

LEAS LIT

The Medford Leas Literary Journal



December 2012

Number 24

LEAS LIT STAFF

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Writing and Art at Medford Leas
Published by the
Medford Leas Residents Association
Medford Leas, Route 70
Medford, New Jersey 08055
609-654-3000

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BACK TO MOMMY

“Mommy!” – the toddler calls, and coos with joy,
as loving hands return an errant toy.

“Mom – at school today I tried my best,
but still I didn’t pass the test.”

“Mom – the beach and sun are far,
could you ask Dad to lend the car?”

“Mom – college days are fun,
but with the draft I soon may tote a gun.”

“Mom – this army food is hard to take,
send some cookies and perhaps a cake.”

“Mom – at last we’ve got the call,
to end this thing once and for all.”

“Mom – we’re going on the line, but
don’t you worry, I’ll be fine.”

“Mom!” – as the bullet hit his side.

“Mommy !” – once more.....and then he died.

Wil Britten

JINGLE BELLS

After graduating from college in the mid 1940s, I accepted a job with the Patterson Screen Company in the small rural town of Towanda, Pennsylvania. This company specialized in the manufacture of rare chemicals that glowed when illuminated by X-rays or electrons. These specialty products were in great demand by the growing TV industry. Hence, E. I. DuPont bought the company. My job was to check output for color and brightness and blend the yellow and blue batches of fluorescent cadmium sulfide into a standard white for TV tubes.

My wife and I found a home being refurbished about a mile outside of town by a Captain Coddington, USN (Ret). He owned several houses along a country road as well as farm land, a large barn, and his own multi-story house. We liked what we saw and agreed to rent the small house for \$30 a month.

The County Agricultural Agent rented a floor of the main house. He and I were given freedom to use farm equipment in the barn. Capt. Coddington taught me how to use his Ford tractor and plow fields with it. Occasionally I plowed fields for a farmer on a side road who lacked the strength or skill to plow his own field. During the week, Capt. Coddington generally traveled to his townhouse located on lower Manhattan Island. Sometimes Mrs. Coddington and her teenage children went to New York and other times they stayed in Towanda. Renting from the Coddingtons was like living in a very friendly enclave.

One day, after a light snow, the Bradford County Agricultural Agent, Bob Jones, and I decided it would be great to surprise our wives by taking them for an old-fashioned horse-drawn sleigh ride. The agent knew vital things about horses, such as where the accelerator and the brake pedal were located. He also understood the complicated details of hitching a horse to the sleigh. I was full of eager but naive enthusiasm. We also had an implicit OK to use most anything in the Coddling barn.

“*Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells*” began to resonate through my brain.

The Coddings’ barn had long stored the indispensable objects required to enjoy a ride across a snow-covered landscape. First the sleigh, never mind that it hadn’t been used in years, and next the horses to provide the essential motive power. These two horses were enjoying a splendid well-fed early retirement. Their main function in life was supplying fresh fertilizer for the Coddling summer vegetable garden. It was years since either horse had pulled a sleigh. Little did we know that these horses were not about to let their retirement be interrupted by pulling a sleigh on a wintry day!

While I swept dust and the accumulation of years of idle neglect out of the sleigh, I imagined that we would be dressed in fashionably warm clothes. Wrapped in beautiful buffalo robes we would ride in a beautiful handsome sleigh, pulled by high stepping well-groomed horses attached to the sleigh with freshly polished harness and jingling brass bells. I could hear sleigh bells ringing, just hear those sleigh bells, ringing and jingling too, and see the snow falling, swirling about the sleigh.

In the meantime, my companion in this hush-hush affair selected a horse, harnessed it, and brought it around to the front of the barn. Then the two of us dragged the sleigh out of the barn and down the ramp entry way to level ground. One look at the old sleigh in the light of day forced some reality into our plans, but we thought “aw-shucks,” we would find a way to cover the worst spots.

When our horse (call it Sleigh Horse) eyed the sleigh, she started frantically neighing to the horse still in the barn (call it Barn Horse). It took me a moment to understand their dialect and decipher what the conversation was all about. I think the dialogue translated to something like this.

Sleigh Horse. These nuts want to attach me to the rusty old hunk of junk sleigh and its moth eaten blanket and then have me drag it about the country side. I would be so embarrassed to be seen attached to it.

Barn Horse. Not to worry. The young one is a city kid. He knows nothing about horses. Remember how scared he was when we charged him in the meadow last summer! Watch out for the other guy. He is the County Ag Agent and took a course in horse psychology. Whatever you do, do not let him attach you to the sleigh.

Sleigh Horse. The Ag Agent is trying to back me between the traces.

Barn Horse. Situation is critical! Pretend to cooperate but back up all the way to the sleigh and...

I momentarily lost track of the directions from the Barn Horse. Have you ever noticed when people talk in low tones you can understand their attitudes by the sneer in their voices even though you cannot make out the words? Well, the mocking tone in the neigh of both horses indicated scornful contempt for human intelligence. Then I tuned in again.

Sleigh Horse. You are nuts.

Barn Horse. Do not hesitate. Do as I say!

Sleigh Horse. OK! OK! I am backing up. The Ag Agent has big smile, thinks I am going to allow him to attach me to the sleigh. OK!

Lost the conversation again. Oh, oh, you will never believe it. The horse backed all the way to the front of the sleigh and sat on the front end of the sleigh. The sleigh is now at a steep angle with the rear high above my head. What can we do now? Even the Ag Agent appears mystified!

Barn Horse. We have won! Whatever you do stay sitting firmly on sleigh till Ag Agent removes the harness.

Ag Agent removed the harness and led the horse back to its stall in the barn. Then we sadly huffed and puffed dragging the sleigh up the ramp back into the barn.



Our sense of self-esteem had been badly damaged by those two horses who so completely outwitted us. For obvious reasons, we agreed not to tell our wives. The news of our setback would have been spread, by the gossip network, all over town. Fortunately the Coddings were in New York and knew nothing of the misadventure. We bribed each of the horses with a small bag of oats to keep them quiet. They never told and we never again challenged their cushy sinecure. Nor did we ever go for a sleigh ride.

Gordon Beckhart

IT SEEMED LIKE A DREAM

I grew up without a kitchen table, or a backyard, or neighbors. It seemed totally natural to me that we lived in four rooms of the hotel that my father owned and managed, that we ate in a public dining room, surrounded by strangers, that I spent my playtime in a local park and had horizontal bars across the fifth floor windows of my room.

My mother had a two-burner hot plate in a corner of her bedroom, where she brewed her cure-all beef tea for me when I was ill. And she melted blocks of depilatory wax there, drenching the apartment with a terrible smell. I watched while she cooled the wax and spread it on her legs, but I hid my eyes when she ripped it off in hard, ugly strips that lay on the bathmat, bristly with hairs. The odor lingered until she tied a string on a door-knob, set the end on fire, and let it smolder there until the offensive odor was gone.

