

## Sharon Hurtley-Durand Шэрон Хартли Дюранд

Although life is linear, memory is often tangential. So, as I have been remembering scenes from the past, I have often jumped sideways to include other somewhat related bits rather than lose that particular thread. And, the thought of later moving them to the proper chronological place would somehow eliminate the mental connection between the events. Also, one event may have occurred at the same time as another completely unrelated one. I have tried to keep the relationship between these events as more important than their timetable. So, with that in mind, here is my story.

My ancestral connection to Russia may be more political than ethnic, but it is valid. I have Russian roots!

In 1809, Finland was incorporated into the Russian Empire as the autonomous Grand Duchy of Finland.



Flag and Coat of Arms of the Grand Duchy of Finland from 1809 to 1917.



Following the 1917 Russian Revolution, Finland declared itself independent.

In my father's Finnish-Russian ancestry, the names Hurtig, Hurtigs, and Hurtley seem to appear simultaneously in the documentation. My understanding was that the name was changed from Hurtig to Hurtley during part of the temporary immigration process as my grandfather passed through England on his way to America. Apparently it was either a misunderstanding of pronunciation or a misspelling on documents.

The oldest record was that Abram Johns Hurtigs married Britta Caisa Jaksdotter some time in the early 1850's, the exact date is unknown. John Abram Hurtig was the last of their three children. He was born in May 1860, in Tervola Parish, Finland.

Abram and Britta's other two children were: Lisa Matilda Hurtig, born September 18, 1856, and Maria Gustava Hurtig, born October 18, 1858.

John Abram Hurtig married Hilda Carolina, daughter of Peter and Susanna Palokangas in 1896. Hilda was born about 1859 in Tervola Parish. John died February 7, 1939, in Marquette, Michigan. Hilda died February 5, 1896 in Ely, Minnesota.

John and Hilda had five children.

John and Hilda's first child was Selma Hurtley, her birthdate is unknown and she died in Finland. She married Abe Kivila and they had three children. Their first was Matt Hurtley, born in Winton and died during the Finnish-Russian War. Their second was Eddie Hurtley, also born in Winton and died during the Finnish-Russian War. Their third was Silvia Hurtley. She married Emil Pakkonen.

John and Hilda's second child was my grandfather, Emil Alexander Hurtley. He was born July 13, 1880, in Kami, Finland.

John and Hilda's third child was Mattias Johnson, born between May 1888 and 1890, and died January 1948. He married Wanda Lund. She died in 1965. Mattias and Wanda had three children. Their first was Charles Bert Hurtley, born in December, 1912. He married Lena Uhorn in May, 1939, and they had three children. The first was Charles Hurtley (also listed as Johnson), born in 1939, who married Tippy and they had two children: Tim and Kim. Charles and Lena's second child was Lanny Hurtley, dates unknown. Charles and Lena's third child was Donna Hurtley, born 1948. She married Caleb. They had two children: Mitchell, born 1970, and Tiffany, born between 1972 and 1973.

John and Hilda's fourth child was Johannes Hurtley, born October 1885 and died at the age of nineteen.

And John and Hilda's last child was Helia Aliina Hurtley, born June 12, 1894 in Cokato, Minnesota and died November 2, 1971 in Ironwood, Michigan. She married John Victor Lutha on January 18, 1918 in Duluth, Minnesota. He was the son of Iisakka Prepula-Luhta and Liisa Maenpaa, born November 5, 1886 in Lapua, Vaasa, Finland, and died April 23, 1918 in Wakefield, Michigan.

John and Helia had one child, Victoria Johanna Luhta, born November 18, 1918 in Duluth, Minnesota. Victoria married Arne Salonen January 15, 1944. He was born in Bessemer, Michigan. She later married Edwin Strand, the son of Charles Strand and Ellen Ramstad, born September 12, 1914 in Bessemer, Michigan and

died November 12, 1978 in Ironwood, Michigan. They had three children: Karen Lee Strand, Marjorie Ruth Strand, and Ted Edwin Strand.

Karen was born January 26, 1945 in Ironwood, Michigan. She married Stephen Miles Graning, the son of Martin Graning and Delores Peterson, January 6, 1968 in Salem Lutheran Church, Ironwood, Michigan. He was born February 13, 1947 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. They had four children: Wendy Elizabeth Graning, born June 24, 1971, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Steven Graning, born February 25, 1973, in Minnesota, Brent and Brian Graning, born December 30, 1975.

