

MGC

An Autobiographical Surprise

1935 to 2005

by

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**Written & printed
Christmas 2008**

Preface

This autobiography was written with the encouragement of the girls in my life, namely Lori, Lesley, Carolyn, Heather and RoseMary. This is not a story of love life or money. In fact, I have omitted those subjects on purpose in order to get to the facts of my life story. This is a story of love from a family that so affected my life I can never lose sight of it. This story is so compelling that it needed to be written down, that's why the girls encouraged me to do so. In an effort to preserve the story and make it more interesting, I have given more than just the 'surprise'. I have also given related stories of the history of the Moon family including dates, names and locations, just in case anyone ever wants to look them up. I have given dates and events during my lifetime that may or may not be known by the readers of this story. Some of them may be humorous, some may be sad, but all of them are truthful and real because they actually happened in my lifetime. It is virtually impossible to write down everything that happened during one's lifetime, but this is my effort to tell of the most important of those events and circumstances. I hope you enjoy the story and decide it was worth my effort to put it down on paper.

I dedicate this story to all five of my children, their spouses and all of my grandchildren. May this little history be something that endures for the rest of your lives.

I also dedicate this story to my wife and best friend Joyce. Without her in my life I would have fallen into the cracks of nothing meaningful for the remainder of my life.

As the poem says from the song:

An Irish Blessing

*May the road rise to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back,
May the sun shine warm upon your face
and the rains fall soft upon your fields,
And until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of his hand.*

MGC: An Autobiographical Surprise 1935 to 2005

I was born July 21, 1935 at 3:15 P.M. in the Elmer & Emma Moon family home on Moon Road, Green Township, Brown County, Ohio, USA. The attending physician was Glenn S. Lamkin from Sardinia, Ohio. My Mother was Mildred Catherine Moon, age 25, an unmarried



Milton Eugene age 1 1936

housekeeper, living at home at the time. Living in the Moon family home at the time of my birth was Aunt Doris, age 16, Aunt Violet, age 13 and Uncle Paul, age 10. The family home is no longer standing, being torn down many, many years ago. I know the location of the former home but have no recollection or photos of the home.

My Mother needed to go back to work soon after my birth and went back to housekeeping homes in Cincinnati, mostly in the Roselawn and Norwood areas of the city. At the age of two it was decided that I would go with my grandparents Elmer & Emma Moon to Tennessee where my grandfather would build churches and start congregations in the Pilgrim Holiness faith. Aunt Doris and Violet became my baby-sitters from the time of my birth and after the family moved to Tennessee and until they married and left home in 1939 and 1942, respectively.

Elmer was born Feb. 24, 1885 in Highland County, Buford, Ohio, the 8th of 10 children of Leonard Moon (1845-1913) and Levina Kennedy Moon (1849-1929). Leonard & Levina are buried on a prominent corner in the Buford, Ohio cemetery. The other Moon siblings were Margaret (Nellie) Wilson (1871-1946), Harley, twin Etta Cornet (1875-1957) and twin Hattie Mount (1875-1959), Frank (1878-1922), Walter (1881-1956), Charles (1882-1946), Lola Donohoo (1887-1959) and Carey (1900-1957). Leonard Moon's parents were David Moon (1818-1887) and Margaret Smith Moon (1822-1889), buried at Five Mile Cemetery, just off U.S. #68 Brown County, Ohio. David Moon's parents were Samuel Moon (1781-1846) and Martha Routh Moon (1781-1852), buried in the Friends Cemetery, behind the church in Clinton County, Martinsville, Ohio. Samuel Moon's parents were Joseph Moon (1750-1833) and Ann Brewer Moon (1755-1824), also buried at the Friends Cemetery in Martinsville. The last time I visited this cemetery it was in urgent need of care and maintenance.

Elmer was the 9th generation of the the James Moon (1640-1713) and Joan Burgess Moon (1649-1739) family that came to Bucks County, PA, on Oct. 27, 1682, up the Delaware River, just past Philadelphia, PA. They were Quakers from Bristol, England seeking religious freedom from persecution in England. William Penn came on the 'Welcome' ship in 1682, but the Moon family came on another one of the 23 ships coming from England at that time.

Elmer did not graduate from high school, but worked in the family Sawmill and did farmer and



Milton Eugene age 2

carpenter work in the Greenbush and Buford towns nearby. Elmer married Emma Stratton Moon (9-23-1885 –1-18-1976) on Dec. 17, 1904 in the little church at Five Mile, in front of the cemetery where his grandparents were buried. From that union came 6 children: Virginia Blanche (1906-1981), Mildred (9-10-1909- 6-25-2000), Carl (1912-1998), Doris Wilma (1919-1991), Violet Mae (1922-1981) and Paul Frank (1924 -). From those 6 children came 18 grandchildren, lovingly called the 'Moon Cousins'. Their stories are many and varied, but I shall not digress from my own story.



First Church Monterey, TN.
With paronage 1939

Elmer became a Christian in around 1914 while attending the United Brethern Church in Greenbush, Brown County, Ohio. He was Clerk of the Green Township School Board from 1915-1930. He attended a year of training at God's Bible School in Cincinnati in 1924 and decided he would build churches in the towns of Mowrystown and Samantha, Ohio and in 1936 visited Tennessee, searching for locations to build more churches. He packed his family and



Mother and Son 1937

moved to Monterey, TN in 1937, and built a church there which is still being used today, then to a suburb of Knoxville, TN , then Jamestown, TN and finally Alpine, TN was his last church. He was Superintendent at the Jamestown, TN Campground in 1946. He passed away Dec. 19, 1955 at home in Alpine, TN and was moved for burial to the Mt. Orab, Ohio cemetery. His faithful wife Emma moved back to Ohio, living for a time with daughter Blanche, then to the Mt. Orab Nursing Home where she died peacefully in 1976. She is also buried in the Mt.Orab cemetery.



Moon Family 1938

Emma, Violet, Elmer, Doris, Paul, and Eugene

Now back to my story..... I remember very little about those first few years in Tennessee. One thing I do remember about Monterey is the parsonage where the family lived was on the left of the little church that was built by my Grandfather Elmer, with help from Uncle Paul and others. The home was small but had an old fashioned tin & wooden icebox on the



Elmer, Emma, and Eugene 1943

rear porch where ice was placed to keep items cool inside the little doors. Aunt Doris met Hershel Matthews while living there and married him in 1939. Later on in this story I'll tell you about re-visiting this church in Monterey, TN. The next move was to a suburb of Knoxville, where the parsonage home was right behind the church. I remember the church but have no photos of it. Uncle Paul graduated from high school in Knoxville. Next was the church in Jamestown, TN with the parsonage home behind the church. I remember Granddad holding revivals in the church, which was located on the edge of town. The next town down that road was Pall Mall, TN, home of Sgt. Alvin York, hero from World War I, played in a 1941 movie about his life by Gary Cooper. I started grade school in Jamestown in 1941. Aunt Violet met a Nazarene preacher named Roy McKinney and they were married in 1942. I remember riding back to Ohio in a 1936 Ford to visit the rest of the family during this time, it was a long trip, no interstate highways and took many hours to get there. My first grade in school I remember

having to write my name Milton Eugene Moon in printing form many times on a paper. To this day, I believe that is why I almost always print when writing something. I also went to the 2nd and 3rd grades at Jamestown Elementary School, I have copies of my school records. I remember going outside of town to the Jamestown Tabernacle where church revivals were held with large crowds. The tabernacle was large, had dirt floors with 2" x 10" board planks for seating. The stage area was large for the many people that were up there, including my Granddad. I was in touch with my Mother many times during my time in Tennessee, she would send me marbles to play with and sent me a little boy Air Force uniform to wear because Uncle Paul was being drafted into the Air Force during World War II. I remember the large coal stove in the living room of the home where the adults would stand around drinking coffee in the mornings. One time while my Mother was there, she asked me if I wanted to taste the hot chocolate milk, only it was coffee and I didn't like it at all. I still do not drink coffee. I had come



Eugene 1943
Jamestown, TN.

to know and love my Grandparents very much during this time of my life and always felt loved by them as well. I didn't know or care about my illegitimate birth.

I also didn't know it at the time but my Mother married Lynn M. Courts in 1939 and lived on Hamer Road near Brownstown, Ohio near the Courts family homes. It was decided that I would go back to Ohio to live with my Mother and Step-father in the summer of 1944, they were living by then in Mt. Orab at the old hotel site that had been converted into apartments. Aunt Nellie Wilson also lived in those apartments until her death in 1946. Mother let me get a black & white kitten that I named Mitten. There was a barbershop on the first floor of the old hotel where Mother would pay for my haircuts at 25 cents each. I was enrolled in the 4th grade at Mt. Orab Elementary School, down the street a few blocks from home, and wrote my name as Eugene Courts because Lynn said he was going to adopt me and my

name would change to Courts, so I started using the name. My first friends in Mt. Orab were Carroll Wallace, Charlie Foreman, Johnny Akers, Shirley Young, Roma Bailey and the Boothsby twins Carroll & Darrell. My 5th grade teacher was Grover Meeker, famous for his 'dutch rubs' on your head and 6th grade teacher was Oscar Bishop.

In 1945 my parents bought a 65 acre farm on Bardwell-Buford Road, about a mile off U.S. #68, north of Mt. Orab, Ohio. We lived in this home until after I graduated from high school in 1953. The farm also had a large barn, a tool shed and a chicken house. The house had 6 rooms, three rooms on each floor with a center hallway and staircase, but did not have bathroom facilities, so we used an outdoor toilet. Running water in the house was by way of a hand pump in the kitchen. I had my own bedroom on the 2nd floor. On March 23, 1946 my sister Rita Carolyn was born. Heat was provided by natural gas to a living room stove and the kitchen stove. The lawn around the house was large with many apple, pear and maple trees around it. I mowed the lawn with a 15" push-mower, no motor. Lynn worked at Allis-Chalmers, a motor and pump company in Norwood, Ohio and drove back and forth each day. Mother worked at Cahall's Department Store in Mt. Orab for more than 30 years. The store was owned by Hugh and Barbara Stratton Cahall. I mention this because Barbara Stratton's father was Fred Stratton, a brother of Emma Stratton Moon. We planted our own garden for vegetables and raised hogs to provide us with meat. We also raised chickens for their eggs and meat. We had a cow for a while, which provided us with milk and butter for the table. We did not farm the land, probably because we didn't have any farm implements that would have been necessary.



Eugene's 7th Birthday
Jamestown, TN.