When her mother and sister were with us, and that was very often, she cooked noodles late at night, broke an egg over them when they were drained, added butter and poured vinegar over all. Sour noodles, that was called. My father would come up from the front desk to join the women and, often, they would play a rubber of bridge.

We lived in a connecting line of rooms: living room, my parents' room, the room where my grandmother and aunt slept with my sister and, at the end of the row, my own. There was a tiny bathroom next to my

room and another between the living room and my parents' bedroom.

It felt like home. It was full of family things, heavy with pictures in thick gold frames and soft underfoot with faded oriental rugs. There were bookcases and quilts and white ruffled curtains crossed at the windows. We had a piano, and Christmas trees, and always a dog.

We also had maid service and room service and clean towels every day. We ordered food that we didn't have to see before or after the meal. We had endless hot water unless the system broke down. When that happened a guest would complain, the phone would ring and Daddy would get out of his easy chair, put on his shoes, and go to the basement to confer with Francis, the engineer.

He loved the life and would have chosen it over any other. He loved having people around and lots of action. His seven-days-a-week, twenty-four-hours-a-day responsibilities kept him pumped up, full of conversation and charm.

My mother longed for a real home of her own. But there were advantages. I can remember her making stuffing in her room and taking it downstairs to join the turkey and the rest of the holiday meal that had been prepared in the hotel kitchen by the chef.

This life was fine with me. I knew nothing else and it was only much later that I began to view the quiet little girl I'd been as isolated and deprived. My father insisted on quiet. In his early career, he'd been exposed to the dreaded hotel children, demanding and spoiled, who ran

rampant through the halls and lobbies and talked back to long-suffering waiters. Not me. I tiptoed down five flights of stairs even though Bobby Bell had taught me how to spin the wheel that operated the elevator in its elaborate iron cage.

I faded out of encounters in the public rooms as soon as I could, sliding into the shadows behind my parents, making up stories in my head to pass the time and sucking on the ends of my hair.

When I grew up a bit, and made some friends, I found that they loved to visit me, to order from a menu and be waited on. Between meals, I took them through the double swinging doors into the dark pantry off the kitchen where the wooden floors were always wet and the ice cream was stored in sunken refrigerated tubs. I dipped scoops and garnished sundaes while they stood watchful and impressed under the huge steel kettles that hung overhead.

We never ventured behind the kitchen into the annex known as the cottage where the staff lived in mystery. I was forbidden to go there. My father went often to scold people, to wake the chef, sometimes to fire an employee and wait while he packed and left. Often on Saturday nights, the police came and pounded on the door of the cottage where smoke and music and screams came drifting through the cracks.

Better than entertaining my friends, I liked to visit them, to eat leftovers in their breakfast nooks or at their small kitchen tables where the white enamel was chipped into patterns of blackish blue or the oilcloth had peeled

into white stringy patches and where the walls felt cozy and close.

I guess I craved the same things my mother did, privacy and normal working hours for my father and a yard of our own. Years later, when Daddy retired and they bought their first house, he settled into a flannel shirt and a recliner in the corner and she moved from room to room to porch to garden, straightening her knick-knacks, pruning her plants. She wore an apron with clippers in the pocket and spots of gravy on the front.

Before that happened, when I was a young mother and they still lived in the hotel, I came to stay with them, bringing my baby. I had mononucleosis and had been ordered to rest. Mother took her granddaughter from my arms and someone brought me a glass of freshly squeezed juice, turned down the covers of my bed and lowered the blinds. I sank into the soft combination of loving family care and luxury, sleeping, even lounging, in perfect comfort until I was well enough to go back to the rumpled sheets and dirty dishes that I'd left at home. My childhood seemed like a dream.

Marcy Webster

TRIBUTE TO A NANNY

My parents hired Helene Mämpel, a “Kinderfräulein” (nanny), to live with me and my sister Evi. We called her Leni. She had been trained by the Froebel and Montessori method. Although our parents loved us dearly, it was Leni who brought us up, taught us what was right or wrong, good manners, and to speak accent-free high German. Eventually, she had to leave us because the Nazis forbade Gentiles to work for Jews. Years later, after WWII, we visited her in Germany before she died. She never married. I still correspond with her nephew.

In my album she wrote: “One is rich when one has a friendly heart. What one has seen and experienced outside, one should not guard closely in one’s mind, as many do, but share. One must be friendly, be interested. Then one is rich.”

What endeared Leni to me was her never-ending understanding, kindness, and patience. She was always there for me and my sister when my parents were busy. She never reproached, criticized, or punished us. How could I not love her?

Lili Wronker

INTERACTIVE VIEWING IN OUR ART GALLERY

The immortal poetry of Heinrich Heine and music of Friedrich Silcher are combined in one of the best known German songs of the nineteenth century. When I recently exhibited a framed copy of “Die Loreley” in my own calligraphy, a group of residents, familiar with the melody, reacted by singing.

*Ich weiss nicht was soll es bedeuten
Dass ich so traurig bin,
Ein Märchen aus uralten Zeiten,
Das kommt mir nicht aus dem Sinn.
Die Luft ist kühl und es dunkelt,
Und ruhig fließt der Rhein.
Der Gipfel des Berges funkelt
Im Abendsonnenschein.*

I know not what it betokens
That I such sadness know;
A legend of bygone ages
Haunts me and will not let me go.
The air is cool, day is waning,
And quiet flows the Rhine;
The summits of lofty mountains,
Sparkling in the sunset, shine.

Loreley’s allure caused many a shipwreck on the Rhine. Hers is a sad story, but the response of the viewers, so typical of Medford Leas, filled me with happiness to be part of this community.

Lili Wronker

SCENES FROM CHILDHOOD

Words

I was learning a poem for a school project. There was a phrase in it that sounded beautiful to me – the “feathery filigree of frost.” My mother was getting dressed for an evening party and I asked her what filigree meant. She took off one of her dangling earrings and pointed out the fine tracings of spun gold that filled the spaces between the bolder designs. “That’s filigree,” she said. I could see how it was like frost on a window, and when the earrings became mine, I gave them to my daughter-in-law and told her the story.

Another time I was looking for the meaning of iridescent. She took me to her bedroom window and pointed to some grackles that were walking in the front yard below. They were splendid with brilliant, vibrant colors. There are grackles in the back yard where I live now.

Infinity was also a word I wasn’t sure about, but I figured it out myself while I was supposed to be taking a nap. I had a book bag that had a picture of a boy and a girl each carrying a book bag with a picture of a boy and girl carrying a book bag within the same picture. Yes, this could go on forever.