Wendy married Steven Edward Mathews, July 13, 1996 in New Ulm, Minnesota. He was born September 17, 1967 in Mankato, Minnesota. They had one child, Elizabeth Grace Mathews, born September 4, 2001.

Helia later married Gust Hill on August 18, 1924. He died in 1948.

John Abram Hurtley later married Catherine Karasti. They had four children. The first child, Armas Hurtley, was born about 1901 and died August 31, 1965. Armas married Ann Boldine and they had two children, Eugene Hurtley and a daughter, unknown name.

John and Catherine's second child, Elma Hurtley, born 1904, married Nick Ranta, died unknown year. Elma and Nick had two children. The first, Thelma Ranta, born May 19, 1920. She married Sam Billings in 1945, and they had four children. Charles G. Billings, born 1946, married Lorna and had two children: Jason Billings, born 1971, and Josh Billings, born 1974.

Elma and Nick's second child, Aileen Ranta, born May 10, 1926 and died March 1994. Aileen married Ed Thornton, dates unknown. She later married Bill Clement and they had a son, born October 29, 1960. Aileen later married Jim McPherson. June 25, 1983.

Elma later married Tom Siren and they had one child, Ilona Siren, born October 22, 1940. She married Kenneth Harwood and they had three children: Stacy Harwood, Jodie Harwood, and Scott Harwood.

John and Catherine's third child was Wanda (Venla) Hurtley, born 1907. She married Leonard Quilliam. He was born April 28, 1928 and died September 1976. They had four children. Sheila Quilliam married Ron Lewke, and later married a man who's last name was Blumach. Their second child was Gladys Quilliam. Their third child was Lennea Quilliam, born about 1950, and married Raymond Bressette. Their last child was Rosemarie Quilliam, born about 1955

and married William Hill.

John and Catherine's last child was Anna Hurtley, dates unknown.

Thelma and Sam's second child was James Billings, born 1947, their third child was Thomas Billings, born 1952, and the fourth child was Michael Billings, born 1954. Michael married Cindy Jenson.

Returning to my grandfather, Emil married Mary Sofia Jonasdatter Fiskar on March 21, 1914, in Escanaba, Michigan. The Pastor was J. H. Carlson.

Mary was the daughter of Jonas Fiskar. She was born on April 25, 1880, in Vasa (a Swedish province of Finland). She had two brothers. August Fiskar was born August 13, 1892, in Malaks, Finland. He married Opal and had a daughter, Dorothy, who later married Malcolm E. MacLeod. August died August 7, 1983, in Portland, Oregon. Alfred, dates unknown, was living in Escanaba, Michigan in 1950.

Mary sailed on the Oceanic from Liverpool, England on March 13, 1907, to stay with her cousin Johann Mosterbach of Dagget County, Michigan.

Emil and Mary had four children. Walter Hurtley was born December 23, 1914, and died around 2005. Adolph E. Hurtley was born March 25, 1916 in Marquette, Michigan. He died October 14, 1974 and was buried at Fort Snelling, Minnesota. Oliver Wilfred Hurtley was my father. Violet Hurtley was born June 9, 1921 and died around 2010.

Walter married Ruth Westman on September 21, 1943. They had four children. Carol Ruth was born December 30, 1943. She married Lynn Swanson and they had two children: Erick Olof, born November 10, 1977, and Taylor Alexander, born June 11, 1981.

Walter and Ruth's second child was Bruce Alexander, born November 16, 1948. He married Mary Knutson in June 1976 and later divorced. They had two children: Karla, born June 26, 1983, and Anna, born December 12, 1985.

Walter and Ruth's third child was Steven, born June 13, 1950. Their fourth child was Alan, born April 7, 1956. Alan married Melinda Evans and they had three children: Julie, born February 4, 1992, Amanda, born August 1, 1994, and Alexander James, born April 10, 1997.

Photo of Emil and Mary Hurtley.

Mary died November 27, 1950, in Duluth, Minnesota. Emil died January 4, 1963, in Duluth, Minnesota where he had been a resident since 1917.



Emil was a machinist employed by American Ship Building Co. and was a member of the International Association of Machinists.