This home became the center for family get-togethers even though Aunt Blanche and her kids, Beverly 1932 -), Dean (1933 -1995) and Anita (1936 - 2004) lived a few miles away. Blanche's husband died early in life in 1936 at age 28. Uncle Carl and wife Hazel Page Moon (1916 -) also lived nearby with daughter Janet. Aunt Doris and husband Herschel Matthews lived for a few years in Troy, Ohio where Herschel had a job before moving back to Tennessee to live the rest of their lives. Their sons Larry (1939-2006), Lannie (1942 -), daughters Rosa Nell (1945 -), Joyce (1947 -) and son Loren Dale (1949 -) and daughter Linda (1955 -) came along as the Moon Cousins got their start during these times.



Moon Family 1949
Top: Paul, Carl, and Blanche
Middle: Doris and Mildred
Front: Elmer, Emma and Violet



Moon Cousins 1949
Top: Dean, Beverly, Sharon, and Larry
Middle: Anita, Rita, and Janet
Front: Joyce, Eugene, Danny, and Lannie

Also coming to visit, mostly in the summer, from West Virginia and then Alabama where Roy ministered churches, was Aunt Violet and Roy McKinney with their children: Danny Joe (1945 -), Sharon (1949 -), Carol Ann (1951 -), Leroy (1954 -) and Melody (1960 -). Uncle Paul and Betty Jackson Moon also came from Florida where Paul had taken a school teacher job in Cape Canaveral, FL. Son David came along starting in 1956. This is the time when the cousins got to know each other and became life-long friends. We all have favorite remembrances and photos from these times together. No one ever talked to me about my illegitimate birth, as this was never an issue. It was not a subject that I discussed with my Mother either.

I rode the bus to school every day. I was an early pick-up in the mornings, but got off early in the afternoons. The bus driver was Eddie Hughes. My sister Rita started going to school with me on the bus in 1952 which was my Senior year. I knew all the kids on the school bus. Merlin Day lived just over on Day Road, Vernol Luttrell was the next stop on the bus after me, then Walter Kerwood, then Ken Bonham, then Dawson Jones, then the Keller family with Helen as one of my classmates, and so on down the line. All the homes were on farms so there was quite a long distance between homes. I rode a bicycle whenever I wanted to visit any of those friends. We had some very good basketball games during those times living on the farm. I had a goal hung on the side of our barn, but Dawson Jones had the best barnyard court for the games.

My 2 years in junior high school were not very memorable but I do remember having separate rooms for classes, including a big room for study hall. One thing I remember was getting so sick when I was 13 years old. Mother & Lynn took me to the Good Samaritan Hospital in Cincinnati where I had my appendix removed by Dr. Brinker. I was much better after that. I remember the winter of 1950 when a big snow storm hit our area. The snow and high winds lasted almost 3 days and covered the fence posts in drifts. The schools and roads were closed for many days. Ken Bonham's father Earl was the first person to make his way out to the highway, using a tractor to pave the way on the more than 4' of snow covering the road.

High school became a much bigger deal for me. First of all, Greenbush and New Hope schools sent their Freshmen classes to Mt. Orab to join us. Obviously, new classmates became new friends. Adrian Shaw, Joyce Tissandier, Sharma Wallace, Don Baumgartner and Arnold Conwell came from Greenbush School, among others. While Lois McKinley and Joanne Lucas, among others, came from New Hope School. Hoot Hatcher joined us in the Junior class. I remember some of our class teachers as follows: Winifred Brooks, English & Literature (having to learn Grey's Elegy poem and recite it in class "The curfew tolls the knell of parting day" was the first line); Andrew Courts (no relation), Science & Biology; A.J. Vandament, Government and World History (he always went home to let out the cat every day); Elden Stansberry, Sciences; Hoyt Leininger, Math & Geometry; Jean Shope, typing, this class would become very beneficial for me later on; Elizabeth Cremer, band and vocal music, I played trombone in my Freshman year, but quit the band because it interfered with basketball practice. I sang vocal music in school and had a leading role in a class play called "Up On Old Smokey". In my Junior & Senior years I went to Wilmington College for a weekend to join about 200 other high schoolers in a giant ensemble of vocal music. We would practice on Friday & Saturday and perform a concert on Saturday night. The instructors were great and I learned a great deal about vocal music from these weekends. It was in my Junior year that I started singing in acapella quartets. One quartet had Arnold Conwell, Don Baumgartner, Carroll Wallace and I. With that group we added Sophomore Joan Redmond for a while with Jeanine Wallace playing piano. Another quartet was called the 'Corsaires' with Sonny Seipelt (a year older), Carroll Wallace, Charlie Foreman and me. I even tried playing ukulele for a short time. It was 1954 and



Eugene 1953

groups were just starting to make musical hits with their records, I'm sure we all had that in mind, but it never happened to us. The 'Crewcuts' and the 'Four Lads' already had hit songs. I did write a couple of basic, simple songs, had them copyrighted, and sang them on tape, but nothing ever came of them. I still have the tape, but don't know if it would play anymore. We had uniforms and made a good appearance whenever we sang. I certainly saw the market for singing groups but probably didn't have the basic talent and/or the luck to make it big. We did sing at various Lion's Clubs, PTAs, church and social groups of any kind. Twice we sang on Ruth Lyon's Variety Show on WLW-TV in Cincinnati. Vocal music was in my blood, I just didn't know about SPEBSQSA yet.

As much fun as I was having with the vocal music, high school sports was an even bigger thing for me. First of all, sports in Brown County, Ohio was very limited. There was no availability to baseball, football, soccer, volleyball, lacrosse or hockey, and there was not any sporting activities for girls. That left very few areas for competitive sports, namely basketball, fast pitch softball and track meets. A track meet was held every May at the Fairgrounds in Georgetown, a tournament for fast pitch softball teams was held in Russellville every September although this was not a school sanctioned event. We fielded a softball team during my Junior and Senior years and won the tournament in our Sr. year. Carroll Wallace was the pitcher, Adrian Shaw played 2nd base and I was the catcher. It was a fun event played in the evenings and under the only lighted field in Brown County. We had to drive to Russellville on our own for the games.

Basketball was played by every school in every town in Brown County. The towns were Aberdeen, Decatur, Fayetteville, Homerville, Mt. Orab, Ripley, Russellville, and Sardinia. Georgetown was an exempted village school and did not play other Brown County schools, choosing to play other exempted village schools around southern Ohio. I played basketball in every school gymnasium in Brown County, however, within the next 20 years every one of the schools merged with other schools or simply closed their school. For example, Homerville and Mt. Orab merged to form Western-Brown High School, etc., while Decatur closed their school. The gymnasium at Mt.Orab High School was the smallest in the County. I can't quote the exact dimensions, but the center circle and the foul circles overlapped, the only place for seating was on bleachers on the stage. People would fill the bleachers and stand around the edge of the court within a 12" area to the walls, thereby spreading into the court where the game was being played. In my Freshman and Sophomore years on the JV team the coach was Dick Swope from



Mt. Orab High School Basketball Champs-1953
L to R: John Stump, Adrian Shaw, Harold Newberry, George Bradley,
Carroll Wallace, and Gene

Georgetown. I didn't play very much in the games, I was still very small in size and had limited experience. In my Junior year Kenneth Emrick from Germantown, Ohio became the basketball coach. Emrick was a recent graduate from Dayton University and his first rule for basketball players was "no smoking". I hadn't smoked before but this was confirmation for me that lasted a lifetime, I have never smoked cigarettes during my life. I was a reserve on the team but still got in some games, especially late in any blow-outs. Glenn Bishop was the star of the team, but we still had a mediocre season.

My Senior season didn't have many expectations but we wound up with a pretty good team.

Carroll Wallace was starting his second season at guard and I made the starting five at the other guard, even though I was only 5' 9" and 125 lbs. Junior George Bradley played forward while Adrian Shaw was the other forward. Adrian was 6' and 180 lbs and a terror on the backboards. We needed a center and turned to sophomore Harold Newberry, who at 6' 3" gave us more rebounding help and a little scoring ability as well. Hamersville was the returning champs from Brown County and still had their starting five of Bob Moler, Don Jennings, Jake Melvin, Jerry Adams and Bob Ogden. They were tough and experienced. Our first game against Hamersville was in the Mt.Orab gym. Hamersville played a pressing man-for-man defense and we couldn't get the ball inbounds or up the floor very well. We got beat by about 40 points. The next time we played them in Hamersville, a much larger gym, we got beat by about 10 points. Our team continued to improve. Carroll continued to have big nights, scoring 32 in one game. Adrian dominated the rebounding with scoring help as well. George was a left-hander with a good push shot. Harold continued to improve at center. I was not a scoring threat early in the season, but as the season wore on my set shot got better and better, I averaged about 10 points per game during the season. Jump shots had not been used by basketball players yet, so set shots were the long range weapon for shooters. In the tournament we won our first game then had to face Fayetteville with their big center Harry Brose going against us. Harold played behind Brose and Adrian played in front of him and limited his scoring chances. We won by about 10 points. Next was the Finals being played in the Ripley auditorium against Hamersville. Hamersville had won all but one of their games, they lost to a team from outside Brown County, and were ready to repeat as champions of the Brown County League. By this time in the season we were playing our best basketball. Hamersville decided to play a 2-3 zone with one guard falling back into the center area to protect Adrian and Harold from getting the ball very often. That strategy left me open for most of the game. I scored 18 points, as did Carroll, and we won by the score of 68 to 50, an 18 point margin. Hamersville was devastated and we were jubilant as the new champs. What a fun time in my life. Joyce Tissandier, Sharma Wallace, Joan Redmond and JoAnn Brown were the cheerleaders for the team. We rode busses to all the games together. Mt. Orab hadn't had a champion team since 1947 when A.J.Vandament was coach with Joe Glover, Walter Watson, Harold Neal, Morris Wright and Tom Bohl as the starting five. We kept hearing about the '47 team from Mr. Vandament in his History and Government classes.

The top 2 teams from our league were invited to the Sectional Tournament in Xavier Fieldhouse in Cincinnati the following week. We got beat by Seven Mile School from Butler County while Hamersville lost too. Parties and honors started coming back in Mt. Orab. Hugh Cahall hosted one party in his home, while Adrian and Carroll made the County All-Star team. This was a good time in my young life, I had many friends and knew a lot of other kids from around the nearby towns. We had a 'Teen Canteen' in Mt. Orab where many of us would congregate and have fun together. I did not have a girlfriend during high school and didn't go out on dates. For one thing, I did not have a car and by living outside of town, getting back and forth was a problem for me. I would hitch-hike on U.S. #68 from Bardwell to Mt.Orab or in reverse and have to walk the mile on a gravel road to my home. Hitch-hiking was not a problem 50 years ago as it would be today. On a few occasions I would ride to work with Lynn to Norwood, take a city bus downtown where I would go to movies all day, take a bus back to Norwood and ride home with Lynn. Movies were very cheap then (25 cents) and musicals were my favorites. Mother would come to some of my school events but Lynn never once came to any of my sporting or singing events, nor did he come to my graduation. I was an average student during my school years, but the activities of sports and singing made me popular with many friends. Mother always looked at my report cards and signed them, but never had much of anything to say about my grades. I know this; my illegitimate birth was never brought up to me or discussed by any of my friends.

