginning what we were up against so we could look for solutions.



**By this time we had our second son, Brian Harrison.** He was also born six weeks earlier than expected, the day after Christmas, 1947, when Phil was twenty-three months old. He was the opposite of Phil. Even holding him was a different experience. He was soft and cuddly, had no problems with colic, and responded to everything. He stood early, crawled early, walked early — very early, at eight months, in fact. His hair was reddish blond and he had his father's beautiful hazel eyes (although he always said he wanted blue ones.) Phil and Brian were alike only in that they were both good-natured and happy.

Brian was born before we fully realized that Phil was mentally retarded. I don't know if that would have deterred us from having a second child. Probably not. After all, we did go on to have Gail and Jim in '55 and '57. But perhaps we wouldn't have had one so soon. My mother was the only one who intuitively felt that Phil's "slowness" would impact on the second child. She had hoped that the second baby would be a girl — I think she felt the impact on the second child would be less if it were a different sex.

**Retardation is a terrible problem to face.** I could never understand those parents who felt that God chose their family for a special place to put "His Angel" to teach them to love all mankind through this helpless individual. This burden could have passed from us and we would have been delighted. But having this problem, we tried to face it squarely. We soon found out that Philip's problems, to be dealt with properly, demanded our active participation in changing attitudes and laws. We changed from relatively conservative politics to much more liberal—even aggressive—politics to institute the necessary changes which would enable people like Phil to lead better lives. If we, and other parents hadn't done this, changes would have come much more slowly.

Our first big problem was with the professionals. We learned early on that medical schools barely broached the subject, so while doctors knew very little about the problem, most of them felt they knew everything there was to know.<sup>12</sup> Many of them had the feeling (reinforced at their schools) that retardation was not only incurable, it was hopeless. Many felt that such persons would never advance to a point where they could live in society. They should be cared for, but one should never expect miracles; in fact, one should expect nothing.

The social worker told us, when we had a workup done on Phil at the University of Michigan Medical School, that our child should be institutionalized and then forgotten, for all our sakes. They wanted us to do this before he reached the age of seven. This was the usual advice given to parents of retarded children then. Sometimes even today, although doctors should know better, many still tell parents of Down Syndrome children that they are "severely" retarded when that may, or may *not* be the case.

Neither Tom nor I could imagine putting one of our children away in an institution. Perhaps if he had been extremely physically handicapped, so retarded that he would never be able to move about on his own, and became too large and heavy to handle, we would have given it some thought. But to put away a child just because he was retarded didn't seem right. This child especially would need love and acceptance. How vividly I remember sitting at my desk in our living room on Rutherford Avenue after the social worker told us to get rid of him before he was seven, breaking into tears night after night. *Never, never, never!* He was a perfectly lovely child, handsome, tall, trying so hard to please. Strangely, he never looked retarded until he was in his teens. The only thing different about his looks then was that he was so "innocent" looking...his eyes were so trusting, not wise. Brian's face, on the other hand, was alert and wise, and his smile, from his eyes to his mouth, was full of mischief. The same words could describe Gail and Jim when they were born, our "second family" starting nine years later than the first.

The most fortunate part of Phil's birth was that it came at the time when parents of retarded children did not take such defeating advice but instead sought alternatives. It is so much easier to keep a retarded child at home now than it was then. Up until that time, many parents kept these children of theirs hidden at home, ashamed of them or ashamed of themselves for having them. Most, however, followed the usual advice and put them into institutions immediately, accepting without question that they could never handle them. Eventually, most ended up there anyway at the death of their parents.

We searched and inquired for services or opportunities which might help us. We were dismayed to find there were so few. Somewhere we heard about a group of parents with the same problem, and when Phil was about five we joined with the parent movement to help make a place for our sons and daughters. What there was in the air that made this time different from the centuries of neglect that had gone before, I don't know. But somehow we sought each other out — and in a few years, in every state, organizations came into being and the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR RETARDED CHILDREN became a vital force.

We never considered not keeping Philip. Still, I have found out in these last ten or fifteen years that his presence as a member of our family had a more profound influence on every single one of us than I knew at the time. Tom and I were aware that such a special family member would have a deep influence on us all, but only many years later am I learning just how much. As I write, all the feelings of despair, anger, hopelessness come rushing from some place where I thought I buried them over forty years ago.<sup>13</sup> Even at this late date I wonder if I had done this — or that — things might have turned out differently. I would love to have been blessed with wisdom beyond my years — but at the time we learned that we were to live with this problem we were only twenty-eight and twenty-nine

old.

Through the early times my mother was a marvelous resource. She gave us sympathy, love, acceptance of the problem and the gumption to help us face it. She baby-sat for Brian and Phil so I could teach music at the school in our neighborhood two-and-a-half days a week. But Mom and Dad moved to California when Brian was a year and a half, and then we had to rely solely on sitters or exchange services with friends from the neighborhood or church.

**Tom's mother (Agnes Neumann Tucker)** married (1946) a man who was nowhere near good enough for her, and Tom was feeling both unhappy and guilty that she had been so lonely that she married such a man for companionship. Frank was not abusive. He was a crude man with little schooling. The difference between him and many people who had to forego high school was that *they* kept on learning. Frank was a man with a closed mind and the end of schooling meant the end of his education. Tom's mother was a very bright woman with a quick and snappy wit, and an interest in everything around her.

Philip and Brian and I drove my mother out West the summer of '49 to begin her new life in California with Dad. Tom flew out six weeks later so I wouldn't have to drive back East alone. Just as we were leaving California we learned that Tom's mother had cancer and she was going into the hospital for an operation. When we got to Detroit we called her at the hospital to find out that the operation was a success and she was hoping to see us soon. We told her we would drive to Chicago that week-end so she could see how the children had grown over the summer. The morning we began our drive to Chicago we heard from Tom's Aunt Myrtle that his mother had died, completely unexpectedly. So our trip there was a very solemn one. Tom still feels badly about not getting there on time, but there was really no way anyone could have foreseen that.

After the funeral, we sat with Frank and found out that he had already given away most of her things to his children. Specifically, though, he knew that there were things we knew were to be ours. So we came home with the hand-made mahogany desk that an uncle from Michigan had made, and a rocking chair, a salad bowl, and an insurance policy worth \$950.

**Tom and I and our family were the only ones holding the fort back East.** Gordon had been recalled to the army during the Korean war, and he and the family moved from Albuquerque to Louisiana. After he had served his stint, they moved to San Francisco where he did his residency at UCSF hospital. Later they moved to Salinas where they have been ever since. Their family had grown in the meantime to include Steven and Paul in addition to Jane and Kay. Once the war was over, Dick and Shirley, had started in on their many moves throughout the country,

finally ending up as Southerners in *Gone with the Wind* country, Atlanta, Georgia. By this time, their family included Margit and Tina as well as older brother, Michael.

Since all my family had gone South or West and Tom was an only child, we really had no family left at all. We were quite alone, forced to find other families for celebrations like Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, and birthdays. Mostly we found such people at Holy Savior Lutheran Church, a mission church where Tom and I, along with Brian and Phil, became charter members in 1950. Other charter members were our friends — Adele and Russ Kittleson who had three children, one boy the same age as Brian; and Hilda and Chris Dahl, with two boys, one a year older and one the same age as Brian.

We lived in Northwest Detroit in a neighborhood of small homes for seven or eight years. All the families were young and there were scads of children around. Brian had a special friend in Dennis Timmons, and Phil had a lot of friends, his favorite being the girl down the street, Debbie, a few years younger than he was. Phil was never a good athlete, being uncoordinated and uninterested in sports requiring small motor skills. But he learned how to ride a two-wheel bike fairly early and became very good at it. He would ride Debbie around on the back of his bike everywhere. Brian, on the other hand, preferred football and softball, playing with both organized and pick-up teams.

Phil had attended a regular nursery school — an excellent one connected with Wayne University — when Brian was a baby. It gave him the opportunity to observe, learn, and play with other children. We also were taking him, three times a week, to a doctor who gave him shots and prescribed glutamic acid and a special diet of no milk but horrendous amounts of orange juice. Of course, none of these things helped. But parents of children with severe and difficult problems are always grasping at straws and spending a lot of money in the process. Phil also took speech lessons, first at Wayne and later through Mt. Sinai Hospital. We decided I should begin teaching again to help out with the extra expenses. This was not the usual in those days when the large majority of women never worked outside the home when there were small children involved. But actually school teaching was a fine field to be in because hours were essentially the same, as were vacations.

**Of all our neighbors, our best friends were Wanda and Ed Pipp.** Pipp was the Aviation Editor for the Detroit News. He and Tom would exchange war stories. Pipp had been a flyer in Europe and had spent several years as a prisoner of war in Germany. Nikki Pipp was the same age as Phil, so they went to kindergarten together while Brian and Dee Dee played at home under Wanda's care. Wanda was happy to take care of the boys when I was teaching. Having a houseful of kids every day didn't phase her a bit, and she liked having the extra

money. She loved children and all living things. Even if she found a mouse in a drawer, not unusual in her cabin up North, she would pick it up tenderly and put it outside. The children would often have a little funeral for bugs they found dead outside. Wanda's home provided a nice atmosphere for the boys to be in, so I never had any guilt feelings about leaving them in the care of someone else. In fact, Brian seemed to love her house more than he did ours. I sometimes had to drag him crying and screaming to our house when I came home from teaching. Wanda had a very easy way with children. I think she enjoyed them more than she did her grown-up friends.

Brian's and Phil's best vacation memories from their childhood were not of the farm, as mine were, but of Pipp's cabin in the woods near the Au Sauble River outside of Hale, Michigan. I would often take care of the Pipp children while Wanda and Ed went on special assignment to the Air Show...and Tom would come up on week-ends. Sometimes the Kittlesons would go with us. Sometimes the Dahls would come from their home towns where they would be on vacation — Rogersville or Harrisville. Sometimes the Pipp's would be there, too. They had an old Model A Ford which everyone called *The Jeep Car*. The kids loved to stand on the running boards as we drove it up and down the dirt road. We would also drive it to Big Bass Lake where we would go swimming, but we didn't use it for much else. I can still hear everyone singing "Big Bass Lake...Little Bass Lake" all the way from the cabin to the lake. (A very simple tune for very simple people, it went "sol-sol-sol...do-do-do.") We picked a lot of blueberries in the woods, and did a lot of walking and exploring. Philip's kitten "Kiki" died there. We buried him and put a cross above his grave so Phil wouldn't feel too bad. ("A cross for a cat?" Adele was horrified.) But Phil knows he'll see Kiki in heaven.

Our vacations at the cabin stopped after many years. By that time we had moved to Rosedale Park and Pipp's had moved to Bloomfield Hills. We had Gail and Jim and they had Wendy. In fact, my last memory of the cabin was when Jim was about a year and a half and Wanda and I had escaped from the brood for a minute of relaxation. We were visiting with Kate, the woman who owned the little grocery store down the dirt road, when down the path strolled Wendy and Jimmy looking for us. Wanda said, "Oh, oh. Here come the little monsters." Kate was very offended. (Now this was long before four letter words were in common usage, I want you to know.) I'll never forget her scolding to Wanda. "Don't call them monsters. Shit, it sounds like hell."

The Pipp's were divorced soon after that. Ed kept the home in Bloomfield Hills and Wanda opted for the cabin. Our close friendship just naturally changed after that but the cabin and its inhabitants are still a lovely memory.

**Back in 1952 when Phil entered kindergarten** , the school authorities knew he was retarded because he could not talk and he was slow in following directions. But they couldn't, and didn't, try to deny him entrance. His first year he got along fine since he never was a discipline problem. The principal called me at the end of that time to explain that he couldn't progress into first grade. She would keep him in kindergarten, however, but after he got too big for that she had no alternatives. There were some classes for higher functioning mentally retarded persons, but none for Philip. The principal meant well, but her only counsel was that "God must have some special plan for him." I was furious and frustrated with a system that couldn't give me more helpful and explicit advice.

I don't remember where we learned of the COLEMAN SCHOOL FOR SPECIAL CHILDREN run by Tom Coleman, a Wayne University professor, but we decided to try it, and enrolled Philip there. (It was Dr. Coleman who urged Tom to become active in the newly formed DETROIT ASSOCIATION FOR RETARDED CHILDREN. He felt they could use his expertise in PR.) The tuition was \$90 a month, a large chunk of Tom's salary in those days. Wanda couldn't take care of Brian that year, but we were lucky to find Mocka, the grandmother of several playmates down the street. She was living with her son, his wife, and their two little girls, and delighted to get a part-time job for herself. It made life so much easier for me. Mocka would come down and dress the boys, get Phil off to school, make the beds and do the dishes, and then take Brian down to her house to play with her granddaughters. I would get home in time to meet Phil's station wagon pulling up in front and then get Brian from down the street.

By the time Phil was eight, he tested high enough (55 I.Q.) to meet the entrance requirements for Special B in Detroit. I dislike to discuss I.Q.s, since they are so misleading, whether high or low. They barred Phil's entrance into school until he could meet that magical number. And much later on, when President Reagan came into office, every disabled person receiving S.S.I. (Supplemental Security Income) had to be re-examined almost every hour (I exaggerate only slightly) in an effort to discover some folks on assistance who could be dropped. Someone determined that Phil's I.Q. was now 70 (another magical number which is supposed to mean that while the person may be somewhat retarded, he isn't too retarded to get along without assistance. Forget the fact that people of normal I.Q.s have trouble getting along on ten times as much money and lots more "smarts.") So proof of another disability was demanded. Anyone listening to Phil could hear immediately that he was severely limited in speech. But we also had to show that this was present at birth, not an accident later in life. Fortunately I had on file all the records from various speech therapists and neurologists from day one.

Let me explain Philip's speech problem just a little. Phil can say words but often they come out in a distorted manner. For instance, he will say *Mar* for

Mother, *Far* for Father — he seems to make a word of several syllables into just one syllable, ignoring some of the consonants. And he uses a subject, verb, and object, but doesn't put in the connecting words. For instance, he might say, "I go park." But try as he will he cannot say, "I am going to the park." One neurologist said he had brain stem damage at birth which is what probably prevents him from putting more than three or four words together at a time. He does communicate well, however, and shows the patience of Job sometimes with those of us who can't understand him the first time. Often he will go into a form of "Charades" where we will try to guess the word he is trying to put across — and we all laugh at our sometimes bizarre translations. Our main problem now that we live so far apart is that Charades is a hard game to play over the telephone!

**Brian, meanwhile, presented a different side of child rearing.** He was a bright, bright child with an active imagination. For example, he told his friends that we had "Snores" living under our basement stairs, convincing them that every house was filled with these creatures who came out at night to "get" them. Of course, whenever they woke up their parents, the Snores would magically disappear. Ruth Engelstad, our pastor's wife, asked if I wouldn't please have Brian tell Mark that snores were something he had invented. Mark simply would not believe her when she told him there were no such things.

Brian was quick to learn that spelling and punctuation do not always follow logical rules. We were walking through the parking lot at Northland (the first shopping mall in the United States, by the way) when he was about five. He noticed a car's name spelled out on its side. He tried sounding it out, "That's a Ply-mouth, (pronouncing it Pli-mowth.) And I said, "No, Brian, that's a Plymouth. " "Well, then," he laughed, "shut my muth."

There was one time when I wished he were also advanced at using tact, however. We had been invited by Dennis's mother, Anne Timmons, to come to lunch at the end of Vacation Bible School as a thank you for taking Dennis with us each day. We brought a young friend, Carla, along, who was going to visit with us the rest of the day. Brian took Carla all through Dennis's house — living room, dining, room, bedroom, bath. And then as they passed Anne and me on their way down to the basement, he said, very gleefully, "Now come down here, Carla. It's even *messier!*" And then there was the time when the minister visited our house and Brian greeted him, "*Hi, ya, Beer Guts!*"

Even at age five Brian's taste in literature was eclectic, and it still is. He loved everything from the Little Golden Books to all the Mother West Wind Stories to Winnie the Pooh. He wanted to be read to all the time. Sometimes I would try to shorten the stories by leaving out a word here and there, but I found out he was reading when he would point out my omissions. I began, then, to teach him phonics

as I had learned them in grade school myself.

My friend, Adele, was a marvelous kindergarten teacher, but she was of the opinion that children should not read early, even if they just picked it up by themselves, and certainly not phonetically nor in Kindergarten. Adele was sure that I was pushing Brian too fast, positive that he would become a slow reader because he would have to stop to pronounce everything syllabically. One day, when she was over for coffee, I asked Brian to bring me the Encyclopedia Americana. He read something Adele picked out for him— perfectly, and without hesitation. I tell you, it was most difficult to raise and cope with children of such different abilities, and to be fair to either one.

Unfortunately, Brian was one of those children who consistently ran into teachers who didn't know what to do with him. His first grade teacher, for example, when we were discussing his handwriting, knew that it was messy, but didn't know that he was left-handed even though he had been sitting in front of her for almost two semesters. (All four of our children are left-handed though neither Tom nor I are. So, by the way, is Tim, our son-in-law).

Later on, after we had moved to a new neighborhood while Brian was in fifth grade, the principal called me into her office to explain that she wasn't going to honor the recommendation from his former school that he attend accelerated classes —the average of his scores led her to believe he couldn't do the work. When I asked to see his records (parents at that time were not allowed access to them as a matter of course) she reluctantly told me (but wouldn't show me) that he was above 95 in everything except clerical ability. That score of 15 brought him down to an average level! So much for figures.

**Gail was born when Phil was nine-and-a-half and Brian seven-and-a-half.** Shirley and Dick and their three children were in Detroit for the occasion, very excited to be present for such an important event. (Mother had arranged her vacation time to be there from California so she could help me when we came home from the hospital. We had figured this birth would be early, as Brian's and Phil's were, but it wasn't, so poor Mom had to leave the day after Gail was born.) I thought I didn't care if we had a girl or a boy, but when the doctor told me it was a girl, I got all choked up. Only then did I realize how much I had really wanted a girl this time. I had forgotten how lovely babies' hands were, and here was our daughter, with long, tapering fingers. Such a miracle! I knew she would play the piano or be artistic in some way. Her face was so round. Her body was long and lean. The doctor assured me she was "perfect." (Gail said later he didn't look as far as her feet. Two toes are webbed together on each foot. Mine are the same way. It's something I never gave a thought to but apparently the children were teasing



her.) Unlike Philip and Brian, Gail had hardly any hair, and what she had was so light in color it hardly showed. Like Brian, she was quick and bright, crawling all around at five months and walking just before nine...and talking early, just like Brian. She didn't get her pronunciation correct all the time...Phil was *Fidlip*, Brian was *Bodden*, and Jimmy, when he came along, was *Dimmy*. She was also Miss Sociability. She loved people, no matter what age or sex. She would chatter away with anyone and everyone. Twice I found her running naked down the street with her pink blanket dragging behind her. She was in a hurry to go to the corner where the other children were, too busy to wait to get dressed after her bath. When a visiting minister at church said he would like to take her home with him, she packed her suitcase as soon as she got home and was crushed when I told her he didn't really mean it.

Gail's kindergarten teacher told me that Gail was the most advanced child she had ever had in her classes. So I was surprised, during my first conference with her first grade teacher, that Gail was not doing as well as she had expected her to do in reading. It just happened that after school that very day, I heard Gail talking on the phone with my friend, Adele, who was asking her how school was going. Gail told her that she was learning to read. Adele apparently asked her to read to her over the phone, so Gail (not knowing that I could see her through the half-closed door) asked her to wait while she got a book. She didn't move from the phone, just waited a few seconds and then pretended she was reading. She started out, "Look.....look:.....see.... Spot ..... run....." I realized she was hesitating after every word. Later I asked her to get her book and read to me. She did the same thing — read, but hesitated after every word. When I asked her why she did that she said, "That's how you're supposed to read. That's what all the kids do." So I demonstrated how to scan the sentence first and then say it with meaning. PRESTO! Reading problem solved. The teacher called me within a week to say she didn't know what had happened, but Gail was reading beautifully now.

Gail also practiced writing her spelling words into poems. One of the most memorable was about my father. I sent it to him, and he enjoyed it as much as Tom and I did:

*I like Harry  
Harry is a Fairy.*

**Jim was born when Gail was two-and-a-half, another "perfect child"** with blonde hair and blue, blue eyes. We had thought in terms of another daughter. But after he was born we couldn't imagine him as anything else, he was such a typical boy...hale, hearty, active. Like Brian and Gail before him, he was a joy to have around...eating well, sleeping like a dream, doing all the things a baby should do as soon, or before, he should do them. The neighbor in back of us commented,

when Jim was about a year-and-a-half and had just taken a bad fall, that she had never heard him cry. I think words hurt him more than anything physical ever did.

When Jim was three months old we moved to the house where we were to live for the next nineteen years. We had thought in terms of suburban living, but at that time the only school system available to youngsters like Phil was in Detroit. So instead of moving to Birmingham, a lovely suburb where many of our friends lived or were moving to, we stayed in Detroit. ("Birmingham doesn't have retarded residents," someone once solemnly told me. I guess, in a way, that was true. Obviously people who had retarded children either didn't move there, or they sent their children to private schools).

Actually, I was afraid to move from the safe community where all the neighbors knew Phil to an unknown neighborhood where we didn't know what the reaction would be. He was eleven, getting taller and playing always with children who were younger than he because those his age had long outgrown him. But the house on Rutherford was much too small. With our family of six we needed bigger rooms, and it wouldn't hurt to have better space for entertaining, either. So it was with mixed emotions that we moved into Rosedale Park, a beautiful community in northwest Detroit.

The move to Rosedale Park was especially hard on Brian. He was about to enter sixth grade, a tough time for children to change. It was hard on Gail, too. She went from a neighborhood where there were many children to a much more settled area where we didn't see any children at all for at least the first six months. Jim was a baby, so it made no difference to him. His world was the family. It didn't make too much of a difference to Phil, although he kept wanting to go back to see his friends. He was quite an adaptable social being. The trouble was that he was apt to wander all over the place looking for friendly faces. Still, he had an unerring instinct for home base.

Brian, however, missed Dennis and his old friends so much that he didn't forgive us for leaving his old neighborhood for a long time. He made some new friends, but always felt his old friends were better. Still there were several large community churches nearby which had fine gyms where he and his school friends could play basketball. He also played touch football and softball in Stoepel Park which was one short block away — a large city park which was such a good place for our kids when they were growing up.

Jim walked early, too, by the time he was nine months old, and nothing stopped him once he started. He climbed all over everything. The house had three floors, and Jim used the stairs as a race track, sliding down all of them as fast as an arrow, sometimes hitting the wall at the bottom when he couldn't slow down. We took

out the beautiful leaded glass panel in the door leading to the front hall, replacing it with a plain wooden panel, because we shuddered to think what would happen to him if he broke through the glass. I don't know what worried me most — whether he would knock himself senseless at the bottom of the stairs or whether he would have a sex change from sheer friction.

Brian and Phil shared the third floor while Tom and I slept on the second floor, Gail in the second bedroom, and Jim, the baby, in the third. After a few years Jim was old enough to move upstairs, giving Tom the small room for his study. Gail felt this made her the "odd fellow out" because she was the only one who did not have someone to share her room, and she complained often that she was lonesome. I usually tried to consoled her by reminding her that she was never alone — that God was always with her, and so was Jesus. Then one night she called me up from downstairs, complaining again that she was lonesome. She needed someone. And just as I started in with my logical (and I hoped, comforting) explanation, she interrupted, "And none of that Jesus stuff, either."

Like the rest of the children, Jim was a mixture of many qualities. He was a good student, a superb athlete, and such a solemn child. When he was in the third grade, I had to go into the hospital for my heart operation, so I went to talk to his teacher about it. I was worried that it might affect his school work because he was sensitive to every nuance. She said she was glad I had told her and she would watch out for him. I said it was too bad he was such a sensitive child, and her reply was very wise, I thought. She said, "Mrs. Tucker, I have many children in my class. A few are very sensitive, but most are not. Which would you rather have?"

Jim was also quick to show early signs of sorting out the basic important essentials in life. Once, when he was about seven, I found him at the breakfast table reading a book Brian had left there the night before. He said, "Mother, what is a w...h...o...r...e?" I thought, "Oh, oh...here come the sex questions." Well, the experts said you should just answer in a straight-forward fashion and let it go at that. So I said to him, "Jim, a whore is a person who sleeps with a man, not because she is married to him or because she loves him, but because she gets money for it." I wondered how this would satisfy him and what his next question would be. And his very thoughtful follow-up, after a long moment's pause, was, "How much money does she get paid?"

Most parents in my generation were very reluctant to talk about sex to their children. I was no different, although I certainly would be if I were raising a family now. "Too soon old, too late schmart." I did, however, find a wonderful book quite explicit in pictures and text, written at a second grade level. Brian, Gail, and Jim all read it at different times. Jim was the only one who commented on it. I found him lying in the middle of the living room floor on his stomach, head in hands,

completely absorbed. His comment to me when I came into the room was, "This is *very in-ter-est-ing*."

All the children loved being read to, and didn't mind going to bed as long as they heard their story before the lights were turned off. Jim and Gail had different tastes from Brian. Gail loved The Children's Garden of Verses by Robert Louis Stevenson, and could recite many of his poems. Jim liked anything that had to do with action. They weren't into Kipling's Jungle Tales or Milne's Winnie the Pooh which had completely captivated Brian. As they grew older they all developed more eclectic tastes like their older brother, reading poetry, science fiction, biography, history, politics, philosophy. But if a first prize were given for reading, I guess Brian would still get it. Even Phil, although he read at a very elementary level, could be found reading books at all hours. I could hear him in the morning (he always got up before everyone else) reading one of his books out loud while in the bathroom.

Gail had heard the words "mental retardation" almost every day of her young life, so I wasn't surprised when she was about five years old and I was driving her and Jimmy to the store one day, to hear the question from the back of the car, "Mother, what does mental detardation mean?" I tried to think of an example to make it clear to her. So I said, "Well, Gail, some people are slower to think than others. They listen okay, but may not do things just right or as fast as you do. They may not talk as clearly as most people do, or they may make more mistakes. But they are very nice people and we love them just as much as we do anyone else. Can you think of anyone like that?" And she thought very hard for a minute and then answered, "Yes, I can. Dimmy."

Our children also learned basic politics from us. Tom and I both came from Republican backgrounds. We learned, however, that the philosophy of the Democratic party fit our situation with Phil much better than did that of the Republicans. Democrats tax more, but their philosophy provides more services to people who need them desperately and can't get them otherwise. Right or wrong, I came to feel that Republicans fear an unbalanced budget more than they do the lack of essential social services. Apparently we talked a lot about this and our children got some mixed signals and information. Jim was about seven when we were driving down Grand River in Detroit and he saw a big sign stating REPUBLICAN HEADQUARTERS: ROMNEY FOR PRESIDENT "Mother," he said perplexedly, "Is Romney a Republican? I thought he was a Christian."

**All the boys spent a lot of time at Stoepel Park**, not together, but in individual activities. As I said before, Brian played football and softball there, and hung around with friends. Jim was introduced to track there one summer, and became Detroit's 8-year-old long-jump champion, going to Washington the summer of

1963 to compete nationally. He also began playing tennis there, and was on football and softball teams, too. Phil spent much of his wandering time there, but his favorite thing was the band concert every Thursday night during the summer featuring the excellent DETROIT PARKS SYMPHONIC BAND. We could always find him there, especially delighted one year when he discovered his first teacher from public school was the first clarinet player.

We found several neighbors in Rosedale Park who became like family, too. Ginny and Hank Dykstal came into our lives when Gail met Laura at age four and Jim met Tim when they were two. They lived next door to the Roses who had boys Brian's and Phil's ages, and also Kris, just between Gail and Jim, who was everybody's friend. To this day they are like family to us. We always seem to pick up where we left off, whether a week or two years have gone by since we last saw each other, and even though none of us has lived in the same city for years.

**Phil had the worst of teachers and the best of teachers** one could find in a school system. If he is puzzled about something, he still puts his forefinger to his head and tells himself, "Think." This refers to the custom that Mrs. Bond, one of his first and best teachers, would tell her students. If something didn't come quickly to them, she would ask them to concentrate, saying, "Think," while pointing to their heads. "Think." You can see the wheels going around. He is delighted when he finds the answers after a little concentration.

On the other hand, the woman he had at Harding School, when he was about sixteen, was a miserable excuse for a teacher. Harding was not quite two miles away and Phil was finally able to walk to school on good days. (I had car-pooled for many years until he learned to ride the bus by himself.) There were two teachers for two special classes — a man and a woman. Sometimes I would pick up Phil or deliver something in the middle of the day — like a musical tape he wanted his class to hear. I would always find these two teachers having a cup of coffee while the students sat at their desks doing nothing. It didn't matter what time of the morning or afternoon it was, before school or waiting for the bell to ring for leaving, the class was doing *nothing*. When the end of the year came, Phil brought home all the supplies we had been requested to buy at the beginning of the year. Nothing had ever been used.

In spite of being retarded and not always having had good teachers, Phil is smart in many ways. He has an excellent sense of direction. If he is taught a specific route on the bus to get somewhere, he can always figure out several more ways by himself. He can even understand abstract things. For instance, once Tom was insisting that Phil do something he didn't want to do. Phil absolutely refused. Finally, Tom told him, "By gosh, Phil, you do it. I'm your father and you must do

what your father tells you to do." And Phil came right back, yelling "You not my father. God my father."