He invented the Hurtley Loader, a mine and tunnel shoveling machine, and was granted a patent for it in 1916.

Photo of Emil Hurtley and the Hurtley Loader in the workshop.





Photo of the Hurlley Loader in action.

This is all I know about this history and this information was given to me by my cousin, Mary Anne Peterson, and I am immensely grateful to her for it. She is the daughter of Violet Peterson, my father's sister. Both of my parents were born in America and wanted to be strictly American and leave the old country behind. They talked very little about their parents background. All that I knew of my father's parents was that Emil was Finnish and Mary was Swedish. I don't even know why they left Finland. Nor did I know that Finland was part of Russia at that time.



Of Emil and Mary's four children, Oliver Wilfred Hurlley was born February 10, 1918, in Duluth, Minnesota, and died December 8, 2002 in Eureka, California.

He married Josephine Bernadette Benal in November, 1945, in Palo Alto, California.

Photo of my parents from their wedding.

They later divorced in 1975. My father remarried three more times, but I know little details of the rest of his life. I lost touch with him after my parent's divorce

and was only informed of his death a few months after it from a nursing home he had been living in for a few years under Medical (a state funded medical aid organization that claims your and your living relatives assets in exchange for aid). Apparently, he had told them that he had no living relatives and they only found my name in an old address book of his. Walter and Violet and their families were very upset to learn this as they would have been glad to come to his aid.

There was a small porcelain figurine of a seated woman as a decoration on their wedding cake. After several moves and general wear and tear over the years, it was much the worse for wear, having been broken and glued back together more than once. Then, it was stored in a china cabinet for years afterward. But tarnish doesn't cover sentiment, so when Jerry and I were married we used it for decoration on our wedding cake.

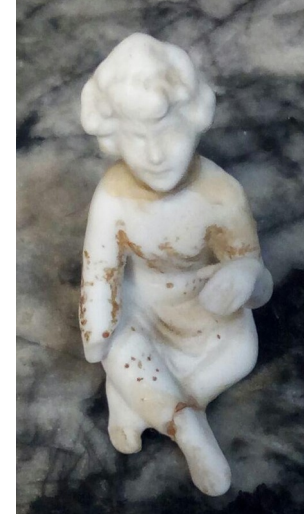


Photo of wedding cake ornament.

Josephine was born March 6, 1914, in Colon, Saunders County, Nebraska, and died June 29, 1998 in Los Gatos, California. She was the daughter of Anton and Margaret Benal, who were immigrants from Moravia, Austria, which is now the Czech Republic.

Anton's mother, Frantiska, immigrated with two of her sons, Anton and Johan (dates unknown) in either 1892 or 1893 through Hamburg. She is buried in Wahoo, Saunders County, Nebraska.

Anton was born May 1, 1868, in Okrisko, Moravia, Austria. He was the son of Vavrinec Lawrence Benal (1827-1877) and Frantiska Brukner (1838-1921). The Benal documented ancestry begins with Matej Benal, (1798-1874). He was married to Marle Musil, born 1793, and died 1874. Frantiska was the daughter of Matous Brukner (1811-unknown) and Frantiska Samek (1817-1869). Anton's siblings include Frantisek Benal (1870-1956), Anna Benal (1874-unknown), and Cecilia Benal (1877-unknown).

Margaret was born Margaret M. Sauer, March 28, 1878, in Kouca, Sumava, now Czech Republic, and died February 1, 1955. She was the daughter of Bedrich Sauer (1840-unknown) and Annie Malick (1836-unknown). Bedrich was the son

of Jakub Sauer (1819-unknown) and Marie Mach (1815-unknown). Annie was the daughter of Simon Malik (1791-unknown) and Marie Mleziva (1795-unknown).

Margaret immigrated through New York from Okrisko, Bohmen.

Anton and Margaret were married May 18, 1897 in Saunders County, Nebraska. They owned a ranch in Colon, Saunders County, Nebraska that raised corn and cattle and had eleven children, all of whom worked on the farm at an early age. Their children were: Elizabeth M. Benal (1899-1987), Francis F. Benal (1901-1964), Frances D. Benal (1902-1982), Mary M. Benal (1904-1973), Anna Benal (1906-1919), James Joseph Benal (1908-1988), Antoinette A. Benal (1910-2007), Emma M. Benal (1912-2018), Josephine Benal (my mother), Rose M. Benal (1916-2010), and George J. Benal (1918-1970).