After graduation in May, 1953 going to college was not a consideration, very few of my classmates headed off to college. College was not considered any big deal in the 1950's.

My first automobile was a 1941 Chevrolet, black, and cost me \$100, pretty cheap, even in 1953. It wasn't much to look at but it got me around for a while. In 1955 I bought a 1953 Ford Sunliner convertible, black with red and black leather interior, from the Crowell family in Williamsburg for \$1900. The car was hot and sure helped me get around a lot better. After graduation, I got a job at Allis Chalmers in Oakley (Cincinnati) and therefore, could ride to work with Lynn, saving me a big expense in getting to work every day.



Gene With 1953 Ford

Adrian Shaw and I became very close friends. Carroll Wallace had married Joyce Tissandier right after graduation, which took him out of social activities with us. Adrian's first car was a '46 Buick but soon thereafter bought a '50 Ford, navy blue, had the nose and trunk customized and gave us some real good wheels to get around in. One of our places to go was Indian Lake, near Bellefontaine, Logan County, Ohio. In the summer, Indian Lake was buzzing with teenage activities. Girls were everywhere. In 1954, Adrian, Jim Rosselot, from Owensville, and I went to Indian Lake for a weeks vacation. We rented a little house in an alley, the address was 120 ½ on whatever street it was on. My Mother was concerned about 3 boys going on vacation together that we wouldn't eat correctly, so she made us a cake to take with us. I remember the fridge being filled with the cake and beer, that's all. I don't remember meeting anyone in particular, just that we had such a good time hanging out with other teenagers from other areas of the state. Adrian & I made the trip to Indian Lake numerous times, up route #68 through Wilmington, Xenia, Springfield and Urbana. One time, coming home late at night, driving fast through Fayetteville, the cop stopped me and asked where I was going so fast. I replied "I've got to get home before I run out of gas". He let me go. Adrian still tells that story. Adrian and I also went to lots of State Fairs and County Fairs during those times in the mid-50s.



Elmer and Emma Moon 1954
Alpine, Tennessee

Late in 1955 I decided to move away from my home on the farm. I found a bedroom and bath available on the 2nd floor of Mrs. Edith Layman's home in Mt.Orab. I knew the elderly lady as did my Mother, so it was a good setup for me. Rent was \$50 per month.

Adrian & I continued to play basketball with a town team, playing other town teams in the area, usually on Sunday afternoons during the winter. One place we frequently went was the Toot & Tell It Restaurant in Williamsburg. Numerous young people would come there, especially on weekends. That's where I met Marcia Morgan for the first time, her girlfriends were Jill Creager and Carol Potrafke, all Seniors at Williamsburg High School. The Hornback twins Neva and Nedra were also there quite often. Adrian had been going with Linda

Copenhaver, class of 1955 in Mt.Orab for a while. I started dating Marcia in early 1956 and married her on Dec. 22, 1956. Adrian Shaw was my Best Man and Linda Hughes was Marcia's Maid of Honor. It was a small wedding in the Methodist Church in Williamsburg, after which we left on our honeymoon, heading for Florida. We stopped in Tennessee to see my cousins and received a phone call from home that Marcia's aunt & uncle, Ethel and Hugh Davidson were ill and that we should come home. Hugh Davidson was an attorney in Batavia, Ohio for Ely, White & Davidson and lived in a large home at 460 Main Street in Williamsburg. Hugh had cancer and would die from the disease in 1957.



Gene and Marcia Morgan 1956

Marcia and I moved into an apartment on Front St. in Williamsburg and I continued to work at Allis-Chalmers in Oakley. Marcia worked at the bank in Batavia. We continued to spend time with the Davidson's as their health deteriorated, since Aunt Ethel had been diagnosed with cancer as well. One of Marcia's fellow workers at the bank was Frank Burger from Batavia, we introduced him to Linda Hughes and they married about a year later. We played lots of bridge during those times with Linda & Frank. In 1957, I sold the Ford convertible and bought a '57 MG-A Roadster, turquoise, 2 seated for \$2700 from Raymond Motors in Cincinnati. I wanted the Austin-Healey Roadster but it was \$500 more and I couldn't afford it. By this time we had moved next to the Davidson's home in a little house they owned and remodeled for us. In the Spring of 1958 Marcia & I

went to Florida for a short vacation, driving the Roadster, we only stayed a few days and came back home to help out with the Davidson's. Also helping with the Davidson's was Wilhelmina Gebhardt, an elderly German nurse and long time friend of the Davidson's. Miss Gebhardt moved into a small house 2 doors from the Davidson's so she could be on call whenever needed. Also of importance in the winter of 1957-58 was that I enrolled at the University of Cincinnati Evening School and took 3 classes, a fact that proved very worthwhile later on.

In June, 1958 I received my orders to be drafted into the U.S. Army. I was married, without children and almost 24 years of age, the prime qualifications for being drafted into the military. I reported for duty in July, 1958 at Ft. Thomas, KY and was sent by bus to Ft. Knox, near Louisville, KY. At Ft. Knox I had my physical, was issued Army clothing, had my head shaved, given a serial number, U.S.#52468614 and sent off to basic training. Eight weeks of training that included rifle and bayonet and other forms of military warfare. Eight more weeks of secondary training and I was ready for assignment anywhere they wanted to send me. The fact is that I was the top trainee in the secondary school, beating out my new friend, Peter H. Theodore, from Georgetown, KY. I was offered the opportunity to become an Army officer but it required an enlistment of another year and I didn't want to do that. Peter's parents were immigrants from Alsace-Lorraine in Europe and had made the first electric blanket in this country, which had made them very wealthy when they sold out to a much larger company. Peter and I were ordered to report to Ft. Hood, TX where I would become a supply clerk, because of my typing skills, in the 15th Cavalry Unit of the 2nd Armored Division of the U.S. Army. Elvis Presley had been at Ft. Hood just a couple of months before my arrival and he had been sent on to Germany. I thought that I might be sent to Europe, but that never happened. Peter was made into an arms clerk for the Arsenal Dept. and lived with his wife just off base in Killeen, TX. Marcia stayed home to help in the care of Ethel Davidson, but came to see me while still at Ft. Knox accompanied by Linda and Adrian Shaw, who had married in August, 1957. Marcia also came to see me once at Ft. Hood.



Eugene, U.S. Army-1958

I was bored at Ft. Hood, being a supply clerk was a nothing job. On a chance of something interesting, I ordered a subscription of 'The Wall Street Journal' to pass the time.

I loved reading that newspaper about business, corporations and money. During the rest of my time at Ft.Hood I decided that I should enter the business of becoming a stockbroker. I had enrolled at Moler's Barber College before being drafted and gave my spot to Marcia's brother Leroy after my notice of entering the military. I needed something to do after my Army tour and this was to be it. Little did I know what it would take to get there, but at least I was heading for something that I really wanted. My tour of duty in the Army ended in July, 1960. I was lucky that my time in the military occurred between the Korean War and the Vietnam War, thereby no armed conflicts that might have required military fighting. For my 2 years in the military I always said that it was an experience that I learned a lot and glad that I did it, but an experience that I would not want to go through again.



Gene With '57 MG-A Roadster

As soon as I arrived back home I started working on becoming a stockbroker. I called a couple of firms in Cincinnati and was told that a college education would be necessary to get started in the brokerage business. I went to the University of Cincinnati to get an entry form into the College of Business Administration, a new branch of the university that had only been open for application in the last couple of years. I made my application to the university, including my classes and grades from high school and received a reply a few weeks later. I was told that my grades were acceptable but that I was short the required math credits to enter the university. They

suggested that I could take a year of Algebra II and Geometry by correspondence and then apply for entrance in February, 1961. So how was I to take classes by correspondence when I didn't even know where to start? In the meantime I went back to work at Allis-Chalmers, this time at the Norwood plant until such time that I could enter college.

After making phone calls to various people that could give me information on classes by correspondence, I found that I could do so with a math instructor at Eastern Kentucky University. I began the process and quickly learned that I needed help, so I went to my high school math teacher in Mt.Orab, Hoyt Leininger, who agreed to tutor me through those 2 difficult classes. Mr. Leininger was a life-saver to me. His instruction was easy going and taught me that most anything could be accomplished if the desire was there.

Back and forth I was going to Mr. Leininger's home in Mt.Orab and back and forth I was sending those math papers to the instructor at Eastern Kentucky. I got the job done in the required time and made my application to U.C. and prepared to enter classes in February, 1961.

Obviously, I was married, living at home and would be commuting back and forth to U.C. Marcia was still working at the bank, Ethel Davidson continued her deterioration due to the cancer, even spending days in the hospital in Cincinnati. I quit work at Allis-Chalmers to devote full time to my studies. My first test in college came on a World History exam, I knew the material very well but was shaking so bad I couldn't write. I got over that pretty fast, as the tests continued to come. I carried an extra heavy load of classes, since I was in a hurry to get through college and get a job as a stockbroker. I majored in Economics with a minor in Finance. I quickly found that History classes were easy for me as electives so I took them whenever I had time. I carried 24 to 28 class hours per semester, it wore me out, but I was able to graduate with a Bachelor in Business Administration in 2 ½ years on August 24, 1963 in the Wilson Auditorium on the U.C. campus. The reason I was able to graduate so quickly was because of those 3 classes I took in '57-'58 were applicable to my credit hours. My grade point average was right at 2.5 for the entire time in school. Books cost about \$5 or \$6 and my whole degree cost \$3500, including the books. It was fun time on campus during these years, the U.C. basketball team was NCAA champions in 1961 and 1962 and runner-up in 1963 due to an overtime loss to Loyola of Chicago.

One of my best friends in college was David Gorman. Dave and I found ourselves taking the same classes, even though he was a Finance major. We wrote papers together, often studying in the book rack sections in the lower Library. Dave was married to Joyce and lived nearby to campus. They had left Ohio State University and needed to finish up at U.C. Both Dave & I wanted to get into the stock brokerage business. Both of our wives became pregnant in our Senior year and after taking numerous interviews for jobs, Dave took a job with Ford Motor for \$6200 per year, because he was afraid he wouldn't be able to make enough money to support his new family as a stockbroker. More on the Gorman's later.