Money was a hard concept for Phil to learn. I'm sure he still doesn't really comprehend it. When Tom and I moved to Chicago in 1977, right after Phil had moved to the home HEP built for him and his friends, we gave his savings account book to the staff to keep for him in his file. It had around \$400 in it. We felt surely the money was safe in that arrangement. Imagine our surprise when about four months later we had a notice forwarded to us (we were still on the account as co-owners) saying that it was overdrawn. We learned later that Phil had copied down the account number and had used it every week to draw out odd sums — like \$5.89...or \$24.33 — and used it to take his friends out to lunch or breakfast quite often. It seemed to him a reasonable thing to do. He just didn't comprehend the idea that there would come a day when the money would be used up! Even today he looks at the bill Tom gets in a restaurant. Whether for \$15 or \$60 for the three of us, he always says, "Not too bad."

**I began to teach school again when Jim was six.** I felt the need to do something besides keep house all day, though now I think back on it, I wonder why I ever felt I needed something else to do. Heaven knows I had all those children and a very busy husband climbing the ladder of success at work. Phil was able for the first time to manage public transportation to school, so I was free of that duty of driving him back and forth. I was also no longer the choir director and organist at our church (something I did off and on for many, many years.) So I decided to put my name in for substitute teaching and was called almost immediately to a full-time position at Dossin School, just two miles from home.

Brian was in high school, and Jim and Gail were in grade school just three blocks from home. Gail didn't object to eating in the school lunchroom, but Jim was adamant about eating at home. Of all our children, he was the only one who had the problem with "schoolitis" that I had. I remembered, understood, and was sympathetic. Since my school was close by, I would tear home (except for times I had lunch duty) to have lunch with Jim, and then dash back for afternoon classes.

I loved Dossin School. In addition to Music, I also taught Auditorium, a class which seems peculiar to Detroit, but which I feel all schools should have. It allows for a great deal of creativity because it emphasized public speaking and drama. Still, one year of such an active schedule was enough, and I decided to bow out the next year. Nevertheless, when the principal called me in October to ask me to teach second grade (she was having problems with a teacher who was eternally absent). I loved it. Second grade children are lovely. It was also the year Jim was in second grade and I could relate very well to that.

My clearest recollection of that year is that I read the story Charlotte's Web aloud to the class. It was about Charlotte, a spider, and her friendship with Wilbur, a pig. After we finished it, the children all had tears in their eyes because Charlotte died, leaving Wilbur all alone. They all urged me to read it again, immediately. Only this time when we got to the last chapter, they begged, "Don't read that chapter. We want Charlotte to live." So live she did. Immortality was achieved by a spider, courtesy of the second grade at Dossin.

The next year I decided once again not to teach because Tom had been elected president of THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR RETARDED CHILDREN. We knew it would take so much of his time, including many week-ends in New York where headquarters were at that time. I felt I needed to be available for him and the family. As luck would have it, though, an acquaintance of mine called me to ask if I would consider taking over her trainable class of mentally retarded adults for a year so she could finish her master's degree at Wayne.<sup>14</sup> Although I told her I couldn't consider it, the Board of Education then called to ask me to do it because there was no one else qualified. This was hard for me to believe—that in the whole city of Detroit there was no one who could teach such a class but me. I had never had one course in special ed. But that is how things were. Not only in Detroit, but in the whole country, Trainable Education (for people with I.Q.'s below 55) was just becoming available in schools throughout the country, and there were not enough teachers to go around. In Detroit there were only three schools offering such classes, and Mabelle's was one. If I didn't do it (apparently my qualifications were that I had a retarded child as well as a certificate to teach music) then they would close down the class for a year. Tom and I talked it over and decided I should do it even though it would prove to be a difficult year for all of us. And so I became a special education teacher.

Luckily, the Nobel School was only about three or four miles down the Southfield Expressway from our house. My aide, Harriet Hauer, was a wonderful woman who was also the mother of a retarded adult daughter. She had no education beyond high school, but she had all the ability of teachers with superior credentials. She was always there before I was, and whenever I entered the room, all fifteen of the young adults were busy working at "before school" projects. (The next year, every time I would walk into any other teacher's room as a substitute, I would usually find the students "waiting" until the rest of the class had arrived...and that waiting period could last as long as an hour. The pupils arrived by cab, only four or five at a time, hence the scattered arrivals. I had seen so much "waiting" when picking up Phil at Harding School, as I said, that I had little respect for teachers who couldn't make better lesson plans. Teachers are like everyone else in the world. Some are the greatest. Others want to be paid for the least effort.

**When you have children you soon learn that no two are alike.** Brian was

the reader and thinker first, the athlete second. Jim was the athlete first, then the reader and thinker, and always the shy one, but determined and goal-oriented. Brian is blessed with a fine mind, but as a child, he was more the dreamer than the student. He is the most avid reader of all, reading anything and everything. In 7th grade he dissected his Auditorium teacher's behavioral and thinking patterns, explaining to me how she could get more out of him if she approached him differently. No doubt he was right, but it didn't change her. Jim, on the other hand, would approach the problem from a different angle. How could he change his behavior to accommodate his teacher and thus get a better mark?

Gail was a fine student and had few problems with her teachers. Her problem, she decided, was with her peers. She confided in me, when she was about thirteen, that she had asked her teachers to stop calling on her to do all the extra things around the room because she felt her classmates were beginning to resent her. Still, she seemed to have plenty of friends, and she was always busy with music and dancing lessons.<sup>15</sup>

All the children were interested in music. Phil loved to hear me sing him to sleep. He enjoys classical music and band more than anything. Brian, on the other hand, would put his hand over my mouth when I tried to sing him to sleep, and say, "Don't sing, mama." (He's probably a better music critic than the others). While he enjoys classical music, he certainly leans to the rock genre which I have never particularly learned to enjoy nor understand.

Gail studied classical piano down the street with a petite little French woman, Mrs. Boucher, while she was in grade school. Later, in high school, she studied pop piano with a man who played background music at one of Detroit's fine restaurants. She also has a fine voice and studied at the Detroit Conservatory of Music. I have always envied Gail her talent. It is my opinion that I am a better classical pianist than she is, but she is much better than I could ever be at popular music. She also has a real talent for writing music, having produced some lovely popular type songs, as well as some excellent choir music, and the musical signature for KRON TV, SF. I have never been able to compose anything but a couple of trite songs for school occasions. On the other hand, I am a good pianist, a darned good choir director and a pretty good church organist.

Both Gail and Jim sang in the high school choirs and were members, at different times, of the High School Quartette. They also sang in my church Junior and Senior choirs. Every choir director should have children she can call upon when all others fail her, and I was thankful many times I had them. I have even used them in retirement...for special music when I was choir director in Aptos. It's a talent I hope they will always be ready to use.



**We had taken many family vacation trips** to visit Dick and Shirley and their family when Brian and Phil were little. Brian became quite a Civil War "buff" through his reading and enjoyed stopping off at various battlegrounds on the way South. He also thoroughly enjoyed being with all of his cousins. But trips to the South were not as large a part of Gail's and Jim's memories, although Gail made her first trip to Washington, D.C. to visit them when she was only four weeks old...and Jim was about two when we took him to Atlanta where he was given a rebel hat which he refused to take off...and which he pulled so far down on his head that his ears began to stick out noticeably! Possibly the reason for not going to Georgia was because we were spending more summers in California, or having Grandma and Grandpa come to visit us in Michigan. Dick and Shirley seldom came north to visit us. Dick usually could take only one week at a time for his vacations so they felt they couldn't spend it on a long trip up North. They came to spend most of their vacations with their close friends at Kentucky Lakes and with Shirley's sister, Marge, and her husband, Cy. There were no family problems ...they were always delighted to see us when we came. But I could feel us drifting slowly apart, and while Brian has delightful memories of his Ness cousins, Gail and Jim have only a few...something which I felt badly about, but also felt I had no control over.

Gail and Jim share vague memories with Brian and Phil of vacations at Pipp's cottage, but they were quite young when Wanda and Pipp separated and divorced and we stopped going there. But the two younger children do share my memories of Evansville and Cooksville. Remembering the lovely times I had had as a child visiting the farm, I wrote to Thelma and Ted Hatlen to ask if we could visit them. They were delighted, and it was at their bustling farm that Gail and Jim became acquainted with cow barns and milk houses and riding mowers. (Phil, too, went occasionally, but he was usually at camp then). Their memories are of the same area, but not the same farms where I had spent my vacations. But the feeling was quite the same, and Cooksville church was still there.

While writing of vacations, I must mention the many trips we took to California throughout the years they were all growing up. Brian and Philip's first trip was the one we took with Mother when she was going to join Dad who had accepted a job with Sandifor and Sandvik in San Francisco. We went to Denver first, to visit Shirley and Dick and see their Tina for the first time. Then down to Albuquerque to visit Helen and Gordon, driving along the Colorado River through some of the most beautiful country I have ever seen, finally ending up in San Bruno where Dad had rented a spacious house.

Gail's first trip to California was via airplane when she was one year old. I think it was Brian's and Phil's first plane ride, too. By this time Mom and Dad were living in a home they had bought in Mountain View — the first home they owned since

losing their house on Sunnyside during the Depression. Auntie Inga, a tall, big boned, high- cheeked woman with straight, dark hair who looked more like an American Indian than a Viking, was living with them by this time. (Her daughter, Ethel, with whom she had lived for many years, had died of lung cancer in 1948. When Paul remarried several years later, Auntie asked Mother if she could live with them in California). Dad had prepared for an inquisitive child's coming by fastening empty spools that Mom had saved from her thread box in places all around the yard and patio, so wherever Gail would go, her busy hands would find something to turn and explore. For Brian's part, he was intrigued by meeting a friend and neighbor of theirs, Dusty Rhodes, who had once been a big-league pitcher.

One of the nice things about Mother and Dad was that they really enjoyed each grandchild for his or her special characteristics, and took time to know them as well as they could despite the length of time that might come between visits. Brian went out to California by himself once, at age fourteen, spending time with his grandparents and also with Helen and Gordon. Gail and Jim went out there together when they were about ten and seven, and then came back across country with them in their Chevy van. Phil spent several summers with them at different ages, once going with them to Family Week at a Bible Camp. Those visits, along with Mom's and Dad's visits back to Detroit, gave them all many wonderful memories of their grandparents to carry through the years.

**Brian and Jim both played on school football teams.** Brian's career was cut short because he developed bad infections in his toes when he was issued shoes that were too small for his wide feet while he was at Cass Tech. (His freshman year was spent at Detroit's superb Arts and Sciences High School downtown, where he was one of two pupils from each city elementary school chosen to attend honors classes). Brian had to have an operation on his toes during that season, and he couldn't recover quickly enough to play again. He transferred to Redford High in his sophomore year because he felt he missed out socially by not going to a neighborhood school and he decided not to try out for football there.

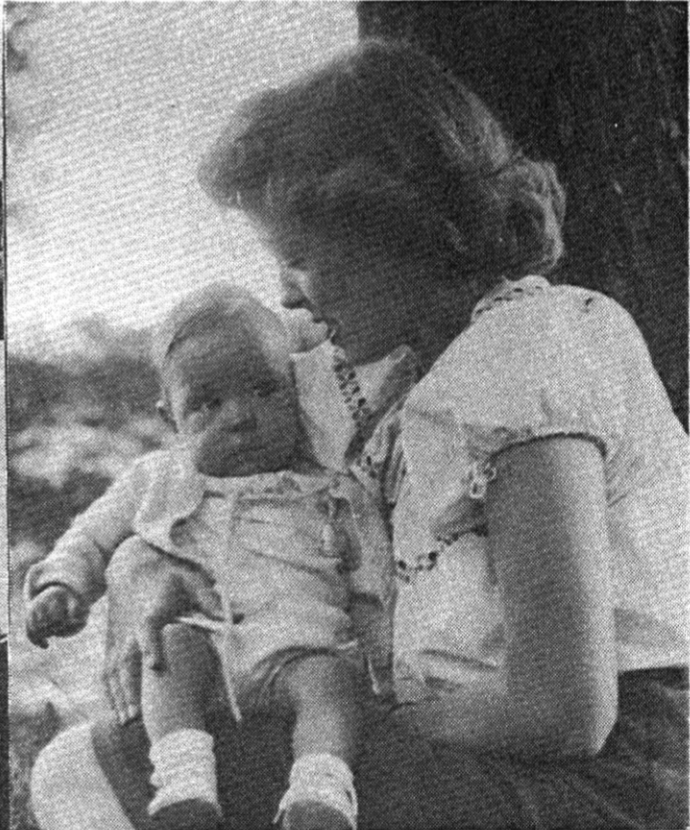
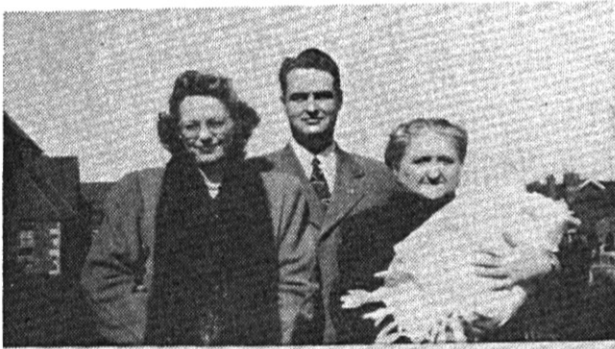
Jim played freshman football, too, at Redford High, but decided he didn't want to continue beyond that, but to concentrate on basketball, his dearest love. Redford was then in the process of becoming a mixed-race school. The neighborhoods surrounding had always been white, but Detroit was rapidly changing. Redford, which had been completely white when Brian attended, had a couple of black students when Gail began, and was about forty percent black when Jim entered two years later. Those in athletics saw even more color change. Jim was the only white regular on the basketball team he co-captained. At one time he wanted badly to become a professional basketball player and hoped he could become at least 6'7".

Personally, I'm glad he stopped at 6'3".

When he was a junior, Jim had a number of letters from different universities telling of their interest in him as a basketball player. Redford basketball had a terrible year during his senior year, however, going through what Jim called its "hot dog" stages. There were so many kids who refused to play a "team" game, but wanted only to show their own skills. And the coach was not able, apparently, to express his authority. As a result, the team did very poorly that year, and that kind of scholarship was not forthcoming. I was proud, however, that he made the Junior Varsity team at the U of Michigan, playing for two years before he decided it wasn't worth the effort. Tom had suggested that he might play for a smaller college, maybe St. Olaf, but Jim felt that a degree from the University of Michigan would mean more to him in the long run, so he opted to stay there.

Redford High had been considered a fine school during most of the years we lived in Rosedale Park. In 1987, however, we were shocked and saddened to read in Time Magazine that it rated as the worst in Detroit. It was full of crime and drugs which had resulted in several student murders — to say nothing of a terribly lowered scholastic achievement record.

Redford is a sad example of the terrible times our whole society is going through — and has been going through — for a long while. Drugs were just becoming a problem when our children were in high school. This has now accelerated to a problem which will probably only be solved through world-wide cooperation. In today's society in which countries, governments, and people are so completely different politically, culturally, and economically, it seems to many of us that it will take more than hard work — it will take a real miracle. □



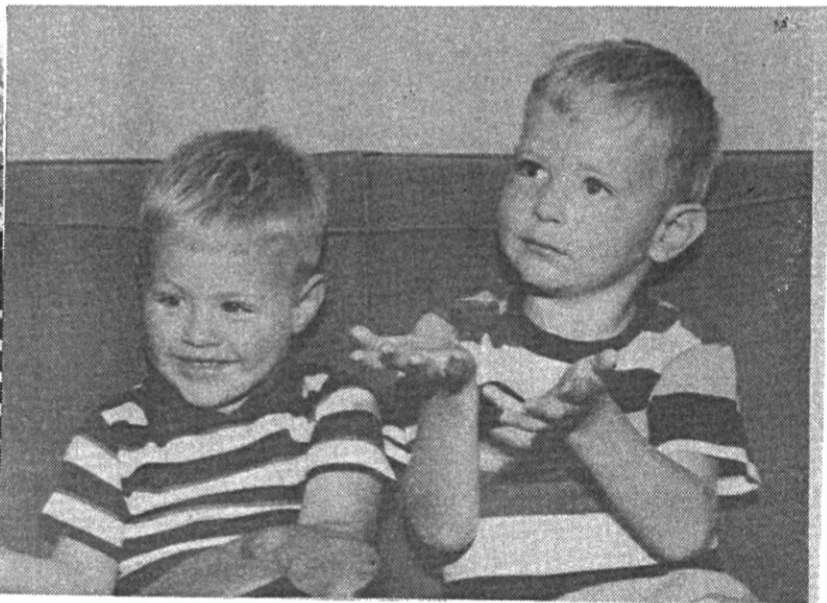
In 1946 Philip was born. ° On the Sunday he was baptized, Helen, Dick and Shirley became his Godparents. This little bundle hides Philip...held first by Grandma Tucker, then by Helen while Mom and Dad and Dick and Shirley look on. ° On the right are Marian and Phil at the St. Olaf Lutheran Church picnic — Phil's very first one!

## The Late 1940's



Brian made Phil a "big brother" almost 2 years later. There he is at about 2 months by himself and then with his two grandmothers and Phil. Then at 8 months in Algonac, MI...and a little later with Grandma Thora.



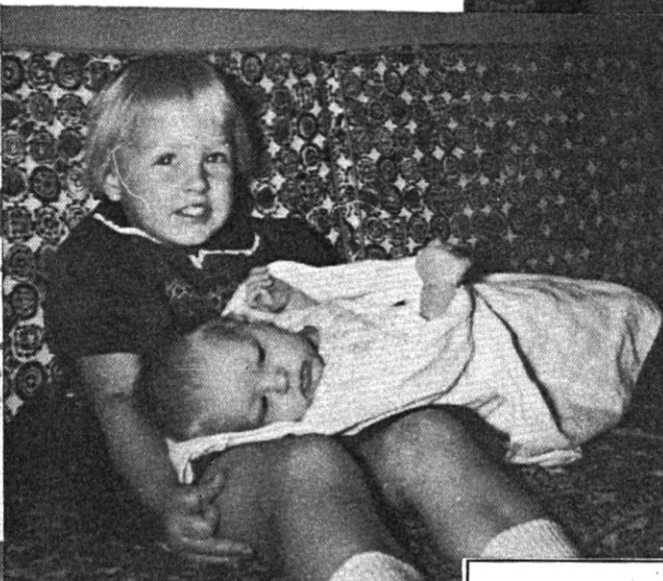
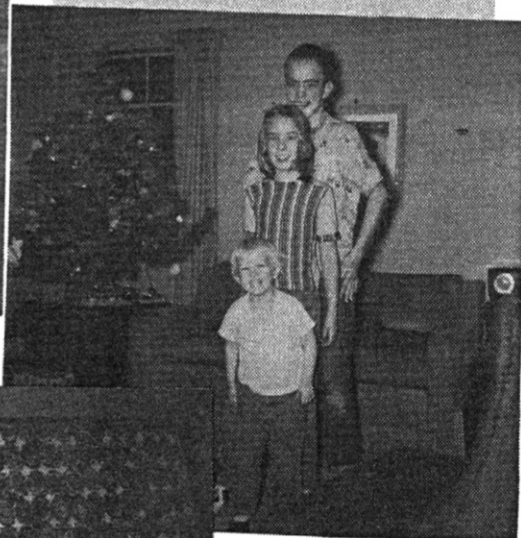


Clockwise from top:  
 In 1949 we drove Mom to California where Dad had rented a house. We stopped to see Helen & Gordon in Albuquerque, NM on the way.  
 ° Here is Mom with Phil on her right, Kay in her lap, and Brian and Jane sitting quietly (!)  
 ° Brian & Phil playing catch with the photographer  
 ° Marian & Tom reading Tootle the Train to the boys  
 ° At Mordella Dahl and Conrad Shearer's wedding in Eau Claire, Wis., 1950



Enjoying our cardboard Cowboy, Roy Rogers on a visit to Detroit are: Margit, Phil, Michael, Brian (in back)..... Tina and Mary Nic in front.





"The  
New Kids  
on the  
Block"

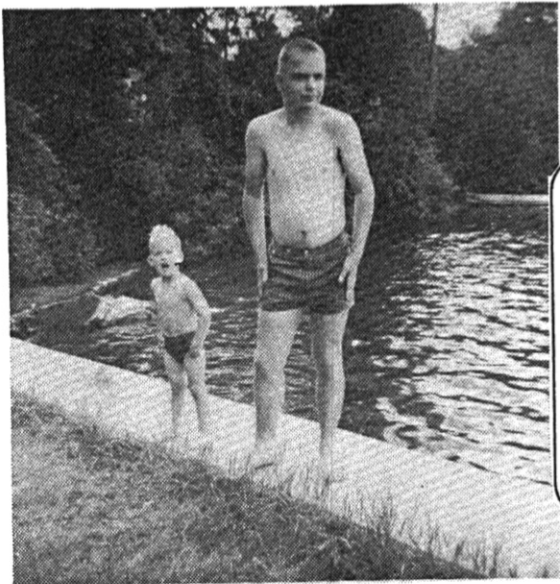


- Clockwise from top left:
- Gail's first Christmas with the family...
  - Gail about 1 1/2 years..
  - Gail, cousin Mary Nic Grendahl & Phil....
  - 2 1/2 year-old Gail with baby brother, Jim..
  - Brian at his favorite sport, football on Bow School playground across the street from our house...
  - Uncle Art with baby Jim

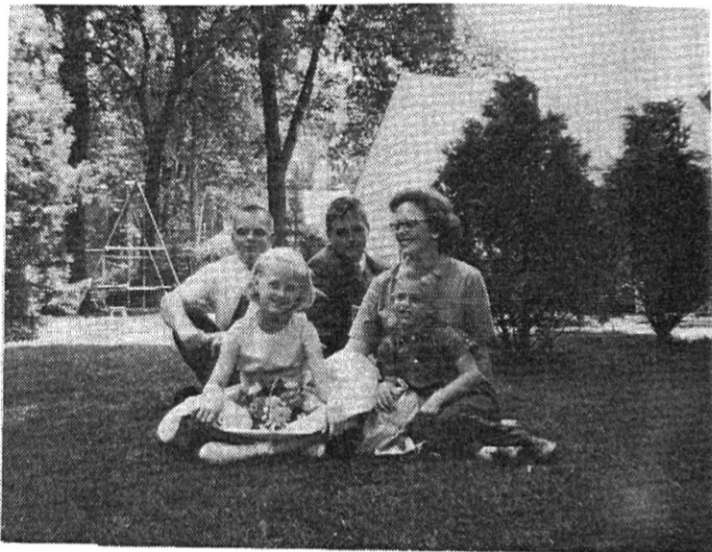
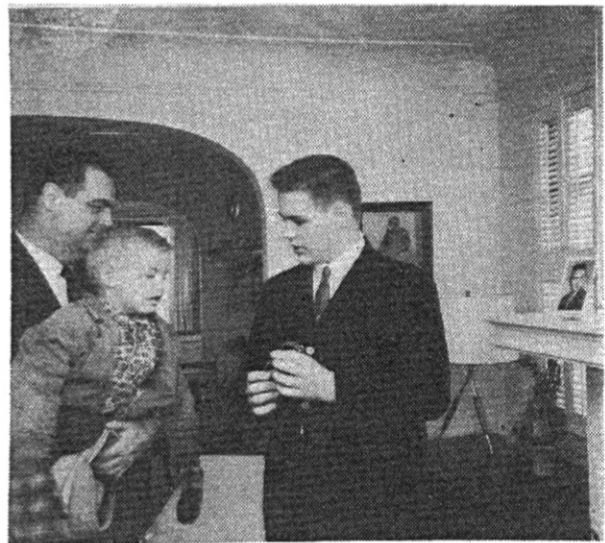


◦ We had a large yard in Rosedale Park where Jimmy and Gail enjoyed playing...sometimes with Brian around (although he was usually in Stoeppel Park with his friends, about a block and a half away, playing ball).  
◦ Gail, Marian and Jimmy reading a bedtime story. Reading is a pastime enjoyed by every one of us.

The  
1950's



The age difference between our "two families" is apparent here. When Gail and Jim got into their teens, it seemed to disappear.



Starting at bottom left, going clockwise:

- Philip, Gail, Brian, Marian, Jim on our side lawn in Rosedale Park, Detroit
- Brian, Jimmy, Phil and Gail about 1961
- Jimmy and Phil at Loud Dam (near Pipp's cabin) on the Au Sable River, Hale, MI
- Jimmy, Gail, in Kingsley's back yard during vacation in California about 1962
- Brian shows his Confirmation gift to Jim who is held by Tom ( about 1962)





We drove to California in our new station wagon in 1963. Tom stayed only two weeks while the rest of us stayed a month longer. Margit & Tina were there from Atlanta, also...so on our way home, we drove them to Chicago where their parents picked them up...and we drove on our way to home in Detroit. I was very tired! It was the summer before Brian was eligible for a driver's license.

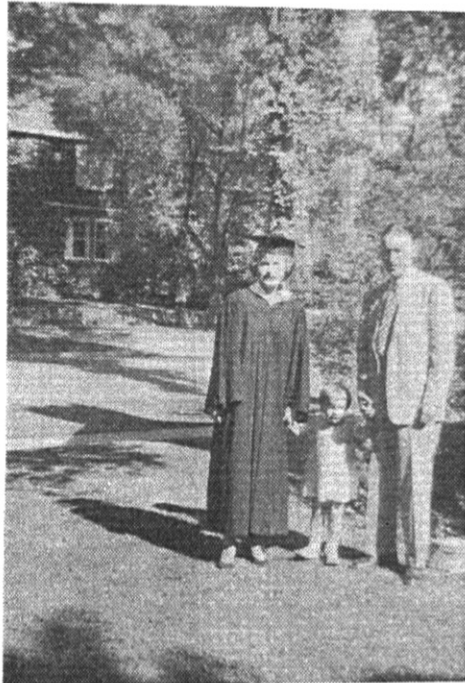
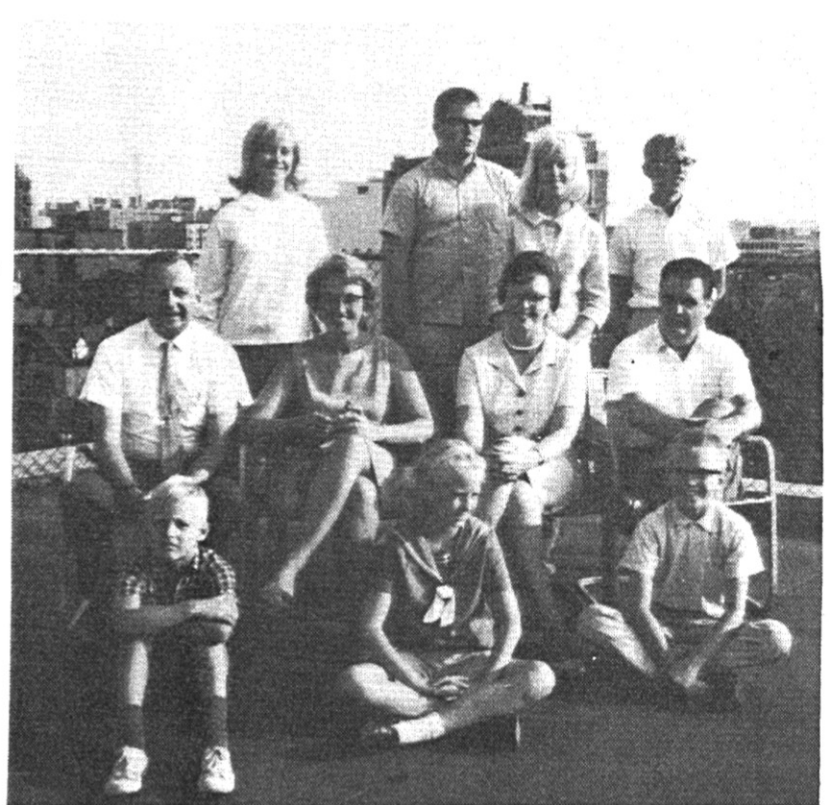


Top:

- Steven, Paul, Kay and Jane Kingsley (about 1954)
- In back: Kay, Thora, Harry, Tina Ness, Brian, Margit Ness, Phil. In front, Gail, Jimmy and Paul.

Bottom:

- Paul, Jean Benson, Steve, Craig Benson, Kay, Jane, Louise Benson, Helen, Thora, Harry, Gordon
- Dick and Shirley Ness with Michael, Tina (Christine) and Margit



**Left top, reading down**

- Tom when he was president of the NARC (National Assn. for Retarded Children)
- Jim the day he left for Washington, D.C. for Jr. Olympics
- Audrey, Mary Nic & Art at Audrey's graduation from University of Michigan

**Right top, reading down**

- Another Tucker Christmas about 1960
- The Kingsleys & Tuckers visited the New York World's Fair together ( about 1966?)... Jim, Gail, Paul sitting in front... Gordon, Helen, Marian, Tom Kay, Brian, Jane, Steve in back

## roublesome Times

As I mentioned before, I was a "blue baby" at birth and somewhat restricted in activities as a result. This was, of course, before heart surgery became commonplace. Most children like this tire easily and usually they died young. My parents must have been worried, especially since Philip (my uncle) had developed his serious heart problems about this time, too. But they tried to treat me normally and to expect of me what they would of anyone else.

Fortunately, the worries shared by the doctors and my parents didn't affect me much. Although several doctors had warned me never to have children, I listened to the one who told me that "perhaps" it would be okay, but I should have them before the age of thirty. I had easy pregnancies, careful to stay on a diet so I didn't gain too much weight. (Doctors seem to be changing their minds about how much women should gain. At that time, it was no more than twenty pounds. Today it's back to the old idea of eating for two.)