The Spider Web

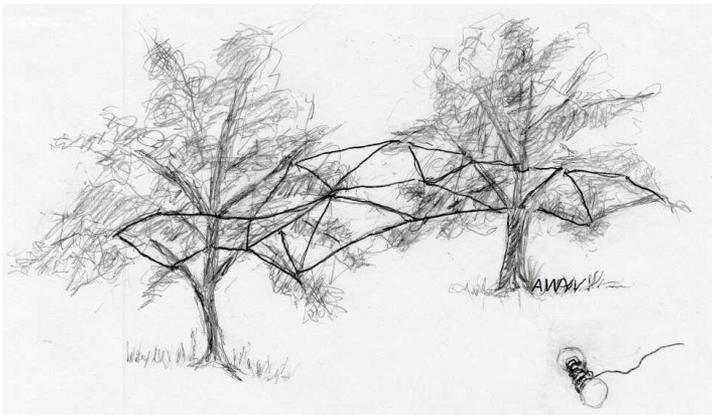
Everyone must love spider webs when they are outdoors. Think of one in the sunlight, covered with sparkling dew, delicate but strong enough to move a bit in the wind.

We were about six or seven, CN and I, and planning to make a very large spider web. For this we needed two things: a large tree and a ball of string. The tree was easy; we had cherry trees in my yard. But the string! The penny candy store where we went with our older brothers probably carried it for kite flying. Were we brave enough to walk there alone?

I had ten cents (allowance money) and CN had fifteen cents. We started on our way to the store. I had on my lavender dress for luck, and CN was wearing a sailor suit with a whistle in his pocket. My hope was that this would also bring us luck. We walked on the sidewalk up the long hill to Monroe Avenue, where there were many cars, several people and the trolley car turnaround. Now we were at the scary part. We had to go a block down the street and cross over to the three round steps that went into the candy store, and we didn't see a soul we had ever seen before. To us, this was a frightening place to be. Everyone seemed to look at us with eyes we didn't know and we tried to rush to those three round steps holding hands, with CN pulling me on. We bumped a man, but slid around him with a quick "I'm sorry" and never took in how he looked. We made it to the steps that had always fascinated me, and got into the store with the familiar Mr. Brown who sold the candy. Kite string seemed to cost twenty cents. We had enough

money! We had a new plan for the way back to the trolley turnaround. We would go on the grass on the side of the street where there was a park. Much safer, and we got to the turnaround quickly and happily. Then we were on my street, Highland Avenue, where we knew the houses and the people.

Perhaps twenty years later, my parents and I were having a drink in the backyard. My Dad called me over to a piece of dirty string hanging from a branch and asked, “Do you remember your spider web?” Now to make the spider web. Our plan was to run the string back and forth and up and down between the two cherry trees in the backyard. It worked! CN took the ball of string, which he carried in a cloth bag with the pull around his wrist, and climbed the first tree. He twisted the string around a branch or strong twig and dropped the ball to me. I twisted it around something handy, and we kept doing this until we ran out of string. The web looked beautiful, just like a real web, and we spent the rest of the day getting people to come and admire it. They did!



A Walk

We were always a family of walkers. One sparkling winter morning in upstate New York we set out for a bit of air and some exercise. The bright, white ground glittered in the sunshine as much as it ever could. The snow was deep, perhaps two feet or more, but the hill road had been shoveled by Fabri and his men as it always was. Where the men and Fabri came from, I never knew, but when they were needed they appeared. We headed for the woods, “our woods,” which some people called Cobbs Hill, where the paths looked smooth and soft and were lined on each side by lots of shadows, big trees, small trees, and lumps of snow-covered bushes with a few dark twigs pushing out. I was about two and traveled in a pack basket on my father’s back, so it is quite likely that I did not take in all this beauty. The picture of how the woods looked probably came from some other time in my life. I am quite sure, however, that that is the way it looked on that particular morning.

As we went up the hill, my father, mother and brother all carried snowshoes. At the edge of the woods, they slipped their toes into the toeholder and buckled the back strap around their winter footwear, which we called galoshes. Again, I was just waiting in the pack basket and only watching all this happen. The real memory of this walk comes now. After I was hoisted on my father’s back, I got my quite new teeth a little way in the shoulder of his suede jacket and chewed on it the whole walk. It was delicious. I can still taste it, and I suspect it is my earliest memory.

Cynthia Mott

CLEANSING MIND AND MOUTH

One day, in my early youth, I was playing alone after school on our front porch. I was also watching for my father to come home from work. My mother was busy in the kitchen. I saw a man coming down the sidewalk toward our house. I did not recall seeing him on our street before. He was dressed like many of the farm-workers in our rural community: old work clothes, a battered hat and old shoes. For some reason a word came to my mind, a word I had heard in the school yard but never in our home. I called out to the man with that one word which even on my young lips was offensive. Before I could turn and continue my playing he came to the porch door and asked me to call my mother.

My mother came from the kitchen. He greeted her and then asked me to repeat the word in front of her. I could not escape. The African-American man's face showed the hurt and controlled anger he had every right to feel and have. My mother was horrified and demanded an apology. I had to tell the gentleman I was sorry and that I would never use the word again. At that point I was crying. I don't know how I got the words out, but I must have made myself understood. I was indeed truly sorry. His face softened as he accepted my apology. He said that he had seen me playing in the yard when he passed the house and that I was a good boy. My mother thanked him. He tipped his hat, said goodbye and was gone.

In a voice filled with humiliation, sorrow and authority my mother commanded me to sit in the dining

room. In a few minutes she brought a bar of wet soap, stood over me and asked me to open my mouth. As she pushed the bar into my mouth, sternly demanding me to chew on it, she told me of her humiliation and how disappointed she was in me. She hoped she would not have to do this again. Indeed, that was the first and last time my mouth was washed out with soap. She never mentioned the episode to anyone that I was aware of. If she told my father, which she surely must have, his behavior toward me never changed. To a wayward child judicious silence is its own reproof.

While not defending my mother's disciplinary tactic, I am happy – perhaps a bad choice of word, but appropriate – that I had the “washing” at a young age, no matter how painful it was for the people involved. I learned several things, not the least of which is the power of words – especially words bestowing humiliating inferiority. These words have so much power. Used intentionally or unintentionally, they become socially destructive acts. I'm still learning that there are consequences for demeaning another person or persons, either by words or actions. I'm still mentally trying to wash my mouth out with soap.

I wish I had learned the gentleman's name and where he lived. I would have liked to become better acquainted. He is now long gone but his gentle dignity remains with me in mind and heart. I wish he were here in body. I would like to speak his name and call him friend.

Chris Darlington

SEVEN MYTHS OF RETIREMENT

I find myself wandering about muttering. How can I have a daughter who is ready to retire? How could she have completed 35 years of teaching? It was only a couple of years ago that I retired, wasn't it? Well, maybe a little bit longer?