This is all I know about my mother's family and this information was provided by my cousin, Conrad "Jim" W. James, Jr., and I am very grateful to him for it. He has done a lot of research into this genealogy. He is the son of Emma, my mother's sister, and Conrad W. James, Sr.

My mother continued the farming tradition by keeping a backyard vegetable garden wherever we lived and I have too, but adding a small forest of fruit trees. When we (me, my mother and Jerry) visited her sisters in Oregon some years later, and Jerry saw their walnut orchard, he said, "I see, it's genetic."

Oliver and Josephine's only daughter, Sharon Ann Hurtley was born December 17, 1946, at St. Mary's Hospital in San Francisco, California.

Oliver served in the United States Marine Corps during and after World War II.

In 1944, he was stationed in Hilo, Hawaii. During his stay there he made friends with a fellow soldier, Les Roll, who lived in Hilo. Ollie made friends with Les's parents and he and Dr. Roll did a lot of pheasant hunting in the fields and forests out side of the city.

Photo of Les with his mother.





Photos of Dr. Roll in front of his house and with some of the pheasants they shot.



It was still during the war and all photos had to be approved by the censors before sending back to the mainland.

In his free time there, my father painted watercolors of the local landscape. He used sea water to wet the paint which was considered the wrong thing to do. But, the paintings have endured the test of time without any degradation and still hang on the wall.



Lapahoehoe was an outcropping of an old lava flow below a cliff. There was a school house at the point that was run by local missionaries. It was later wiped out by a tidal wave.

Mauna Loa is the tallest mountain on the island and is often covered by clouds. It currently houses an observatory near its peak.



After my father's discharge from the Marine Corps, he worked as a commercial artist and later became a gun smith, making muzzle loading flint lock rifles.

He started building these rifles when we lived in a small rented house in the Santa Cruz

mountains on top of the summit ridge.

We were one in a small group of houses surrounded by forest and lived there from the time I was in sixth grade until my sophomore year in high school in 1962. The house had a small garage, that he outfitted with a forge and other wood and metal working tools and started making these guns. He designed

them in such a way that they were extremely light weight, less than six pounds for a rifle that was about 5 feet long.



I learned how to operate the coke burning forge, how to add fuel, control the air flow to keep the coals at an even temperature with a hand turned fan, and how to melt lead to cast round ball bullets for the rifles. I also learned how to rifle the bores for the guns with a metal cutting rifling blade that had to be slowly pulled back and forth through the length of the bore.

We built a canoe for fishing and traveling along rivers. We cut narrow strips of wood, steamed them over boiling water and bent them to fit along the support frame made of larger pieces of wood, then glued them in place with clamps until the glue cured. Over this wood frame canoe, we used sheets of fiberglass soaked with resin to make a waterproof hull. We later painted the fiberglass a deep green and left it in the sun to dry. Unfortunately, one of our cats thought it would be a nice level and sunny place to nap. We had to clean the paint off of our long haired green cat. Which mostly ended in a hair cut as much of the paint had dried. He was not happy.

One of our projects was to build a fence for our yard. There was a spring near the road a few hundred yards down the hill from our house. It flowed down the canyon through the forest. There was a horse trail that followed it a couple of miles it down to a small camp and then a mile or so further on to a village down the road. This was my favorite place to hang out and explore when I got home from school in the afternoon, until the time my mother got home from work and it was time to make dinner. Not too far down the trail there was a stump of a huge redwood that had been logged years before. The stump was quite tall, taller than my father, and several feet in diameter. The wood was in good shape, not rotten, but well aged. We hauled axes and pry bars down the trail and started splitting out lengths of wood about two to three inches in diameter and four feet long, and hauled them back to our house. All this work took several days, if not weeks. We gradually built a picket fence that surrounded the yard from the driveway by the kitchen door all the way around the house to the back door of the shop.