When Tom and I had settled in Detroit after the war and I was expecting our first child, I went to a highly recommended obstetrician who became quite concerned when he listened to my heart. Not enough, apparently, to send for the transcriptions from my heart specialist which I suggested he do. I always felt he was remiss in this because although he made me feel this was very important, he always "forgot" to do it. Anyway, when the baby began to arrive six weeks early, Dr. Seely sedated me from the time I started feeling labor pains until hours after Philip had been born. We always wondered if this had a bearing on his mental retardation because we were always asked about it when giving Philip's medical history. It took forty-two years to learn that it had no bearing when genetic medical testing finally diagnosed him.\*

Since I went on to give birth to three more children — Brian when I was twenty-seven, Gail when I was thirty-five, and Jim when I was thirty-seven — my heart trouble obviously was "well compensated" for, as one doctor said. Still, when I was forty-five years old, my doctor suggested that I have an operation to close the shunt in my heart. This was an operation unheard of when I was a child, but perfected some years before this time, and a well-developed procedure. I was living well with my troubling heart, but the doctors always felt there was a chance that if I had a serious illness, or even an infection in a tooth, the heart could become diseased and that would mean real trouble. We agreed it was a good idea to do it.

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\* Reports from genetic blood testing done in 1988 show what Phil's problem is. I shall include the report in the back of this book so you may have reference should you ever need it.

My doctor was on staff at Ford Hospital, rated then as one of the ten highest in the country, so that was where I went to have the hole in my heart repaired. At the same time, completely unexpectedly, I lost my voice. During thoracic surgery, I was cut from under the left breast all the way around to under my left shoulder blade. The vocal chords lie in this area, so the procedure is to tie them back out of the way. Several days after the operation my voice was still very hoarse, like a serious case of laryngitis. I was quite concerned, but when I asked when it would get better they assured me, "Any day now. We had to put some tubes down your throat and it's probably a little bruised." But after a week, they finally became concerned, too.

Tests were done. The consensus was that one of several things had happened. One vocal chord had been paralyzed, severed, or badly bruised. My voice might return, but then again it might not. It might be able to be fixed with an operation, but probably not. If they did inject silicone into the chord to stiffen it (a new procedure which was still suspect) it might work for a while, but the silicone might "flake off" eventually and cause more serious problems. They were sorry this had happened to me, but that was one of the possibilities — a minute one, of course — but hadn't I been warned about that? No, I hadn't. Well, golly, they were sorry. Of course no one ever expected it would happen, but someone should have told me, they said. Nowadays, every horrible possibility that might occur during an operation has to be told to each prospective patient, but at that time, it did not. I am not sure which is worse — to be told, or have it come as a surprise.

For one year I couldn't talk above a laryngitis whisper. Singing was impossible. So was teaching music. It was a terrible period to live through, not only for me, but for the whole family. I was deeply depressed. For the first time in my life I began to know how it felt to be handicapped. I was sure that people who met me for the first time wondered what someone like Tom could ever see in someone like me. After all, I couldn't even carry on a conversation. Boring, boring, boring. Tom was depressed, too, because I felt so bad and he felt so helpless. The kids were stressed because I was reduced to using a whistle to call them whenever I needed them. One blast for Phil, two for Brian, three for Gail, and four for Jim. In our three-story house plus basement, all of which we lived, worked, or played in, a whisper doesn't carry very far. <sup>16</sup>

Shortly after a year was up, there was some improvement. My voice started to return a bit. In a few months my speaking voice went from gravelly to sexy to normal. My singing voice never returned. I can sing, but my range is severely limited to an octave in the tenor, low alto range, and it strains easily.

I began to substitute in the school system again, but music became next to impossible to manage. Special education for trainable adults was an appealing

field, but I would have to go back to school to become qualified. In spite of the fact that only a short time before the school authorities had pleaded with me to take Mabelle's special ed class, there were now many graduates in the field who were able to fill the jobs in Detroit. Administration no longer needed to depend upon (nor wanted) someone who did not have the proper credentials.

I started to work toward a master's degree in special education through Wayne State University, but teaching had less and less appeal for me as more and more problems surfaced in the Detroit school system. Some schools had effective principals who kept things under control. But many schools were really difficult to work in, especially for substitutes. I was prevailed upon to take a music position in spite of my voice, because music teachers were so scarce. But after the first day in that particularly undisciplined school, I knew I was finished with teaching forever. I told the principal that I was not coming back...he could have the job... I was not interested.

### **Viet Nam Rears its Ugly Head**

**Brian was having problems** that had nothing to do with school work, but everything to do with psyche. It was at this time that the influence of having a retarded brother started to show on him — in fact, on Gail and Jim, too, as we look back on it from a distance. (It is my opinion that if one must have a retarded person in the family, it should be a younger child. Birth order has much to do with what happens to a person, I feel. But if we had our "druthers," our children wouldn't be born with a handicap, would they?)

Much has been written about the 1960's Viet Nam period. Living through it was hellish. Our whole family felt its toll in different ways. After high school graduation, Brian had taken a job at a steel mill on Zug Island, driving a huge crane, saving his money towards college. After six months, he entered Michigan State, taking his hard-hat with him as a reminder to study hard because he didn't want to be a laborer all his days. It didn't help. Brian was poorly motivated and had low self-esteem. A year at college showed he simply wasn't ready for that. And all this was happening at a time when America was in the throes of a phenomenon that it had not seen before. Extreme dissension had sprung up throughout the whole country about fighting an undeclared war in a land halfway around the world, a place most of us had never even heard of. The time of the "flower children" and "hippies" (the dissenters and critics of our military involvement and the catalysts of the drug crisis) had come. Many young men burnt their draft cards, refusing to serve the military even if their number came up.

Brian asked for counseling help for the first time in his life. We found a fine psychologist and Brian was making good progress when the draft board stepped

in and called him for service. He appealed for status as a conscientious objector and the psychologist (and the psychiatrist from the same clinic) were positive that a letter they sent (stating he was in treatment with them and that being drafted would have serious repercussions) would keep him out of the draft. The Wayne County Draft Board denied him a hearing and its representative later bragged to Tom that such an appeal had never been answered affirmatively by that board.

Brian reported to the army in September 1967. Up to the last minute I wasn't sure whether he would consent to report or not. But on a very dreary morning I drove him to Fort Wayne in Detroit and said goodbye, fully expecting to be called back to pick him up before the day was over. We were truly shocked to hear from Brian that evening saying that the psychiatrist's letter had been ignored, he had indeed been drafted, and he had also been talked into enlisting for an extra year! As usual, his test scores were extremely high. An officer there had heard him say how anti the Viet Nam war he was, and he assured him that if he enlisted for an extra year he would be put into Communications, and if he were in the top 10% of his class, he would be sent for further schooling, either in Alaska or Germany.

We didn't see Brian until Christmas when he came home on furlough. He looked great. He had lost a lot of weight. He was proud of the marksmanship medal he had won but not happy with the bayonet training because it was meant only for killing. Later, after several months of intensive study, he graduated in the top 10% of his class. But instead of being eligible for more schooling, as promised, the whole class was ordered to Viet Nam. The war was being escalated and more and more men were needed.

Brian came home on leave before he was to report to Fort Dix and then overseas. He seemed okay and resigned to going to Viet Nam. On his last night home we had been invited to Kittlesons for dinner. Brian was spending the day with Dennis Timmons, then a senior at Wayne State University. When the time came and had long gone for Brian to have dinner with us, we began to get very worried. We felt something drastic had happened. Calling around, we learned from Dennis' housemates that the two of them had taken off for Canada.

We were in complete shock. We didn't know where he could be or what would happen to him. Avoiding the draft was one thing. Desertion from the army was another. He was due to report to Fort Dix, N.J., his embarkation point, the next day. Tom and I slept in one twin bed that night, trying to comfort each other. I remember shaking all night long, although it wasn't cold at all.

Tom's secretary, Clea Chapman, was a most capable woman who lived in Belle River, Ontario, Canada, just outside Windsor (one of many people who drove through the tunnel every day to work in Detroit.) She helped us to send a

message to be placed on the bulletin boards in Toronto and Montreal. We asked Brian or Dennis to call home...that we needed to see them and we wanted to help. Dennis's parents were terribly upset, too. He was their only child.

The boys saw our note on the board in Toronto and were surprised, they said, that we had found out where they were, and thought we would disown them. But they did call us, and the next day Tom and I drove to Toronto, 250 miles north of Detroit. We found them in a one-room, second-floor apartment right by the railroad yards, a really dismal place. We took them out for a good meal and talked with them. We went with them to a house where the Quakers gave counsel and help to young American refugees and found them to be such wonderful, caring people. We were glad there were folks like them to help young men like Dennis and Brian. Then we bought them an alarm clock so they could get to work on time if they found work, gave them some money to help out and said goodbye.

Brian remained in Canada for the next three-and-a-half years, but Dennis returned to Detroit within a few months. His parents persuaded him to come back. Although he could have returned to the University, he decided, I guess, to get the draft behind him so he could get on with the rest of his life. He enlisted in the army immediately.

Sadly, almost on his 21st birthday just one year later, Dennis was killed in Viet Nam. His mother called us with the news and I went to see her immediately. I felt terribly sad. What does one do when her own son is a deserter, living hand-to-mouth in Canada while her neighbor's son and only child comes home in a body bag from a miserable war our country wouldn't even declare? I consoled her the best I could, and hemmed up her black dress so she could wear it to the funeral the next day. I listened to Dennis's father, Floyd, who was so angry and so sad. He was berating himself for encouraging Dennis to return home from Canada. Much better, Floyd said, to have his son live away from his native land than to be buried in it, so young.

The rest of the family were also very concerned about Brian, of course. I took Gail and Jim with me to Toronto to see him. He was doing volunteer work in a youth drop-in drug counseling center held in the basement of a very large Presbyterian church. Gail was thirteen and Jim almost eleven. They were a bit scared of all the strange characters they found around the place, and depressed, I am sure, that their brother was caught up in this whole mess. Many years later Gail told me she decided then that she was going to be PERFECT so we would never have to worry about her. She knew that Philip had none of the requisites to be head of the family if anything happened to one of us, and that Brian couldn't do anything in exile, so she nominated herself to be MISS (OR MISTER) PERFECT<sup>17</sup>. Jim, in his own way, decided that the best thing he could do was to keep out of mischief and do

his best in school. Whether it was a conscious decision on his part, or whether it was part of his innate character, I never once had to urge him to do his homework or take care of the yard work at home. Those were responsibilities he took on himself. Philip was interested and concerned about his brother, Brian, but didn't realize the seriousness of his situation.

**There was plenty to keep me busy, but I looked for more** to keep my mind from dwelling on Brian all the time. I hadn't been the organist and choir director at our church for a number of years, but requested the job again from Phil Wahl, our pastor. That poor choir suffered with me. We would be singing an anthem and I would think of Brian off in Canada, and the tears would stream down my face. But we would keep on singing! By this time Gail was singing in the senior choir, too, and I'm sure it wasn't easy for her to see me going through all this.

Tom had been very busy through the years working to get services started to help alleviate problems in mental retardation. He had been president of the MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION FOR RETARDED CHILDREN, a board member and after that the president of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR RETARDED CHILDREN (now called ASSOCIATION FOR RETARDED CITIZENS/US.) At the time we were going through the Viet Nam period with Brian, Tom was a member of the PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION FOR MENTAL RETARDATION under President Johnson (later he was on the same committee for President Nixon and also on Reagan's PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE FOR EMPLOYMENT OF THE HANDICAPPED.) I had not been active in the ARC movement up to this time because Tom was spending so much time away from home going all over the country, most often to New York. The family had needed me at home most of that time. But now I felt I needed to keep my mind occupied and not so focused on Brian in Canada.

## My Personal Involvement with the ARC Begins

At the time, the two main focuses of the Detroit ARC were running a work activities program for adults and doing advocacy for a variety of things like education, new programs, parent counseling, membership, etc. The DARC had a group called HANCOCK MOTHERS which met at the ARC workshop building once a month and assisted in fund raising activities. They ran a giftshop for which they made handcrafted items, and also gave of their time once a week to sell them. For all the time they put in, I felt the money raised was too little to help the DARC projects significantly—maybe \$4,000 a year. I wanted to find a way which would give more returns for my time and efforts. When they suggested I be their candidate for member of the board of the ARC, I accepted and was elected.

Every member was expected, of course, to be active on some committee. As



the new person, I didn't quite know where I fit in, but it soon became apparent that no one wanted to chair the workshop committee. As the new board member, I was delegated. My job was to visit the workshop, see what was needed, and report to the board. It sounded simple. How naive I was.

The workshop was located in a large old building a block from Wayne State University and just behind the 13th Precinct Police Station. During the day it was a busy neighborhood. At night, like much of distressed Detroit, it was dead... and frightening. My visits made it all too clear that there was not much happening at the workshop. There were about eighty workers or clients. Many were sons or daughters of DARC members. Others were people who had returned from the institution to the community. It was poorly funded. Parents who could afford to pay were charged \$20 monthly to help support the shop, the rest of the funds coming from various charitable sources. There was never enough to do a first rate job.

Mrs. B., the person in charge, was a good person at managing the contract work, but her staff was a motley crew. They worked about thirty hours a week. One or two were students at Wayne; some were well qualified and pleased to gain experience in their chosen field; some were there because of their relationship to ARC members. Some were good at their jobs in spite of the lack of professional qualifications. Others were completely ineffectual.

About half the time I visited there, I would find the clients sitting around doing nothing. I felt that since most of these people had very little schooling (mandatory education would not begin for most mentally retarded persons in Michigan for a few more years) this "down time" should be spent in learning educational and socializing skills they had never had the opportunity to study.

It sounds so simple, but my search for adequate funding for a fine work-activities program for these neglected and deserving people was complicated and led down many pathways. I gained a reputation as a super go-getter with many people, but as a miserable pain-in-the-neck with many others — those who preferred the status quo, no matter how inadequate it was, because it was theirs.

I feel absolutely drained when I think of putting down all that happened between the time I first started as a board member of the DARC in the late 60's and the time Tom and I finally retired to California in 1984. I could fill a book dealing with women's lib problems at that time; of black-white relations in Detroit; of Ph.D.'s with wonderful resumes and beautiful programs written down on paper but not worth a damn when it came to performance; of the irresponsibility and deviousness of some boards; of the reluctance of people to give up power. On the other hand, I could note at great length some wonderful volunteers, some dedicated professionals, some remarkably resilient mentally retarded people. But

that is another story, not this one, although I might touch on a few. Tom, Gail, Jim, and Phil (later on Brian, also) lived through those years with me, and it was hard on them, too. It took an enormous amount of my time and energy, and the whole family was wonderful about helping in a household which was upset by all that took place. Since I am one who becomes consumed by what I am doing at the moment, I am sure I got to be "Marian-one-note" to family and friends. Thank God for their forbearance!

I became more and more aware of problems at the DARC. During my second year on the board, I was elected second vice-president. After six months, the president, an old man who became ill and decided to move to Florida for half the year, resigned just hours before a meeting. I was notified by phone by the first vice-president who was next in line to become president. But he, too, was resigning, he informed me, because his job wouldn't allow him that much time from work (he was a young man who had just received a big promotion at Blue Cross). So the responsibility shifted *immediately* to me.

While this was an unexpected turn of events, more shocking was the fact that we had as our past president Joe C., a man who (I learned later) didn't think I had the experience required for the job. In the finest stonewalling tradition, instead of offering me his help, he connived with the brand new director to feed him all material that came in addressed to the president. As a result, I never saw the important communications. It took a few months for me to discover this, and the board, as well as I, was most unhappy about it.

I was prepared to ask the Board to fire the director, but he acted first and resigned. However, the board never chastized Joe and I felt damnably let-down because of that. He had been responsible for obtaining a large grant from the Kresge Foundation for rennovating and remodeling the archaic, inadequate DARC building. The rennovation was going on at this very time and Joe was chairman of that committee. The board members didn't want to upset the apple cart.

About this time, Tom was getting into politics of a different kind. He had become assistant to Tom Adams, Chairman of the Board of Campbell-Ewald. He attended all kinds of meetings for him, including those of the Commissioners of Wayne County. When he was approached by the Chairman of the Commissioners to become a member of the DETROIT-WAYNE COUNTY COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH BOARD, Tom turned him down because he couldn't spare the time from work and from his time-consuming duties with the PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE and the NARC. He suggested to Chairman Fitzpatrick that I be put on the board in his place, and I was. This was an honor, but quite a responsibility as well. Wayne County is the third largest county in the United States and provided services to many groups of people with profound problems through its funding of the CMH

(Community Mental Health) Board.

I resigned from the DARC board when I became a member of the Community Mental Health Board. Soon after that, however, I was asked to take over as the hired Program Director for the DARC while they sought a new Executive Director. The main person in the office after the former director's "resignation" was a woman who had been the secretary for many years and had been made Assistant Director a year before. She was a woman who would have been a fine Executive Aide. But the Board felt that she was not as knowledgeable about retardation as the one they needed to be in charge — nor did they feel she would take the lead to find links with the Departments of Mental Health and Social Services in the county or the state while they looked for another executive director. With some reluctance, I agree to do it. I knew that it would be difficult.

We all knew that the Assistant Director would be unhappy at having anyone put over her, and with the black/white situation getting more press and recognition every day in Detroit, she would especially resent a white parent put in charge. The new president, Chuck Landrum, was concerned because he needed someone he could trust to carry out the Board's wishes. He was well aware of all that had happened to me as president, but Joe was on the board again and still in charge of the building committee. The Executive Committee felt that Joe and his cohorts (he had a few) would want to keep the status quo (they wanted adequate funding, too, but not if they had to give up some of their autonomy. Others of us opted for less autonomy and a well-funded, quality program.) Chuck (and Joe, too) urged me to forget bygones and take over as Program Director. He needed one less worry while the Board was searching for a Director... and someone who would take the job at a salary they could afford to pay.

Detroit was losing its white population more and more each passing year. Black people were demanding more recognition from labor and management and also in running the city. It was a difficult time for everyone. It was shortly after the Civil Rights movement had caused many mandatory changes. It was difficult for my assistant because she was a black woman. And it was difficult for me because I was white. Many white people had stayed on in Detroit by choice, hoping the reconciliation of the races would take place quickly and easily, and that the city would survive. It was my feeling that at the DARC we had not thought in terms of black and white and I was proud, really, because I felt we had avoided such problems. Our client population was a fairly even mixture of black and white, and our main goal was to serve mentally retarded people. The color of the client didn't matter. The amount of money we needed to run a quality program — and where to find it — did.

So I began, and immediately had run-ins with Mrs. X. When I asked for infor-

mation about certain areas and programs, she said it wasn't up to her to tell me — and anyway, she was going to quit. I told her firmly that she shouldn't talk such nonsense...that I wanted her to stay because we really needed her. She stayed, and I heaved a sigh of relief. But my problems with her were far from over. The former director had refused my requests to attend meetings that I felt were important. ("I never attended a meeting of more than two or three people that got anything done," he told me). My feeling was that our agency needed to get much more active in order to become recognized by the funding sources we needed to tap. I asked Mrs. X to take on some of these meetings which would be of value to both her and the agency, I thought. She refused to attend any meetings at all, her reason being that she wouldn't go "just to be a black face sitting there."

Other problems I faced were also difficult. There was a vocational evaluator from Voc Rehab working there about twenty hours a week. In the two years she had been there I learned she had evaluated only about twenty of the ninety people in the workshop. No matter how much I pushed her, she insisted that Voc Rehab would not evaluate certain people because they were not of the quality that could ever be placed. (She was wrong about their abilities, but she was following the unwritten philosophy of the agency. One of the men from the same agency actually told me once, "Marian, the cream of your crop is our sour milk.") But I felt she could cut through the red tape if she wanted to try. She told me her time was limited. She was right there, too...but I felt she was doing some of the limiting herself. She and Mrs. X would sit in her office next to mine and chat for long periods of time before settling down to work, as well as spending overly long lunch hours together. But I wasn't the only one aware of it...the president was, also. It took over a year, and happened after I left DARC, but the board eventually fired the evaluator. She filed a suit on the grounds that the Board had discriminated against her because she was Jewish. I could never figure out the reasoning there...the personnel committee who recommended the firing was made up of three persons, two of them Jewish. I don't think she won, but I don't really know.

As for Mrs. X, while I was terribly annoyed with her, I felt sorry for her in a way. It was the Board that had promoted her beyond what they really felt she could do. They, in turn, were trying to do the best they could with the limited money they could afford to pay. It was a no-win situation for everyone. She left shortly before I did, to work for a friend who was starting his own program for mentally retarded persons. She said she was finally going to get a salary worthy of her talents. I hope she did. I didn't. Not at DARC, anyway. But in the long run, the clients finally won big, and I had an interesting experience

Working for the DARC was not all problems. I greatly enjoyed the mentally retarded people, learning first-hand of their problems as adults, trying to make their way in the community. I know I could have been a much better manager if

I had proper training for the job, but felt I was every bit as capable, maybe more so, as those who had held the job before me. When it came to understanding what to do about getting funds for the program, I quickly learned the politics of the situation and wasn't afraid to do what was necessary to accomplish it. I was also good at recognizing which staff were good at their jobs, and I encouraged them to be creative and try new approaches, some proving to be very successful. I was better at that than anyone who had been there before.

While some of the staff were real duds, I was very pleased with others. Mrs. Walker had been teaching basic education for years. She was a middle-aged black woman with only a high school education, but she was a "natural" teacher. She had a wonderful heart but it didn't keep her from demanding much from her students, and they responded well to her.

And there was Nancy, a young woman who had begun working in the office but came to prefer interacting with the retarded clients. She studied after working hours at Wayne (one of the advantages of working close to a large university) and became an instructor and later, supervisor of the Workshop. The last job came long after I left.

One of our best teachers, Jeannie Snapp, came from an agency in Omaha which was gaining national recognition for excellent programming. She was very demanding of her students and treated them as responsible adults. As a result, Mrs. X was quite perturbed. She felt the clients needed much more protection and sympathy. She meant well and had their welfare at heart, but more aware of their limitations than their potential. She had planned on getting rid of Jeanne, and was incensed that under my direction she was given more responsibilities.

As a matter of fact, Jeanne and I wrote and introduced A.B.E., The Adult Basic Education Program, a basic course for mentally retarded adults, something which is not uncommon now but was then. Jeanne had a wonderful aptitude for working with mentally retarded adults and was also working on her master's degree in Child Development at Wayne State University. She developed a program which each client could pursue at his own rate, helping them to be more understanding of life in the city and the situations in which they found themselves. She was a genius at motivating retarded adults. Her success lay, I am sure, in the way she treated them as equals, not as inferiors. She would introduce herself to them as Jeanne Snapp and ask them what they would like to be called — *Mary* or *Miss Jones*? If they wanted to be *Mary* or *Joe*, she would tell them to call her *Jeanne*. If they wanted to be *Miss Jones* or *Mr. Smith* she would have them call her *Miss Snapp*. You cannot imagine how this affected people who were always expected to call the other person by a formal name, but always had to answer by their first name and do exactly as they were told.

I found some wonderful volunteers, too. One of my real "finds" was a young lawyer, John Weisenberger, from the DETROIT SCHOOL OF LAW who stopped by to volunteer a few hours each week to our association if we could find a place for him. I had him begin a swimming program (along with a young woman friend of mine from church) at a large Detroit indoor swimming pool. He became so interested in their personalities and had so much respect for them and sympathy for their plight that, after getting his law degree, he joined me as a member of the Michigan ARC Social Services Committee when I was Chairperson. He was our law resource and helped write our first manual which became the Bible for all our advocates throughout Michigan, helping the staff and volunteers in their dealings regarding financial assistance problems with Social Services offices throughout the state. He became assistant director at one of the agencies that I (and everyone else) had always had trouble dealing with. With him in that position I had high hopes for its becoming much better. But he decided, several years later, to move to Guam with his lovely girl friend who had been raised there, and he became director of the island's first ARC. Guam's great gain was Wayne County's great loss. There *is* a plus and a minus to everything.

### **Brian Comes Home**

**Brian decided to return to the United States** during the time I was Program Director for the DARC. His almost four years of exile in Canada had been most traumatic for him and for the whole family, as well. He had never become a "landed immigrant" in Canada. He had not wanted to give up his citizenship in the United States as some exiles had done, but hoped that some day he and others like him would be reconciled with the country. As a result, he had not been able to obtain a steady job. The family had helped support him, and he had lived a hand-to-mouth existence, as so many had done.

We had kept in touch by mail, telephone, his visits to us in Windsor and ours to him in Toronto and Montreal. His return home came at a time when the country was finally beginning to listen to the anti-Viet Nam side of the war. Many responsible, reputable folks had added their voices in support of getting our country out of the war. Hubert Humphrey was running for the Presidency of the United States against Richard Nixon, promising to finish the war and bring the nation together again. We contacted the lawyer we had retained after Brian had gone to Canada, and he advised us to find a place other than our house for Brian to stay until we had time to prepare a defense before he turned himself in.

How many times Tom and I have talked about the day Brian returned! We drove two cars over to Windsor that summer of '71, picked him up at the hotel and took him to the barber shop where he got a haircut which transformed him from a 60's "hippie" to a much more well-groomed young man. New clothing did the

rest. Tom drove the first car with Brian, Jim, and Gail as passengers. Brian's baggage was put into the car I was driving, with Phil at my side. If we were stopped and questioned closely by United States customs authorities as we came into the U.S. (they were on the look-out for draft-dodgers or deserters) the baggage could logically be assumed to be Phil's.) Believe me, we were all concerned and nervous.

It had been a beautiful summer day. Then all of a sudden, when Tom's car approached the customs stand on the U.S. side of the Detroit-Windsor tunnel, the heavens opened up and a torrential rain came pouring down. The customs officer just poked his head out of his stand, asked where everyone had been born, then waved them on. He did the same thing with Philip and me. We were so relieved. And believe it or not, the moment our cars turned onto the James Couzens Expressway in Detroit just a few minutes later, the rain stopped as suddenly as it had started and the sun shown down through a rainbow. Tom characterized it as a "Gift from God."

Brian spent the next few months alone on a small island owned by the Roses, our neighbors, both of them former U.S. Marines. We were concerned for them because they could have been charged with harboring a fugitive if he were apprehended there. But they were adamant in their decision.

It was a beautiful island, about twenty-five miles northwest of Detroit, with only their cabin on its two acres. A motor boat at the dock of a small access area was the only means of getting there. Beautiful as the island was, it was lonesome for Brian all by himself, with only a few visitors now and then. Tom and I usually went together on the week-end, and once a week I went by myself to pick him up to take him to Dearborn to visit his psychologist or to see his lawyer. Tom and I could even laugh at the situation once in a while. One Sunday, while we were leaving the island in the mist of a rainstorm, we looked at each other, rain running down our faces, our hair sopping wet, and we laughed and asked ourselves, "What is a nice, middle-aged couple like us doing in a place like this?"

**Richard Nixon won the election, not Hubert Humphrey.** All the young men who had been heartened by Humphrey's promises of reconciliation were disillusioned when the re-elected Nixon began bombing Cambodia in a last-ditch effort to win the war. Brian was one of the hundreds who had turned themselves in during this time of hope. Some were treated leniently, others received long prison sentences. Brian had his choice of going to trial or accepting an undesirable discharge. He chose the latter, and returned to Detroit early in 1972, a civilian.

Brian found the only job he could at the time — driving a cab at night. Fortunately, this left him free to help me out once in a while when a teacher would call in ill. He was excellent with the clients, so when one of the instructors went

on sick leave for a month, I had Brian fill in. When the doctor told the teacher she should not return to work, I was told by the president to hire Brian. And that's how he began his work in the mental health field.

After the ARC Workshops became adequately funded throughout the county, Brian became foreman in one of the new units. Later he quit to go to Southern Colorado (Beulah and Pueblo) and then Texas, returning to Michigan a few years later. After working with mentally retarded adults again, he became a guard at the Center for Forensic Psychiatry for the criminally insane, a very difficult population to work with. He did this for several years when he became "burned out" and quit his job to attend computer school in Denver, the start of a new career and a new life, ten years after returning from Canada.

### **Life as a Member of the Mental Health Board.**

The DETROIT-WAYNE COUNTY COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH BOARD had twelve members, and I was one of the three women on the Board. Six members were appointed by the mayor of Detroit, six by the Chairman of the Board of the County Commissioners. All funding for the county and city services and institutions who used public funds to assist mentally ill and mentally retarded people went through our budget process.

The members of the Board were interesting people, all appointed for various reasons — some political, others because of their jobs. The County Supervisor of Public Health,<sup>18</sup> for instance, was on the Board, as was the mayor's principal aide. Other members were: the Chairman of the UAW-CIO,<sup>19</sup> Monsignor Sawyer of the Catholic Diocese of Detroit, Dr. John Dorsey, psychiatrist, author, and professor from Wayne State University, two Detroit women, one the wife of a prominent doctor, the other a representative of a very vocal coalition of the poor people of Detroit. One County Commissioner, a member all the years I was there, was John Barr who was especially understanding, supportive, and helpful to me. He also owned and ran a restaurant in the Wayne University area.<sup>20</sup>

I was the only white woman on the Board, a true minority, I felt, but that didn't give me a minority credibility in Detroit! Color or not, we all got along very well. Once or twice someone on the board accused someone of splitting along racial lines, but I didn't feel that we did. We did split male vs. female once, however.