Ethel Davidson had passed away peacefully with me at her bedside in December, 1962. Todd Davidson Courts was born on April 22, 1963. Todd was a beautiful child, I was so proud of him, he was the best looking child on Main Street. One of the things I did was pose Todd for a photograph on a seat with one leg under him, just like a photo of me at age 2, the similarities were strikingly the same.

Something new was about to happen with me that would provide a source of pride and accomplishment for years to come. I had never heard of SPEBSQSA, but a new barbershop harmony chapter was about to be formed in Batavia, Ohio. Frank Burger was involved and wanted me to join him. The chapter was called the Clermont Clippers with a blind man Wally Haglage and Al Kollar from Batavia spearheading the new license. I was finishing up my studies at U.C. and didn't have much time for this hobby at the time, but did manage to learn enough of the music to sing on the Chapter Initiation Show on June 15, 1963 in Batavia. Also on the show was the Roaring 20s from the Western Hills Chapter, the Piperettes, Sweet Adeline champs from Cincinnati and the Society's 3rd place medalists from Chicago, the Four Renegades. I was hooked from the start, it was acapella singing in harmonies in a quartet, what more could I ask? I found out later that that Society was formed in 1938, why did it take me 25 years to find it?

My Mother and Lynn had no idea of what I was going to do for a living, and I must admit finding a job in the brokerage business was not as easy as I had hoped for. I interviewed numerous companies. The Dow Jones Industrial Average was around 300 and trading was less than ½ million shares per day, so the companies were hesitant in hiring someone new, especially since my name wasn't a well known and a respected money name in Cincinnati. However, I finally landed a job as a trainee in the investment business at W.D. Gradison & Co. in the Dixie Terminal Building, downtown Cincinnati. About 2 weeks after going to work President John F. Kennedy was assassinated on Nov. 22, 1963.



Gene and Mother, Graduation 1963

I was at work on the trading desk and saw the message from Dallas firms stating the President had been shot.

The markets were closed immediately and stayed closed for 5 days.

After graduation from U.C. I had more time to start attending weekly meetings of the Clermont Clippers and enjoyed it very much. I felt the need for getting in a quartet and decided to ask some Mt.Orab friends if they were interested. They were reluctant at first, but finally decided to give it a try. Don Jennings would sing tenor, Carroll Wallace, lead, Hugh Cahall singing bass and I sang baritone. These guys were singing in the Methodist Church Choir and I knew they were capable singers. We took the name 'New Harmony Four' from the little cross-roads between Mt.Orab and Williamsburg called New Harmony. At my urging we decided to enter our first contest in April, 1965 at the Int'l. Prelims contest being held in Cincinnati. We came in 32nd out of 34 quartets, but did beat out our friends from the Cincinnati Chapter, the 'Six Foot Four', who came in 33rd. We didn't quit, we just kept on working and singing wherever we could. In July, 1965 Don & Shirley Jennings and Marcia & I drove to Boston, MA to the

International Barbershop convention. This was our first Int'l. contest and was even more fun than we expected. I went to many Int'l. conventions thereafter but can't take the time to name each city attended, maybe only some special ones.

In the summer of 1965 Marcia and I decided to build a new home just outside Williamsburg. I bought 3 acres of land on a hill top for \$3000 and started making plans to build there. We had been living in the Davidson home in town and felt like we needed more open space to raise a family. The builder was the late Kermit Smith, a friend in Williamsburg and so we began to build the ranch style, 3 bedroom, 2 bath, red brick home with 2 car garage on the lower level and a long winding driveway up to the house. The house was to cost \$28,000 to build, but it ran \$4000 over budget. The house was great, the location was excellent and proved to me a great place for the kids.



Home on the Hill 1965-1977
Williamsburg, OH

In November, 1965 my company decided to send me and Dale Honeker, a fellow broker, to New York City for a month to attend classes at the NY Institute of Finance. We stayed at the Meridian Hotel at 62nd & Avenue of the Americas in Manhattan and rode the subway down to Wall Street every day. On one particular day we were riding the subway back to our hotel when the subway stopped dead on the tracks. The lights went out, it was pitch black and the cars were jammed full of commuters. It was 5:30 in the afternoon. No one knew what was going on, so we stood there in our little 12" square, afraid to go out onto the tracks because they were electric. We had no cell phones to find out what was going on. Finally, after 3 hours standing there in total darkness, we all decided to go down on the tracks and walk single file to the next exit. When I came up to the street and looked around, there were no lights anywhere. I was at 22nd Street and it was the night the lights went out in New York City, and I had been on a subway. Dale and I made our way the forty blocks to our hotel, stopping a few times in bars that were operating with candlelight. We arrived at the hotel about midnight and to my surprise, the lobby was jammed packed with sleeping people. They couldn't get to their rooms unless they walked the stairs and the hotel was more than 40 stories high. My room was on the 4th floor so I was in good shape. I called Marcia and she was so relieved to hear from me, she knew more about the blackout than I did. It was the talk of the city and the country. They made a movie about it the next year, starring Doris Day.



New Harmony Four 1966
LtoR: Don Jennings, Carroll
Wallace, Hugh Cahall, Gene

The quartet went to contest again in November, 1966 and had improved very much. But this contest was more noted for something else than the ranking of the New Harmony Four. Marcia was pregnant with our 2nd child and when I left for the contest in Pittsburgh, PA, she was 2 weeks from her expected delivery date. I called her Friday night and again Saturday morning and she didn't tell me the truth about being in labor that morning. I received a call in the afternoon that she was in the hospital in Cincinnati and ready to deliver. Bari Lee Courts was born the afternoon of Nov. 12, 1966 while I was in Pittsburgh, PA. Since I couldn't be there for the birth we decided to sing in the Finals on Saturday night, after which we would head home. The drive home

late at night was a thriller, in fog and mist all the way. The name Bari was a change from the spelling Barry that we made on Sunday following his birth.

In the Fall of 1966 I was appointed, due to a resignation, to the School Board of Williamsburg School District. I served 10 years on the School Board before departing it in 1976.

It was good to be involved in the schools where my children would be going to school. In the meantime, Marcia was pregnant with our third child and Darren Thomas Courts was born on Sept. 16, 1968. We had a girl name picked out 3 times but never got to use it. The name would have been Laura Kay, but I have never been sorry. I might add that we had a Dalmatian dog named Wendy that gave birth to 5 little Dalmatians the day after Darren was born. The boys loved those pets. I continued to play slow-pitch softball for the Methodist Church in Williamsburg and even ran a softball league in Williamsburg for a few years because the School Board paid me a small fee to organize the league. I played 3rd base most times and was an average batter in the line-up.

Within the New Harmony Four, bass Hugh Cahall decided he couldn't keep up with the shows we were doing by now and asked to be replaced in the quartet. After some searching, we asked Jim Gentil to join us singing bass. Jim's brother Tom Gentil was the Director of the Western Hills Chapter, and although Jim was not a barbershopper, we figured he had good genes. The quartet continued to improve and made the top 5 in the District, but lead singer Carroll developed allergies that caused him to clog up his throat, which is not good for a singer. Unfortunately, we had to replace Carroll as lead singer in the summer of 1969, one of the hardest jobs I ever had to do. Mike Connelly, former baritone of the Roaring 20's quartet, joined us singing lead. Mike was an experienced barbershopper and even though he had never sung lead, he was a terrific singer for our quartet. Our first contest with Mike came in Sept., 1969 in a Divisional contest in which we place 1st and qualified to enter the JAD Contest in Pittsburgh on October 17-18, 1969. The quartet won the contest that weekend and became the JAD Quartet Champions. Our wives attended the contest weekend with us and appeared on stage with us following the announcement of winners. Suddenly, we were in great demand to sing on Chapter shows, we had 23 show bids come in for the following Fall for a 6 week period. Obviously, we had to turn most of them down, but we continued to sing many



New Harmony Four, JAD Champs 1969
LtoR: Gene, Jim Gentil, Mike Connelly,
Don Jennings



New Harmony Four-1974
Mike, Jack, Don, and Gene

Chapter shows all over the District and surrounding Districts. We had a good show act, Don would do most of the talking and introducing of songs with interruptions and corny jokes from Mike throughout the performance. We competed again in April, 1970 and won the right to compete at the Int'l. convention in Atlantic City, NJ in the summer. We placed 22nd in our first Int'l. contest and had a great time doing it. It would take too long to enumerate the activities of the New Harmony Four during the next 5 years, but suffice it to say that we sang on 125 chapter shows and 4 Int'l. contests with lots of memories throughout the years. In 1972 Jim Gentil left our quartet to join the Roaring 20s because he thought Mike would have to drop out of our quartet because of work commitments. Jack Craven, a well-known bass singer from Aurora, Indiana joined us as we continued our shows. In 1975 Jack had to quit the quartet to rejoin his family and we were left without a bass singer again. Pat lasillo joined us for about a year, but

we broke up for good in 1976. It was a long run of about 12 years, but I still have so many memories that will remain until my last breath.

On the work front I continued working for Gradison & Co. in Cincinnati. The stock markets were starting to boom with the number of shares trading each day. In the summer of 1969, the NYSE initiated a 'no work on Wednesdays' policy because of the heavy work load in the back offices. Wall Street firms were just beginning to install computer systems to handle all the paperwork. As the computers took over, business continued to grow. In 1974 a good friend of mine in the business, John Silvati, started an office for Prescott, Ball & Turbin, another NYSE brokerage firm, in Cincinnati. John wanted me to come with him and after a long thought process, I did so. The markets had a turn-down time in the 1974-77 period, but I continued to work hard in getting new business.



Todd, Bari, and Darren 1971

the house on the hill outside Williamsburg and I was mowing almost 3 acres of lawn every week. Even if the quartet was doing a show on weekends, the lawn still had to be mowed, arriving home many Sunday mornings, tired, but still had to ride the John Deere mower. My stepfather Lynn Courts died of a heart attack in 1970, he had not been well for a few years after selling the farm and moving into Mt.Orab. In the early 70s Marcia & I started going to various parks in Kentucky, like Barron Lake, Lake Cumberland, etc., the boys had a great time together on those weekend trips. In 1973 and '74 I rented a house from a fellow broker at Gradison in Omeana, Michigan and took the family there for a week vacation. Joining us in Omeana was the Gorman family, who also had 3 boys; David, Peter and Chris. The rental house was large with 8 bedrooms, 4 or 5 bathrooms and located right on Lake Michigan. We cooked meals,



Courts Family 1970
Gene, Marcia, Todd, Bari, and Darren

played games, threw many flat rocks in the lake and had a wonderful time together. We had to cut wood for the big fireplace in the family room for warmth at night.