It occurs to me that I probably need to prepare my daughter for what to expect in retirement. She needs to know, for instance, that when we are advancing toward retirement, it is something like anticipating the Emerald City in *The Wizard of Oz*. As we move inevitably toward this fantasy of delight, we imagine the Yellow Brick Road as one that will have its rough spots. Once over the bumps, however, we will arrive in the Emerald City. Life will be beautiful. Retirement will be beautiful.

Anyone who is preparing for retirement needs to know that the Yellow Brick Road is often paved with myths, myths that can cause a great deal of stumbling. As I remember, there are at least seven myths of retirement. But if you, dear reader, know of other myths, please let me know, so that I can pass them on to my daughter.

Myth #1. You will now have time for all the things you have always wanted to do. For example, you will now be able to take that paleontology course at Rutgers or travel to the southern tip of Argentina on the Patagonia Express. You will write the great American novel and complete the definitive work on the life and times of Alice Paul.

Myth #2. You will finally have time to get organized in your personal life. Your stamp collection, for example, will take shape at last, its marvelous good order in categories phenomenal. And so will your collection of recipes. You will begin each day with meditation, run five miles, come home and bake two loaves of multigrain bread while reprogramming your financial goals on your personal computer.

Myth #3. You will only get involved in those volunteer jobs that are without stress and which give you great joy and satisfaction. If you volunteer to be a docent at a museum, for example, you will never, ever again be stressed. The public is so cooperative, even when you are trying to keep the fire lanes open. They will move immediately! Equipment, like microphones and video projectors, never fail. Only your professional job produces stress. There is no stress in retirement.

Myth #4. You will not need as much money as you did when you were actively employed. For one thing, everyone will be eager to give you a break because you are a senior citizen. You won't need as many clothes because you will not always be in the public eye. You will not need new resources. You can drop all those magazine subscriptions and books that dealt with your profession. See how many ways you can save big bucks!

Myth #5. You will not ever look back on your career years with longing for your former colleagues and for the challenges you always dealt with so effectively. Of course, you will be considerate of your former colleagues when they come to you for advice, but every day will be an opportunity for interac-

tion with exciting new people and wonderful new challenges to conquer.

Myth #6. You will find many opportunities to say, “I’m busier now than I ever was when I worked full time.” Unfortunately, no one will be listening, because they will be trying to tell you how busy they are. Keep on saying it anyway. You’re bound to impress someone some day with your incredible busyness.

Myth #7. You will be able to “sleep in” and take long afternoon naps on those days when you aren’t busy. Time will seem to stand still, providing you with luxurious leisure. You will no longer feel rushed for there will be no more deadlines, no more review committees or evaluations, no more staff meetings, strategic planning or conflict resolution. Yay! You will be able to plan ahead and take all the time you need doing it.

Well, there you have it – the seven myths of retirement. Should I let my daughter just find out for herself that myths, after all, are only whimsical imaginations of the person who is looking forward to retirement? Everyone has his or her own set of myths of retirement. I could admit to my daughter that I have yet to write the great American novel or organize my collections in categories phenomenal. I could confess that I still get up in the morning in time to beat the traffic through Philadelphia. I rather suspect that she already knows that. I’ll probably find it more effective to just share with her those things that I have learned in the last 22 years of retirement. For example:

- Small tasks can consume an entire day if that is all that is planned. Because we *have* more time, we tend to *take* more time.
- Days are chaotic when there is little structure. We still need structure in our lives. We still need to set goals and work toward them.
- Stress will find us wherever we are, if we have not yet learned how to relax and go with the flow.
- Retirement is a time to enjoy old friends and especially to discover new ones.
- We can anticipate new challenges and adventures, but sometimes we have to go looking for them. They're not out there just waiting for us to retire.
- We may not be able to accomplish all the things we thought we would. That doesn't mean we can't enjoy the things that we do achieve.
- Growth and enrichment have the potential to continue all of life. As long as we live we learn; as long as we learn we live. I didn't make that up, but I believe it.

Sarah Klos

LEARNING TO SKI

When my husband and I lived in the south of France in the early 1950s, we met a charming young Frenchman who was very helpful to us. We were shaky in both the language and the mores of the native population, and Roger was very eager to help. I think he was delighted to be regarded as an authority about everything French, and he certainly smoothed the way in learning the ropes when it came to certain business transactions such as opening a bank account and buying a car.

One winter morning he stopped by our apartment and suggested that we accompany him and Claudine, his wife, on a ski weekend to Auron. "It is not so long a drive," he said. "We can drive up Friday night and have time to ski all day Saturday and Sunday morning." I protested that we had never been skiing, had no skis, no ski clothes and no idea how this activity would be accomplished. *Pas de problème!* Everything could be arranged. It would be possible to rent skis and everything we might need at the inn, which was right by the mountain (not a very big mountain, you understand, just a little one). My husband was all for it, so with many reservations I agreed.

Actually, the drive took about four hours, so we arrived after dark. We had stopped for a very good dinner with lovely wine on the way, and I went to bed that night feeling more optimistic. Morning was another matter. As I gazed out of the front of the hotel, I was faced by a mountain surely higher than Everest with a brooding look about it. Roger rushed up to us full of enthusiasm,

“Allons-y! La piste nous appelle!” It certainly wasn’t calling me. I didn’t even want to make its acquaintance, but Roger hustled us through breakfast and into the ski shop. There we were fitted with ski boots, constructed apparently of lead with rawhide laces from some large animal long since extinct. “Where is Claudine?” I ventured. “Oh, she never skis in the morning. She’ll join us later.” I was thereupon presented with a pair of six-foot skis made of teak, I think, from the weight of them, and we went out to join the happy throng.

The trip up the mountain was negotiated by *Le Tram*, a large cable car that bore its passengers up the mountain packed in like sardines in an upright position and holding our skis in our arms. There were two cars, which used the same cable going up or down with a large post about halfway up with detours around it so that the cars could pass each other before resuming their journey in whatever direction they were headed. The wind blew also, so that the cars rocked back and forth. Since there was nothing in the middle to hold onto, we were all very well acquainted by the time we reached the top. The floorboards were very sturdy, but not set so closely together that the view below us was obscured. We could easily observe the terrain below, apparently covered with ants on miniature skis.

On arrival at the top, Roger gallantly fastened on my skis and made sure the bindings would release. He advised me very gravely that it would probably be better if I did not point my skis straight down the hill, but should proceed *en travers*. He told us about a charming little chalet about halfway down where we could all meet for lunch; he did not think we would make more than

one run. Then he schussed off with a smile. In retrospect, I should have gotten right back onto *Le Tram* and gone to look for Claudine in the inn. Hindsight is always 20/20!