Our Executive Director was a fine psychiatrist and a good man, but he missed many meetings. I found out later it was because he was an alcoholic. Monsignor was very supportive of him. But the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners



was most unhappy because the service delivery system was suffering severely in the meantime. The director had tried to overcome his problem many times, but had not been successful.

Eventually the Chairman of the Commissioners called a special meeting of the Board to tell us in confidence what had been going on. He asked us to discuss it and come to a decision about the Director. We did, and then voted on whether to keep him or to ask for his resignation. All the men voted to keep him. All three women voted to ask for his resignation. The men were astonished that these "nice" women had "gone for the jugular." Far from being put down by their comments, each of us said that our responsibility was towards the mental health clients who were hurting so much but receiving much less support than the Director was. The Commissioners evidently felt the same way we did. Two weeks after that meeting, the Director resigned and we got on with our work with a new man. (The director, we heard later, went to a health board in a much smaller city, felt so much less stress that his next crack at overcoming alcoholism was successful. Sometimes it pays to change jobs.)

My background in mental retardation was very helpful to the board members because no one else knew much about the subject and they relied on my information. They were there because of their various interests in public health, labor unions, the mayor's office, Latinos, black youth, and other services.

The Community Mental Health Boards had been formed under mandate from the state legislature to provide programs and services for mentally ill, mentally retarded, or drug addicted people in the community setting. (After my first two years on the board, drug abuse became so rampant that a separate board was formed for that.) De-institutionalization had become the policy throughout Michigan and the whole country. The policy of state governments everywhere was "Penny Wise and Pound Foolish" and they did not do what they should have done — have program money follow the clients into the community. Mentally ill people were released in droves. Clients found almost no services and programs available to them — just room and board money and minimum funds for personal use. Higher functioning mentally retarded people, too, were soon being released into the community. Again, very little was available for them. The DARC was funded only by parents' tuition money and United Way funds — far too little for good programming — and it was the only work activities program available in the city for mentally retarded adults. There were several small ARC programs throughout the county, each in the same dire financial state as the Detroit program. Goodwill and Jewish Vocational Services were in business, but they served only higher functioning persons at that time.

The housing situation for mentally retarded adults who were returned to the

community from institutions was very bad. Most of them lived in group homes within the inner city of Detroit. For the most part, the people who ran the homes had little training and thought of their residents as grown-up children who needed to be cared for. They did not see them as people who could learn to better themselves and be more accepted within the community. The whole housing situation was made more complicated because of two separate funding sources. Those who were released from institutions were under the regulations of the Department of Mental Health and thus entitled to more support money than those who had lived in the community. People who had lived with their parents were funded only by the Department of Social Services after their parents died. Further complications arose because any support from Mental Health lasted only a year or two and then was cut off.

The Community Mental Health Board had never really dug deeply into the plight of mentally retarded persons in the community (they figured the parents had the responsibility.)<sup>21</sup> Although *Community* in the name of the Board implied differently, the Board was still concerned with the institutional programs of the county which came under its line-items (because people from the community lived in them.) I felt that board members and the whole community (including parents and families) had to be educated about several things: the Board had responsibility for retarded persons who always lived in the community as well as those who had been away in institutions; almost all mentally retarded persons could be much more capable, independent, and responsible people than we had previously thought, if given ample opportunities for training in work skills. Education through the school systems' programs for trainable adults (like the one I had taught at Nobel School) had been in place for several years by this time, mandated to keep Michigan's handicapped citizens in school until age 26. They had helped the students develop many talents which would become lost if they graduated into a community with few programs and opportunities.

At the time I started on the Board (1971 or '72) about 3% of the budget was earmarked for mentally retarded services, almost all going to institutional care. When I left, five years later, it was about 35%. I felt good about that. But for a long time, even though we would occasionally receive extra monies for those coming from family homes, the Michigan Department of Mental Health did not accept full responsibility for all the people we felt should come under its mandate. The Department of Social Services was the main source of funding for them, and that included only very basic services. (Have I made the point that resources for doing an adequate job were woefully lacking?)

The State Director for Mental Health's personal representative to our county Board of Mental Health was Dr. Joe Denniston, a rare medical doctor who understood the problems of serving people in the community. He was particularly

impressed with the ARCs and Tom's extensive work in it. I invited him to the DARC workshop, since I was Program Director there at the time, and told him of our problems with funding and our dreams for its future. No other agency in the county had accepted responsibility for day programs for adults. In years past, parents had begun nursery programs, then school programs, and eventually recreational or work programs for adults to show what their sons or daughters needed and were capable of doing. But many years of work had taken so much time and energy that most of these parents were old and their resources were getting smaller. They were desperate for help. With Dr. Denniston's assistance it took about six months to have the State Department of Mental Health put together the funding necessary for the ARC workshop not only for Detroit, but the five other ARC's in Wayne County. This is the program that Chuck Landrum and I were trying to get started about the time Brian returned from Canada.

There is a difference in philosophies of parents of retarded children and adults which comes to light often in ARC work. Tom and I are of the philosophy that one may have to provide services initially, but in the long run, such programs should then be made a part of a continuum of services run by the departments of education, social services, mental health, etc. Then all people, not just those with private resources, will be able to receive services. Advocates can always have real input through participation on community boards in a variety of ways, especially in policy making, advocating for services, and monitoring programs.

Other parents, however, feel that no one understands their children the way they do (often these people consider their offspring " children" even after they reach adulthood.) Therefore some parents or families feel that they should have the only say-so in all matters concerning them. So one of our stumbling blocks in obtaining funding for the work activity program came from the ARC's in Wayne County who were not prepared to give up their autonomy. Their reasoning was "We're not ready yet. This isn't the right time." The Detroit ARC workshop was in real danger of shutting down because the funding base was so poor and had no prospect of getting better in a city that was falling apart at the seams. Chuck Landrum and I stated that we were positively going ahead to sign the contract and get Detroit's program funded even if the other ARC's did not come in as part of the deal (as Dr. Denniston suggested.) They wisely but *very reluctantly* decided it was time for them to act or get lost in the shuffle. I have kept the letters I wrote to them at that point to prove to myself that this is the way it happened... but if you were to ask them about it today, you would think it was all their idea and their effort. At the time, however, they were livid that Detroit had pushed them into action.

And so, after I had been Program Director at DARC about nine months and on the County Mental Health Board for about a year, all the ARC workshops became funded (seven in all, if I remember correctly) and our services became upgraded

into what became a fine system. The clients who were already in the program were "grandfathered" in, thus assuring their places. About half were living with their parents, the other half in foster care homes. However, the priority client, to my dismay, now became the one returning from the institution into the community. (I felt the community people should have equal access.) But at least we had won the fight for a securely funded program. This gave us breathing time to gird up for the continuing fight.

I was naive to think that everyone would be thrilled with this really monumental achievement, but I soon realized that some folks were extremely resentful at losing their authority. The funding for the program, while agreed to and passed, was not to be in the state's budget for several months — when the fiscal year began. Joe Nemesis was elected president again; He immediately told me there was no money in the budget for my position; and, backed by that particular faction (playing black against white) he let me go. At the same time, Tom was defeated after he had reluctantly agreed to run for the Detroit ARC board. (And at that time Tom was a member of the PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE ON MENTAL RETARDATION, and a past President of the National and Michigan ARCs!) We learned first hand how much ego and hatred some people have. Joe, by the way, disappeared from the Detroit scene a year later by moving to the suburbs. (His wife had told me years before they wanted to sell before their house went down in value... "the neighborhood is changing so fast.") That's justice for you.

## Philip Gets HEP

Leaving DARC was a minus for me. But the plus was that this provided time to become more concerned about Phil's future, especially where he would live when Tom and I were no longer alive. We didn't want him to depend on Brian, Gail, or Jim, either. For years Tom had assured me that the time would come when community living would be a reality for all mentally retarded people, that they would no longer have to go into institutions when their parents died. In fact, institutions would no longer exist!

This became partly true. There were a few group homes going up in various parts of the state, but not nearly enough to satisfy the need. When I asked Tom once again when something might be happening around Detroit for Phil, he said, "I guess you'd better do it, Marian, if you want Phil to be sure of having a place." People like Phil were ignored. Parents were expected to provide for them, even those in their 70's and 80's and greatly worn out or stressed. Counties and states would accept responsibility only after parents died, except in rare instances. And then the retarded son or daughter lived in one of the group homes provided through the Department of Social Services (DSS) . The Department of Mental Health

(DMH) did not provide any funding for them. DSS homes were usually in the Inner City. Better neighborhoods had been very successful in their efforts to keep out people who were not appealing financially or socially. Visitations I had made on behalf of the Mental Health Board made me aware of the terrible conditions in many of the DSS homes. A typical home had once been a lovely, large family dwelling, but had been in a state of decay for years. Anywhere from 12 to 20 people would live in one house, sometimes with only one bathroom and a lavatory. Paint was more often peeling than not, and furniture was often made up of broken springs covered by falling-apart slip covers. One house parent bought wrought-iron furniture with no cushions because "it held up better", she remarked. Her blind residents were especially hard on furniture, she said, because they liked to finger the materials (their way of "seeing", I guess) and they wore it out that way. Often these people attended no school, day program or work activity, but would hang around the house with little activity to stimulate them.

I felt it was imperative that something be done to obtain decent homes for all mentally retarded people *whether they came from institutions or from the community*. That simple philosophy became my byword, my battle cry, my logo, my litany. I'm sure many people would have preferred to crawl under their desks and hide rather than hear it from me again. They were having enough trouble finding schools and homes for those getting out of institutions. They didn't want to have to deal with those not already in the system.

Being on the Mental Health Board, I was privvy to all the things happening statewide. Tom's work nationally also gave me much information to share with the Board. I learned what it might be possible to do in Detroit from what was happening in the best places in the country. I went with Tom on many various meetings throughout the state to become better informed (and to keep our marriage going.) As a result, I met many people who went into my mental file, often using them years later as excellent resources for information or funding.

Staff members of the mental health board made themselves available to me because our priorities were the same. We learned that the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) had set aside funds for handicapped housing. Prior to that time, no one had considered mentally retarded persons as eligible, only blind or physically disabled persons. But the man in charge of MSHDA at this point had a mentally retarded son living at home and he was acutely aware of their potential as well as their problems. He ruled that such adults were indeed eligible for handicapped housing grants.

**I had met Marty Kope of Goodwill Industries of Detroit** through his substitute preaching at our church one Sunday a few years before. He had taken time from his busy schedule for this because he had heard of the church's SUNDAY

SUNDAYCLUB PROGRAM for retarded adults.<sup>22</sup> He was pleased that the church had taken such an interest in retarded people because he and his wife, Sally, had a severely retarded daughter, Lynne, living in an institution.

Marty was a Lutheran minister who had left the active ministry to get a degree in rehabilitation work with disabled people and was in charge of Human Resources at Goodwill Industries. When I happened to be at that agency for a meeting about a year later, I stopped in at his office to reintroduce myself. We chatted about the Lutheran Church of which we were both lifelong members and found out that we both regretted that the main church body had never done much for either of our retarded children. We also agreed that it would be a good time to make them aware of their needs and problems. The immediate result was the forming of HEP, more officially known as *Housing for Exceptional People*, in 1972. We asked the new members to suggest names and the one they chose was the one Gail submitted. Not bad for a 14-year-old young lady.

HEP is composed of parents and friends of mentally retarded people. Some board members are professionals in social service areas, others are contractors, builders, bankers, homemakers, churchmen, lawyers, office workers, teachers. Marty said later that if he had known it would take almost five years, hundreds of thousands of dollars, and thousands of volunteer working hours, HEP houses might never have been built. Fortunately, we didn't know that then, so we began enthusiastically. As they say, "If a tree takes forty years to mature, plant it immediately."

To make a long story short, we received a grant from the AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH in Minneapolis to fund a Coordinator position for two years;<sup>23</sup> received the last grant available for a 40-year, 1.5% mortgage from MSHDA;<sup>24</sup> purchased a lot in northwest Detroit only two miles away from our home on Grandville in Rosedale Park; became involved with Lutheran Social Services of Michigan (LSSM). The first coordinator, Leif Clark, resigned after his first year to enter law school, so I was hired to complete the project, gaining first-hand knowledge on how to deal with architects, contractors, zoning boards, social service agencies, and parents as I went along. The first house, HEP-Burgess, opened in December 1976, just before Christmas.

I could write a book about dealing with contractors who were always behind schedule, writing change orders and spending more than their original bids; of meetings with architects with beautiful ideas and MSHDA officials with regulations which dampened dreams; of committee meetings with parents to help them through the traumatic decision-making process of finally "letting go" of their adult children; of zoning board regulations and open meetings with the public to allay fears that criminals and drug dealers would be moving into the neighborhood; of

interviews with prospective residents who dreamed of getting into HEP House but whose parents who wouldn't let them leave home; of interviews with parents who were afraid they would die before HEP opened; of the fun I had interviewing interior designers and choosing all new furnishings for so many rooms; of the puzzlement of the prospective residents when viewing the skeleton of their new home, trying to figure out which space on the cement floor would be theirs; of the pride of the residents when they held their first Open House for family and neighbors. But I'll skip all that and just say that HEP now has two homes. Phil moved into the Burgess house in December 1976. Later, in 1980, he moved to the second home, Lamphere house, about a mile away, where he is still living. He will probably continue to live there unless there is a radical change in either Michigan or California mental health services — Michigan being far better at this time.

Marty and I had two privately stated objectives for Lutheran Social Services of Michigan on our own agenda. Our first was to involve them with the HEP home. They offered office space for the HEP coordinator which we gladly accepted. Leif, and later I, worked out from there for over two years. They also put a member of their staff on the HEP Board. Our second objective was to get the Lutherans more involved in services to mentally retarded people. LSSM now manages two homes for us. But beyond this, they have also, on their own, developed seventeen LSSM homes throughout the state, including homes for severely retarded persons, and they are continuing to develop more.

No one was happier to know that Hep-Burgess was to be a reality for Philip and his friends than my parents were. They had always been so concerned about what would happen to him. On trips back to Detroit to visit us they had become enormously interested in the HEP organization. They visited several sites we were looking at for our first home, and enjoyed meeting and talking with the various members of the mental health groups who were helping us. When we finally bought the Burgess property, they were thrilled to know that plans and construction would soon follow. Sadly, they did not ever see the home. But I know they were both content that Phil was going to be in the best possible situation once he could no longer depend on his family.

## Other Family Changes

**Dad had just turned eighty when he died in 1975.** Muriel, my cousin, was visiting with them the year after they had moved into the Seacliff house in Aptos which we bought in partnership with the Kingsleys. Helen had come up from Salinas to take them all on a trip to Napa Valley. They had a fine time... shopping for a jacket for him in the morning, and then going on to visit the various wineries on what turned out to be his last day on earth. It was a fine way for him to go, in the midst of a celebration with the family, but a tremendous shock to Mother and

Helen.

Dick and I went to California, he from Georgia and I from Michigan, to attend the memorial service for Dad on Easter Sunday at the folks' little Community Church in La Selva Beach. I almost didn't get there. Tom and Jim had taken me to the airport earlier than usual because it was so terribly crowded with college students going down to Florida for Easter vacation. I checked in at the counter and, having sent Tom and Jim home, settled down to read my magazine. I looked at my watch now and then, expecting to hear a call for the plane, but it never came. All of a sudden I realized that a lot of people were looking out the window, some of them waving. I went to the counter and asked when the plane was going to leave and the woman told me it was already pulling away. I told her I had never heard any announcement and that I had to get on that plane. She told me she was sorry...but I would be able to take the one leaving the next day...this one was on its way. I don't what made me do it, but I glared at her and said, "I never heard an announcement. It's so crowded in here it's possible I couldn't hear it. I must be at my father's funeral *tomorrow*. She still said, "Sorry." I don't know what made me do it, but I began stamping my feet on the floor and said very slowly and very firmly, "I am going to my father's funeral. Now stop that plane and *get me on it.*" She picked up her phone, made a call...and that huge DC747 turned around. In a short while it pulled up...and I walked onto it and down the aisle to my seat all alone, feeling mixed emotions of utter chagrin and absolute power.

The service for Dad at the small church in La Selva Beach was a happy one. Coming on Easter Sunday, the minister's sermon had been one of rejoicing at the Resurrection and the meaning it gave to our lives — and deaths. So the memorial service which followed immediately, was really a happy celebration of life. Helen had a reception afterwards at Seacliff so all the family and friends could get together and reminisce and talk with Mother.

We also had a memorial service shortly afterward in Chicago in the chapel at Mount Olive Cemetery, with many relatives attending, some whom we hadn't seen in years. Gail, Jim, Kimble (Gail's fiancée) and I made up a fine quartette (I could still sing a good alto, and the other three had really beautiful voices) and we sang several of Dad's favorite hymns. Dad would have loved it. Louise and Howard (my cousin and his wife) invited all of us to their home for a "wake"...in the midst of a sudden torrential rain.

That was the last time that I saw Mother in what I considered to be fairly good health. She and Dad had more or less taken care of each other in their last few years. What she couldn't do, he could, and vice versa. But Mother simply could not manage alone. She went to live with Helen and Gordon in Salinas, visiting us back East once more to see Wisconsin and Michigan. She saw the framework of Philip's house going up and could see me dashing in and out of our house, busy coordinating for HEP.



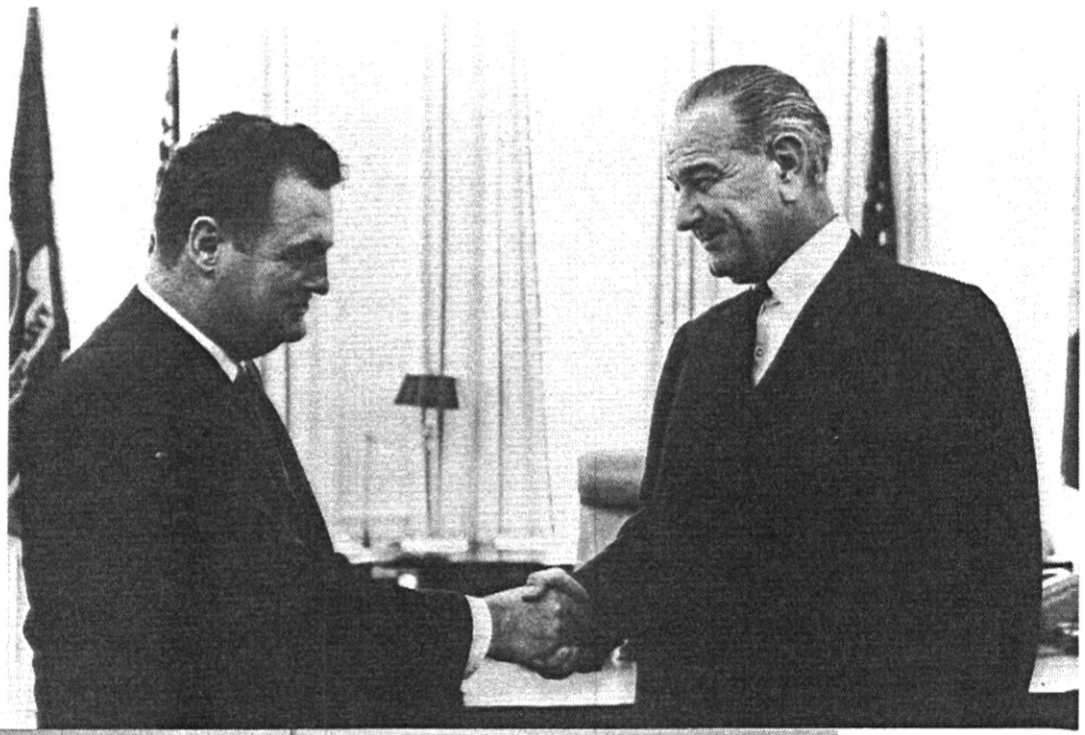
She was very pleased and relieved for Phil and what we were accomplishing for him and his friends. But by this time she was in very frail health, needing constant attention.

**About a month after Phil went to live at HEP** in early December 1976, Tom was presented with the opportunity to move to Chicago. He was asked to assist in molding the newly purchased Clinton E. Frank Advertising Agency to fit the Campbell-Ewald specs after its purchase by CeCo. We didn't want Phil to feel abandoned by us, so we gave him the choice of moving with us to Chicago if he wanted to, explaining we didn't know about workshops or services in the area, but would find out. His answer was, "HEP my home now. Stay here." What a wonderful feeling to know that he was satisfied and happy to be in the home we had planned for for so long. But what a strange feeling to know that we were no longer the main players in his life!

I resigned from all the projects I was working on — the DETROIT-WAYNE COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH BOARD of which I was then the Secretary, the MICHIGAN ARC SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE of which I was Chairman, and HOUSING FOR EXCEPTIONAL people for which I was the Coordinator, and we moved to Chicago, our old Home Town. □



The Detroit-Wayne County Mental Health Board 1976: Seated — Dr. Walter Brown, Marian Tucker, Eloise Whitten. Standing: Dr. John Dorsey, Andrew Brown, Director Mel Ravitz, Tom Turner, John Barr, Dr. William Clexton. (The other two were new, and I can't remember their names...I resigned the next month).



**WE MET SUCH INTERESTING PEOPLE**  
Tom gets to shake President Johnson's hand. Retarded persons benefitted greatly from his *Great Society* programs.  
Robert Kennedy and Tom talk with the National Poster Boy  
Muriel Humphrey wife of VP of USA & Marian Tucker, wife of ARC Pres.





>>>TROUBLESOME  
TIMES<<<<<



Top: Phil, Jim, Marian, Tom & Gail  
About the time Brian left for Canada

Middle Left- The choir threw a party for me  
and invited the family...Gail, Tom, Marian,  
Jim & Phil. Brian was still in Canada.

Middle Right: Brian while in the Service  
and, of course, before Canada

Bottom: Jim became a fine basketball player  
and a real fanatic. How he loved that game!

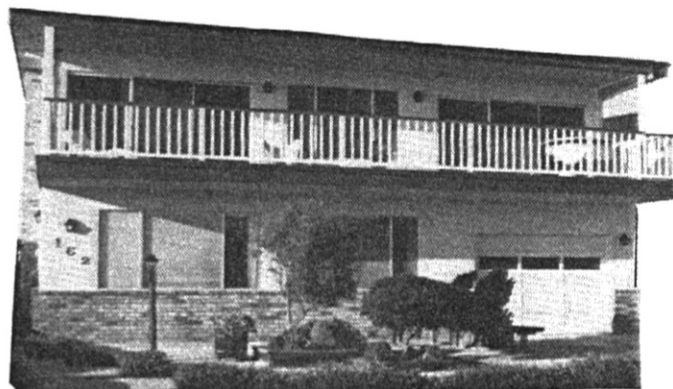


- Friends from Japan, Takuji & Michiko Shimizu visited us for an American Christmas
- Brian finally came home after four years in Canada
- Phil visited Grandma and Grandpa in California
- HEP-Burgess, the house that we parents built and where Phil went to live in Decmeber 1976.



### THE 1970'S

- Marian and Tom, Dick & Shirley dancing at the wedding of Jean and Pat Esler (Howard & Louise Benson's daughter).
- Mary Nic Dezomits, her mother Muriel Grendahl Benson and Muriel's sister, Ardis Benson Glass at Gail's first wedding reception.
- Seacliff House
- Gordon, Helen, Mom and Dad on a Sunday morning.





## Chicago... That Toddlin' Town

**In February 1977 Iran, a country that the United States had considered would always be under its sphere of influence, had gone through a revolution.**

To say that our relations with it were severed was to put it mildly. The new Iranian fundamentalist government, headed by the Ayatollah Khomeini, was devoted not only to the overthrow of the Shah, but to his extradition back there for trial and execution. They were irate that we had helped His Royal Highness escape and then sheltered him during his illness which proved fatal.

Their first act had been to raise the price of oil to an extreme high. This proved to be an almost fatal blow to the automobile capitol of the World, Detroit. After dominating the automotive industry since its inception, Detroit now found itself fighting to keep its head above water. It had bet its life on the popularity of the large car. But Japan had planned differently and was building most of the small cars, ones that ran on far less fuel than ours did.

Almost before you could say, "What happened?" Detroit was in the middle of a recession. People by the thousands were being laid off from work in the factories and this led to others being laid off in the white collar businesses. To find work, many had picked up stakes and moved out of the city, mostly to Texas or Colorado. It was at this time that Campbell-Ewald bought an advertising agency in Chicago and asked Tom to move there to get it into shape and conformance with the Detroit office. Tom would have to leave his job as Chairman of the Board of CeCo Publishing Company. While he loved that job more than any he had so far, the new job presented an intriguing challenge, so he accepted. We had to move and try to sell our house at a time the housing market all over the state, but in Detroit in particular, had gone straight down the tubes. We decided to rent an apartment since selling would obviously take time.

The company had rented a temporary place for us on the 26th floor of a residential hotel on Chestnut Street in downtown Chicago. We both loved the area. It seemed so exciting to be in the midst of all the rush. So we started our apartment hunting there. We thought a place overlooking beautiful Lake Michigan would be just what we wanted. We were city folks, after all. We had never lived in the suburbs and didn't particularly want to.

It wasn't to be that way at all. The more we looked, the more discouraged we became. It was very cold — minus 17 degrees the day we started looking. We couldn't even find a place to park the car because of all the snow...and the one place which allowed visitor parking was so expensive we realized that anyone coming

to visit us would have the same problems. So we decided to include other areas in our search.

We were heading out to Hinsdale one Sunday afternoon to visit old friends, Len and Dorothy Jensen, who had invited us and my cousin Howard Benson and his wife Louise for dinner. On our way we stopped at a rental agency and were shown three suitable apartments. There was no doubt in my mind when I saw the one on Carriage Way Drive in Burr Ridge, just south of Hinsdale. It was a spacious apartment with two bedrooms and two baths, a den, a 30-foot living room/dining room with a real fireplace, a kitchen with ample table space, and a laundry room where I could have my own washer and dryer. They even offered to give us new carpeting. There was parking for guests outside and two private underground parking spaces for our cars right next to an elevator, very convenient when we shopped for groceries. All of this was in the midst of a beautiful subdivision with its own private lake where we could take our daily walks to commune with Mother Nature.

The house in Detroit hadn't even begun to be sold. Real estate had appreciated everywhere in the country, but in Detroit the market was *The Pits*. We packed up our thirty plus years of Detroit history and memories and headed for Burr Ridge, leaving most of our living room and dining room furniture behind because we had decided to start out fresh in our new life. Besides, with two college youngsters there is never any problem with what to do with the old things. So while we were in Chicago enjoying our beautiful apartment, our old house stood with open arms for Gail and Jim to come home to whenever they wanted to get away from school and visit the old neighborhood.

I knew I would be lonesome at first and that the change would be a drastic one. Still, I was surprised at how devastated I felt that first day, sitting in the bedroom surrounded by packing crates. Tom was at the office and I had time now to realize how alone I was for the first time since Philip was born. I broke down and sobbed. I guess I realized for the first time that life was irretrievably changed. Phil no longer needed me. He was all settled down in his new life. Gail and Jim were still at the university in Ann Arbor, but they wouldn't be coming home on occasional week-ends. Brian was working far away in Texas. My old life, where our children had been such a consuming concern, where I had been involved in so many interesting and challenging things, where we had good friends...this old life was gone. Now I lived in a city that we had left some thirty-four years ago but where we had only a few friends and relatives left.

Tom was busy with the all-consuming details of a demanding job, so I was left to wrestle with putting the pieces together for myself. Thank goodness I had heard somewhere about the *Newcomers' Club* — probably from the local newspaper.

I decided to go to a meeting at someone's house in Clarendon Hills for a "get acquainted" coffee. I arrived there and saw mostly young women in their thirties going in. Obviously it wasn't the place for someone in her late fifties, like me! I almost turned around and headed for home. But I remembered that there were many empty days ahead for me if I didn't find new friends with whom to share them. So I took myself in hand and said, "Pull yourself together and get into that house."

As it turned out, a few other "older ladies" turned up there, too, and they looked very interesting. One of them went around and tapped three of us on the shoulder and took us to one side. She had heard us say that we were interested in playing bridge and decided to take matters into her own hands. She didn't want to get involved in playing with the younger women. From past experience she knew that they dragged their small children along to the afternoon games and didn't take the game seriously enough for her. As a result, the four of us started a couples bridge group which included our husbands and we all hit it off great from the start.

There were other things of interest to do with Newcomers, too. I joined a delightful "Explore Chicago" group...and an afternoon bridge club and a craft group. Age, I found out, made no difference, and soon there was more than enough to do and I had great friends with whom to share my time. However, I felt frivolous and useless, since so much of my time back in Michigan had been spent on mental retardation and mental health concerns. I investigated and became a board member of the Chicago Society for Mental Health, recommended by a colleague of Tom's from the President Johnson's Committee on MR.<sup>25</sup> We joined St. James Lutheran Church in Western Springs, often stopping off after church to see Howard and Louise who lived close by, to share a bowl of corn and fish chowder with them. Good food...good company.

Tom's job was interesting. He found that the president of his company was not doing much of the social/business things he should do as agency head, so we picked up the slack. We attended parties thrown by the big magazines and agencies, or went to the ballet, or had dinner at some of the best restaurants. One of the most colorful characters I met was the owner of the Chicago White Sox, Bill Veeck. He had a wooden leg and would casually empty his cigarette ashes into the ash tray he had built into it!