I can't be specific on time, but during the mid-70's I noticed my marriage beginning to fail. Arguments and disagreements about anything and everything came along more and more frequently. I remember after the Int'l. convention in Indianapolis in 1975, Marcia & I had a major argument that almost broke us. We took my Mother to San Francisco with us in 1976 for the Int'l. convention, we had a good time with Mother along, but it was tense between Marcia and me. Later that summer we decided to seek a divorce. We decided to tell the boys on Thanksgiving weekend, Todd was 13, Bari was 10 and

Meanwhile, at home the boys were growing rapidly and becoming very active in knothole baseball and soccer, along with their schooling of course. The family was living in



Bari and Todd With Dalmatians 1968

Darren was 8 years old. Marcia & I worked out the details of the divorce without help from an attorney or judge. I moved out of the house on the hill on Dec. 1, 1976 and the boys helped me move some furniture to my newly rented condominium at Royal Oak in Withamsville, Ohio. The divorce date was set for Jan. 10, 1977 and would you believe it, it snowed 10" overnight and everything was closed. I went to Williamsburg to get Marcia and drive her to the courthouse in Batavia where we hoped to find a judge able to get there to hear our case. Judge Ralph Hill was there and heard our case and granted the divorce. Soon thereafter Marcia decided to sell the house on the hill and move to Anderson Township to rent a house until she built a new house in Withamsville. I continued to see and get the boys regularly on weekends.

Some of the JAD Officers started working on me to become a District Officer in the early 1970s. I accepted a VP position in 1971 and became District President in 1975-76. In 1973 I was awarded the JAD 'Barbershopper of the Year' and entered the JAD Hall of Fame for the year 1972. In 1977-78 I was the Int'l. Board Member on the Society's Board. The Int'l. Convention had been awarded to Cincinnati for 1978 and I was the Chairman of the Convention. It was a very demanding job that I've always said 'dammed near killed me'. I had a new boss at Prescott Ball and he didn't care about my hobby and time away for barbershopping. I stopped barbershopping in 1979-80 to have more time with my boys and get my work back to a respectable place in the business. Later in 1977 I met a divorcee' by the name of Carol Williams and started a relationship with her. Carol & I had numerous problems in getting along, she was Catholic, I was not. None of my friends liked Carol, but I thought I could fix anything at that time in my life. But it was not to be. We split in 1980 for good. Todd had come to live with me during that summer and stayed for almost a year. I helped him get a job bussing tables at Crestview Gardens Restaurant in Anderson Township. Todd didn't have a car so I had to take him to work and pick him up again later in the evening.

As fortune would have it, I noticed an attractive blond that came to that restaurant numerous days with a girlfriend. That's where I met Joyce Vaughn Carroll and starting dating her soon thereafter. Todd & I went to Florida over the Holidays to visit Larry Donohoo and other friends down there. I continued my relationship with Joyce, who was a widow with 2 daughters. Her husband Richard had died of a heart attack in July, 1979 at age 36. My relationship with Joyce continued to improve, she had a house on Crestview Dr. in Mt. Washington and worked



Gene and Joyce's Wedding 1982 With Roy and Lorene Vaughn and Mildred Courts

as a hair-dresser at Mt. Washington Hair Design. By the summer of 1981 I knew that Joyce & I needed to be married, but I didn't ask her until the Fall. We got along so very well and my 3 boys and her 2 girls overlapped in ages, from 11 to 18 years of age. We decided to put our lives together with a wedding to be held on Jan. 16, 1982. Our 5 kids stood up with us for the wedding. However, prior to that date, our very good friends, Don & Donna Jennings told us to invite 20 of our best friends for a fine dinner and pre-wedding party at a nice restaurant in Mt. Adams in Cincinnati. The evening was wonderful and so many people were wishing us so much

love in finding each other. It was an event I still remember in great detail.

I had purchased the one bedroom condo at Royal Oak but decided to rent a two bedroom, 2 floor condo next door and rent out my condo. I needed more room for my boys when they came to stay with me. It was one of those Friday nights in the winter of 1980-81 when there was a knock on my front door. Darren answered the door and then turned to me in the living room and said "Dad, I think this is for you!" I went to the door to find Judy, one of my neighbors, standing stark naked in the cold night air. I asked her in and told Darren to go grab one of my coats to put around her. Judy explained that she and her fiancée' had gotten into an argument and he

locked her outside the nearby condo. True story, just ask the boys who were all there for the excitement.

Joyce & I would spend the evenings planning our small wedding to be held at the quaint little Methodist Church on the corner of Salem and Corbley Roads in Mt. Washington. We only invited about 50 of our friends to attend the wedding. Todd, Bari, Lori, Darren and Lesley stood up with us during the service by Rev. Bob Parr. Don & Donna Jennings sang a special song for us "The Sweetest Thing I've Ever Known is Loving You", recorded by Juice Newton. It was cold that night, 24 below zero, even the flowers wilted in getting them to the car to take to the Reception at Royal Oak Country Club. I often said "it would be a cold night before I got married



Lesley at Wedding 1982



Lori at wedding 1982



Todd, Bari, and Darren at Wedding 1982

again, and it was". Darren and I attended the Bengals-Chargers play-off game the Saturday before the wedding, a famous game the Bengals won because it was 59 degrees below zero wind chill. Darren & I came home after the 3rd quarter, almost frozen but happy for the win.

Joyce & I went on a honeymoon 2 weeks later to the St. John in the U.S. Virgin Islands. Don & Donna told us at the pre-wedding party that they wanted to go with us on our honeymoon, and they did. We rented a 2 bedroom cabin from Carla Newstead from Cincinnati, up on a mountain top overlooking Cruz Bay and other islands. We rented a gurgel (similar to a jeep) to get around the island and had such a wonderful time for 10 days that we decided to come back again in 1983 and '84 to the same location for follow-up good times. These trips were very memorable for Joyce & me and will live with us for the rest of our lives. In the meantime, I moved into Joyce's house on Crestview Dr. following the wedding and started looking for a home in Hyde Park where Joyce & I could remodel and call our own.



Gene and Todd 1983

In 1983 I noticed symptoms of diabetes of my own. An appointment with Dr. Lancaster confirmed the fear of a silent disease that would last for the rest of my life. I began oral medicines and started watching my diet which seemed to control the numbers for blood sugar. It was not a pleasant thought of living with a disease forever, but it was better than something like cancer that would take me down and down to end my life prematurely. I tried to be positive.

Joyce & I would spend most of our Sundays searching for a house to buy, mostly in the Hyde Park area of Cincinnati. We came home most times with frustration of how much money the houses were going to cost in Hyde Park. Finally, daughter Lesley told us about a house on Madison Rd. near her girlfriend's house that was for sale. We went to look at the house at 2544 Madison Rd., near Withrow High School, and fell in love with it. The house was owned by Marjorie Johnson, the daughter of one of Cincinnati's first funeral

home directors. Miss Johnson had moved to this house in 1936 with her Mother who was divorcing her Father. Miss Johnson was now in her 80's and wanted to move to the Marjorie P. Lee Retirement Home in Hyde Park. We settled on a price and closed on the house on June

6, 1984. We asked some of our friends to come over to the newly purchased house to celebrate with us. Unfortunately, Joyce's Father, Roy Vaughn was taken to the hospital that night and passed away during the night. I had hardly gotten to know Roy, but I knew he was overweight and had heart problems, including by-pass surgery.



Todd, Bari, and Darren

entire family loved this house, we lived there for 14 years and enjoyed every moment of it.

On April 1, 1985 I left Prescott, Ball & Turben to take my business to Hilliard Lyons Inc. My good friend John Silvati had left PB&T about a year before to go back to Merrill, Lynch & Co. to join partners with a couple of his buddies and PB&T was talking of merging with another company. I felt my clients would be better served with me going to Hilliard Lyons. With the 5 children now teenagers and some graduating from high school, college was soon coming up with large expenses to go with it. Todd had no interest in going to college, so he enlisted in the Navy. Bari searched Ohio colleges and finally settled on Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio, about an hour northeast of Columbus, Ohio. Lori decided to enter the University of Cincinnati while Darren wanted to go to Georgetown College in Georgetown, KY. That left Lesley to decide where she wanted to go to college following graduation from the School for Creative & Performing Arts in downtown Cincinnati. Lori also graduated from that high school, while Todd, Bari and Darren all graduated from Glen Este High School in Withamsville, near where they lived with their Mother.

Joyce & I took Lesley to visit numerous colleges during her senior year, notable among them was Ohio University, Miami University, Hillsdale College in Michigan, Transylvania College in Lexington, KY, Hanover College in Madison, IN, Bowling Green University and Northern Ohio University. Lesley applied to 5 colleges just to make sure she would be accepted in one of them. Only she was accepted in all 5 and had to make a decision which one to attend. Finally the choice was Hanover College in Indiana where she stayed until midway through her Junior year when she was found to be hypo-glycemic (low blood sugar), so we brought her home and entered her at the University of Cincinnati. In the school year of 1988-89 we had 4 kids in college, 2 Seniors, a Junior and a Freshman, money was pretty tight during those times.

The new house was a four story, stucco covered Georgian home with large fluted pillars on a slate front porch. It had 4 bedrooms, 2 ½ baths, was built in 1920. We were the 4th owners of the home. The house needed major remodeling and with barbershopper friend and remodeler Roy Wergers, we began the long process to rebuild the house. The old hot-water furnace system had to be removed and a new forced-air furnace installed, which meant that air ducts had to be installed in every room, taking out the cast-iron heaters from the old system. The first floor ducts were put in place and we noticed the crown mouldings were made of plaster. I had to locate a Master-Plasterer to come and rebuild those mouldings and put them back in place around the new duct forms. The house was a mess every day. Joyce & I would come there in the evenings to clean up and do whatever we could to help the process along. By Thanksgiving 1984, we were finally ready to move in, even using the old kitchen until we would re-model it in 1985. All the kids helped us move in the big, new house where we enjoyed Thanksgiving dinner for the first time there. The



Lori and Lesley

Right after Christmas 1987, Joyce & I took Lesley on vacation with us to the Cayman Islands. There we met up with the Jennings; Don & Donna, with Ray and his friend Jim. We rented a house on the beach, stayed there for a week. We drove all over the island including Hell, C.I. and the Diamond Coast, a stretch of shoreline with white sandy beaches and big hotels. We shopped the city of Georgetown, snorkeled, swam and had a great time. On New Years Eve we noticed flyers around of a dance with live music at one of the parks. Joyce & I, along with the 3 kids decided to go to the dance. We were the only white people there. There was only 100 or so people, a native band playing island music, outdoors among the palm trees, what a fun and unusual time we had there. No one bothered us, other than casual conversation. We were comfortable enough to stay for quite a long while. I remember Lesley saying "this is where I want to be at this time in my life".