I learned a lot about building things during that time. I learned how to use a wood lathe when my father built the coffee table for our living room, which we still use today and will move with us when we get to our new house in Russia. The table was made from redwood railroad ties reclaimed from a defunct old railroad that used to run from downtown Los Gatos to Santa Cruz on weekends taking beach goers on holiday. As the timbers were rough, my father cast an epoxy resin over them to make a smooth surface. The legs and cross ties were turned on our wood

lathe and the finished table was painted with a clear varnish to preserve the color of the wood. As things go, our puppy decided to use the legs to chew on when he was getting his teeth. A future project will be to refinish the legs and fill in the scratches on the top that have come with wear. But the table is sturdy and will serve well for many more years.

Learning about paints and different clear finishes brought me to learning how to work with wood, something I dearly love.

My father had an old wooden military chest that was falling apart. The olive drab paint had worn thin and faded. The glue that held the boards together had dried and exposure to damp had warped some of the boards. My father was going to throw it away, but I stopped him and asked if I could try to repair it.

I took it apart, sanded the wood, re-glued it and finished it emphasizing the natural wood color. I later added castors to enable it to be moved easily and to also be used as a bench.

I have since done a lot of different wood working projects, including making rustic furniture out of leftover wood that was piled up in our back yard. I made a kneading table that nests into a butcher block table for bread making in our kitchen. I also made a picnic table out of heavy virgin redwood planks my father had laying around along with a bench with steel brackets for our front yard. I also made some more benches for our BBQ area out of old fence wood. All of these will adorn our new home.



During the time we lived in the mountains, my father had a friend, an old man, that lived a couple of miles down the road. I often went with my father when he went to visit the old man. He lived in a small rustic cabin between a corn field and a chestnut orchard. The cornfield was the size of a football field and was the remnant of a huge redwood tree, long gone. At the time it stood there, it was the largest redwood tree in North America. Redwoods are actually a grass and suckers grow out from the base of the parent tree to become new trees. As the parent dies, the other trees grow out over time to become a forest. The last of the younger trees stood at the borders of the cornfield.

That was a long time ago, and I don't remember the old man's name, but I do remember the stories he used to tell me. And the gifts he gave me as well.

When he was a teenager, he lied about his age to join the army as a journalist. He was stationed in the Philippines during the Spanish American War. There were Maori tribes in the jungle and the soldiers used to stretch chicken wire over their tents to catch any knives or other weapons that were thrown at their tents. One morning he found this copper knife caught in the chicken wire. He later made the wooden scabbard to go with



the knife.

He later served in World War I, and acquired this French bayonet as a souvenir of that part of his life. He also served in World War II and acquired a German knife, but that has been lost to time. When I grew older, I realized I had no desire for a Nazi blade and gave it to a friend that wanted it. It had a triangular blade, was black and the hilt was bulky. It just felt ugly and I wanted no part of it.

I really enjoyed all of the stories he told me. Knowing him was the closest thing to a grandfather I had as I had so little contact with my real grandparents.

In later years, I realized how much I missed living in the forest. Cities are so crowded, there is no space to breathe. But youth has to get out and explore the world, only to learn that sometimes it's better where you are.

We then moved down into a suburb of Los Gatos, where my parents got a mortgage and purchased a small three bedroom tract house.



Since he no longer had a workshop, he rented one in town and later in 1969, moved his studio to Forbes Mill, an historic building in Old Town, located in downtown Los Gatos.

Photo of Forbes Mill, a now-defunct flour mill originally built in 1854 and located in Los Gatos, California, which served as the History Museum of Los Gatos after having been saved from destruction in 1982.

The museum closed in 2014, and its collections are now part of New Museum Los Gatos.

Oliver also designed and built large wrought iron sculptures. He is known for his entry arches in Old Town, Los Gatos, California and San Pedro Square, San Jose, California.



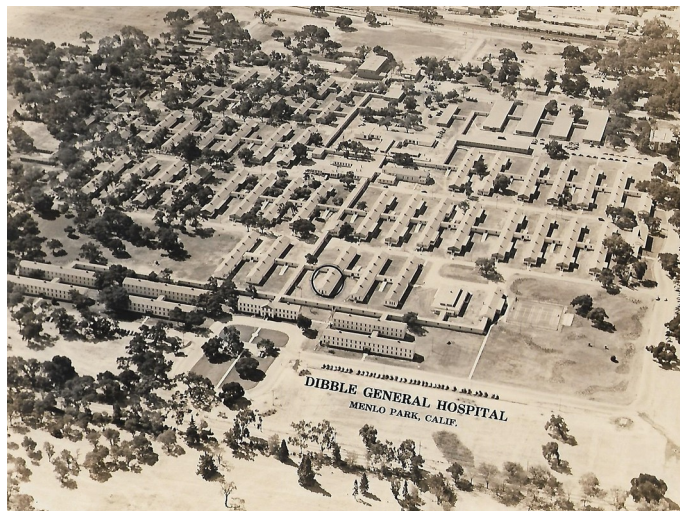
He also made this gate for the entrance to the side yard of our house.