Gail and Kimble, her fiance, and Jim and his girlfriend, Sheri, would come to visit us, and it was great fun to show them such an interesting city. Occasionally they would bring Phil along. But Phil also came once without them, bringing with him a friend from the workshop for a week's vacation. They were thrilled to be able to ride AmTrak by themselves all the way from Detroit to the big city of Chicago. There was so much to do...take the train to the city, ride the double-deck busses,



take a boat ride through the locks, go to the top of the Sears Tower or the Hancock Building, eat at MacDonald's in Water Tower Place. We loved the excitement of downtown Chicago with people walking from place to place even late at night, so unlike Detroit which was sparsely populated during the day and almost deserted the rest of the time.

Gail was making wedding plans. She had begun working for the Michigan Department of Mental Health in Ypsilanti the summer before her junior year at college. We had bought her an old Volkswagen so she could drive the forty-five miles between city and country easily. She did so well she was offered a permanent 20-hour a week job at Ypsilanti (just a few miles down the expressway from Ann Arbor) which allowed her to work and go to college full-time, too. It helped make her college expenses easier for us, and gave her a sense of independence, as well. She had several years of career building work behind her in her chosen field when she graduated from Michigan the Spring of 1977. So it was no surprise that she declared final independence by marrying Kimble soon after that.

Gail's wedding took place in Detroit that September after graduation. At first I thought it would be a great disadvantage to be the mother-of-the-bride at such a distance. But she was such a fine manager that I had very little to do except to be there and follow instructions. It was a lovely affair, with brunch at the Dearborn Inn after a beautiful wedding at Holy Savior Church where she had been baptized and where we had been members for many years. We didn't know the marriage would last only a little more than a year when she decided that Kimble was not the one with whom she wanted to spend the rest of her life.

We also hadn't known how long a time we would be in Chicago. Tom made all the managerial changes he thought were needed at Clinton E. Frank, and after little more than a year there, he felt he had done what he could in that respect for the agency. What they needed in Chicago then, he suggested, was a good financial person. It so happened that the Detroit office needed a new General Manager to replace the one they had let go. They offered Tom his choice of staying in Chicago or going back to Detroit. Tom accepted the new offer to return to Detroit as the General Manager for Campbell-Ewald.

Although we loved Chicago and would have been content to stay there, actually we were pleased with the prospect of moving back where we had most of our family close by, as well as many friends.

Our move back there proved to be traumatic. □



## Michigan, My Michigan

**In May we drove to Detroit.** Tom had a meeting with the Chairman of the Board and I was going to look for a place to live. We had finally sold our house in Rosedale Park just a few months before and thought it would be fun to live in downtown Detroit in an apartment on the river. But Mayor Young decided to levy extra taxes on people who lived in Detroit but worked in the suburbs. CE was in Warren. Detroit's financial problems were in a terrible state. So we decided this situation was the "straw that broke the camel's back," said goodbye to living in Detroit, and looked to the suburbs.

We were staying with a friend, Neva Moyer, at her home in Birmingham. My car was in Chicago and Tom was using his, so Jim came from Ann Arbor one day to help me check out some condominiums in Rochester, a northern suburb which we had not been in before. Neva had told us about some friends who lived in a lovely condo there. We went out that way, saw some beautiful ones under construction and called Tom at the office to tell him about them. He agreed to meet us in an hour and a half at the address I gave him.

After Jim and I had eaten lunch, we went back to Fairwood Villas. Tom hadn't arrived yet, but he had called, leaving a number where we should contact him. When Tom answered, he sounded very strange. He slurred his words, telling me that he had dropped his brief case several times while walking to the car, and that his foot slipped off the pedal while driving. I don't know how he managed to keep from having an accident on the expressway before he decided to get off. He was calling from a gas station at 8-Mile Road (we were at 24-Mile Road.) I told him to wait there until Jim and I arrived.

We found Tom sitting very quietly in the front seat, not quite sure what was happening. His mouth was drooping to one side and his speech was hard to understand. A girl at the gas station had helped him put the coins in the telephone slots because they kept slipping out for him. Fortunately he had already made an appointment for a check-up with our friend and doctor, Art Walter, for that very afternoon. So I drove Tom to Art's office in our car while Jim followed in his. Art took an EKG and sent us directly to the hospital. Tom had had a stroke. And so began a very stressful time for all of us.

**It was a seller's market in Rochester.** The housing situation was completely different from what it was in Detroit and we had to decide at once what to do about the condo. Rental apartments did not compare at all to the one we had in Chicago. On top of this, we felt we needed to get into the home-owning market again, and

we both wanted a condo instead of a house, and this was the nicest one I had seen. Tom, of course, had to tell me to do what I thought was best. I didn't know if he was going to live or die; I didn't know if I could get our money back if I made a down payment. But there was only one unit left in the six-unit complex being built, and the next complex would not be ready for nine months. Art didn't know what to tell me about Tom's prognosis.

I discussed the angles with a lawyer that Joe Lujan (our friend and lawyer) asked to counsel me. We decided to take the plunge. The decision was also made to operate on Tom's carotid artery and clean it out. For many reasons, including the surgeon's illness, a strike by all the nurses in the hospital, Tom's cold, and the surgeon's abscessed tooth, Tom waited in the hospital for almost two months before having his operation. Meanwhile, I stayed with Neva. All our clothing and furniture was in Chicago and Tom hadn't even seen the condominium. He had a lot of information, though. I spent hours at his bedside telephoning realtors, bankers, lawyers, builders...making decisions on carpeting, tile, ovens...just everything that has to be decided when buying a new home.

When the operation finally took place, it was a terrible experience for all of us. Gail came from Ann Arbor so I wouldn't have to go through it all alone. Tom was wheeled into the operating room about 8:30 a.m. After a few hours went by we asked at the nurses' station for news and they tried to find out but couldn't learn a thing. After five o'clock the visitors' waiting room was closed down and we had to wait in a different part of the hospital. We were there for what seemed an eternity.

Finally the surgeon appeared, with no explanations or apologies for the lack of information through the whole long day. When Gail took notes (as I had asked her to do so we could discuss what he was telling us with Art) he became incensed, saying that Dr. Walter wouldn't understand, anyway. I know he was tired...but what a terrible bedside manner he had. He told us he had trouble closing the artery after the operation and finally had to hold it together with cement (?). He also said that Tom had had another stroke while on the table, and that the next few hours were crucial. It was critical, he said, that Tom lie absolutely still and not move, or the cement would not hold. Of course the first thing Tom said to us when we were allowed to see him about eight o'clock was, "I have to sneeze." I just squeezed his hand and told him as authoritatively as I could, "Don't sneeze. Don't you dare sneeze." And I prayed.

Tom was in the hospital ten more days and then was discharged, still very weak. He recuperated at two different homes. First we went to Art's and Eileen's place in Birmingham while they were up North on vacation at their summer home in Roscommon. After that we stayed in Dick and Alma Ross's home a few miles

away while they were on vacation with their sons in California, spending some of their time at our then vacation home in Aptos.

Tom recuperated remarkably well. His attitude was very good, something essential for recovery, I think. Our condo was ready to move into by the end of July — just about the time Alma and Dick would be home from California. I flew to Chicago to supervise the moving men, staying with Howard and Louise, driving back to Rochester to wait for our things to arrive at the new house, a place Tom had seen only once — about a week before the move.

**And so we started our new life in Rochester**, a charming town we came to love dearly, in Fairwood Villas, a place that would be our home for the next six years. There were just sixty-nine units in all, beautifully landscaped and planned. Half of the units faced on Great Oaks Golf Course and County Club. Ours faced on the Commons just a few steps away from the swimming pool. It backed onto the new Great Oaks Mall, but since we were fenced off from that and our street was lined with huge pine trees and olive trees, it was a convenience instead of a drawback. In fact, Tom talked the manager of the mall into putting a gate from their parking area to our street so our residents could walk to the mall, and our overflow visitors had lots of convenient parking.

Our condo was spacious and airy. We came through an iron gate into a pretty courtyard, entering the house into a foyer off which was a living room, dining room, lavatory, large kitchen, and a garage. A wide, open spiral staircase wound down to the basement and up to the second floor where we had a large garden-windowed hall with two huge bedrooms off either side of it. Our bedroom was located on the Commons side, and the other one, on the street side, became Tom's office and guest room. The huge walk-in closet was just too big to keep for that purpose alone, so we had it walled off and made part of it into a private office for me. My dressing room, just off our bedroom, was large and luxurious. The tub was big enough to hold two adventurous people. Tom's bathroom was also nicely designed, with our washer and dryer placed conveniently behind folding doors. What a handy place, after the years on Grandville where I sometimes had to run to the basement from the third floor!

Each room had its own deck. On the one off our bedroom, we could sit and watch the many brightly decorated hot-air balloons which passed lazily overhead on week-ends, sometimes landing on the golf course. The other deck, facing the parking mall, was much more enclosed and one could lie there on a towel with nothing on and get a suntan in complete privacy.

Off the dining room we had a patio where we could sit and drink coffee, read the newspapers, and chat with whatever neighbors were on their way to swim in

the pool. The grounds were lovely and well-kept. It was a perfect home for two people who wanted to relax after the traumatic stroke and operation Tom had just gone through.

**Of course, things don't always work out the way you plan.** Tom's next six years were difficult ones. His stroke had come at the precise time that he needed to come in hale and hearty as General Manager to be able to change some very entrenched policies. Some of the things he would liked to have seen happen came to fruition after he retired rather than when he was there. To complicate things further, he had a second operation on the other carotid artery soon after he recovered from the first. One top executive often seemed paranoid about the other and each had a different opinion of what Tom should do as General Manager. And the financial man was a real "bean counter". Sometimes the things Tom wanted were okayed with no problem, but other times money was the only important consideration. One example...Tom had recommended a loan to one of the employees. It was the middle of winter, his wife had left him with two small children, and his furnace had broken down. The financial man turned him down! Tom finally wrote him a personal check.<sup>26</sup>

Jim and Sheri were married right after we moved into the condo and in the time between Tom's two endarterectomy operations. They joined Kimble and Gail in becoming Ann Arbor residents. Gail was working at Plymouth Center (institution for mentally retarded people) as their policy writer, and Jim and Sheri were finishing at the University of Michigan, both working full-time. Brian had returned from Texas and began working in the Michigan mental health system again, first in a small foster care home for mentally retarded adults, then at the large Southgate program, and finally at the Forensic Center for mentally insane prisoners in Ypsilanti. The last was probably the most difficult job he ever had, so exhausting mentally, physically, and spiritually.

I became a member (later Chairperson) of the Advisory Board that had just been mandated by the Governor Miliken to close the Plymouth Center for Human Development where Gail was working as Policy Writer. Plymouth was a long but beautiful drive from Rochester, and I often took the opportunity to have lunch with Gail before our meetings. She was also going through troubling times. She was a strong advocate for the policy of normalization of mentally retarded people, but she knew that the closing of PCHD eventually would mean the loss of her job which could be a stepping stone up the state's mental health ladder for her. Although we didn't know it then, this was also the time she was deciding to leave Kimble.

Tom became a member of the Oakland County ARC Board as well as continuing with the Public Information/Awareness Committee of the ARC/US. This was

a continuation of activities which had begun with a team he had put together in Chicago from Clinton E. Frank and CeCo. They had done a magnificent ad campaign to promote greater national recognition of the ARC.

We also took bridge lessons — we should have done it years before — to learn to be better communicators at the bridge table. We made a lot of friends through that activity. Strangely, outside of our many years at Holy Savior where most of our friends came through church, later on we met most of our friends through bridge or from work, not from church activities. We joined ABIDING PRESENCE LUTHERAN CHURCH there, however, and occasionally I would substitute on the organ for Betty Jo, the pastor's wife. Lloyd Buss, the minister, was a great teacher and gave excellent sermons, so we enjoyed that part of the church, but not many social activities.

### I Get Involved with a New Cause

**Marty Kope called me in early 1979 to ask me to be on the Board of a new coalition** in North Oakland County called North Oakland Life Enrichment Coalition (NOLEC). However, when I heard that Goodwill Industries (his agency, which was to be the "umbrella" agency for the coalition) was looking for a program developer for that project, financed by grant money it had just received, I told Marty I would like to be considered for that job instead. I hadn't gone through the job interview process for many, many years because all of my jobs had been offered to me after doing volunteer work, so I was a bit nervous. I surprised both the personnel director and myself when he asked me, at the end of the interview, what my secret ambition in life was. I couldn't believe it when I heard myself say I had always wanted to sing torch songs while sitting on top of the grand piano in a bar! In spite of this, I was hired.

This is the way I began my intense involvement and concern for mentally ill people. I knew some of the problems from my membership on the Detroit-Wayne County Community Mental Health Board. Also, Dottie Nesse, a friend from both Holy Savior and St. Olaf College (and now on the NOLEC board) had worked with mentally ill people for years and used to ask advice from Tom regarding public education about this subject. We were well aware that problems with the treatment and understanding of mentally ill people were in many ways the same that families of mentally retarded people had been having. Families of such persons were just beginning to demand the kinds of programs and services that we had become involved in thirty years before. I think they were so busy coping with family problems, life styles, and outbursts, that they had no time and energy to give to solving these problems through legislation and services. They also hadn't faced up to what we had faced up to years before... admitting our children's diagnosis in spite of the stigma that was attached to it. The parents and their sons and daughters,

too, were afraid that they would never get over the label "mentally ill" if they were to acknowledge their problem openly.

I was pleased that Dorothy was a member of this coalition. I never appreciated her so much as I did when I began to work with her. She had worked for many years at Clinton Valley Hospital in Pontiac as a volunteer, becoming so interested that she took graduate work at Oakland University in order to become a social worker for the community mental health system. We didn't know it then, but we were to work closely for the next five years. Dorothy was excellent at her job, an untiring worker who spent many long hours far above and beyond anything her job description called for. In her unending search for services for chronically mentally ill people, she had come into contact with Marty and several other dedicated workers with this similar interest, and they formed the coalition for which I had just been hired to work.

The grant money for my salary would last, full time, for about six months. After my first week on the project I knew it would take much more time than that to interest the county or state to find funds for a day program. Contacts must be worked on over a period of time (we had absolutely no political influence or clout) especially for starting up what we hoped would become a model program. Sometimes my phone calls would find no one in, but if I called again within a few days, I might be able to arrange a meeting for perhaps a week in the future. I discussed it with Marty and we decided to make the job a part-time one for as long as it would take. This was great for me. It allowed me to work three hours or thirty hours a week, depending on how things were lining up.

Again, this story would make a fascinating book on political intrigue, how to pull strings, how to be a fairy godmother to one group of people while being an obnoxious busy-body to others. I worked with Marty and NOLEC for two years before we were able to get a program funded for seventy-five people in northern Oakland County. (How Tom hated the name of our program, by the way. He said it sounded like a lousy tasting baby food formula. I agreed, but the coalition decided we were too well known by this time to change it.)

Once again the people I met during the years I had worked in Wayne County or through Tom's volunteer work throughout the state were of primary importance. After exhausting many possibilities which led to blind alleys or little interest in our project, I learned that Dr. Walter Brown, who had been a member of the Detroit-Wayne County Community Mental Health Board with me, was now the head man in our tri-county area working for the Michigan Department of Mental Health. *Voila!* It was easy to get to talk with him. His understanding and sympathy for the plight of these unfortunate people with absolutely no political clout was what finally made us successful in our search for funding this unique program. He felt

these folks had been completely ignored for years, so when the MH Board put us down as No. 66 on its priority list, he suggested it be moved up to #1. If not he could have the state fund it from the county budget. In essence, this meant the county would pay for the program but have no say in running it. They got the message and funded us immediately. To our delight, two years later, at a legislative hearing, the Director of CMH singled me out publicly during a legislative hearing, praising the program and calling it a "Jewel in Oakland County's crown."

Our clients in this newly funded venture were folks who lived in the community but who had seldom left their foster care homes where they had lived for many years, going in and out of the institution when they had "episodes." After NOLEC began its program, they were able to have individual attention tailored to each persons' unique needs. Their day might include adult education, physical exercise, golf, psychological and psychiatric counseling, work activities, group therapy, gardening, arts and crafts, community orientation, computer programming, socialization, cooking — whatever they needed to have a more happy, independent life.

The program began in a small way in a lovely county park setting in rural Davisburg, forty-five minutes from Rochester, a scenic drive no matter what the time of year. I acted as Program Director while we posted the job. I could probably have had the job permanently, but one raging stormy winter day, when I had to drive to Davisburg for a meeting, I realized I wanted the option of staying home with a good book at times like that rather than being responsible for so many people, so I withdrew my name from consideration.

I continued my interest by replacing Marty as Chairperson (he remained on the Board). Within two years we relocated to a more convenient area in Ortonville, occupying facilities rented from the school district. Working with Marty and Dottie was so rewarding. They were wonderful, dedicated people who were friends long before I worked with them on this important project — and still are.

I must also mention another young man we worked with — Dennis Jacobs — who was a real leader of that great coalition. He had been raised in the small town of Ortonville and became interested, while very young, in the mentally ill people for whom his grandmother and other family members were foster care providers. Dennis was only about twenty-nine when I met him, but was already supervisor of Adult Basic Education for Brandon Township. He was a marvelously innovative person. Since so many home operators would not furnish transportation or take time to bring their residents to his community education programs, he hired teachers to go to their homes to get the residents interested once again in the outside world. He felt they needed physical exercise as well as mental stimulus, so he introduced that kind of activity into the curriculum. When his supervisors pro-



tested that every program had to be a "learning" one and that exercise did not fit that classification, he had his pupils write papers on the benefits of exercise. And when he felt that many of them needed more challenges and opportunities than studying in a home basement provided — with the washers and dryers running all the time — he started the coalition approach with a colleague. When our first funding came through, Dennis proved to be a true genius in picking exactly the right teachers for his Adult Basic Education component. The people he found were superb in being exactly the right ones at the right time.

Imagine sitting around in a rural home for many years with *nothing* to do. I, for one, would certainly "go off my rocker." Some providers wouldn't even take their residents to the doctor for their yearly checkups, but proudly told me that the doctors would come to their houses instead. This might have been good if they were really sick, but it gave them absolutely no stimulus to want to change their life situation. Besides, these doctors often prescribed medications for a year at a time. Mentally ill people need more observation than that!

What a change came into their lives with this program in the community. Their enthusiastic teachers included in the curriculum such things as how to order from menus, plan a budget, do CPR, use the town library. They would go out once in a while to eat in a restaurant, something they might not have done in years. They acted, directed, and made props for plays. They invited their township supervisor and their state representative in to meet with them and incidentally told them they were all registered to vote in the next election. They invited the State Director of Mental Health to discuss their problems with them. They could try their hand at golf or tennis. They planted a garden, using the produce in their culinary efforts...and selling the pumpkins in a yearly auction of their original Halloween designs. One man became so adept at stained glass work that he was hired to design and make a huge plaque for a retiring Ford Motor Company executive. And a number found rewarding employment in the new furniture refinishing workshop Goodwill set up there. Their ages ranged from early twenties to one man who became rejuvenated in his eighties.

Dennis and I spent many hours together over four years — in meetings, discussing new ideas at lunch, driving to Lansing to meet with legislators or financial people. He left Michigan to go to Columbia University to study for his doctorate the year before Tom retired. Michigan's loss will be someone else's gain. But it's good to know someone like Dennis is out there — anywhere.

**Goodwill Industries received another grant in 1983 and hired me** to try to find money for a similar program in the urban setting of Pontiac. We worked hard with the legislators and budget people in Lansing, but money was once again very hard to obtain. Still, this venture was also successful, but the final funding

did not come through until after Tom and I had retired to California.

For all that I was so busy doing work for NOLEC, Tom and I were both busy with mentally retarded programs, too. My work on the Advisory Board for the Plymouth Center for Human Development went on for four years before we were able to close the institution. I felt very split about what our committee was doing. The mandate from the governor to close Plymouth Center down came after the ARC/Michigan won a law suit against the State on behalf of the residents. But the end result was two-fold — while residents in the institution would finally be placed in much better homes, people from the community who were not yet in the service system were going to find it much harder to become included. It was the old fight — services for people from the community versus services for people from the institutions — both with identical needs. No wonder I became paranoid. On the one hand, people in the HEP home were sometimes served very poorly (example: there was little money for psychiatric services desperately needed for several persons; or new residents who came from the community were refused funding for day programs which meant they couldn't enter the home). On the other, people from Plymouth were now entering school programs or work activities programs in the community (advantages they had never had before) and moving into much smaller (and better) group homes.

In 1984 Tom and I were honored at the yearly Oakland ARC Banquet as their PERSONS OF THE YEAR. We are still members of the ARC/OAKLAND COUNTY and, as such, we have been able to take advantage of a unique advocacy program for Philip which is most helpful when we are living so far from him. The person in charge of that program, presently a man who is Associate Director and a lawyer, goes to all pertinent meetings about Philip that have to do with his living situation or his job situation, and reports to the family what is going on and how Philip is doing in each of these situations. It makes us feel more at ease that his benefits and his situation are protected.

### **All Work and No Play Makes for a Dull Life**

Socially we were busy with old friends, but we also made some very good new ones. The Biksons, Shirley and Alan, lived across the Commons from us and were the kind of people we could call at a moment's notice to play bridge, or join us at a movie, or go out to dinner with us. Once again, looks are deceiving. They both look so sophisticated, always impeccably dressed, full of worldly observations and comments. They turned out to be two of the easiest people we ever dealt with, always ready to discuss business and politics —she was a conservative Republican, he an ardent Democrat.

The rest of the people in our particular condominium area were very congenial, too. We had a friendly relationship with everyone, in the summer around the swimming pool, in the winter at parties in someone's house. Our only disagreements in the area were with our builder who proved to be a sleazy character to all (completely impartial) and we went through a frustrating time-consuming law suit which the home owners finally won. Building contractors came to have a bad reputation with me. First there was the slippery procrastinator when I worked for HEP with our first house, and then this character in Rochester who was just as devious and downright dishonest. He cared a lot about his money, but certainly not his reputation.

We had also found many bridge playing friends. In fact, we played more bridge the six years we were in Rochester than we ever did before or since. I was a member of the Newcomer's group only long enough to find a couple's duplicate club to join. We belonged to this group the six years we were there. And through our bridge lessons, we found a group that played every Friday night at the Mall, so we spent many good (and many frustrating) evenings there. We joined another duplicate group (part of the Friday night crowd) that played monthly on Sunday afternoons. We also joined the Great Oaks Country Club, but not to play golf. (Tom had walked off his last golf course about twenty years before when he was playing on the hottest day of summer with a client he didn't particularly like, with a back that had been giving him trouble for a week, and a splitting headache...vowing never to get on a green again... and he never did!) We had a social membership which gave us an easy way to host friends or family, and we enjoyed many a lovely Sunday Brunch or week-day luncheon or dinner. I also played cards with a great group of ladies there every Wednesday (unless I had a meeting to attend for my job) and Tom and I often went to the Thursday evening bridge game, too. We both thoroughly enjoyed living in Rochester.

**Mother's last visit with us had been during the summer of 1976**, before our Chicago move. Helen had flown out with her and then left to go on to Madison to visit Gordon's sister, and then back to California. I had shown them HEP's framework going up and my office at LSSM. Mom had a nice visit with us for a few weeks, but then she came down with a terrible case of herpes. This particular disease of the nerves is especially hard on older people, and our friend, Art, tried very hard to help her. But nothing seemed to ease the pain which would strike often and severely. I had to be away from home a lot at this time, but got a young friend of Jim's, Mickey Tupper, to come and take care of her at those times. Still, we could see how miserable she was, and when she expressed a desire to go home to be close to her own doctor (and Gordon, his partner) I flew with her back to Salinas. She couldn't possibly have flown alone.

Tom and I visited her in California a few times after that. She had to get up

almost every hour night and day and this became very hard on Helen. Mother agreed the best thing to do was to move into the nursing home about a mile from Helen's. Her body was very weak, but her mind and spirit were strong.

I wish she could have continued to travel back and forth, she was so interested in what we were doing. I wanted very much for her to see how successfully Phil and his friends were living at HEP. And I also wanted her to visit us in Chicago and Rochester. She would have loved that. But that was not to be.

It was no surprise, but sad, nevertheless, to get Helen's phone call our first year in Rochester, telling us Mother had died in her sleep (December 1978). Her body was cremated, as Dad's had been. Helen had a memorial service for her at the little church in La Selva Beach, and Dick and I planned a memorial service at graveside in Chicago. The trouble was that Illinois and Chicago were in the grip of terrible winter weather once again. Only the year before, while we were living in Chicago, we had gone through some of the worst winter weather we had ever experienced. Snow piled up everywhere and the ice had not disappeared until the end of April. When Dick asked how soon we could get to Chicago for the service, I told him of the problem we faced (he had lived in Georgia for so long he had forgotten how long winters were in the mid-west.) It seemed incredulous to him that her grave could probably not be dug until the following April, but in fact, the Chicago mayoral election had been lost the previous Fall by the incumbent because of her "poor handling of the snow" the year before. I don't know where they expected her to put it...Lake Michigan maybe?

As sometimes happens, sad times can have their funny sides, too. Jim had just been hired that December for an advertising job in Detroit that he really wanted. The boss was explaining their vacation and sick-leave policies when Jim told him he would need a week-end off in April to go to his grandmother's funeral. I wonder what he thought! I know Mother would have laughed.

When April finally arrived, we had a memorial service at Mt. Olive just as we had done four years earlier for Dad. There were fewer people there for Mother than had been there for Dad. Time had taken its toll and some of the old friends of theirs who had died in the meantime — and a younger one, too. My cousin, Jack, who had been baptized with me so many years before had died, too. The minister from St. James, where Tom and I had been members just the year before, gave the message. But what I remember most of all is Gail's lovely unaccompanied voice singing the beautiful hymn Amazing Grace over Mother's grave — a beautiful song for a lovely lady.

Of course there was no way of knowing then that Dick would be the next to go, but, four years later, during one of the worst winters ever experienced across the

whole country, he went as quickly with a heart attack as Dad had. We were vacationing in California, horrified by the severe rain storm that uprooted trees, ruined bridges, and caused mud slides which deposited houses onto the beach below and just East of us.

Shirley called with the news. Atlanta was in the midst of a terrible winter storm. She had called Dick at work to tell him she had become completely snow-bound, couldn't move her car, and was calling from a stranger's home. He told her to stay there and he would pick her up. When several hours passed and he hadn't come, she called the office, only to get no answer. Very worried, she called a man who lived near the office and worked with Dick and asked him to check on him there...perhaps the telephone line was down? The man did, and called her back soon to tell her he had gone to the office and found Dick lying there. Dead. Obviously, it had happened immediately after Shirley had talked with him. What a shocking way to go. And how hard for Shirley.

Tom and I left California to get to Atlanta...having to return first to the Detroit airport and take a plane from there. Michael had called the airport to page us to tell us not to come..that even if we landed in Atlanta, we could not get to their house, the weather was so bad. We never got the message. So we arrived at a deserted Atlanta airport hours later. We were lucky to hustle a ride to a motel down the road where we called them to tell them we were there. Tina and her husband, Bill, got through to pick us up the next morning to take us to the house.

What a day for a funeral! Shirley and Dick's house was at the bottom of two hills. I can't tell you how many cars got stuck. They would come down the first hill with no trouble, but could never get up the next, slowly sliding down before reaching the top. It was obvious that no Southerner could manage slick roads the way people from the North could. I guess they never had the chance to practice as much as we had. We were able to get to the funeral home, however. I saw Dick...looking so good and healthy it was impossible to realize he was gone. So many thoughts rushed up to me as I spent a quiet moment with him alone. The many good times we shared together as children and teenagers...regrets at growing apart as we got older...not seeing each other as often as I would have liked. I felt a deep sadness.

Tom was one of the pallbearers. They had a terrible time getting Dick's coffin from the hearse to the gravesite because the beautiful slopes and hills that are part of Atlanta's charm turn treacherous after a sleet storm. After a few days' visit, we left for Michigan again. Shirley was taking things well and in stride, but we knew it was because there was so much company with her right then and things would look so different when she was finally alone. Shirley had been my best friend during our late teens and early twenties. With our different family situations and

with geography separating us, our interests and outlooks naturally changed, although we still keep each other's interests close at heart. Shirley visited us in Rochester after Dick's death, and we visited her at her new apartment in Roswell, Georgia in 1987.

**Winters became more something to endure rather than to enjoy.** The time from November through April seemed interminably long. Much as we loved Michigan, and especially Rochester, we decided to move to the Seacliff house in California, the Kingsleys willing (and they were) when Tom retired. Brian had graduated from computer school in Colorado and was working in Denver again by this time; Gail had been settled in California for a couple of years; and Jim was thinking of moving to California to start a new life after he and Sheri had decided the summer of 1984 that their marriage was over. That meant that all of our family lived far from Detroit except for Phil.

We thought a lot about what our decision to leave would mean to Phil. We decided that he was very happy at HEP and had been settled there, by this time, for eight years. Eventually he was going to have to live a life without us. It might be better, we thought, to give it a try while we were still around to have input, although at a distance. It seems to have worked well...except during the holidays he can't be with us. Sadly, many friends seem to have forgotten him.

The real estate market in Michigan was just beginning to move again in 1984, after a long period of recession. The lawsuit against Slavik who had built Fairwood Villas had been won and the worrisome problem, the roofs, had just been fixed. Hardly a condo had been sold in the previous two years (word of that kind of trouble gets around quickly) so we didn't know what kind of luck we would have. We put ours up for sale in June, hoping to sell by October, our target date for leaving. We were lucky and unlucky. It sold immediately, but we had to be out by July. So our last few months were spent in a kind of limbo — in a Royal Oak rental apartment just marking time.