In case there is any doubt, I want to assure the world that French skiers are brimming with the milk of human kindness. The number of times that day when strangers picked me up, brushed me off, put my skis back on, retrieved one over the side of the mountain when a runaway strap broke were innumerable. My husband had disappeared early on. I resolved while I was in transit that if he were not dead, I would file for divorce as soon as we reached civilization. As for Roger, I found I had completely revised my opinion of him as someone who could be helpful. I never wanted to see him again.

It was beginning to get dark when I finally caught sight of the chalet where Roger and my husband were enjoying a glass of wine on the *terrasse*. “Where have you been?” they demanded. “We were worried about you.” I assured them that I was worried about me as well. I had expected that I would disappear without a trace, never having reached human contact again. Furthermore, if there was a portion of my anatomy that was not aching, it was an area as yet unfamiliar to me. Roger informed me that he had arranged for *le chariot* to convey me downhill while he and my husband would use the toboggan that my husband had been able to press into service earlier on. So I was loaded ignominiously into the sled reserved for the wounded and whooshed down the mountain at the fastest speed I had made all day. My amiable attendants whisked me into the Cabane de

Secours, pounded me all over and released me with the assurance that I had no broken bones and *tout va bien*.

When we finally stumbled into our room, I demanded of my husband how he had managed to secure the toboggan and why he had not included me in the venture. He assured me he had been having a terrible time making any progress and was picked up by a couple of teenagers on the toboggan (how had it ever been allowed on the *terrain de ski*?) who offered him a ride. When they arrived at the chalet, the teenagers had gotten involved with a crowd of their own and told him just to take it downhill and leave it at the door when he got there. He told me that he thought I was way ahead of him and he would catch up with me. It was not until it started to get so late that he became concerned. I had a few terse remarks to make on the quality of his reasoning, but really only wanted to soak in the bath, probably for the next week or so. While I was lying there, someone started to bang on the door: Roger! He wanted us to hurry down to dinner so we could go dancing later. Dancing? Moving at all was a challenge! We both allowed that we would have to pass up that activity with regret.

Dinner was served in our room that evening. I stood up through most of it and, despite having been out in the fresh mountain air all day, was not really very hungry. Sleeping was also a problem, as I could not sleep standing up, and lying down brought me into direct contact with my bruises.

The next day Roger was *désolé* that we didn't want to ski again. He assured us that we would be much better

at it since we had had all that practice the day before. I refrained from pointing out to him that what I had really been practicing was falling down and had achieved such a degree of excellence in that regard that I didn't need any more practice at all. He was very sorry that we would not take advantage of another chance to enjoy the mountain and assured us that he would offer us the opportunity to accompany them again. Somehow we were never able to take him up on his offer, and as our social circle began expanding, we saw less and less of Roger and Claudine.

In the meanwhile my bruises went through changes that would have put the aurora borealis to shame. Fortunately, none of them were on my face or I would have been obliged to remain cloistered in our apartment or emerge wearing a heavy veil. It was several weeks before the colorful display disappeared and I was able to rise, sit and lie down without wincing. Later I was even able to go hiking and play tennis, but was careful to avoid any activity that involved mountains.

Eventually, we did learn how to ski, but not in France with lead boots and teak skis. We also found that it was prudent to take lessons – on really small mountains before attempting big ones. It became a wonderful family sport which we all enjoyed, but nothing ever equaled the thrill of that first experience.

Ruth Gage

AWAKENING

Loneliness hung around me
Like a dark cloud, as I wandered aimlessly,
Not caring, not feeling.
My thoughts turned inward,
As if to save from hurt
The heart that yearned to feel again,
But was afraid.

Suddenly, you were there.
You touched my arm,
Gently, briefly.
As I looked up and saw your smile
And heard you speak my name,
A rush of warmth and tenderness
Filled my body,
Taking me completely by surprise.

In a minute, you were gone
And I went back to my wandering,
No longer afraid.
My heart beat softly in my chest,
My steps quickened,
And I smiled,
As I realized someone had touched my heart
And brought it back to life again.

Helen Flynn

JOURNEYING INTO THE WOODS

The path down is steep and distance becomes exaggerated as I look back and see only the roofs of the houses of our village. Soon I am alone. Perhaps it is the isolation that brings me back, and I am content that I probably will not see anyone else on my journey. The necessities of greeting and civility might be an imposition on what I now need and seek. Henry David Thoreau once commented: "I have never found a companion so companionable as solitude." And while I reject the notion of the reclusive life that he seemed to enjoy, for me the process of grieving and life's renewal have recently found solace in long periods of silence.

I suppose that silence and the ability to grow and be nurtured by it must at some point be learned. I doubt that it ever comes naturally. In years past, with five children and daily courtroom appearances, there was often very little of it in my life. But one of the gifts found in childhood and which I was later able to share with my own children was the ability to go with serenity into nature's world and to silently experience its secrets. There were fox dens with kittens that ventured forth and played as we hid downwind, and does that gave birth to fawns as we watched. Miracles of life that those who enter a wilderness with radios and headphones and idle chatter have never seen and may never be fortunate enough to experience in their lifetimes.

This evening the winter's first freeze has quieted the woodlands and there is a silence so profound that I sense I can almost hear my own thoughts. For many, such still-

ness might be uncomfortable, maybe even frightening. Silence is seen as a void that must be filled. But to a child brought up in the Quaker faith, silence was always an integral part of our spiritual existence, and it has now become a refuge in a time of sadness and grieving.

Approaching dusk brings a chill that hastens my pace as I venture back toward our village. I think of spring when the woodlands will come back to life, first with the frenzied voices of spring peepers in March and then the arrival of songbirds. But now there is only the creaking of trees as they bend to the wind and rub against each other. Suddenly there is the bark of an owl in the distance. I call back and soon there is dialogue between two lives that can never enter each other's world yet now seem to understand a language of their own.

The evening's journey comes to an end. Once again I have lifted the veil to nature's mysteries. But God's ultimate wisdom in matters that now seem so arbitrary still remains hidden from my eyes, perhaps to be revealed only after a lifetime of journeys. For now I must return to our village and its kindly people who might stop me to ask: "What did you see?" Do I dare to tell them that I may have seen an end to world conflict? Or perhaps a cure for heart disease and cancer? Or maybe the end to famine and hunger? They might look puzzled and ask simple questions like "how?" or "when?" or "where?" and this would sadden me when I realize that I have not yet traveled that far.

But it is why I will return in the morning. And it is why my journeys must continue.