In 1986 I went to California on a business trip to a mutual fund conference with American Funds Group. Joyce went with me, we stayed at the Los Angeles Athletic Club. After the conference we went to Universal Studios for a day and traveled south to stay at a bed & breakfast home in Laguna Beach, CA, then on to San Juan Capistrano to see the mission. We went to Dana Point to see the sun set over the Pacific Ocean. We went back to California again in 1988 for the same type of conference. Afterwards, we went north from Los Angeles to Santa Barbara, then to San Louis Obispo to stay in the Rose Inn, another bed & breakfast. Next day we went to the Hearst Castle, what an incredible place built in the early 1900's.

During the 1980's Joyce & I would take weekend trips with the kids as often as possible. I remember one trip to Cumberland Falls, KY with Lori, Lesley and Darren. We stayed at the lodge at Cumberland Park and dinner that evening was buffet style fried chicken. We watched in amazement as Darren ate 23 pieces of fried chicken. During the mid-80's I sang in a new quartet called the 'Blue Chip City Quartet' with Larry Findlay, Brian Barford and Bob Moorehead. We finished in the top 10 in JAD competition but only sang together for 1½ or 2 years.

It was during this time that I started asking my Mother for more information about my birth father. Mother was very reluctant to give information but did let me know that while she was working as a housekeeper in Roselawn (Cincinnati) she met a young man and started seeing him. The man was from KY and was named Milton Rose. Mother just didn't want to talk about it. Finally, I asked Mother for a copy of my birth certificate. At first she refused, but finally said she would get it from the Brown County Records office. Obviously, she was embarrassed about the subject. When she gave me the birth certificate it was an exact copy dated 1-22-82, signed by Valerie Shelton, Brown County Registrar. My name was hand written, probably by the Dr. himself, as Milton Eugene Moon, born July 21, 1935, son of Mildred Moon, no father listed. That was the reason for Mother's reluctance. It became apparent that Lynn Courts had never adopted me and changed my name. I had grown up, went to grade school, high school, the U.S. Army, college and gotten married under a false last name.

Later on I decided my last name needed to be legally changed to Courts, so I contacted my attorney Norbert J. Scheper to begin the legal proceedings to get the name changed. This took several weeks and an appearance before Judge Melvin Rueger to state the reasons for asking for the name change and was granted the change on Jan. 26, 1990 to become Milton Eugene Courts. I informed the kids about the name change and only Darren questioned how this had all happened. Now I could get a U.S. visa.

I started working on finding my birth father but had no luck. I contacted the Kentucky Bureau of Genealogy in Louisville, KY with no luck. I contacted the Filson Club Historical Society in Louisville but they were no help. I contacted the Rose Family Association, a genealogical association from California that could not help identify Milton Rose, born in KY in 1907, son of a Doctor, said my Mother. Joyce & I went to the Int'l. convention in Salt Lake City in 1986 and I went to the Mormon Church Genealogy Building to see what I could find. I found info about the Moon family and Rose family but nothing about Milton Rose. I was about at a dead end and my Mother was no further help. Whenever I would bring up the subject to my Mother during the 1990's, she would say she didn't remember so long ago. I even looked up the house where my Mother was the housekeeper in Roselawn, traced back to the owners of

the home in 1934 and found a daughter living in Mt. Adams, older by now, but I called her and she confirmed living in that specific home, but had no recollection of my Mother. Another dead end.

I was asked to run the conventions for JAD in 1990 and remained in that job until 2000, except for 1993-94 when I became District President for JAD for the second time around. After missing 4 Int'l. conventions during the 80's, Joyce & I went to the convention in San Francisco in 1990 and began a string of conventions to Louisville, New Orleans, Calgary, Pittsburgh, Miami Beach, Salt Lake City, Indianapolis, Atlanta, Anaheim, Kansas City, Nashville, Portland, Montreal, Louisville, Salt Lake City, Indianapolis, Denver and Nashville in 2008. I became Society Board Member for JAD in 1995-96 and again 1998-2000, serving as chair of the Planning and Program Development Group in 98-99. I sang with the Southern Gateway Chorus during those years until 2001, winning the coveted gold medal in 1992 in New Orleans Superdome. During the trip to New Orleans, Joyce & I along with Don & Donna Jennings decided to go early and stay on a working alligator farm in the Louisiana bayou. We had a cabin over the water with alligators all around, had dinner with alligator meat served along with Cajon food, what a treat. We took a boat trip out into the Mississippi delta just for the fun of it and stayed at bed & breakfast hotels in the big anti-bellum mansions along the river. We went to a former slave camp near Thibodaux, LA that brought back the reality of early times in the South. We ate bread pudding at every meal, all made slightly different, and all very wonderful. By the time we got back to the hotel in New Orleans we were so full from over-eating we fasted for one day. Calgary, Alberta, CAN in 1993 was also a great time. After the convention Joyce & I rented a car and traveled the Canadian Rockies from Banff to Jasper, stopping at Lake Louise and climbing the ski mountain, staying in bed & breakfast rooms, it was a really fun time for us.

In 1985, on the 100 year anniversary of Elmer & Emma Moon's birth, the Moon cousins decided to hold a 'Moon Family Reunion'. By then Aunt Blanche, Violet and Doris had passed away, but Uncle Carl and Paul with Aunt Betty and Mother all came to the reunion. Many cousins, but not all, came to the reunion. Not many of the McKinley side of the family came, but all of the Matthews came along. We continued the reunions every 2 or 3 years, usually holding them in Mt. Orab or Glen Este, Ohio or in Tennessee where the Matthews were the hosts. I remember the reunion held in Tennessee in 2002 and on Sunday morning most of us went to the church service at the little church our grandfather Elmer Moon had built in Monterey, TN. We all met there that morning and totaled more of us than was in attendance at the church service. The last reunion was held in 2006 with plans for 2009 or 2010. The cousins are all getting along in age by now, with many kids and grandkids of their own. However, there is still something special about the original cousins during the 40's and 50's that made us lifetime friends. Cousins Dean and Anita Wylie and Larry Matthews have passed on in recent years. Fifteen cousins remain.



Todd Bari and Mother at Darrens Graduation 1992

During the 1990's the stock market continued to make new highs in all areas. My work with long time clients made for good earnings, especially with our kids out of college by this time. We were finally able to start putting away some savings for future retirement. Joyce even made mention that maybe I should consider retiring, so as not to lose my health before retirement. I wasn't much interested in retiring because the work as a stockbroker had never been better. However, by the late 90's, the markets were at all time highs, the NASDAQ was over 5000 and I started considering retirement.

Bari was the first child to get married. Bari married Carolyn Boboltz in Oct. 1994 in Anderson Twp. Darren married Heather Martin in July, 1996 in Mt. Carmel. Lesley married Matt Folan in October, 1997 in Hyde Park. Todd married

RoseMary in May, 2002 in Gatlinburg, TN and Lori married Jim Mullarkey in Sept. 2002 in Louisville, KY.

In the Fall of 1998, Joyce & I went to an estate sale on Dexter Ave. in East Walnut Hills, where we purchased a couple of wildlife prints and admired the house and property. After inquiring, we found the property for sale and decided to come back the next day to have a further look around. The property was heavily wooded with beautiful spruce, pine and other variety of trees. It had a pool that was in poor condition. The property was surrounded by a black wrought iron fence with large gates at the street entrance. The long driveway came up the right side of the property and crossed in front of the house and then up the left side into the garages. The property was 300' deep by 75' wide, more than 1/2 acre right in the heart of the city. In fact, many large old homes surrounded the property, but this house was only built in 1983. The owner of the home was the late John Lloyd, an attorney for Cincinnati Public Schools and famous within legal circles of the city. We came back the 3rd day with Kathy Gregory, our friend and a realtor and decided to make an offer on the home. We bought it the next day without even thinking about selling our home on Madison Road.



Home, 2544 Madison Rd. 1984-1998

Our home on Madison Road had been so beautiful for us, we didn't want to leave but we had been there for 14 years and it was time to move on. We listed the house for sale and it sold in about 2 months. We had all the kids for dinner on Thanksgiving, 1998 and then started the moving process that took the rest of the weekend. Moving out of a large home completely filled in every room, including the basement, took a mammoth effort from everyone. We had extra furniture, one load for the girls, one for the boys and

another for the junk pile. We even moved rocks from the yard.

Our first grandkids came along in 1997, first was Cara, the only girl, then Jordan. Then Hunter came in 1999, Maxwell in 2000, so we had little ones to care for during that time. Matt Boboltz Courts was a step-grandson, age 14, son of Bari's wife Carolyn.

Joyce & I started the re-modeling process in the new home at 1827 Dexter Ave. to make that home and property a showplace, admired even by the Walnut Hills Homes Association award. The home was a place of activity. I was still working downtown with my evenings and weekends taking care of the large outdoors areas at this property, along with barbershop activities and travels. Joyce had the babies on Tuesdays, her day off work. The parents would come to pick up their kids and would stay for dinner, hectic times, but much fun for all. Soon thereafter grandsons Davis, Oliver, Carter, Jimmy and William came along. All together it was one granddaughter and 8 grandsons along with step-grandson Matt Courts. I fondly tell Cara she's my favorite granddaughter. An interesting note about Lesley's children is that I am biologically related to her children, but not to her. Matt Folan's Mother's maiden name was Moon and we checked to find that we share the same grandfather back 8 generations. Therefore, I am related to Matt and his children, but not to Lesley, who is my step-daughter.



Home, 1827 Dexter Ave. 1998-2003

Joyce had decided to open a new hair salon in Mt. Washington with her friend and co-worker Jenny Allen in 1990. They rented an old insurance office, took out the lowered ceilings, added mirrors, lights, chairs and a new floor, all in art deco style. They had a grand opening

party complete with champagne fountain and the business really took off. The salon was called 'Hairbrainz', which seemed to fit the situation. The salon was a huge success all during the 90's until Jenny decided to get pregnant. Never mind that she had 2 children from a previous marriage and that her tubes were tied, she and Harold decided to raise a family, having twins, a boy and a girl in 1997. Jenny just didn't have time for doing hair any longer, so the shop was sold to one of their employees in 1999. Joyce continued to work for a couple of years on a part time basis in the shop.