**Sixty-five, the magical age that separates the working person from the person of leisure,** arrived for Tom September 26, 1984. Even though you know the inevitable is going to happen...even though people always tell you (and you try) to enjoy each day to its fullest...even though you think you are prepared mentally and financially...when the day finally arrives and you hang up your hat and retire from the "rat-race"...it comes as a shocking surprise.

I know Tom was ambivalent about retirement. It is such an unknown quantity, especially for men who never spend any appreciable time running the household or finding social activity in the community instead of at the job. Retirement and sixty-fifth birthday came on the same day for Tom, so I invited the friends I thought

correct—teaching is not his cup of tea. It's a great deal of preparation for one class held three times a week, and the pay is minimal, to say the least.

We even started a small company — COMMUNICATIONS CONTINUUM (COM-CON) — designed to teach businesses how to write well. Stu Russell, a refugee from a prominent school textbook publishing company, and his wife, Dot, also an editor, introduced the idea to both Tom and a young English teacher in the Santa Cruz system. We produced excellent material, beautiful stationery, and three 4-page newsletters written by Stu and produced by me on my lovely new (since California) MacIntosh computer. But while Stu and Dot have maintained their interest, we feel the prospects for growth do not appear sufficient to justify our expenditure of time, effort, and money, so we have pulled out of the partnership to let them continue as they wish.

I took advantage of my experiences in Chicago and Rochester and joined Welcome Wagon as soon as we arrived. Through this group I have met other people who are new to the Santa Cruz area who are also looking for new friends. I could play much more bridge than I would ever want to, but I keep it to one day a week, occasionally two. And I have gone with new friends to many luncheons and explored Santa Cruz environs with them.

Tom and I contacted our County Supervisor and told her of our backgrounds in mental retardation and mental health. She responded almost at once with an appointment to the Community Mental Health Board. We decided that I should be the one to take it because Tom was already involved with several volunteer activities. I was active for three years on that Board, involved on the subcommittee which is trying to get businesses interested in hiring mentally ill adults. I also produced several brochures for them. The woman who is director of CMH here, Dr. Rama Khalsa, is excellent, and I would have liked to continue working with her. But I feel strongly that the reason I was so productive in Michigan was because of the years of contacts I had built up. I knew the system, and people in it knew me. I knew where to go for help and to put forth my ideas. If I am realistic, I have to face the fact I don't have the time left to get into the full swing of things to produce the kind of results I would like, so when the time came up for my re-appointment, I asked to be replaced. I promised Rama I will produce any brochures she wants, but so far, money she needs to produce them just isn't in the budget (even though I donate my services.)

Sadly, the need for much greater understanding of mental illness has struck home several times this past year. A dear younger friend of mine was devastated when her sixteen-year-old son took his life last year. Their terrible sadness and confusion at not understanding the cause for this, nor knowing how they could have anticipated his action, made me even more aware that there is so much

research that needs to be done. Recently my friend, Adele, who visited us two years ago, wrote that her nephew in his twenties had just taken his life. Also last year we had a visit from old friends, Ralph and Audrey Jensen from Holy Savior days in Detroit, whose son had taken his life a few months before while clinically depressed. All this serves to remind me that our work in life is never done. If I can't serve on the mental health board, I can still write letters to my senators and representatives and give money to causes that need understanding and help.

I also became a choir director again! I had filled out a membership information form for our church telling of my past experiences, offering my services as substitute organist and choir director, if needed. Offers like that don't come along very often, apparently, so the organist/director almost immediately asked me to substitute once during Lent for choir practice and the Sunday service. I found a choir full of enthusiasm but lacking in technique. That wasn't surprising because the choir director had never had experience in directing. It is also difficult to direct and play at the same time in a church which does not have the correct physical placement of the choir loft in relation to the organ. So I had the choir sing a simple hymn in four parts and do it *a capella*. You would think I had asked them to fly to Mars. They insisted they could never do it without the organ to sustain them. But when I insisted, they tried...and to their surprise, they did it well. They also began and ended each phrase as a unit, not as separate voices, because I insisted on firm attacks and releases. Amazing! The congregation was so delighted at the choir's new sound while singing the old hymn that they clapped. So, at the urging of everyone and much hesitation on my part, I agreed to do it for a time. I did this for over two years, but resigned in early 1989 because both Tom and I want the freedom to come and go as we please, and especially because I did not want to be tied down to twice-weekly responsibilities for nine months every year.

Still, this past year (1990 by this time) I agreed to be elected to the Church Council, never dreaming that I would also be elected to be the first woman president at the first meeting I attended. It has been an extremely busy year because the minister that had been here for 24 years had just retired. So this year I have had the ultimate responsibility of seeing that we seek out and hire a new one (we did, and he's great); secure the services of an interim pastor (we had two, both excellent); and plan the 25th anniversary celebration of the church. Tom has been a wonderful help. He is a member of the marketing Committee which is new...and every other committee that I need expert advice on. He also is consultant to the GOOD NEWS PRESS, our church newsletter which I write and edit.

But more important things have happened...so now for some back-tracking.





## Whatever Happened To \_\_\_?

**Gail was the first to move to California.** Soon after her divorce from Kimble, she resigned from working at Plymouth Center to take on the directorship of the ARC/Dearborn. Tom and I had many misgivings about that. Through our involvement with the parent movement over many years, we were aware how erratic and demanding many parents can be. Dearborn, especially, was an extremely conservative association as far as their adult sons and daughters were concerned, very protective of them. Gail, as most young workers in the field, was an active advocate and an ardent follower of the Wolf Wolfensburger principle of normalization. As such, she was bound to run counter to the conservative ideas of most of the Dearborn board members. However, there were some who wanted to see some new directions taken, and the board members who were appointed as the committee to hire a new director were part of that group. They found in Gail the one they wanted. She could have been effective, I think, if the previous director had not stayed so publicly on the scene. But although he had been pressured to resign by one group, he was urged to remain actively involved by another. It sounds in some ways like my own story with the Detroit ARC repeated. It was a no-win situation from the beginning.

But that is Gail's story. Maybe some day she will write all about it. After about a year and much, much wrangling she resigned from Dearborn ARC. We worried about her a great deal because she became very depressed. She decided to make a complete career change from the mental health field to a more creative one in advertising. And she decided to move clear to the west coast to do it. It took time, work, and determination, but she finally began at McCann Erickson Advertising in San Francisco. As often happens, careers begin in an oblique manner. She started in her new field not in the creative line, but by putting in their computer program, something new to them. Still, they eventually put her on as copy writer. When she left McCann, it was to become a writer/producer for KRON-TV, Channel 4 Television, in SF. She also had experience writing and doing the musical directing of a very clever revue for a charitable organization which raises money for Child Abuse Prevention.

**Jim was the second Tucker offspring to migrate to California.** He and Sheri had left Michigan several years before we did to start new careers in Denver. Jim became the Advertising/Marketing Manager for a subsidiary of Sunbeam which manufactured commercial ice-makers. He also had started a computer software company in partnership with another young man, and had finally quit his job to do this full time. But just at this time (and also about the time we had sold our house in Rochester) Sheri and Jim's marriage came to an end. Jim decided to

leave Colorado and come to California where he felt he could continue with the computer company just as well. Financial considerations, however, demanded that he get a job at once. He found a good one with with PacTel (Pacific Telesis) which gave him an excellent start and good background for his next job. (PacTel closed down its directory business after a year's trial.) Presently Jim is Circulation Director for an excellent new health magazine called Hippocrates, (now called IN HEALTH)working out of Sausalito.

**Brian was "burned out" from working with criminally insane people.** He found the work so demanding and debilitating, and not in the least uplifting. Many of the people who are serving long sentences behind bars in a forensic setting are almost certainly going to be aggressively abusive as well as devilishly clever. So Brian, too, decided he wanted to make a complete change in fields. He enrolled in a computer school in Denver and moved there about a year or so before Jim moved away. He graduated, found work, and was in Denver for several more years before he listened to the now familiar call to the Tuckers to "Go West." He applied to several places while on one of his visits to California and was called to work for Morrison-Knudsen company in San Francisco in mid 1985.

**All three were to meet their romantic destinies in this area, too.** Jim was the first to succumb. He met Sumi Lewis, a transplanted Michigander who was a colleague of Gail's at McCann-Erickson. Sumi is a lovely Japanese-American girl, the daughter of a mother born and raised in Hawaii and a father from southern Illinois who is a professor of business history at the University of Michigan. After a courtship of over a year-and-a-half, Jim and Sumi married on May 17, 1986 (Norwegian Independence Day) in a beautiful ceremony in an Episcopal church-on-a-hill in Sausalito. After a honeymoon in Tahiti, they settled down in San Francisco.

Presently Sumi is working for a bank as art director, a job which makes use of her fine artistic and designing skills. She designs brochures, credit cards, the kinds of things needed for its marketing program. Sumi also uses her talent for design to work in needlepoint, cross-stitch and sewing which have become her hobbies. Sumi and Jim complement each other. He is neat and orderly and she is "getting better at it," she says. They are both good athletes, but Sumi's interest is mostly in dance, modern and tap, while he has always played team sports, mostly basketball and more lately, tennis. Jim is quite serious while Sumi is more light-hearted. He needs that right now. Jim had some very serious back trouble most of '89 which finally ended in a disc operation just before Christmas. In the midst of it, they had moved to Mill Valley into their first home. They were in the midst of painting the paneling, whacking enormous weeds in the back yard, and planning more intensive remodeling. Sumi had to do a lot of hard work to finish what they had both begun, while Jim could barely walk and sit or do anything.<sup>28</sup>

While Gail didn't marry a Michigander, she came close when she married Tim Whipple who was born and raised in Ohio, right next door. Tim attended the University of Miami in Florida, taking a job with BROADCAST MUSIC, INC. right after graduation. He was transferred to San Francisco when he was put in charge of BMI's western division...and it was there he and Gail met. I feel that Gail was lucky to find Tim who has so many of the elusive qualities she finds intriguing and important for her. After all, it isn't easy to find a tall, intellectual vegetarian with a sense of humor who also has common philosophical/ spiritual interests and a musical background! (Tim is a drummer who about once a year makes time to play a few gigs around the country with a "Patsy Klein" Country Western trio...I have never heard him, but Sumi has and says he's a great drummer!)

Gail and Tim were married July 11, 1986, less than two months after Jim and Sumi's wedding, in a small but lovely ceremony at St. Gregory's Episcopal Church in SF which they had joined. They took a trip to the midwest and Canada where they introduced each other to relatives and friends in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and Michigan, and took in the Shakespearean Festival at Stratford, Ontario. Tom and I held a reception for them about a month later in a beautiful old San Francisco mansion. They lived in SF for about two years when Tim's company transferred him to Manhattan to take on other responsibilities.

Brian didn't lose his heart in San Francisco, but instead gave it away freely in Monterey immediately after he met Cyd Halbersleben on a blind date arranged by Jim and Cyd's sister, Tracy. (Tracy and her husband, Tom, have a computer company which was doing consulting work for Jim while he was at PacTel.) During their first year of dating Brian kept a long-distance courtship alive by coming down every week-end to visit Cyd who is a math teacher at Seaside High, about thirty-five miles south of us in Aptos — about a hundred miles south of San Francisco. We saw Brian quite often that year...he would stop in late on Sundays, on his way back up to the city, to get a little rest in our guest room before rising at 4 a.m. to get to the office on time. Pretty exhausting! But love found a way...and Brian found a job in Salinas after a year. They were married on August 8, 1987, in a lovely ceremony at Cyd's cousin's beautiful adobe hacienda in Monterey. True Californians (via Michigan and Utah) they honeymooned in Aptos and Tahoe.

Brian and Cyd bought their first home last year in a wooded area on a hill overlooking the Bay in historic Monterey. Cyd is an avid athlete who teaches math and coaches tennis at Seaside High. Brian worked for Tom and Tracy for while, but since they moved to the Bay Area, he is doing consulting work "over the hill" in San Jose. Brian has learned a whole new life style from Cyd, whose idea of fun is to do the triathlon and whose only indulgence as far as her diet is concerned is ice cream! He has even started to ski, after becoming a jogger, and a tennis buff. I felt I was walking in a dream when they were showing us around their tennis club

in Carmel Valley. Brian was impeccably dressed in white tennis shorts and shirt. I thought I had come to Yuppie Heaven. But Brian has a certain influence on Cyd's life, too, introducing her to a wider world of reading than I think she enjoyed before. And he has made her a candidate's wife. He is running for Congress on the Libertarian ticket this year. No one is expecting a Libertarian to win. But I wish I could envision those of you who might be reading this a hundred years from now. I wonder what politics will be like then. Will there still be Libertarians? Or, for that matter, Democrats or Republicans?

**Philip, too, has changed his life style.** For two years now, he has worked for the Michigan Packing Company in the Eastern Market on Detroit's near East side making packing crates for tomatoes. We are very proud of him. He was featured in a two-page article in the Goodwill Industries Annual Report for 1989 showing how well people like him can be accepted by employers and fellow-workers. Jobs for people like Phil are becoming more available, but it has taken all these years to make business people aware of how capable mentally retarded persons can be, particularly when job adaptation is well planned. They prove more dependable than most teenagers who take menial jobs for the money they can make immediately and whose interest is short-term. A person like Phil is so delighted with a steady job and pay check that he will be a good employee for years.

We want to be able to visit Philip more than we have since moving here. We want to talk to the people at Goodwill about the stability of the work he is doing...and to the people at the packing company about vacation time he may take...and to the ARC in Oakland County about the advocacy program which is helping him *in absentia parentis*....and to HEP about things in general. We feel we have done the right thing by not interrupting his life in Detroit. He has friends, staff, and HEP board people who have known us all for many years. We feel that while it would be wonderful for him to be surrounded by his family, in this day of moving around when the right opportunities beckon, he could easily be left in a situation in a new city and state where no one knew him well, no one really cared, and where his brothers and sister no longer were around to help pick up the slack. The most Tom and I can do is to have a fund through our will that will enable him to have some of the things he can't afford on his meager salary...and trust that his siblings will continue to share some of their time with him on vacations and continue advocacy where he needs it.

Which brings me to the latest changes in our family...



## We come to California

Gail was first, moving to San Francisco several years before Jim came from Denver to Seacliff in September 1984.

Jim was there only a month before Tom and Marian retired to Seacliff.

Still, there was Phil back in Detroit where Marian visited and took him and James and Nicole Dezomits to lunch at Sweden House.

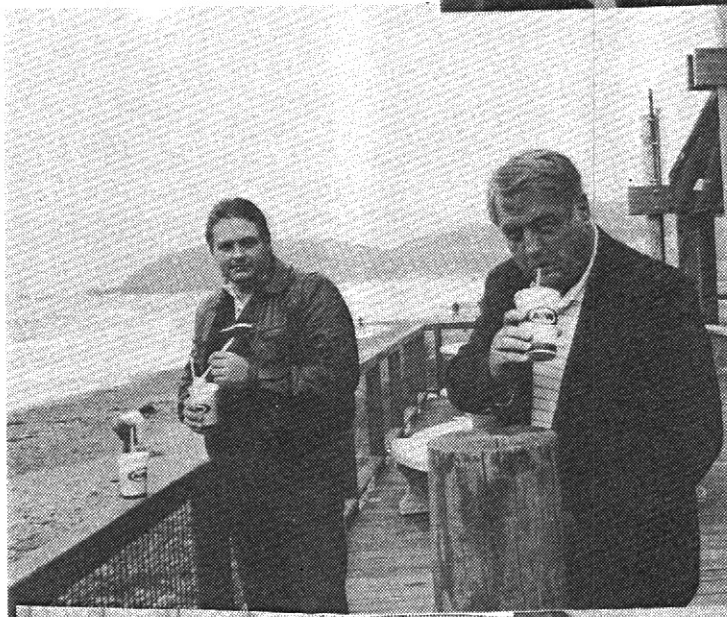


Top: ° Brian visited from Denver, Jim had found Sumi and a job with PacTel, and Gail had found Tim who had come from Florida via Ohio to SF.

Middle: ° Brian & Tom eating lunch in Pacifica before B returned to Denver, vowing to return for good soon!

Back: ° Steven, Paul (from NY) holding Melanie, Jim & Ardis (from Chicago) Front: Eric, Kay, Alex, Gail

Bottom: ° True to his vow, Brian had returned, found a job in SF and Cyd in Monterey.....°Phil came on vacation and, among other things, rode the ferry to Sausalito with Tim and Marian





**SUMI AND JIM GET MARRIED IN SAUSALITO  
MAY 17, 1986**

Clockwise from bottom:

- Jim and Sumi leave the church for the reception
- Jim, Brian, Sumi, Gail, Phil & Tim the evening before
- The wedding party: Gail, Lani Lewis, Pam Nissley, Sumi, Jim, Brian, Tim
- The parents: Dr. David Lewis, Yuri, Marian, Tom
- Guests at the wedding: Cyd, Steve & his wife Margaret, Helen and Gordon



**GAIL AND TIM GET MARRIED JULY 11, 1986**

- Rick, Sumi, Jim, Pam Nissley, Tom, Marian, Gail, Tim, Brian, Cyd, Heidi and Benny (Tim's oldest friend)...
- At their reception: Cyd, ?, Gail, Brian
- The happy groom and bride.



**CYD AND BRIAN ARE  
MARRIED AUGUST 8, 1987  
AT HER COUSIN'S MONTEREY HOME**

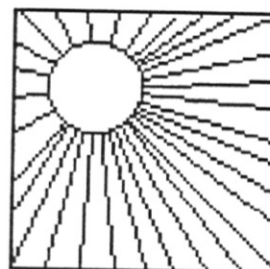
Clounter cockwise from top:

◦ Brian and Cyd dance at their  
reception

◦ Right after the ceremoy

◦ Our family - Phil, Tim, Gail,  
Brian, Cyd, Jim, Sumi, Marian, Tom

◦ Cyd & Brian chaperone a  
school dance





A post-script...  
Some special times before the pictures end



- Marty Kope hands me a special HEP award (Tom, too)
- Phil working at his first real job
- Audrey, Tom, me, Tom Kuhn, Gail, Mary Nic at the Banquet
- Ardis, Sally Parsons (Ardis's granddaughter) Aunt Gerdie (95 years old) Helen & me in L.A.
- Helen, Audrey, me on Audrey's visit after Rhonda's wedding.

## he Next Generation

Lucas Allen Whipple was born August 5, 1988, in San Francisco. He was only *one day old* — all eight pounds, six ounces of him — when we first saw him and held him. We were delighted. After all, we had waited far longer for this than most people do. I was almost sixty-eight and Tom almost seventy years old before our first grandchild came into our lives.

"The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away" was never brought home to us more clearly than it was at that time. Tim had received an offer several months before that he couldn't refuse. BMI, the company he was working for in San Francisco, wanted him to move to New York to become the National Director of Licensing and Sales. By the time Lucas was just over two months old, he moved to Ridgewood, N.J. with his mom and Dad. I flew there to help them get settled in their new home — a beautiful area. Jack Frost had nipped the leaves so the natural beauty of New Jersey was gloriously apparent all around. If only New Jersey were closer than across a continent! But Tim, who does a lot of traveling in his new job, promised Gail and Lucas his Mileage Plus bonuses, so they can get here to visit more often than we could visit my folks when our positions were reversed. This lovely area with the ocean as our front yard is an enticing lure, thank goodness.

Tim has kept his word, and they have been back about five times in two years, and Tom and I went there the Fall of '89 and again for the Christmas Holidays in 1990. Phil joined us there, his first trip that direction, although I couldn't count the times he has been out West or down South in his lifetime.

Each time we see Lucas, the changes so evident in every child's miraculous first years are clearly present with him. He had been walking for six weeks when he came in late July 1989, just before his first birthday. He knew how to crawl up the stairs, and learned quickly how to go down backwards. He loved music. Just the sound of it made him move his hips and feet to the beat. He was also talking up a storm. The problem was he seemed to be speaking a different language from ours. Very emphatic and earnest...but quite different!

Just before his second birthday Lucas returned with Gail and Tim to Seacliff again, investigating the sand and the ocean, talking clearly then, interested in books and videos, realistic about accepting naps and bedtime. He had become a real personality. You could almost see the knowledge seeping into him. A half-year later, at Christmas, he was already singing dozens of songs...loudly asking the organist during Christmas eve service if he could play "Rudolph, the Red Nosed Reindeer." The other good family news was that before Lucas will be three, he will have a new cousin — Brian and Cyd's first baby will be born in June '91.

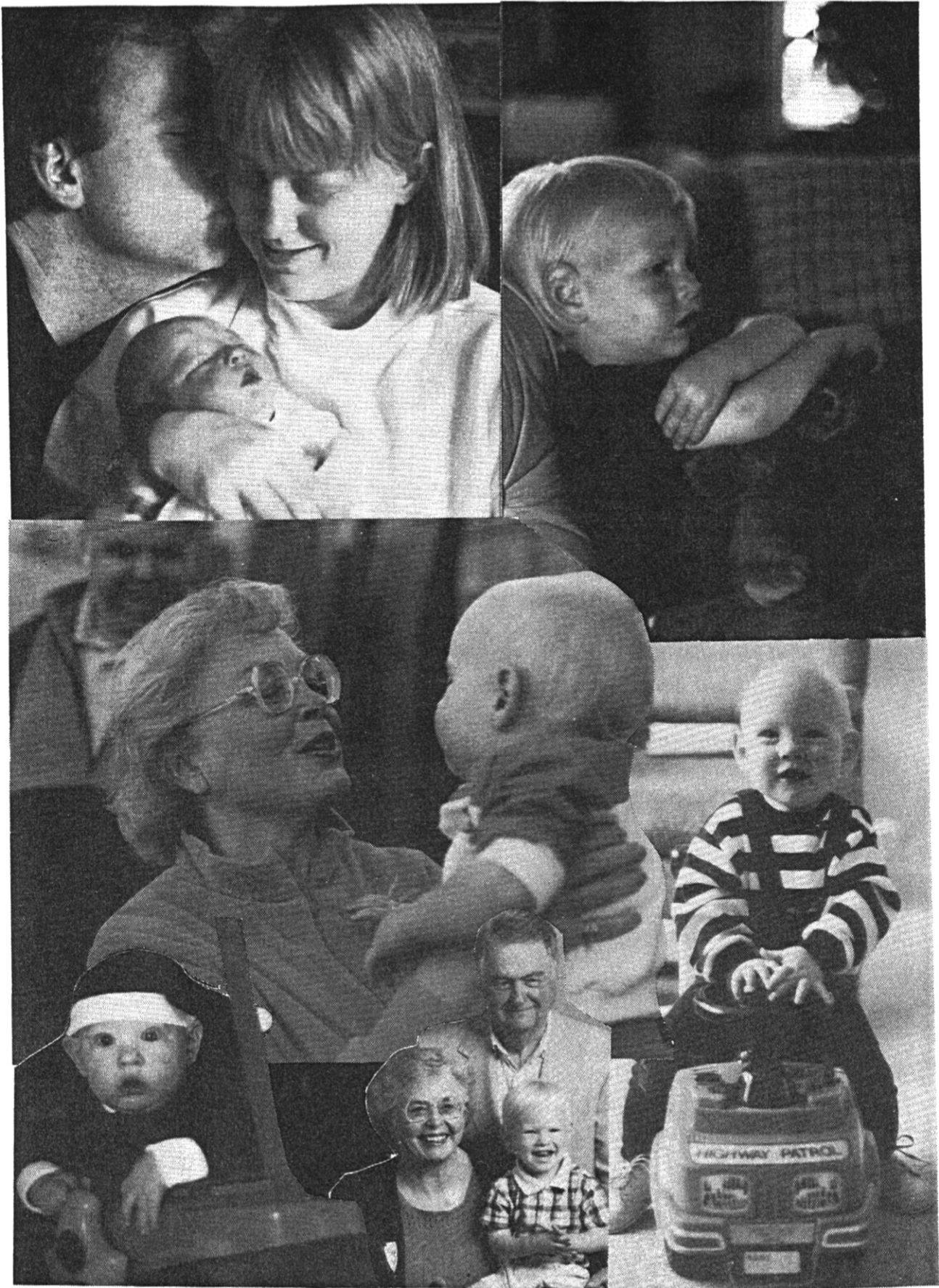
What does the future hold for these children, I wonder? Two years ago, no one could have dreamed of the changes this world would be going through. The "Cold War" with Russia is over, and that most formidable nation — our country's biggest "bogeyman" — is having trouble keeping food on its shelves. It is asking us for help in turning that country into a democracy! Various countries it had invaded and ruled after World War II are demanding and receiving independence. East and West Germany are no longer divided, but One. Some of the world's nastiest Communist dictators have been overthrown —some executed, some jailed, some awaiting trial.

Apartheid is dying in South Africa, although many of the die-hard white segregationists are giving it a real fight before they allow that to happen. Japan, like Germany, forbidden from supporting the military, are strong, viable countries. We, bowing to the Military-Industrial complex, have emphasized power and military domination in the world and let our infrastructure and social programs falter.

There is still a great deal of unrest in Central America. The problems created after World War II when Israel became a nation for Jewish Refugees the world over has come to a boiling point after simmering for so many years. The oil shortage that caused problems for us when we moved from Detroit to Chicago in 1977 became quickly forgotten in subsequent years. Our short-sightedness in ignoring the search for alternative fuels and our dependence upon the Mid-East nations for oil came to a head dramatically. Our country, under the aegis of The United Nations, finished a short but awful war liberating Kuwait from Iraq's invasion of August 2, 1990. Our "smart" weapons proved much stronger than their highly touted army. Almost everyone in this country seemed supportive of the decision to go to war. Only a few of us, according to the polls, were for continuing sanctions and have become scorned by many of the majority as "leftist peaceniks." We can't understand why there isn't more fuss over our government supplying a country like Iraq with many of the weapons of war these past years. Of course the weapons we sold to such a monstrous dictator were meant for some other monstrous dictator. When will we ever learn that we can get caught in the backlash of our rash behavior? Or that innocent people, no matter from which country, die by the thousands in wars that solve so little?

Dear Lucas and dear baby-to-come, I hope that these days of uncertainty turn around soon, and that you will be able to enjoy a wonderful childhood and youth in a world that is more loving and tolerant of different cultures and ideas. But unless this world has become heaven upon earth, there will be many causes that need your support. From the state of the world today, you will have many to choose from...world peace, the environment, drugs, racism, greed. Do accept responsibility for helping solve some of them. The pathway won't be easy, but it's worth the effort.

My most fervent prayer is that all our grandchildren be caring, feeling, spiritual human beings willing to help make the world a better place in some way than it was when you came into it. Here's to you all. *Hans ska live!*



From top left, counter clockwise: Lucas Allen Whipple the very hour he was born; Watching the story of Corduroy Bear on TV while holding his own Corduroy Bear; and in various poses around the house, in his Santa Claus costume with Grandma Marian and Grandpa Tom.

*Nicholas Brian Tucker  
born in Monterey, CA  
June 12, 1991*

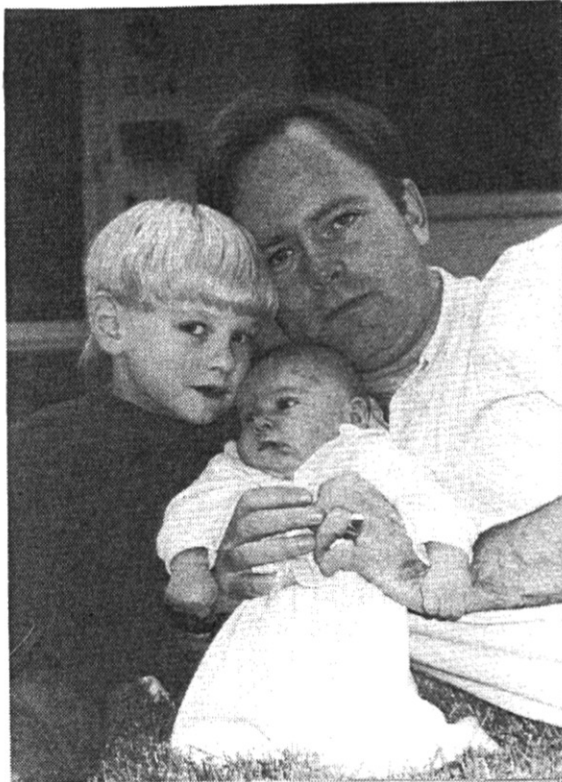


° Brian and Cyd take  
Nicholas home from  
the hospital

Nicholas with his  
mama...And what  
a smile!



1991  
Various visits  
with Lucas,  
Nicholas, Cyd,  
Gail, Tim,  
Jim, Sumi,  
Tom, Chawny  
(Jim's &  
Sumi's dog),  
and me.



1992 — Andra Sophia-Beth Whipple was born August 21st. Here she is with Lucas and Tim on their front lawn. .and then by herself....After we left them in NJ we picked up Phil in Detroit and took him on a week-end trip to Alma, MI to visit old friends and neighbors, JoAnn and Tom Neff who had a golf course for their back yard...and when we came home, we found Nicholas had been a skeleton on his first trick-or-treat Halloween.



# Epilogue

December 1992

I began this story in 1987, finished it early in 1991, and was editing it to get it ready for printing. Meantime, our second grandchild was born and I thought I would put a little about him into this autobiography. It was on June 12, 1991 that Brian's and Cyd's son, Nicholas, was born...6 lbs. 12 oz...a beautiful baby with blond hair and blue eyes, a slightly turned up nose and a wide smile. It was a lovely time in all our lives. We celebrated his birth in the most relaxed situation — Cyd holding court in a beautiful hospital/living room setting...friends from her school visiting, along with her sister, brother-in-law, Brian, Tom and me. That evening Tom and I took Brian out for dinner to celebrate, at one of his favorite spots in Carmel. An auspicious occasion.