Pete McCord

MY FIRST MODEL “A”

or

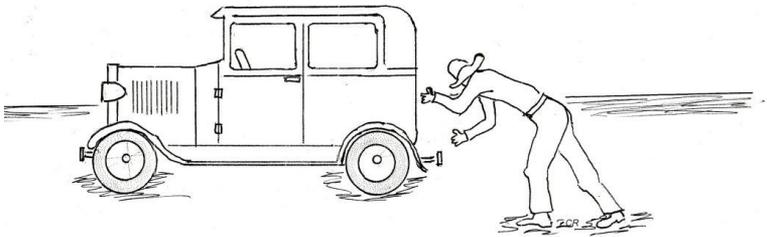
THE THINGS A KID DOES

I bought my first Model A when I was 13 years old for \$15.00. I had learned to drive in a Model A when I was 8 and lost some teeth in one when I was 9, but that’s another story. I drove that car all over the farm.

One summer my Dad and I were building a shed at the edge of a 50-acre hayfield. We usually worked on it together, but occasionally I would drive the Model A down there and work on it by myself. When I was ready to come back one time, the Model A had a dead battery so I walked up to the farm, a good quarter of a mile away, for help. There were no such things as jumper cables then so the Model A would have to be push-started. There was no one around to help so I would have to do it by myself. I would put the car in gear with the switch on and push it with a truck. When it started, I would just run after it. It seemed simple enough in that large expanse of hayfield. So I drove a truck down there and began to get ready. I set the throttle at what was, no doubt, the proper place and turned the switch on. The car would have to be in gear with the clutch engaged so it wouldn’t be easy to get moving. I was sure the wheels would just slide in first gear, maybe even in second. Third would be best, but I decided to try second.

The exercise would be in four parts. Part A, determining when the Model A was running: Part B, stopping the truck: Part C, getting out of the truck and going around the door: Part D, running after the car. As it

turned out, Part A was no problem at all. When the Model A started it began to pull away; in fact it continued to pull away. That caused a real urgency for Parts B and C, not to mention Part D. I don't remember executing Part B, but obviously I did because, when I came back later for the truck it was where it should have been. Part C was easy enough, but Part D, running after the car and catching it, was no laughing matter. I didn't know about the exploding universe theory then, where everything is moving apart at an ever-increasing rate, but that well describes what was happening in that hayfield.



It hadn't occurred to me to pull the truck alongside before jumping out for a shorter chase or even stopping well ahead and jumping on as it charged past, but then without a hand on the steering wheel, I couldn't be sure it would maintain a straight course and not run into the truck. I had no choice but to give it my best.

As I chased after that driverless Model A, which seemed determined to reach the other end of the field alone, I realized that when I set the throttle at the guess point, I should have been more conservative. How glad I was I had selected second and not high gear. You are probably expecting me to say that I couldn't catch it and it piled up in the hedgerow at the end of the field or

even went through the hedgerow, escaped from the hay-field and raced on forever. But, fortunately, I was playing some soccer then and was a pretty good runner. Yes, I did catch it. It was probably my best time for the 100 plus yard dash of my life. Needless to say, I drove the car right home before shutting it off and went back for the truck.

I had that Model A three years and sold it for \$30.00, double what I paid for it. It was much improved then with a coat of paint and some new parts. I also tacked on the cost of a brand new battery from Pep Boys, \$3.95.

As for starting a car by myself, I don't recall starting any kind of vehicle in that manner again. Had I done so, I am sure I would remember it.

Coles Roberts

LETTERS HOME

It was a bright, clear summer morning. Martin sat on the stoop in front of his house quietly bouncing a spaldeen on the concrete stoop.

“What’s up, Marty?” inquired Sidney as he walked up to him.

“Not much,” he answered, “I have to make some deliveries for Pop in a little while. Want to help?”

With a shrug of his shoulders, he nodded. “Why not?”

Sidney sat down next to Martin, took the spaldeen out of his hand, and started bouncing it. They had grown up together and were now approaching that time between childhood and adulthood. Martin was tall with dark wavy hair and an easy smile. He was wearing a loose tee shirt, long pants and scuffed Keds. Sidney was heavy-set with his hair crew cut and deep blue eyes. He wore a long sleeved-shirt with the sleeves rolled up to his elbows. And the shirt tails hung out over his knickers. They had both just graduated from public school and in the fall it was off to high school. They would be going to different schools and knew they wouldn’t be seeing as much of each other except on the weekends. But for now this was their time together.

“Think we can get a game of stick ball going after your chores?” asked Sid.

“I think so, I know Arty and Hank said they would be free and could get some of the other guys. Lincoln

Place looks quiet today, not too many cars to louse up our game.”

The glass-paneled door at the top of the stoop suddenly opened and Marty’s father, Mr. Abe Finkel, called out.

“Marty, I need you now. Oh, hello Sidney, both of you boys come up here.”

They both came up the stoop and into the house, following Mr. Finkel into the cool dark interior. Abe Finkel wore his vest unbuttoned with a tape measure hanging over his shoulders. Thin white hair covered his head and eyeglasses hung out of his vest pocket.

“Come down to the basement. I have some coats I have just finished that need to be delivered.”

Marty and Sid followed him through the dark hallway, past the kitchen, where a picture of President Roosevelt hung on the basement door. Mr. Finkel switched on the light and the three of them went down the stairs. The basement was cool and well lit. In front of them were two sewing machines, a steam press, and a long table with bolts of cloth. On one end of the table was a pile of children’s coats all in bright colors.

“Marty, these are the finished ones,” said Mr. Finkel. “I want you to take them and deliver them to Mrs. Rosen on Schenectady Avenue – you know, near Eastern Parkway. She has the bill, so be sure she pays you.”

The boys divided the coats between them and trudged up the stairs.

“Leave them on the dining room table while I get the pushcart,” Marty said. He left quickly by the front door. Sid, alone in the dining room, gazed at the crocheted tablecloth and the cut-glass bowl on top of it. A large crystal chandelier hung down over the table. His reverie was interrupted by Molly Finkel, who came into the room from the kitchen. She was a large woman with a wide smile. An apron covered her house dress. Her salt-and-pepper hair was tied back in a large knot. She was wiping her hands on a kitchen towel.

“Hello Sid, here to help Marty?” she asked, as her smile seemed to grow even wider. She walked over to the tall breakfront and took out a glass bowl. Sid always enjoyed her company. Her warmth always made him feel as if he was part of the family. He smiled back at her and nodded in assent.

“Get the coats, Sid, I have the cart outside,” yelled Marty from the doorway.

“Bye, Mrs. Finkel, see you later,” Sid said, as he went out the door with the coats and down the steps. The boys loaded the merchandise onto the cart and started off down the street. They hadn’t gone more than half a block when there was a loud shout from across the street.