In January, 1997 Joyce and I needed to go to the barbershoppers Mid-Winter convention in Sacramento, CA. We had been to numerous Mid-Winters before but this time we took Lesley with us and went to San Francisco first. There we rode the cable cars, went to Fisherman's Wharf and did the usual tourist things in the city by the bay. Next day we rented a car and headed for the Sonoma Valley for some wine tasting. What a good time. We had a wonderful lunch and dinner and stayed in a bed & breakfast overnight in the Valley, then went to the Napa Valley the next day. We went to some more wineries and then to the Robert Mondavi Winery where we were special guests. I had called prior to going out there to let them know I was a stockholder of their company shares, and did they ever lay out the red carpet for us. We toured the farm and watched the wine-making process and drank some of their \$100 per bottle of wines from expensive Austrian crystal. Lesley was in her glory. The only problem of the day was that it rained so hard we had a difficult time getting out of the Valley and making our way to Sacramento for the convention. As usual, the convention was great fun too.

In the summer of 1998 a barbershopper I had known for many years, Pat Tucker-Kelly, who now worked for the Society in Kenosha, WI made it known to me that he would be selling his 1957 Rolls Royce Silver Cloud I. I thought it over for a few months and then decided to buy the old Rolls. Pat was willing to drive the car down from Wisconsin to Cincinnati. The car was a classic, sand color fenders with black body, right hand drive, mirrors mounted on the front fenders. The car brought a crowd whenever I took it out. The seats needed re-upholstering and the brakes badly needed repair, which was quite expensive. I drove the car to the store with Joyce in the rear seat or out to dinner at times. I drove it to Louisville for Lori's wedding to Jim Mullarkey and I drove the car for Gary Ellerhorst's wedding to his new Russian wife Paulina.



Mildred Courts

On June 25, 2000 my dear Mother passed away, she was 90. Mother had been deteriorating in health for the past 2 or 3 years. Dementia was the problem. Mother had moved out of her apartment in Mt. Orab in 1995 to live with my sister Rita in Glen Este, Ohio. That long planned move was not a good one. Mother was difficult which in turn made Rita difficult. In 1997 Mother moved into a retirement home called the New England Club, off Beechmont Ave. in Anderson Twp, east Cincinnati. Mother had her problems in this facility as well with the dementia getting worse and worse. For a lack of control, Rita and I decided to move Mother to the Mt. Washington Nursing Home where she lived (if you call it that) for another year before passing.

The grandkids all paid visits to her during her last months, but her mind was not able to appreciate what was happening. I still think of her often, since she brought me into this world, I could never think harshly of her.

By early 2000 I was convinced that I should retire from my work. I would be 65 that summer and had been registered in the business since 1964, 36 years, working for 3 different brokerage companies, for 10, 11 and 15 years respectively. I had a 401-K and a couple of IRA's and some savings put away, plus the equity in a very nice home. I felt comfortable enough to tell Hilliard Lyons that I wanted to retire in 3 months, at the end of May, 2000. None of my sons wanted to come into the brokerage business with me to take over my clientele and position with the firm, so I had to make plans to give my clients to 5 brokers in

the office. Whenever possible I would introduce the new broker to my clients. I took Hank Brightwell out to Brown County to let him meet some of my clients one day. When we arrived at the Ripley, Ohio National Bank, the Board of Directors was waiting for me to make a special deal of my serving the Bank for such a long period of years. Hank was impressed and I was surprised. Bill Martin was Chairman of the Board and had been a long time client of mine. I guess he appreciated the work I had done. The time for my retirement came so fast I hardly had time to get ready. But I was committed and had to go through with it.

Joyce held a retirement party for me at our home the following Saturday. She had a 'pig roast' with the supplier coming early in the morning to start the roasting process. More than 100 people came during the afternoon for the food and fun. Many of my clients, friends and family all showed up for the event. Even a barbershop quartet came to entertain.

The following week Joyce & I went to New York City on Wednesday to meet up with Darryl & Meredith Flinn and Frank & Doreen Santarelli, longtime barbershop friends from Canton, Ohio and Kenosha, WI to go to the theatre and eat out in NYC. We rode the subway downtown NY to Wall Street where the guys all went to the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, which I had set up earlier with friends from Hilliard Lyons. Darryl and Frank could hardly believe all the activity on the floor, so it was a great time for us. We all then went to lunch atop the World Trade Centers, a buffet at \$39 each, the food, especially dessert, was outstanding. We went to the Statue of Liberty, the Empire State Building and had dinner out every night. We also took a boat ride around the island of Manhattan to see the sights of NYC including the Trade Centers and everything else along the way. We went to 4 shows: The Phantom of the Opera, Swing, Annie Get Your Gun, and the revival of Music Man, where we were special guests and met the cast for autographs and laughs. The trip was truly outstanding, with good friends and good times by all.

The next year, in May, 2001, we went to the BABS convention in Glasgow, Scotland. First of all, we flew Cincinnati to London, England to stay a few nights before going on to Glasgow. Darryl & Meredith met us in London where we took the 'tube' to Trafalgar Square and Covent Garden. It was May 1st, 'May Day' in London, where the hippies, skinheads and other assorted types blocked the subways and caused havoc all around town. Sirens were the norm. We toured the palace and Westminster Abbey and went to 3 shows. We noticed a new musical called Mama Mia being touted all around only to find no tickets available. Finally, through a ticket broker, we came up with 4 tickets and went to the show. Obviously, the show was unbelievable, dancing in the aisles, with all the music of ABBA. What a fun time. The next night we went to see The Phantom of the Opera and finally went to see Art, a show about a white painting. The next morning we flew off to Glasgow for the British barbershoppers convention for the weekend. The British are gung-ho for the music and we had a great time there.

On Sunday morning following the convention, ten of us boarded a charter bus for a tour of Scotland for the next week. Joyce & I, Darryl & Meredith, Bill & Phyllis Campbell, Dick & Nancy Shaw and Chuck & Judy Watson were on board for the trip. First we went to Loch Lomond, then Portree on the Isle of Skye where the sun set after 10:00 P.M, being located so far north. We stayed overnight in Kyle of Lochalsh and Inverness hotels prearranged by our travel guide. Our bus driver spoke fluent Scottish and was very hard to understand. We stopped at Blair Castle, battlefields, a scotch distillery, Urquhart Castle to see the Loch Ness monster and then Edinburgh, where we visited the castle and shopped the streets below. Our other friends took a plane back to the U.S., while Joyce & I took a plane to Dublin, Ireland.

We rented a car in Dublin, where the steering wheel was on the right side of the car, and we drove on the left side of the road, which caused us many worries about on-coming traffic. We stayed the first night in Dublin, visited a few pubs, went to see the Guinness beer plant and walked the streets of the city. The next morning we took off to the south, past ultra green golf courses, down to Waterford, where we visited the crystal factory and purchased some items for shipping back home. We met up with Pat Tucker-Kelly, a barbershopper from Kenosha, WI, now living in Ireland, and stayed in his little apartment overnight. Pat took us to a restaurant called the Lime Inn, driving over narrow, windy roads. We kissed the Blarney Stone, stayed in a

castle, went to a wool factory and purchased sweaters for all the kids and sent them home, went to Killarney and Kildare and visited the coast line on the east and wound up in Shannon, Ireland for our trip home. We had been in Ireland for a week staying in bed & breakfasts, the time flew by so quickly, and not one accident on those crazy roads.

2002 was a special year. Unexpectedly, without warning, came a 'surprise' about my birth father. My Mother's best friend was Mildred Hiler Tatlock, married to the late Forrest 'Pete' Tatlock. They lived in Georgetown, Ohio but Mil (as she is known) grew up in Mt. Orab and graduated from Mt. Orab High School a couple years after my Mother. I have known Mil Tatlock ever since coming back from Tennessee to live with my Mother in 1944. Mil and my Mother visited each other often and she was always around whenever anything of importance came up. At the Mt.Orab Alumni Banquet in June, Joyce Wallace asked my Mother if I ever talked about my birth father. Joyce said 'sure', but why do you ask? Joyce W. explained that Mil Tatlock wanted to speak with me about my birth father. I could hardly wait until the next day when I drove to Georgetown to visit with her.

Mil and my Mother were the best of friends during the early 1930's while both worked in Cincinnati as housekeepers and living during the week at Bill & Minnie Hiler's home in Norwood. Bill & Minnie were aunt and uncle to Mil Hiler Tatlock. It was there that my Mother came to know Doy William Hiler, son of Bill & Minnie Hiler. One day Mother was not feeling well and Minnie said they would go see Dr. Kennedy in Norwood. Doy drove the car, Minnie rode front passenger with Mil and Mother in the back seat. Minnie and Mother went inside to see the Dr. and upon coming out Minnie said there was nothing wrong except Mother was going to have a baby. Pregnant, oh my gosh, what a big problem. Unmarried, parents were Christians, living away from home. Mother said "I'll kill myself rather than disgrace my family!" Doy Hiler looked sheepish but never confessed to anything. But Mil knew better, she knew Doy and my Mother were involved, she just didn't know how involved they really were. In those days if a guy didn't want to marry someone, they simply didn't offer. That is apparently what happened to Doy and my Mother.

They went back to Brown County over the weekend and Mil and Mother went to see her parents. They met in the lawn of the old Moon family home on Moon Road, Green Twp, near Mt. Orab. When Mil told of the situation they all cried together and it was decided that Mother would stay home during her pregnancy and prepare for the birth in July, 1935. Remember in those days, out-of-wedlock babies were not a good thing. Elmer & Emma Moon never wavered, they took care of their daughter and never let on anything was wrong. I remember Uncle Carl saying many years later that Elmer & Emma said 'we'll keep him, someday he may take care of us'. Bill & Minnie even said they would take the baby if any problems came up. Bill & Minnie lived in Brownstown, near Georgetown, during most of their life, just living in Norwood during this time in the 30's.

I said to Mil, "where is this Doy Hiler now?" She said, "he's deceased, since the 1950's". "He married another woman and had a daughter, who lives in Cincinnati." "Where's he buried?" Georgetown Cemetery, I said "let's go there right now, show me where he is buried". We went to the cemetery and would you believe; he is buried about 50 yards from my Mother's gravesite. Mil then showed me the Hiler family home in Brownstown and the church where they all attended. Doy Hiler had 3 brothers, all deceased, all in Georgetown cemetery, along with Bill (1876-1962) & Minnie Hiler (1879-1947). What an incredible eye-opener for me to find my biological father after 67 years of age.

My Mother passed away without ever telling me her little secret. The only survivor is Mil Hiler Tatlock, and she was nearly 90 and wanted me to know the truth before she passed away. No one in the Moon family knew about any relationship with Doy Hiler either. I've asked Uncle Paul and he knows nothing about it. I couldn't wait until the next day to try to find Doy's death certificate. It wasn't easy. He didn't die in Brown County, or Clermont County, finally I found him in Hamilton County, Ohio. I was able to secure a copy of the death certificate and noticed a check mark for having an autopsy. I called the County Coroner's office and was told the autopsy was on micro fish. They made me a copy for \$20 and I have it in my files.