Barely a month later, on July 26th, Brian's life ended. Brian and Cyd had spent the morning driving around beautiful Monterey Bay...Cyd driving while Brian sat in the back with Nicholas, pointing out the beautiful nature of that particularly lovely area by the ocean...the water, the beach, the Monterey Cypress trees...telling "Burrito" (nicknamed that because that's what he looked like when all wrapped up) what he was looking forward to teaching him as time went on.

Later that afternoon they went to the tennis club where Brian played several sets...and when his partner began the third set, he just slumped down on his kness...and never came to consciousness again. All that could be done was done, but to no avail. Brian had left this life and his beloved little family to go to his eternal rest..

I can still hear Cyd's grief-stricken voice telling us the news. She had called us immediately, but since we weren't home (we had spent the afternoon shopping and then went to dinner and a show) she left two messages on our answering machine. The first was to say he had a heart attack and had been taken to the hospital. The second one, a few hours later, told us he was dead. Her sister Tracy and her husband were already with her, and her parents were on the way from Utah.

We called Gail in New Jersey and she arranged to get Phil in D etroit and come by plane on Sunday. Jim and Sumi came down that night from San Francisco to be able to go with us the next morning, Saturday, to Monterey to see Cyd. Her parents were there already and we decided, all of us, on a memorial at Asilomar Beach on Monday, early evening before sunset, a place Cyd and Brian loved for its beauty, so close to their home they often ran beside it.

Tom, Jim and I went to the morgue where Brian's body lay. We each said

goodbye privately in our own way. Brian looked asleep, to me, with a little smile on his face. Somehow it made me feel better to be able to tousel his hair and talk to him even though he couldn't answer, and even though the tears were streaming down my face. I meant it with all my heart when I said to him, "If I could, Brian, I would take your place."

Gail and Phil arrived the next day. Gail wanted to say goodbye to Brian, too, so she and I drove together to Monterey. She felt the same as I had...unutterably sad, but better, somehow, to be able to say a final goodbye in her own way to the brother she had known and loved so well through good times and bad.

His memorial service was beautiful and reassuring, a celebration of his life as well as a tribute to him. Gail and Sumi produced a beautiful order of service after consultation with Cyd. While Jim and Gail sang *Amazing Grace* we were amazed to see a lone seagull separate from a large flock to hover over the group gathered on the beach, as if to dip his wings in farewell. It was an awesome spectacle to those who were aware of it. We knew this had been the most happy period in Brian's life and this was confirmed by the many tributes spoken during the service by so many of the friends he had made...friends who came from Colorado and Wisconsin...friends who shared his passion for *The Grateful Dead* (a musical group of which Brian was a devoted fan for years)...friends and relatives from childhood...friends who had been thankful for kindnesses he had shown to them in their times of loss...and of course his family and Cyd's who were there in abundance.

Our minister was a wonderful help both in the message he brought to us during the service and in the way he took care of Brian's ashes afterward...casting a few into the sea symbolically, and then later on taking him out to sea on his surf board to scatter his ashes in beautiful Monterey Bay. One thing I never mentioned about Brian was the passion he had as a teenager for surfing. He devoured magazines and books about it, but living in Michigan during those years, he could hardly take up the ocean sport...and then he came to live in California, his time was taken up with tennis and running. I think he would have loved the idea of finally riding the surf with Kevin.

Cyd is still teaching math at Seaside High. Nicholas is growing into a beautiful, happy child. He runs, never walks that I can see, whirls in a frenzied dance when a musical video is on, and is a wonderful comfort and joy to his mother. I have such admiration for Cyd who is managing so well — although I suspect she has her very bad days and nights as I still do (and everyone thinks I am doing so well, too).

Gail and Brian were both traumatized at losing a brother so early in his life. They worried, too, that they might have some hidden heart or health problems and went in for tests which seem to show everything is all right. But we all still miss him and probably always will — just as I still miss Norman and Phil and Mom and Dad.

Before the tremendous weight of that loss lifted, another tragedy as completely unexpected happened ten months later. Helen was killed in a one-car accident May 25th...all alone on a country road on a holiday afternoon, coming home from we don't know where to have dinner with Gordon who had been golfing at the club. More unanswered question. How could it happen on such a road? To such a good driver? What a loss to everyone in her immediate family, Gordon who was going to retire in a few weeks...and she had just become a great-grandmother for the first time (Kay Elizabeth, Jane's daughter had a little son just a few weeks before)...and to us and her community. Helen was a tower of strength to everyone, so thoughtful in the little things she did as well as the big ones. Such a great talent, such a big heart.

Gail was unable to come to the funeral, being in the sixth month of a difficult pregnancy. Jim and Sumi came down, of course, and Jim sang at her memorial service. I had written a reminiscent memorial letter for the service, Gail did her part long distance, thanks to the fairly new fax machine, by spreading some magic dust over what I had written, and Sumi put it all together in a fitting, beautiful way that Helen would have appreciated, and her friends had a wonderful reception in the church parlor where we could meet and talk about the tragedy and sadness of it all.

So many plans unfulfilled. Helen was working so hard on plans to help revitalize downtown Salinas with a fitting memorial to John Steinbeck who was a Salinas boy. I hope they get finished without her, but she was such a mover and shaker in that community, who knows?

The plans she would miss most, of course, were those she had made with Gordon to just share a lot of time around the house, and do a lot of traveling, too. And she would miss some time with me, too. We were talking about going to Norway (one of my dreams) within this or the next year.

As for me, I lost the one of the dearest persons I ever knew...my only sister...and also my only connection to my childhood now so long, long past.

But in spite of two tragedies, there has been great joy, too. Gail and Tim's daughter, Andra Sophia-Beth Whipple, was born August 21st in Glen Rock, New Jersey, and Grandma and Grandpa were there to help out beforehand, and also to welcome her home and help out for a few weeks afterward.

So you see— life continues on, even though those who mean so much have left it. What the future holds I don't know. I do know that life is precious, but there is nothing we can do to keep it forever. We should make each moment as good a moment as it can be. We know that...but we don't always do it. My parting thought to you all is to keep up your family ties...live your lives so you have precious memories if you are left behind...and leave precious memories for others if you go before. And plan on meeting in the Great Beyond. I'll have the coffee on!

THE LIFE OF BRIAN HARRISON TUCKER  
DEC. 26, 1947 — JULY 26, 1991

## A GLIMPSE OF HEAVEN

The Life of Brian Harrison Tucker  
1947-1991

Our time on earth is always measured. This knowledge follows us more closely the older we get. And at some point, we face this truth. You can either live dying or die living.

Brian died living. Living a full, complete life with his dearest Cyd and lately with their Nicholas. Living his dream of a life filled with glimpses of heaven: days filled with nature, good humor, freedom and love.

The Talmud says, to have a good life one must "have a child, write a book, and plant a tree." Brian lived to see the birth of his son, who now is among us as part of our hope for the future. Brian wrote volumes of poetry, like the beautiful poem to Cyd (below). And Brian sowed among us all the seeds of his love, imagination, wisdom and wit — seeds which leave him firmly planted in our hearts.

Godspeed, Brian. We remember you well — with thanks for the glimpses of heaven we shared with you as we walked the earth together.

*From Brian's memorial service are the tribute from Gail, above; the poem Jim read that Brian wrote to Cyd; the song sung by all, Forever Young is Bob Dylan's, one Brian especially liked.*

## FOREVER YOUNG

May God bless and keep you always  
May your wishes all come true  
May you always do for others  
And let others do for you  
May you build a ladder to the stars  
And climb on every rung -  
May you stay forever young.

Forever young, forever young  
May you stay forever young.

May you grow up to be righteous  
May you grow up to be true  
May you always know the truth  
And see the light surrounding you  
May you always be courageous  
Stand upright and be strong -  
May you stay forever young.

Forever young, forever young  
May you stay forever young.

May your hands always be busy  
May your feet always be swift  
May you have a strong foundation  
When the winds of changes shift  
May your heart always be joyful  
May your song always be sung -  
May you stay forever young.

Forever young, forever young  
May you stay forever young.

### SCENE 1

The beauty of the day  
Drinking wine on the rocks  
Listening to each other's views  
And the bark of the seals

The beauty of the day  
Wandering through tide pools  
Watching her loveliness  
And the grace with which she moves

### SCENE 2

The beauty of the evening  
Driving down the coast  
Her touch warm on my arm  
And down into my soul

The beauty of the evening  
Laying on the floor  
Hearing the same music  
And knowing the same words

## CATCH A MOMENT

*Brian Tucker*

CATCH A MOMENT  
PUT IT IN MEMORY  
TRY AND HOLD IT  
HOPING I CAN SEE  
GOLDEN MOMENTS WHEN I WILL

### SCENE 3

The beauty of the nighttime  
Standing in her room  
A symphony of shadow  
And a glimpse of heaven

The beauty of the nighttime  
Laying in her arms  
Inspired by her touch  
And touched by her inspiration

### SCENE 4

The beauty of the morning  
Reflecting on her charms  
Hearing her five o'clock sigh  
And seeing her smile

The beauty of the morning  
Walking arm in arm  
Touched by her tenderness  
And called uphill by bagels

## Helen Thora Ness Kingsley

December 16, 1923 - May 25, 1992



The end of a life is the back cover to a book that began being written at birth. Not until the book is done do we reflect fully on how it moved us and changed our world. Helen's story is a full one, with many twists and turns of plot that surprise people who are familiar only with one chapter of her life.

Helen Thora Ness was destined to live a life that made a difference right from the start. She was so good at sports the boys in her Chicago grammar school named her captain of their after-school football team. She didn't want to play the piano - probably because her big sister did - so she took up clarinet and became a true virtuoso. She excelled so in school that she went through college on scholarships - finishing her formal education with a Master's degree in biochemistry from the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

It was in Madison that she met Gordon Kingsley, fell in love and married. They soon moved to Salinas where Gordon began his medical practice and Helen chose the job and the joy of raising their four talented, fine children - Jane, Kay, Steven, and Paul. Still, even in the busy life of a homemaker Helen had talent, energy, and ideas to spare.

Salinas people know her as an extraordinary civic leader. Helen was actively involved in many important projects - the Salinas City School Board, the development of Sherwood Hall Community Center and the selection of the Monterey wealth of art that's exhibited there. She was a Board member of the Monterey Peninsula Museum of Art, Board member of the Steinbeck Foundation and member of the Corral de Tierra Country club.

It seemed the more Helen did, the more she had to give. She gave away much of the fine art she created in her never-ending study of art. She gave away books so others could share in some new author or idea she discovered. She gave generously to causes dear to her community and foundations far away that served people with disabilities who had touched her heart. She gave her time and tender loving care to her mother and mother-in-law in their declining years. The lives of her husband, children, parents, sister, brother, in-laws, grandchildren, nieces, nephews and friends have been forever enriched by the love and support they received from her, too.

Dear Helen...we will miss you at the dinner table, the ball games, the board meetings, at home, at Seacliff, on vacation, the bridge table, the tennis court, the walks, the talks, the sharing of ideas. We thank God that our life stories were touched by yours. You gave us strength, love, and respect. Energy, laughter, perspective. You gave us you.



mega

*'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending.'*

It was a beautiful morning that day on the beach—the kind of day the Psalmists would sing about. "This is the day the Lord hath made." The breeze was a winter one, but the sun was pure summer. The sand looked golden in places where the sun shone on it, and the ocean was many shades of blue. There was a haze over Monterey, so if you didn't know better, you might think the nearest land was thousands of miles across the ocean. Moss Landing was visible only because of the smoke spiraling up above invisible stacks. But walking northwest, I could see Capitola in softened detail...a Monet painting come to life. The cliffs were covered with dark green iceplant clinging to the sandy slopes, and resting on top were the tan-stuccoed apartments topped with terra cotta roofs. Here and there white houses dotted the way to town where shops and restaurants cluster around the beach area, livened up with an occasional pink or blue splash of color to make the seaside community look like what I picture a Mediterranean fishing village to be.

The ocean was so calm that it seemed more like a large lake. I saw what seemed to be a large square raft made of puffy styrofoam floating in the distance, but when my walk took me closer, I saw it was a large flock of seagulls floating lazily by in geometric pattern towards the cement boat.

There was no way I could experience such a glorious morning but to know in my bones that it came to us courtesy of a Heavenly Maker — the origin we confess when we say the Apostles' Creed every Sunday in church. A day like that makes it come alive.

I need days like that. The seventy years I have lived should help me interpret life's meaning, but the older I get, the more I search for *the* answer, and the more vulnerable I realize I am. Answers to my unuttered questions never come in a form I recognize. But this day — this beautiful day showing this complex, wonderful universe....made it clear that all had to come from a source...a source we call God.

It's a mystery to me why some prayers are answered while others are not—or at least not recognizably so by me. If my most fervent prayer had been answered, Philip would have been made whole in mind a long time ago. Maybe God's answer was to use us to make the world a little bit better for others like Phil... and we have been catalysts for good change there. But I really don't know.

Others...like Tom's recovery from a stroke or successful by-pass surgery have been answered just fine. And Gail and Jim recovered from their divorces and married

married very happily. Brian found someone for whom he had been looking for for a long, long time...and Phil is in a home that he loves and enjoys (no matter how many things we would improve if we had our way).

When I can't come forward and say "This I know to be a fact" I feel as though I am denying Christ. But when I consider dying, as we must because it is inevitable, I don't have any real qualms. I really believe, as St. Paul said... "For now we see through a glass darkly, but then, face to face." Some day we will understand all mysteries. But that won't come until the day we die.

Will it be as some prophets have foretold? Will the streets be paved with gold? Will we pick manna from the ground and drink of honey and nectar? (I hope not. I have never liked honey...and what if manna was made of cantaloupe? As Mrs. Malaprop might say, "Cantaloupe isn't my cup of tea.")

My idea of heaven is living in a neighborhood where my family and dearest friends live nearby, and all I need to do is invite them over...or drop in on them... for a cup of coffee and a chat...and, like Grandma Ness wanting to greet Grandma Grendahl, say hello with uncontained happiness and enthusiasm... hardly able to wait until I hear all the news from them since last we met. But if that doesn't happen, it will be because something more wonderful and ethereal will take its place...something I can't even begin to imagine.

So, finally...in answer to a question Tom asked me when we were first married and that I have taken forty-seven years to ponder...my belief is simple.

There is a God. He loves everyone, including me. Jesus is His Son who showed us by His example how we are to live our lives. We are *all* God's children. He expects us to serve Him in this lifetime through honest, caring and compassionate interactions with our fellow human beings. What the life to come holds in store for us, I really don't know. I can only speculate and hope. But I know that someone who created the incredible beauties and complexities of this life will surely do even more for us all in the time to come.


I hope that my children will think seriously about their beliefs and find a place of worship where they are comfortable...and raise their children in the understanding and knowledge of the Word of God as they were raised. I think of what Sumi told me her landlady said about Jim when she first met him. "He has a clean heart." You all do. Just remember "from whence it comes."

My final hope is that peace will soon find its way into the hearts of all men. Then we can beat swords into plowshares, eliminate hunger and war, and live with each other in love and harmony. Won't *that* be *heaven*?



## Snapshots in Time

Remembering is hard to do. Over a period of seventy years, you would think I have thousands of memories to draw upon. When I look back on a certain time period, usually one or two memories always rush up. The others stay illusively hidden for all time. Why I recall certain things is obvious... they're unusual...but why I remember others is a mystery to me.

 *One of our most memorable evening started out as just a "must attend" cocktail party* for Roman Gribbs who was running for mayor of Detroit. Tom and I had put up \$50 apiece and thought that entitled us to at least a few hors d'oeuvres before having dinner. But the large reception room at the Statler Hotel was overflowing with people, and every time we got up to one of the four or five tables, it had been swept clean of food. Finally, we had had it, and, getting hungrier by the minute, we left to find some place to get a bite to eat. The Statler had a nice restaurant just down the hall and down a few steps, so we headed there, hoping to get in without a reservation. Lo and behold, it was empty. Not a soul anywhere. Everyone was at the cocktail party, I guess. So we sat down, ordered dinner, and had just finished when another couple entered—the architect, Veryl Uger, who had designed the football stadium for downtown Detroit (which, courtesy of William Clay Ford went to Pontiac, instead.) Tom had often represented his boss, Tom Adams, on that committee, too, so we transferred over to his table to chat and have our after dinner coffee. One other couple showed up just about then, and the waiter set them right next to us — even though we three couples were the only ones in that large room. I saw Veryl look up and say, "Hi, Champ." We turned and saw this very handsome black man with a beautiful black woman. It was Mohammad Ali, the heavyweight boxing champ of the world, and his wife. We all smiled, and Tom and Veryl went on with their discussion.


Finally, Ali moved closer with his chair and asked if we minded if he sat in and chatted...he was interested in the problems encountered in the effort to build the stadium. It had been front-page political and sports news for several months. Of course, we didn't mind, we were delighted. In the course of the conversation we discovered that he was in town for his court trial for refusing to be drafted for the Vietnam war about three years before. That was a troubling and scandalous time for him. Ali had refused to be drafted into service for his country because he believed it was against his Muslim religion. There had been serious talk of taking away his heavyweight crown. But he had stood firmly and refused, in spite of that. We told him about our son's problems with the Vietnam war, and Ali was very interested in that, too.


In the course of the conversation I told him of my work at the DARC and asked



if he would write a note to the people there. Just his autograph with a line or two would have been sufficient. He was quite taken with the workshop idea, however, so he wrote a two-page letter. (Fortunately I had some notepaper in my purse.) When I read it, I was surprised and delighted. His act before every fight and at every press conference was one of "Ah's the Greatest...Ah can lick you...Ah can lick anyone... Ah's the greatest." And that's what it was — an *Act*— because the letter he had written was a beautifully composed, almost poetic greeting to the people at the DARC. He certainly wasn't the clown or the dummy that the press portrayed him to be. Both his writing and his conversation proved this.

I knew that everyone, especially the black workers, would be delighted to see the letter, so I put it on the bulletin board for everyone to have a chance to admire it close up. I never dreamed anyone would take it...but it was gone at the end of the day. It's easy to say, today, why didn't you xerox it? Truth is, we didn't have easy access to one, so it never entered my mind. I have so regretted not having that note as a keepsake — a real disappointment to me.


 *One of the best birthdays Tom ever celebrated was his fiftieth.* We were away from home, in Boston, at a Direct Mail Advertising Convention. Sometimes those things are a pain to have to attend...but Boston is special. We did some of the usual things, going to see Paul Revere's home, having lunch on a ship in Boston Harbor. Then on September 26, 1969, we attended a huge gala banquet...and the program was the Boston Pops Orchestra in Concert, with Arthur Fiedler conducting. What a thrill to hear them play *The Stars and Stripes Forever* and join with all the other guests in the grand march. It isn't everyone who marches to a world-class orchestra on his birthday!

 *In my substitute teaching days I was called to teach handicapped classes quite often.* I met some of the bravest kids in the world there. The first time I stepped into the assigned classroom at the Spaulding School for Crippled Children, I was so glad I had some previous experiences seeing some "hard" cases at institutions. Some folks there had severe physical handicaps, too, which prepared me somewhat for what I saw. Crippled, to me, meant perhaps a wheel chair disability, or withered limbs. One young black boy came up to greet me, and I was so thankful that I could smile at him without reacting in some way that would hurt him. He had been in a fire, and his face was horribly scarred, with a lot of extra skin accumulating in some places, but no ears to be seen at all. His face wasn't even black...just shiny, new, blotchy, reddish-brown skin irregularly growing on his face and hands. If anyone had ever seen this child, they would think twice about playing with matches, or leaving a child unattended at home even for a short time. What a price that child was paying for someone's lapses, sins, or carelessness.


In that same classroom was a youngster whose legs were almost as thin as those


on a stork, and bent in the same way as he walked down the hall. He couldn't straighten out those stork legs, and walking was a difficult chore for him. But he would go from class to class cheerfully, pushing his school bag on the floor in front of him.

Only one other time have I seen physical disabilities so bad, and that was at a meeting, many years later, in Waterford Township where I went to a school to talk about mental illness. One of the high school girls came up to me to ask a question. Again...I was so thankful, when I looked up at her (I was sitting at a desk) and saw her face, that I could look at her and smile. I can't imagine what had happened to her... something congenital, I think. She had the ugliest, most deformed face I have ever seen...eyes where they shouldn't be...teeth protruding from all over her gums. Still, everyone in her class seemed to treat her just like everyone else, and I thought how lucky she was to be in a place where she seemed to be accepted. Still, I couldn't help but think what a sad life she must be having. I wish there were more money for plastic surgery so people so unfortunate as this could have deliverance from this kind of state which would be intolerable to me, I'm afraid. I'm not nearly so brave.


 *Some people have everything in the world to be thankful for, but they're sons-of-bitches, anyway.* When I was working for NOLEC to get our program for mentally ill people going, it wasn't only funding we were concerned about, but understanding on the part of the people in Oakland County, one of the wealthiest, most conservative counties in this country. I attended many Community Mental Health Board meetings (the Oakland County counterpart to the board I had sat on in Wayne County) just to keep tabs on the board members' attitudes so I would know what to expect. I was always aware that I had to keep my "mental retardation cap" on as well as my "mentally ill" one. During one of their monthly meetings they were listening to pleas from parents of mentally retarded adults to let more group homes into the county. (They tried to thwart them for every reason they could..."that place isn't safe, too many cars on the road."..."that place is too far out in the country, not close enough to hospitals.."..."that house is too close to a school, they might rape some of the girls."..."that house is too small."..."that house is too big." You get the picture. Anyway, this day, after hearing Dr. M. talk about how expensive it was to keep people in a house in Oakland County, I decided to quote a few facts. I was, at this time, Chairperson of the Plymouth Advisory Council, and was well-versed in the enormous difference in costs at that institution (mandated by the governor to close down) as compared to the cost in a group home. (I know this isn't accurate because I forget after ten years....but \$240 a day as compared to \$80 seems about right to me now.) Dr. M just said to me, "Why can't parents take care of their own children in their own homes?" My reply was that most parents did, but there came a time when the adult child had to leave because the parents were old, and being mortal, would die...and they would like to have the privilege

of knowing that when their children were left alone, they were already settled in a good home where they could live safely and happily. Dr. M. turned around in his chair, gave me a withering look, and spat out the words, "Bleeding Heart." The whole room was shocked. Even the chairman, who was as negative on the voting side as Dr. M., said, when he recovered, "I think, Doctor, that we owe the lady an apology." It taught me something. Instead of feeling "put down" when I would be called a "liberal bleeding heart" I think of Dr. M. and feel proud.

 *Some things that happened, however, were pleasant, and funny as well.* Tom and I were honored at the HEP banquet in May 1985. We had returned to Michigan after our first half-year in California because of this event. Several of the residents had been chosen to say some kind words about me. The final one was Bonnie Allen, a young woman I had known as a client when I worked at the DARC. She was also a member of Sunday Club and had lived in HEP from its beginning, chosen to speak because she knew me well. Bonnie began, "We are all so glad Mrs. Tucker started HEP house. Mrs. Tucker...Mrs. Tucker did...Mrs. Tucker... (obviously Bonnie was stuck, she had forgotten her speech)...but she finished triumphantly and brought the house down when she said, "Well, I like Mrs. Tucker because....because.... Mrs. Tucker knows *everything*."

 Some things were not only funny, they were embarrassing. My memory for names of people I have just been introduced to has always been bad, and I had recently read an article telling how to cure that trait. If you didn't catch the name at first, ask for it to be repeated, then repeat it aloud and make a pleasant remark.

*Tom and I had arrived at the annual Indiana State Association meeting in Indianapolis where he was to be the speaker (this was when he was president of the NARC). He had gone down to a cocktail party where I joined him after I had "prettied up" a bit. I was introduced to about four or five people in a group, and since I didn't remember the first person's name after all that, I decided to start the "remembering" program at once. "I'm sorry," I said. "I didn't catch your name." Everyone laughed, and the gentleman said, "I'm So-and-so, Governor of this fine state." (I still don't remember his name! It must have been shocked out of me.)*


 *President John F. Kennedy and Tom were both PT boat officers during World War II, and they both served in the South Pacific and spent their training time in the states at Melville, Rhode Island. Of course, all PT officers did. Everyone claimed to know the son of Ambassador Kennedy whether they did or not, so Tom's favorite remark is, "I'm the only PT officer that never knew John F. Kennedy." He always gets a laugh.*


However, he seldom goes on to say that he did meet Kennedy eventually. That was in 1963 when Tom was invited to be toastmaster at the NARC banquet when


President Kennedy was the keynote speaker. It was an important event because, as I have mentioned, mental retardation was a "no-no" for families to acknowledge before this time. His family's public recognition of Rosemary, the mentally retarded Kennedy, made a great difference to public awareness and acceptance.

It was a memorable occasion. Everyone woman who entered the banquet room had to open her purse to make sure no weapon was hidden there. (I can't remember if the men were frisked, but it wouldn't surprise me.) Then there was the fanfare. Wherever a president goes, the marine band goes, too, to play "Hail to the Chief." I can't honestly remember what Kennedy said, but I do remember how surprised I was at how handsome he was. He was impeccably groomed in a navy blue suit...but it was his blue eyes and absolute glow of health from his deep tan and rosy complexion that were most impressive. Most sad to remember, of course, was that this was exactly one month before he was assassinated in Dallas.


THERE ARE, OF COURSE, MANY, MANY MORE SNAPSHOTS...


 *There I am, standing in front of my house on Sunnyside* (I must have been four or five years old) saying to anyone passing by, "Get off my sidewalk...this is my sidewalk"...chasing big kids I didn't like with a piece of rubber hose to keep them away from my house. (I am amazed at myself as I remember this because I also remember being so shy it was difficult for me to function at times. Just goes to show you can never tell about a person.)


 *Then I see my mother playing the piano in church one Sunday evening*, accompanying a soloist who played hymns on the theramin (a one-of-a-kind instrument invented by the soloist.) He stood in front of a box which apparently emitted electric waves. The closer he got to the box, the higher the tone...the further away, the lower the tone. So there he stood waving his arms, producing weird but strangely musical sounds. What impressed the eleven-year-old me most, however, was the sight of my mother in a beautiful black silk evening dress with silver bugle beads all around the V-neckline. She looked so glamorous, completely alien to her every-day self, wearing a house dress with her hair pulled back in a knot.

 *I see my Dad stepping off the airplane* on a visit to us after we had moved into our big old house on Grandville, wearing an Alpine hat with a perky feather. (Dad loved hats and had a huge variety of them from a real Texas Stetson that Tom had received from the Texas ARC, to straw hats, fedoras, canvas fishermen hats...you name it, he had it). For this visit to our newly purchased old house Tom and I had made up a list of things he could do as "handy man." But he had different ideas. Under his arm was a box containing a water pump, and *his* idea was to build us a waterfall in the back yard. He built it next to the big elm tree next to the garage. All of us, from Grandma to Baby Jim, pitched in mixing concrete, shoveling dirt,


and planting flowers. What a conversation piece that turned out to be. The handyman jobs never did get done, but the waterfall was a great conversation piece for the next eighteen years.


 *Most children would only dream of eating ice cream for their every meal every day...but when we went to visit mother's cousin, Ragna Odde, and her family on their farm in South Dakota the summer of 1931, that dream came true for us! We three kids and Mother, with Norman driving our Chrysler, took off on what was then a long trip, to see what was going on in that part of the country. It was the time of the drought (your history books will tell you about the Okies leaving their farms to find a better life in California). Depression had hit the year before, but Dad's business was still doing well. Dick, Helen and I thought it was a great adventure. No highways as we know them now. Just two-lane roads the whole way, some of them dirt and gravel. When we arrived, we found a farm that had very little in the way of crops. Much of the country had been without rain for several years. This was desolate, barren country, so on the fourth of July we drove to a grove about fifty miles away where the Odde family and friends met for a picnic. It was only there that I remember having sandwiches, potato salad and things like that. The Odde farm did have chickens and a lot of eggs, but for whatever reason, Ragna had decided she would not cook eggs because everyone in her family wanted them fixed a different way. One wanted scrambled, one boiled, others "over easy." So she rebelled and decided to put all her eggs and milk into ice cream for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Mother was scandalized. We kids loved it.*


 *It was also on that trip that we discovered I needed glasses. Mother was pointing out some signs along the way, getting tired, I suppose, of our constant asking, "When are we going to get there?" She soon found out I couldn't read any of them, so as soon as we returned to Chicago, it was a trip to see Dr. McRoberts who discovered I was as near-sighted as Mother was. I was quite dismayed. Boys would call me "Four Eyes," I thought. (I was right.) And when I was older and in my dating days, I was sure that, as Dorothy Parker so cleverly said, "Boys seldom make passes at girls who wear glasses." (She was wrong. But then I had to worry about whether I took my glasses off before he decided to kiss me...or would I look too eager or too "easy"? It's always something...or at least it was in those far-gone days before "women's liberation.")*

 *I had other concerns, very important to me, but annoying to everyone else, I imagine. I always made Dick stand in front of my bedroom mirror with me, noting exactly where I measured against him. Then he was supposed to stand next to the fellow who was calling for me to take me on a date (unobtrusively, of course) so I could size up his height. I thought I was much too tall. I grew to be 5'7" (not even in the Tall Girl class today — but at that time it was.) I was sure every boy I went out with was going to be dwarfed by me. Dick thought I was nuts, of course..*

but although he was exasperated, he was very obliging for a brother!