“Hey guys, hold up, I need to talk to you.” It was Norman, Marty’s older brother. He was tall and thin like his brother with light brown hair and dark eyes. He was wearing a windbreaker with a union slogan on the back. He took the cigarette he was smoking out of his mouth and said:

“I have something important to tell you and I need your help.”

“Come on, Norman, Dad told us to get this order to Mrs. Rosen. Can’t it wait until we get back?” an annoyed Martin blurted out.

“Sure, sure, meet me at Miller’s Luncheonette when you’re done, OK.”

He walked away taking another drag on his cigarette. Marty and Sid continued to push the cart up the street with the bright summer sun reflecting off the colorful coats.

The sun was now low in the sky behind the bank and St. Matthews Church, and the shadows from the buildings seemed etched into the sidewalk. When Marty and Sid entered Miller’s, the ceiling fans were stirring up the warm air and rustling the newspapers on the counter. Norman sat at one of the round metal tables with a Coke in front of him.

“You two want anything?”

They both shook their heads in a silent no.

“So, what’s so important that we have to meet you here?” Marty asked.

Norman took a drink of Coke and put the bottle down and looked directly across the table at them. He seemed to Sid more serious than he could ever remember.

“I’m going away and I need your help. I’m fed up with the politics in this country so I have enlisted in the Lincoln Brigade. I really believe that their cause is worth

fighting for. I will be leaving for Spain next week. As a matter of fact, the boat leaves a week from Friday from a pier in Hoboken.”

Marty stared hard at his older brother.

“What about Mom and Dad, have you told them?”

“No,” quickly responded Norman. “And that’s why I need your help. I’m going to tell them I’ve found a job in another city and I’ll write to them as soon as I get settled.”

“So, if that’s the case, what do you need us for?”

For just a second Norman hesitated, then took another swallow of Coke, and said:

“Well, I’ve written Mom and Dad a number of letters and I want you guys to mail them about one or two weeks apart. I’ll drop them off at Sid’s house so that Mom and Dad won’t see them until you guys mail them. They all say pretty much the same thing, that I’m working and feeling fine.”

“How can we do this, Norman? You know it’s wrong. Mom and Dad will know just looking at them.”

“I know they will never look at the postmarks, just the return address, and it will be a P.O. box from Boston, New Haven and even Philly. To them I’m working in these different cities. You know I was never good at holding a job at any one place.”

Sidney and Martin stared at Norman with looks of shocked amazement. Martin got up from the table and said, “Big brother, I’m awful uneasy about everything

you're going to do. Your going away to fight in some other country's civil war and then this letter business..."

Norman interrupted him before he could finish.

"Marty, I made up my mind some time ago. Things are rotten everywhere and those Fascists are killing innocent women and children in Spain. I'm holding down a lousy \$30 a week job in a Greenpoint factory and it's going nowhere. I see how hard Pop works and I try to help by giving them a couple of bucks each week. You know I tried college at night, but half the time I was too tired to go. I will still send them part of my army pay when I can."

When he finished speaking his shoulders seemed to drop and he immediately lit up a cigarette and took a deep drag. All of a sudden he seemed much older. Martin walked over and put his arms around his brother and hugged him. They all knew that the conversation was over and that in the silence a decision had been made. Norman put on his battered baseball cap, turned, and walked out the door. He tossed his burning cigarette into the gutter. Suddenly the street outside seemed very still and they watched as he disappeared around the corner.

The days turned into weeks and the weeks into months. Summer became fall. After school Sid and Marty would would take a local trolley car or at times a subway, all over Brooklyn, to mail Norman's letters.

It was a rainy, cold Saturday. Sid had come over to see if Marty wanted to go to the movies. He was down in the basement working with his dad. Molly Finkel, in

the kitchen, was cooking a pot of chicken soup for dinner that night. The sharp ring of the doorbell interrupted everyone.

“Sid, please see who’s at the door,” said Mrs. Finkel.

Sid got out of the chair he was sitting in, put down the Amazing Comic book, walked over and opened the front door. A Western Union delivery boy stood in the doorway.

“Mr. and Mrs. Finkel, please. I have a telegram for them,” he said.

Sid called out from the doorway, “Mrs. Finkel, it’s a telegram for you.”

She wiped her hands on the dish towel tucked into her apron and walked to the front door.

“Yes, young man, I’m Mrs. Finkel. May I have the telegram?”

He handed it to her and she signed for it, and with a nod he turned walked down the stoop, got on his bicycle and peddled away.

Molly Finkel tore open the yellow envelope and put on her reading glasses.

SPANISH GOVERNMENT REGRETS TO INFORM
YOU YOUR SON NORMAN FINKEL WAS KILLED
SEPTEMBER 18 DURING BATTLE OUTSIDE
BARCELONA STOP SPANISH REPUBLIC KNOWS
HE LOST HIS LIFE FIGHTING FOR LIBERTY
AND DEMOCRACY STOP FURTHER DETAILS WILL
FOLLOW STOP

She read and reread the words over and over again.

“It’s a lie! It can’t be true! Abe, Abe come up here!” she shrieked and sat down crying. Mr. Finkel and Marty raced up from the basement. Abe Finkel put his arms around his sobbing wife. He pulled the crumpled telegram from her shaking fingers. Then he too began to cry. They held on to each other lost in their own personal grief.

“How can this be? It must be a mistake.” Mrs. Finkel said, gasping through her tears. “I have all of Norman’s letters that said he was working here in the East. Oh, dear God, why didn’t he tell me, how could he lie to us this way?” Her voice became louder, her face wet with tears, her body shaking. Mr. Finkel wiped his own eyes and turned to Martin and Sidney.

“What do you boys know about this?” he asked sternly.

Helplessly they looked at each other and Martin knew he had to tell his parents the whole story.

A few hours later Martin and Sidney sat quietly on the stoop of the house. The rain had stopped and dull sunshine cast long shadows onto the street. Martin sat with his arms folded over his chest. All his tears had stopped, leaving his eyes red. Sidney, sitting next to him, looked over at him every now and again. Suddenly they both knew, without saying anything, that they were now part of the adult world. Every once in a while Sid took the spaldeen and bounced it over and over against the concrete stoop.

George Rubin

LOST NATION

Lost Nation has a special meaning to me. In my young life it was everything that meant freedom. Elgin, Illinois (home), was school, work at my Dad's paint store, piano lessons, chores, all scheduled and no freedom. Lost Nation was the opposite, time to wonder, to look at the blue sky, time to grow up.

Lost Nation is a peninsula between Mill and Middle Lakes, two of the three Lauderdale Lakes in Wisconsin. The small-acreage farmers valued their pastures and planting fields, but considered worthless the land at the back which consisted of pot holes, gulleys and steep wooded hills – the Kettle Moraine remnant of the last Wisconsin glacier. Lost Nation refers to the undeveloped virgin land which the native Indians fled in the first half of the 19th century.