Doy W. Hiler died after having acute bacterial meningitis in the head and went to the hospital where they gave him penicillin, to which he was allergic. Doy died in General Hospital 12 days later on May 16, 1958. He was 51 years old, 5'7", balding forehead, weighing 156 pounds. When he came by ambulance to the hospital he had a temp of 103 degrees, pulse 84, well developed body, keeping eyes closed, in obvious pain. He had lived at 2015 Cleaney Ave. in Norwood, Ohio.

When Doy's hearse came through Mt. Orab on its way to Brownstown for the funeral and Georgetown for the burial, Mother happened to be standing on the street corner and saw the procession. She went to Cahall's Dept. Store where she worked and called Mil on the telephone to tell her that Doy had just passed through Mt. Orab. This was another sure sign of Mother's interest in Doy Hiler.

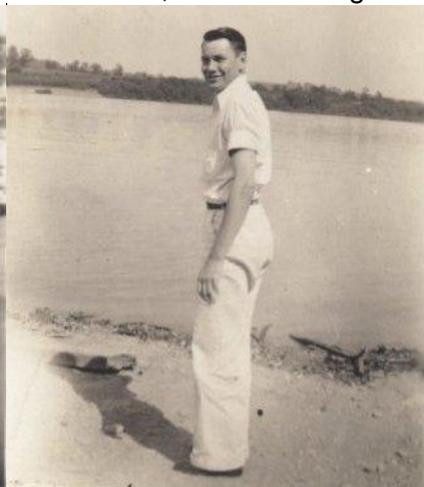
I called my sister Rita and told her of the story. Rita remembered some old photographs in Mother's box of photos. There to her surprise were 8 photos of Doy Hiler with Mother and various other friends. We both knew the pictures were there but had no knowledge of their meaning. It was unbelievable, but true. Doy Hiler was a graduate of Sardinia High School, I have a picture of the graduating class of 1927 and Doy is in the back row, 5th from the right.



Doy Hiler and Jo Hiler



Doy Hiler



Doy Hiler



Clyde Klein, Midred Moon, and Doy Hiler



Clyde and Marjorie Klein with Mildred

Doy's widow never remarried and now lives in New Smyrna Beach on the west coast of Florida. I know approximately where she lives but have never made any attempt to introduce myself to her. Why open up unknown stories? It's the same for the daughter living in Cincinnati, no need to try meeting her after all these years.



Mildred, Doy Hiler,
and Marjorie Klein.

So now I know why Mil Hiler Tatlock was special to me and me to her. She's my aunt, without me knowing it until 2002. Soon thereafter I took all 3 sons out to Georgetown, Ohio to meet Mil. She was grateful and talkative, knowing more about me than I ever expected. There is nothing wrong with her brain. Pete Tatlock passed away a number of years ago and Mil has moved into the Meadowood Nursing Home to spend her final years. I look forward to seeing her every visit I make to Ohio.

Also happening in 2002 was for me to join the quartet Cincinnati Pops to sing with Don Jennings, Larry Findlay and Kent Smith. Their baritone Bob Mucha left the city to live in New Mexico and that opened a slot for me to fill. The quartet qualified for the Int'l. Seniors contest in Jan. 2003 in Albuquerque, NM where we competed and came in 16th of 25 quartets. In May of 2003 Don Jennings suddenly quit the quartet and we were done.

In June, 2003 Joyce & I decided to list our beautiful home and property for sale. We went to Montreal, QE, Canada for the Int'l. convention and received an offer to buy the property while 'out of the country'. We worked the fax machine at the hotel until we had signed contracts for the sale. Our only problem was they wanted occupancy by the closing in August, 2003 and we had no place to live.

We had driven to Montreal so that we could drive back through Vermont and New Hampshire and then visit my good friends the Gorman's at their summer home on Cape Cod. We arrived and Dave and I went to the fish market to buy lobsters, 3 lbs. each for dinner that evening. We went to their country club for dinner the next day. Joyce & I noticed that Dave was acting strange, had trouble finding his way out of the parking lot, we thought he had too much to drink. Unfortunately, that was not the case. Dave called me in September to tell me he had been diagnosed with ALS or Lou Gerhig's Disease. Dave passed away in August, 2004 after only 11 months with the disease. Joyce & I went to his funeral on Cape Cod, MA, I had lost a true and long time friend. Joyce Gorman lives on the west coast of FL near Vero Beach in a beautiful, large home right on the ocean front. We still visit with her.

After getting back home in the middle of July, 2003, Joyce & I looked at 3 rental houses in the area and decided to move into the one on Brazee St. in Oakley as soon as possible. We had decided to make our move to Florida as soon as we could get down there and look around the area where we wanted to live. After looking all over the state during our numerous trips to Florida, we had decided on Anna Marie Island or Sarasota County, FL. I don't want you to think it was easy picking out a place to live in FL, because it was not easy. Joyce & I had been thinking about living in FL for a long time, at least 10 years. We would rent cars after conventions in FL and drive up and down both coasts looking for the perfect spot. We went to Orlando in September one year and it was so hot and muggy we knew we didn't want to live in the center of the state.



Todd, Bari, Darren, and Gene With Mildred Tatlock 2002

In January, 2000 we were in the Sarasota County area and found Lido Beach, Longboat Key and Anna Marie Island. Anna Marie sure looked inviting to us, so we decided to come back

to the Island for a longer stay the following February. We came down without reservations and luckily found a rental in the high rise condo building in Holmes Beach on Anna Marie Island. We stayed there a month and became really hooked on that location. The island seemed perfect, no fast food chains, only local restaurants serving many fish dishes. We came back the next winter and the following winter and started looking around for places to buy and live. We even made an offer on a house in 2002 but we hadn't sold our own home and were not in financial shape well enough to do it without selling our home. By then we were also starting to see some drawbacks to living on an island. No shopping, no doctors, no hospitals, only 2 bridges getting off the island that became jammed during rush hours, let alone if an emergency came along.

We began looking around for new construction out near I-75, which was 14 miles from Anna Marie Island. We wanted to be closer to the beaches so we traveled south to the Venice area and took a look around. In Venice, the downtown was special and quaint and only a ½ mile from the beaches. Nearby Pelican Pointe was in full construction mode as were numerous other sites around the area. We started looking for builders and the areas they were building in and going to the 'Show of New Homes' that were continually going on. We must have looked at 100 new homes and every detail in the building process. We finally settled on 4 builders in 4 locations and started eliminating 4, 3, 2 and 1st was Pelican Pointe with an Arthur Rutenberg house built by Sam Rodgers Builders Inc.

That was in September, 2003. We had sold our home on Dexter Ave. and moved into a rental house on Brazee St. in Oakley. We made a down payment on the new house on a vacant lot located at 825 Tropez Lane in Pelican Pointe Golf and Country Club. The lot was in a cul-de-sac with its rear view to water and the 26th tee on the golf course. It sure seemed perfect. We were the first house on the street since the builder had just opened up the newest and last unit for construction. When completed there would be 213 homes in this new section and over 1300 new homes in all of Pelican Pointe.

The 'red line' meeting with the builder came in December, 2003 and we contacted an interior decorator we found at another location. Joyce loved her work, so I found out who she was and how to contact her. The decorator was named Terry Davidson and her partner Michelle. We met them and asked them to help us pick out colors and materials for our new home that hadn't been started as yet.



1957 Rolls-Royce, Silver Cloud 1

Construction began in May, 2004 and lasted for 9 months. By July I could not remain living in Cincinnati while our new house was being built in Florida. We made plans to make the big move by hiring a moving company to move us lock, stock and barrel, including the Rolls Royce to Florida on July 15, 2004. Two weeks later the first hurricane of the season, Charley, came near Venice and scared us into driving across the state to visit Darren and his family

in Sebastian, FL. The problem was that unknown to us, the hurricane turned eastward and followed us, taking a northeastern route across the state. It took 3 hours to cross the state and 8 hours to get back home because of all the destruction caused by the storm knocking out many roads and highways.

By the middle of July construction had the site leveled, all underground electrical and plumbing work finished and the concrete slab poured on the outline of the house. Concrete blocks were in place to start putting up the side walls, followed by the roof trusses. I clearly saw how secure the building process was to prevent storms from causing big problems as support beams were bolted down and trusses were wrapped in steel strips and screwed down tight. If another storm comes by here, this is where I want to be to be safe. In fact, 2 more hurricane came within 50 miles on Venice during the Fall of 2004 causing mostly wind and rain and very little destruction. The roof plywood sheeting and tarpaper was put in place and roof tiles placed

up on the roof for placement later on. The framers came in to frame the inside walls with all the arches and 8' doors. The garage was on a 90 degree angle to the front of the house and totaled almost 900 square feet, as one of the workers said, bigger than his whole house. The dry wallers were next and the finishers followed them in finishing the walls and corners. Tile setters came in to lay tile throughout most of the house. Only 2 bedrooms had carpet and my office had hardwood floors, the rest of the house was tile. The pool was dug and formed with tile all around the edges and around the spa. The outside stucco was added and paint over the stucco made the finish colors. Driveway paver stones were put in place. Appliances and trim mouldings were added and painting finished by late January, 2005. The interior of the house was painted white in preparation of Terry and her crew coming in right after occupancy to paint every room in the house.



Home, 825 Tropez Ln. Venice,

When we moved to FL we moved into a rental home on Joyce Court (no lie) until our house was completed. I spent every day at the construction site and oversaw everything that was going on. Many mistakes were made and corrections made on the spot, sure glad I was here. We closed on the house and lot on Jan. 29, 2005 and Terry and her crew of 12

workers descended on the house that afternoon. In 8 days, the house was completely painted, ceilings put up, shelving added, wall papering hung and curtains and drapes put up. A big job in record time, all for a price, I might add. We moved in Feb 8, 2005. Some of the furniture was still in the driveway. We have 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, living, dining, entry foyer, kitchen, laundry and family rooms, 3 car garage, a pool, cabana and lanai area, all told about 4200 square feet of living space, 3000 under air. The transformation of a white house to a finished, decorated house was unbelievable. Terry had done an outstanding job. We would be making our home here with plenty of room for the kids and their families to visit anytime they could get away.

While this is not the end of my story it is a good place to stop. Joyce & I are so very happy in our lovely home and look forward to many years of living here. However, we know that health issues will raise its ugly head at some time in the future. We just hope not too soon.



Gene With Mildred Hiler-2003

Not the End