 *I see many pictures of Tom in his naval uniform* during those early days of our marriage. The most poignant one is of our last morning at the St. George Hotel in Brooklyn before he left for the southwest Pacific. He was very handsome, slim and trim, with close-cropped curly hair, carefully packing his sea bag with all the belongings he would need for going off to war...and he was worrying about how I was going to stand the crowded train ride back to Detroit. Oh, we were so young. He would have his 24th birthday on the ship to Panama.


 *Of course I have many proud pictures of our children... I see Gail* on stage, with the high school choir, hearing her sing that beautiful, poignant solo, "Bless the Beasts and the Children, for in this world they have no voice, they have no choice." ...*I see Brian* bringing home a dictionary, his prize from being one of the spelling bee champions of the whole Detroit school system while he was in grade school...*I see Jim* at the starting line of a track meet one Saturday afternoon at Belle Isle. There was a lovely black Jamaican-born woman (you could tell by her soft accent and lovely lilting voice) who was pointing out her child to me..."He's the third one from the left"...and I laughed and said to her, "Guess which one is mine."..and she laughed, too. Jim had not only the blondest of blond hair, he was the only white child there.

 *It will be inconceivable to anyone born in Lucas's and Nicholas's time*, but there was a time when we didn't have computers, either. We owned our first one in 1984, after coming to California, and we were quite unusual among our friends. Brian and Gail were already into computers as their livelihoods. Jim's job wasn't dependent upon one, but he certainly made use of one for that purpose. Sumi became expert at computers as an art form because her job as Art Director for a bank made that a necessity. But what everyone used them for beyond business, was for games. Whenever the group got together we would find one or the other, or groups, playing Solitaire, Scrabble, PT Boats, Baseball, Backgammon, Tetris, Blackjack. We all had our favorites. If I am not mistaken, Brian was the Tetris and Scrabble buff, Tom was addicted to Solitaire and Scrabble, both of them enjoyed playing Bridge on it. Jim was into PT's and Tetris, and I liked Solitaire and Webster's Revenge (making words out of scrambled letters.) Sumi was the one who gave us most of the games — which she learned about at work. Cyd wasn't a gamer, but she would occasionally use it for writing material for her math classes or for her own classwork at Cabrillo College.

Brian got hold of a program that put sounds into the computer, and he put it into this one, unbeknownst to me. I'll never forget turning it on one day, hearing Robin Williams (a well-known comedian) screaming out, "Good Morning, Viet Nam"...and every time I used the space bar (after each and every word) the darned thing would make a noise like a trash can. I begged him to take it off...which he finally did...but I think he was disappointed that I wasn't as mad about it as he was. Just age, I guess.


*I finish with some snapshots of Phil...*


 The first is a picture I see of Phil's face when he finally succeeded in mastering the two-wheel bike after a week of Herculean efforts. Sheer unadulterated happiness!

 One of the saddest pictures I remember came after two policemen had left our house. They had seemed so kind and understanding when they returned him home after they had found him wandering around the neighborhood. But Phil broke down after they left and cried big tears and said to me, "Retard...retard. Call me retard." He was twelve years old and beginning to understand what *retard* meant.

Actually, Phil has learned to be very happy with what life has given to him. One of his childhood friends from school lives in an apartment about two blocks away from HEP house, and he and Phil discovered each other in the hamburger shop nearby several years ago. Bob is a janitor for the city and lives independently. I talked to him over the phone a few weeks ago when he was visiting Phil for dinner at the home. He was thanking me for a card and note I had sent to him a few weeks before, after the death of his father. I commented to Bob that it was so nice that he and Phil were still good friends. He was so seriously sweet he almost broke my heart. "Mrs. Tucker," he said, "as long as there is breath in my body, Phil and I will always be friends." There they are...two retarded friends against the world. But it was comforting, somehow, to me. Of course there is always *family*. I hope you all continue to hold him in your hearts after Dad and I are no longer around.

I leave you all with a favorite, most recent story about Phil.

 We had phoned the social worker at Goodwill to discuss Phil's job at the repacking company. She told us how much she enjoyed him as a client. She said she was trying to find out if there was something special she could do for him. He always seemed so content with what he had but she knew he must have some unfulfilled needs or desires. So she kept prodding him during one of their phone conversations. "Isn't there something you would like, Phil?" No, he said...he had everything he needed. "Do you need some clothes?" No, he said, he couldn't think of a thing. "Philip, I really would like to do something for you. Can't you think of something?" "Well," Phil finally said, "Take me out to lunch."

So when you need to know what to do for any of those special ones you care about, remember Phil's request. A little lunch can feed the spirit, too. 

# Footnotes

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1. Helen and I drove down the coast to visit Aunt Gertie in Feb. 1991 in her Long Beach apartment at almost 98 years of age! She was alert mentally but was much slower physically, of course. She had a young man staying with her who would drive her to the grocery store and take her to church, etc., in lieu of room rent. Seemed like a good arrangement to both of us. Also saw our cousin Bob for the first time in many, many years...and visited with our cousin, Ardis, now retired in a Lutheran Home for the Aged in Anaheim...and getting a little senile.

2. After his divorce from Louise (when their daughter, Audrey, was 8 years old) Art stayed single for many years...finally marrying Muriel, my cousin on the Ness side of the family. Their daughter, Mary Nic, then became my first cousin and my second cousin....and Muriel became my aunt as well as my cousin...and Art became my cousin as well as my uncle. Comprenez vous?

3. I regret that Auntie Ragna spent her last years in Dunning, a home for mentally ill people outside of Chicago, dying in her fifties or sixties. Whether the reason was that no one could take care of her because the Depression was so hard on our families...or she was having episodes of mental illness, I don't know. Mother never wanted to talk about it...and although she went to see her she wouldn't take us. She said, "I want you to remember her the way she was."

4. Lester and Mildred had their two oldest children, Betty and Glenn, taken away from them as "wards of the court." Betty married very well, I understand. Glenn died in his early twenties of diabetes. And Mickey, the youngest, was adopted at age 18 months by friends of Uncle Rheinie and Aunt Emma. He didn't know he was adopted until his parents died and he was left to manage their estate. He found out while going through their papers. I met him once when we were in Chicago in 1978...married and doing very well, living in Park Ridge...and his name is Richard William Freund. He seemed interested in knowing who his family was...but not wanting to get too friendly.

5. The Norwegian table prayer goes this way:

*I Jesu navn  
gaar vi til bords  
at spise og drikke  
paa dit ord.  
Gud til aera  
os til Gavn  
saa faar vi mad  
i Jesu navn. Amen*

(I tried to get it translated correctly. The best I could do was something like this):

*In Jesus' name  
we go to the table  
to eat and drink.  
God's in heaven  
And some day we shall meet  
there in Jesus' name. Amen*

6. Marie Hatlen Mennes Hamlin's mother, Margarethe Hatlen, and my mother's father, Peter Grendahl were first cousins. Margarethe and her husband settled in Evansville, Wis. (many Norwegian immigrants did ... staying first in Chicago with Marie and Peter until they got "their feet under them.") Marie went to nurses' training at Lutheran Deaconess Hospital in Chicago, and she stayed with us at our home whenever she had time off. There were seven Hatlen children... but Marie and her younger brother, Ted, where Gail and Jim stayed, were the closest to us.

7. War has given us many strange bedfellows. Our problems with Communism lasted for many years of Cold War. It's ironic that as I write this in 1991, we have again been at war with a country



that we supported only a few years ago with financial aid and arms, even though we knew that the country (Iraq) was headed by one of the cruelest dictators in the world, Saddam Hussein. I hope that by the time our grandchildren grow up we will have learned this sad, expensive lesson from history...Don't support governments and people just because of political expedience. In the end, you are sure to pay dearly for it.

8. Research lately seems to lean in the direction of genetics having something to do with alcoholism. But it could be environmental. Harry's mother, I was told, used to meet his father every week at work when he got paid — to get his pay check before he could spend it all. One of my cousins was a very successful interior designer, but was an alcoholic, dying quite young, as did our Uncle Les. I always cautioned our children about it...how seriously they took me, I don't know...but it does not seem to be a problem with any of them, thank goodness. Smoking, which used to be considered a "smart" social behavior has come into great disrepute lately. Perhaps by the time some of you read this, drinking will be, too.

9. Allen Spengler, Tom's first cousin (Myrtle's son) was also a "90-day Wonder". He was killed by a buzz bomb while sleeping aboard his ship (a YMS, Yard Mine Sweeper) anchored off the British coast during the WW2. Allen was about two years older than Tom and also was an ensign in the navy. He was in England when Tom and I were dating and married. I never met him.

10. Actually, Tom did meet Kennedy...but a long time after the war was over. Tom was toast-master for the National Association for Retarded Children's convention when it was held in Washington, D.C. in October, 1963. President Kennedy was there for the luncheon and gave the keynote speech. Tom introduced the person who introduced President Kennedy. Kennedy did a great deal for our cause because, for the first time anyone could remember, someone of such high stature admitted that a person in the immediate family had mental retardation (his sister, Rosemary). I was sitting at a ringside table, very close, so I could see he really was remarkably handsome and virile looking. He was assassinated exactly one month to the day from then.

11. It boggled my mind to try to imagine such wealth. Much later I was able to be a first-hand-onlooker at what incredible wealth was like. In 1970 Tom and I were invited for a week-end committee meeting at the Arkansas home of Gov. Winthrop and Jeanette Rockefeller on top of Pettijean Mountain outside of Little Rock. (Jeanette R. and Tom were on the President's Committee for M.R. together.) This was the only time I have seen such accumulation of wealth first hand. While it was such fun being there, I could see how folks who never had anything but hardship all their lives could feel a terrible alienation as a result. The things that particularly astonished me were: After our chauffeur-driven car passed a sign stating "Entering Winrock Farms" we drove for an hour, passing their private airport en route, before arriving at the guarded gatehouse. Then we drove through an area of servants' homes into a complex which, while they were individual buildings, were really sections of the main house. For instance...the living room was a separate building...as were the various bedroom/suites... and the eating complex of dining room, kitchen, walk-in deep-freeze, walk-in refrigerator, table-settings room (dozens of sets of beautiful china, silverware, etc.) were all linked together by flagstone walks and, in the winter, by the addition of jalousied window-walls along the walks. Guest houses were scattered here and there. Ours was J.R.'s studio — a hobby/guest house — two suites on the first floor, with a huge living room and hobby room on the ground floor (this guest house was built into a mountain)...the living room with 6th century Chinese objects 'd' art....the hobby room with enamels of all different colors on ceiling-to-floor shelves...and several kilns for firing. One building was a gym and beauty shop. But perhaps the most talked-about place on the mountain was the barn...with machinery to hoist W.R.'s huge Santa Gertrudis bulls and hold them flat on their sides to be able to extract their sperm... and the huge vat of sperm from his prize cattle just waiting to be shipped to South America. I almost forgot the swimming pool...and bars (the alcoholic kind) everywhere.

12. Robert Maniaci, M.D., also at one-time a president of the Michigan ARC, was most outspoken about the lack of instruction given to doctors during their medical school training (he had only a few hours of study about mental retardation in med school) and their resultant lack of knowledge. He said he had to start from scratch himself when their mentally retarded child was born.

13. I was asked to speak about a parent's feelings and experiences in having and dealing with a mentally retarded child when I was taking a graduate course at Wayne State University. I thought I was the complete professional at this time, but when asked about the help that doctors were in the situation, I found myself reliving that period so completely that I broke down and cried. It was like it was happening to us all over again — completely in the present.

14. Mabelle Chance. Her husband, Joe, became a real thorn in my side later on during my Detroit Association days.

15. Gail saw it differently. She wrote once about her high school days: "...for all that the people were with me for hours, filling up my time, I never let them fill up my heart. ....The consistency in my life was music. As I went through the motions of "coolness" with my friends, and "sweetness" with my family, I continued to sing. At school I became involved with the chorus. I took voice lessons, and practiced the piano, touching it with the softness that I longed to feel from the world."

16. Gail writes again: "Soon it was apparent that her voice was not coming back with the rest of her abilities. She began making tapes in her breathy whisper: "One, two, three testing" she would scratch onto our old reel to reel. Aftermath checkups left her with no news except the obvious — she had no voice. The tapes became the evidence she would need to prove to the world she was a victim of malpractice. "One, two, three testing — Fourscore and seven years ago our forefathers brought forth on this continent..." The evidence mounted. Then one afternoon my mother went to play back her handicap and they were all gone. Erased. Philip had been recording, using the tapes left in the machine. My mother regained her speaking voice, but she would never sing again. Or sue, for that matter."

17. Gail again: " Inside the house we were briefed on a new order. We were carefully instructed to say nothing about Brian's whereabouts so we would not jeopardize his position. If anyone came to the door, we were to get Mom or Dad to answer their questions. The responsibility was awesome. It separated me from my friends, for I could not share my pain with them. They didn't understand and their families didn't approve. It was 1968. Anti-war activities were not yet in fashion in middle-class America. Responsibility touched me in another way, as well. I saw how hurt my parents were. I knew they were kind people. I decided that God must not be so good if he would let this happen to them. First Philip, then Brian. As the third child and next in line for great expectations I quietly took on the job of being oldest son and only daughter."

18. The DARC was training only one person at a time in its kitchen. I found out it was because they could afford only one health license (necessary for public kitchens) at a time. I talked to Dr. Clepton, County Public Health Supervisor, after one of our CMH board meetings to explain the problem to him...that to have teamwork training for all, it was really a necessity to put into effect a program which could train five or ten people at a time, not one. He obliged within a week's time...and the DARC kitchen began a fine program.

19. He was a handsome, politically powerful man, very friendly and outgoing. Before one of our meetings I had mentioned to him that we had just been in Toronto and how impressed we were with

the activity going on downtown, people with small children living in the area (the complete opposite of Detroit)...due, we thought, to the government's incorporating the whole, large Metropolitan area into one political entity. It meant that they had the same transportation system, the same governing body...no layers of bureaucracy fighting with all the others for their share of the pie. He agreed that Detroit would be much better off if it could do the same...Birmingham and Grosse Pointe, Plymouth and St. Clair Shores would then not vote against Detroit's interests all the time, because they would be part of us. "But," he said, breaking into black dialect, "it ain't gonna happen, Baby. Us blacks have finally got into the power seat, and we ain't a-gonna give it up. But if you tell anybody I said so, I'll deny it."

20. Unfortunately, after we moved to Chicago we heard that John had been indicted for some shenanigans with the Civil Service system. I don't know how that turned out, but certainly wished him well. He had a kind heart and was very concerned about the problems I brought up to him...(and remember, a politician is always supposed to worry about the votes...and these people and their families certainly had very little clout.)

21. The age of adulthood in Michigan was, by law, 18. But the Michigan Department of Social Services still interpreted their rules as saying that if they were living in the family home, they were their parents' financial responsibility. Through the Social Services Committee of the MARC, we started to meet with the top person in Lansing who was in charge of adult services. He agreed that we were correct, and acknowledged that almost all the workers in the state were misinterpreting the regulations. He sent notices to every office (with copies to us for our manuals) that at age 18 every mentally retarded adult was entitled to Aid to Disabled payments. (Later, SSI became the law throughout the country and took the place in Michigan of Aid to the Disabled.)

22. I started the Sunday Club in the late 60's when we felt Phil needed more recreation time spent with friends. Holy Savior Church was happy to give us the space every Sunday, and our volunteers came from there and also five other churches which were involved in the start of the "ecumenical movement." I spent a year of Sundays in charge of it myself, but two wonderful volunteers, Joan Cords and Karen Lehman, took over for me the next year and I never had to think about it since. Karen quit after ten years, but Joan has kept it going by herself ever since. It has already celebrated its 20th anniversary of service... and the members of the club and their friends not only spend many happy times together playing Bingo, drinking coffee and eating cookies at the church ...but also go to the theater and sporting events throughout the year. Marty's interest in helping start HEP stemmed from his appreciation of what had been started by the parents and friends of the Sunday Club members.

23. One of our former ministers, Phil Wahl, who had confirmed Philip at Holy Savior, had been called to a strategic position at the church office in Minneapolis. He dealt with social ministries, and had first-hand knowledge of the folks we were trying to help. Political allies (even in church) are good to have! In 1991 he became Bishop of the Michigan District and asked Philip to carry the banner at his inauguration in Ann Arbor.

24. Mary Wagner was a woman (and parent of an m.r. adult) who was a pioneer in the field of developing and running excellent homes for mentally retarded persons, using grants from MSHDA. She built her homes in the Farmington area. We wanted ours to be in Detroit where there was adequate public transportation for our people who were more independent.

25. Tom served on a number of national committees. He was an original member of President Lyndon Johnson's Committee on Mental Retardation; he was appointed, also, by President Nixon to his Committee on Mental Retardation. He was a member of Advisory Board to the Office of Child Development; and at the request of the chairman of the President's Committee for Employ

ment of the Handicapped, he was appointed to that committee by President Reagan. He felt that all were extremely valuable in forwarding the cause of mentally retarded persons (except, perhaps, the one on employment which was far too big and met only once a year to be of much value. It was more of an influence-peddling committee than anything else.) The Committees on Mental Retardation were small and did a great deal of work which was of value in turning around things for mentally retarded persons in this country. Did you know that President Kennedy was the first person of "substance" to admit publicly to his family having a retarded person in it? Once he put that out as public knowledge, the stigma seemed to be removed. It became obvious that mental retardation was no respecter of wealth or family. (We knew *that*.)

26. Tom was disgusted at their "bean-counter" mentality. In checking up, Tom found out that his wife had left, run up a lot of bills, ruining his credit as a result. He had been turned down by every loan company, and CE was his last resort. He was one of the most qualified black persons CE had hired in response to the Affirmative Action Program — an excellent worker and a fine man — and Tom didn't want to lose him. He wrote him a personal check for \$1000, and it was paid off inside of six months. One of the nice things that he received this past year was a letter from him telling of the fine promotion he had just had and saying that without him, it just wouldn't have happened.

27. On October 7, 1989, while Tom and I were visiting Gail, Tim, and Lucas in New Jersey, a 7.1 earthquake as measured on the Richter scale rocked our area back home. The epicenter was about 5 miles from Seacliff house. Steven Kingsley was house sitting at our place. We were sitting around waiting for the start of the World Series baseball game in San Francisco when we saw the whole stadium in a state of shock... people bouncing around, running...pictures of fire in a large area of SF. We heard only a little announcement that Santa Cruz had been hit, too. Steve was able to call us almost immediately to say that the house had not been damaged severely, just in a terrible mess from pictures falling and books and papers all over the place — especially the office where I am writing now, and the kitchen where the cupboards just spewed things all over the floor. Before we went to bed that night we had heard from Brian in Monterey that they were okay and from Sumi in Mill Valley that they, too, were safe and sound. We found out later that Santa Cruz (5 miles from us) and Watsonville (11 miles south) were quite devastated. Amazingly the loss of life was small, considering the force of the quake and the damage to property. The graphic TV pictures forever put the Aptos area on the map....and folks back East who once had been ignorant of where we lived had a wealth of information about the town with the strange name of Aptos.

28. Jim had been doing okay after a serious and lengthy bout with his back during the summer of 1989. But just before Christmas Sumi called to tell us he was in the hospital for emergency surgery. The doctors performed a laminectomy and we got up to see him the next day. He made an amazing recovery and was able to spend Christmas with us and Phil (in from Detroit) and Gail, Tim, and Lucas (visiting from New Jersey.) Brian and Cyd were skiing in Utah.

A Special Note to Lucas Allen Whipple  
Nicholas Brian Tucker  
Andra Sophia-Beth Whipple  
AND ALL GRANDCHILDREN NOT YET BORN



When I was a little girl I started to keep a diary — many times! I meant well, but it always became too much of a chore. Ideas didn't flow into my head. What I did write down on paper seemed to be so much *nothing*. And I didn't see the importance then of being able to reminisce, later in life, through a few notes as reminders of what I *was* at one time, or how I *felt*.

I would love to be able to return to the eight-year-old child...or the sixteen year-old girl...or the nineteen-year-old romantic...or the young war bride...or the expectant mother of her first-born child...to recall what was important to me in relation to what was going on in the world at the time. It would be interesting to see in what areas I had matured well, and where I still need to grow, even though I am now "getting on in years"... seventy-two years old (although I don't feel anywhere near what that sounds like!)

Oh, how I wish I had kept some sort of diary, no matter how insignificant it seemed to me then. We think we will never forget certain events while we are living through them. But believe me, we do! I hope you will be smarter than I was and at least make notes to yourself to help jog your memory when you get older. It might be important to you one day. At the very least it will help you when you have a theme to write for school. Even better, it might give you an idea of what kind of person you are and what you believe in, and why you are the way you are.

Long ago, when we were first married, Grandpa tried to get me to write down my philosophy of life on paper. Once again, I thought my ideas looked too simple, too stilted. Beautiful, deep thoughts didn't come easily out of my head like they did to Emily Dickinson or Elizabeth Barrett Browning. In retrospect, they probably didn't come easily to them, either, but *they* persevered. Actually, Lucas and Andra, your mother is doing what I wish I had done and you will have many interesting journals to look through. And Nicholas, your dad was a fine writer, too...he hasn't written a diary, but he put some of his ideas into poetry.

It took me a long time to learn that ideas we think are simple may, in fact, be quite profound. The older I get, the more I appreciate that some simple thoughts are really very, very wise. So I am going to put down a few of them for you to think about. They are mottoes to live by. If you don't understand

them at first, look them over again from time to time until you do. Here goes:

*Bloom where you are planted.* Or another saying, quite like that: *When life gives you lemons, make lemonade.* There is also a lot of backbone in *This, too, shall pass* and *Nobody's perfect.* And finally, *It's all relative.*

There's another saying which fits any situation which I must have said to Brian, Gail, and Jim hundreds of times. Gail tells me she's tired of it (but it's still true.) *There's a plus and a minus to everything.* There really is, you know, so it takes a lot of thought to decide what's best in many situations.

Above all, try to practice the Golden Rule: *Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.* If everyone lived by it, this would be a pretty good world. It isn't always easy, but I hope you try.

Tom and I made up our own mottoes, putting them in Latin we remembered from high school — probably incorrect, but who cares? It's fun to remember when some miserable person is ruining your day. It might make you feel better to say, *"Illigiti non carborundum"* which means, "Don't let the bastards get you down." ...Or *"Nil desperandum"* —Never despair.

I have always liked the thought I first read in English Lit Class at St. Olaf College, expressed by Robert Browning when he wrote: *Ah, but man's reach must exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for?* That might take some thinking to figure out (especially if you read this when you are quite young, but ask your Mom or Dad to help you.)

The only other advice I would give you is to *Work hard. Play hard. Study hard. And Be sure to laugh and have fun along the way.* I wish I had done more of this and not been so serious so much of the time.

I hope, dear Lucas, Nicholas, and Andra, that we will have time to get to know you well. And if we are blessed with more grandchildren, I hope we get to know you, too. But we never can tell, can we? I never knew one of my grandparents and I feel I missed a great deal. I want you to know, however, just in case we don't have the chance to meet any others and become dear friends, that Grandpa and I love you deeply anyway, and I wrote the happenings of my life so that you *all* would have the chance to know a little more about your family than I did.

Much, much love to each of you who reads my story. I hope that knowing something about the family who went before you will add meaning to your life. God bless.

Henry Ford Hospital

Medical Genetics and Birth Defects Center

CYTOGENETICS LABORATORY

2799 West Grand Boulevard

Detroit, Michigan 48202

Telephone: 313-876-3178



CHROMOSOME ANALYSIS REPORT FORM

DATE January 21, 1988

MRN 072 48 25 1

NAME Tucker, Philip

CYTOGENETICS AND MEDICAL GENETICS

Daniel L. Van Dyke, Ph.D.

V. Ramesh Babu, Ph.D.

Referring Physician:

Dr. Weiss and

Mrs Ingall

Date Sample Received:

January 12, 1988

CLINICAL GENETICS

Lester Weiss, M.D.

Jacquelyn Roberson, M.D.

CLINICAL FINDINGS

moderate mental retardation

SPECIMEN

peripheral blood

# CELLS	(# CLONES)	CYTOGENETIC FINDINGS	INTERPRETATION
50		no break at Xq27	
30		10 autosomal breaks	normal break rate
8		46,XY	normal
16		46,XY,6p+	abnormal

Chromosome preparations were GTG-banded. 50 cells were scored for chromosome breakage at Xq27.



CYTOGENETIC IMPRESSION

Philip has a normal karyotype in about 30% of cells but in about 70% of cells there is extra chromosome material attached to the top of chromosome 6. By comparison of the pattern of the extra material with the rest of the karyotype, it is probable (not certain) that the material represents a duplication of the distal long arm of chromosome #15. This chromosome abnormality most likely arose during early embryogenesis of a 46,XY embryo, although it is possible that the original zygote had the duplication and a cell line with an apparently normal karyotype arose later. The karyotype can be written as: 46,XY/46,XY,-6,+der(6)t(6;?15)(p25;?q24) or to express less certainty about the origin of the extra material, as: 46,XY/46,XY,6p+.

CYTOGENETICIST

*[Handwritten signature]*

Henry Ford Hospital

Medical Genetics and Birth Defects Center  
CYTOGENETICS LABORATORY

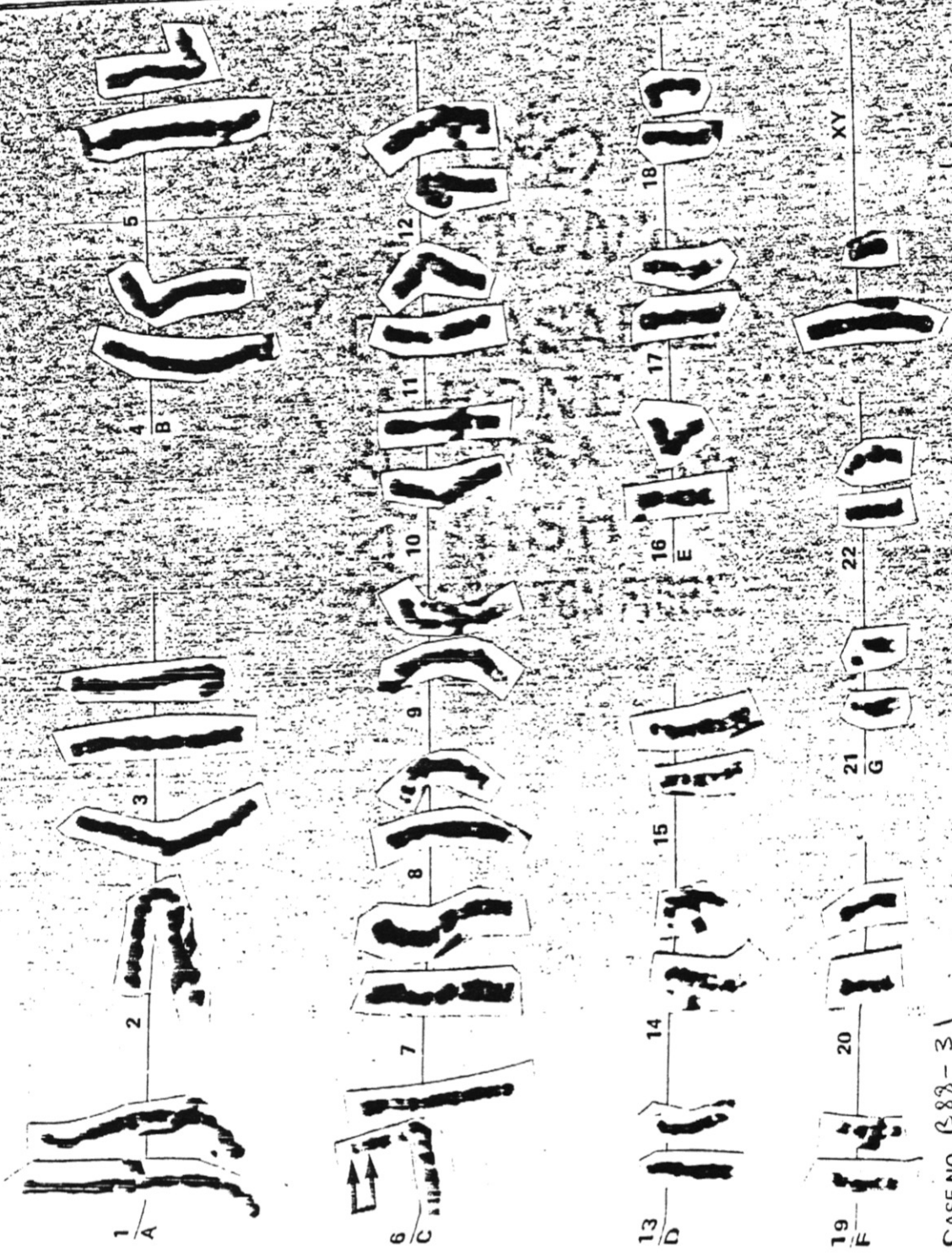
2799 West Grand Boulevard  
Detroit, Michigan 48202  
Telephone: 313-876-3178

KARYOTYPE FORM

DATE January 20, 1988.

MRN 072-4825-1

NAME Tucker, Philip



CASE NO. B88-31  
 CELL NO. 12  
 SPICIMEN: peripheral blood  
 KARYOTYPE: 46,XY,G1+  
 TECHNICIAN: SP  
 DATE: 1/20/88