No road penetrated this morass until about 1900, when an entrepreneur built a 15-foot dam and created three interconnected lakes with four islands. Thus was formed miles of waterfront property and a real estate bonanza for the farm owners on the new peninsula. From 1910 to 1929 the lakes were developed rapidly – a conjunction of post WWI prosperity, the automobile, and a US highway from Chicago, 75 miles south.

My father had left his farm home in Wisconsin at age 16 and gone to live with his Aunt Bertha and Uncle Claude Hewitt in Elgin, Illinois, where his uncle had a paint and wallpaper store. The Hewitts, with Dad in tow, bought their lot and camped out in their “touring car” on the top of the hill for the first couple of years.

They built their cottage in 1922 with details culled from Sears, Roebuck catalogues.

I was six weeks old when I was first driven to “the lake” in my parents’ Willys-Knight. Six weeks old meant about April 15, which in retrospect takes on a symbolic meaning because it was always that date (after the ice had melted) when I first went swimming. I don’t recall the first time, but it was whenever I could outargue my mother.

The roads were terrible. US 12 was laid out on the old section lines. Since Lauderdale was northwest of Elgin and all roads then went either north or west, there were countless 90-degree corners with attendant accidents, ditching, etc. Upon leaving Elkhorn, Wisconsin, the gravel roads deteriorated once we turned onto Lost Nation Drive. Beyond, it was terrible, narrow, washboardy, subject to frequent washouts, and DUSTY.

Waldo Elliott, my age, lived next door. His parents were almost as old as my two grandmothers and, said my family, that was why Waldo was the way he was. Always into some sort of trouble – mostly greasy, mechanical, automobile, outboard motor trouble, unsettling to the older generation. He and I had little in common, but we did live twenty-five feet apart and were often thrown together in our preadolescence. Waldo had received a wonderful Sears, Roebuck tent for his birthday from his doting parents. He had erected it across the road in the woods.

One day Waldo called me over to show me something. He could make fire burn out of the earth!!! He would pour a teaspoon of clear liquid from a medicine

bottle onto the ground and light it, and THE GROUND WOULD BURN! Fantastic! He did this two or three times after the fire went out. The next time, rather than wait, he poured the liquid straight on the fire, which leapt up to the mouth of the bottle. He threw up his arm, throwing burning naphtha (for that is what it proved to be) all over his tent. A great conflagration ensued. We pulled out the tent's center pole, but the fire continued. In fact, it spread into the dry leaves and grass of that droughtish summer. Mr. Framburg, a neighbor on the other side of the Elliotts, came to the rescue. He had just installed his electric water pump and had begun to propagate a lawn. Luckily his hose reached, but the tent was no more.

I was in the doghouse. This was my first time at the lake without my parents. I was in the care of both grandmothers and on pain of good behavior. I was immediately taken home. Was it really true that this was an extraordinarily dry year and that the whole of Lost Nation might have been consumed? That's what they said.

Waldo's father, Mr. Myron Waldo Elliott, was a bit of a martinet. As I indicated, he was older than my parents and was stern and overbearing. He was a baseball fan and would park his radio in the rear living room window, turn up the volume, and then head up to the top of the hill to listen to the Cubs or White Sox. This, I realize as I write these words, is probably what alienated me from baseball as I joined the silent disapproval of my elders.

Mr. Elliott took one swim per day. His bathing suit was wool with horizontal khaki and yellow alternat-

ing stripes. Of course it was one piece, with a top, cut out holes under the arms, and a skirt-like covering. Everyone else had long before moved to trunks and even two-piece suits for the ladies. He did a back flip off his diving board every day until age 75.

On rainy days, in that tiny house with Aunt Bertha, two grandmas, mother and three kids, Grandma Neil (as I think of it now, perhaps in self-defense) would put a Sousa march on the Victrola, put a U.S.A. flag in our hands, and march us around the dining room table until we dropped.

As we grew older and began to notice automobiles, it was exciting each spring to see what Mr. Framburg would be driving. Every year, despite the Depression, he would have a bigger and shinier Oldsmobile. Everyone else was making do, we with Aunt Bertha's 1931 Buick and the 1926 Willys. One year both Mr. Framburg and Mr. Peterson, another neighbor, showed up with new Oldsmobiles! (Framburg's still the biggest.) Dad finally sold Aunt Bertha's Buick and bought a streamlined Ford in 1939. What a comedown! As WWII loomed, I don't know how I wheedled the use of that sporty car so much during my teenage years. We kept that car until 1947.

When I was 14 or 15 Lee Gilmour came into my consciousness. She was a young, attractive, vivacious 25-year-old woman. She was always surrounded by friends who drove new, sporty coupes with rumble seats. Remember rumble seats? I do. Lee was beautiful. Raven hair, pale ivory complexion, red lips. She paid attention to me, a young teen, even when she was involved with her friends. We kids would end up at the Gilmours eve-

ry Saturday night because Lee would be there. We'd listen to the Green Hornet on the radio in her car – Wow! – a radio in a car!

Boats, boats, boats. Boats were to me as a young child what cars or trains or planes are to many kids. “Big bam boat with the put-put on” was my baby talk for the old brown round-bottom boat powered by our 2½ HP Johnson. It was a thrill when I first was permitted to steer the boat and then later take it out all by myself.

Dad bought a little 12-foot scow sailboat for us. What a challenge! I quickly mastered the art, but Dad never felt comfortable. He loved it and spent a lot of time in it, but the excitement and the fear, I'm afraid, are what made it irresistible to him. Two incidents: (1) We capsized, he and I, in a squall. The boat turned turtle and the centerboard, a steel plate, went to the bottom. Bad design. A replacement centerboard, narrower but deeper, met the same fate. (2) A squall came up. Dad was out alone. He headed for shore with the wind directly behind him going a mile a minute. The centerboard hit bottom and he went ass over teakettle. He was unhurt except for his pride.

I grew up. No, that's too strong. I left my early childhood on September 1, 1939, when WWII broke out in Europe. I was only 14, but I knew the war would affect me. My parents and grandmothers were somber and frightened. It was Labor Day weekend and we were at the lake. The radio was on the porch. Pearl Harbor was two years away, but I knew on that September date (Dad's 45th birthday) that the world and my life were affected. In 1943, at age 18, I enlisted in the Navy, was

sent to officer training, and then a career loomed ... no more carefree days at Lost Nation.

After the war, the old gang scattered and life moved on. I accepted a job in 1947 with Price, Waterhouse in Chicago. Carol Claus and I fell in love while auditing the books of the W. F. Hall Printing company. She came to the lake with me often. We were married in 1951 and in 1952 we started our move east. She loves the water and sailing as much as I. And her first experience with sailing began at the lake, too.

Joseph Neil