Josephine graduated from Wahoo High School, Wahoo, Nebraska in 1932. She studied at Isaacson School of Medical Technology, Omaha, Nebraska from 1932 to 1933, Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska from 1933 to 1934.

She obtained her ASCP-MT License in 1934. She was tutored in Cytology at University of California Medical Center by John Frost, MD and Robert L. Dennis, MD from 1949 to 1950.

Josephine worked as a Medical Technologist detecting cancer in blood and tissue samples in various hospitals and for private doctors: St. Catherines Hospital, Omaha, Nebraska from 1934 to 1938 specializing in Chemistry, Hematology, Microbiology, and Histology, Public Health Department, Omaha, Nebraska from 1938 to 1941 in Chemistry and Microbiology, Dibble General Hospital, Menlo Park, California from 1941 to 1944 in Chemistry and Microbiology.





Jo in the laboratory at Dibble General Hospital.

I never really knew my grandparents as they lived in the heartland, Nebraska and Minnesota, and we lived in California. My parents were not well off and we could not afford to travel.

When I was about six months old, we all moved to Duluth to live with my father's parents for about six months. Moving to Duluth was a matter of need as my mother had stopped working so she could take care of me, and my father was unable to find work in California.

Photo of Josephine, Oliver, Emil, and Mary on the front steps of their house in Duluth.







Photo of me with my mother on my first birthday.

And  
a week later, me on my first Christmas.



Many years later, Violet, my father's sister, told me that her parents had been very impressed with how well my mother took care of me.

After our stay Duluth, and we returned to the San Jose area in California, my father was still unable to find work, so he reenlisted in the Marines for a couple more years.

Back in California we rented part of a duplex in the suburbs and my mother and I lived there. In 1949, my mother went back to work this time in the laboratory at San Jose Hospital. The next door neighbor took care of me while my mother was at work.

My mother worked at San Jose Hospital until her retirement in 1975, rotating in all fields of medical technology.

After her retirement, she worked part time for Robert L. Dennis, MD Path Lab until 1985.

When my father returned from the armed forces, he got a job at Muirson Label Company (<http://onlineexhibits.historysanjose.org/labellegacy/index.html>), designing labels for different canned and packaged food products.



This was my introduction to commercial art and my first job was drawing a bunny for the label on a package of Easter candy.



But, my earliest education began with being home schooled by my father in fine art, drawing and painting. He guided my hand and taught me perspective and how to work with paint and combining colors to make my first real painting, "Lone Hill", an historical artists interpretation of a local geological formation that had been long ago leveled for housing developments.

As my father was able to work at home and only went to the company to turn in his projects, he pretty much took care of

me while my mother was at work.

I learned a lot from him, including how to design and build things, such as a dog house for our dog, a brick BBQ in our back yard, and making a tractor out of an old Ford car. I learned how to drive on that tractor. It was my first car!



The education was good and it has helped me be more inventive and independent in later years, but our relationship was not an easy one.

He had wanted a son to teach all these things to and me being a girl was a big disappointment to him. I was to be named Michael before I was born, there was no other choice.

My father was a hunting guide and a trapper in Minnesota, when he was young. He taught me a lot of backwoods skills including hunting, fishing, and trapping. When I was in sixth grade, I ran a trapping line down in the canyon of our mountain house.

When we went camping, our tent was a teepee that my mother sewed out of heavy canvas. It was the best tent I ever slept in, warm and cozy, with a canvas floor under our sleeping bags and a small camp fire in the middle of the tent.



Many years later, in December of 1977, as an adult, I had a friend who was a member of a small hunting club on a private farm in Northern California. He invited me along for a weekend of goose hunting. We did quite well. I got to play “bird dog” for the hunt. The guys all quietly staked out their positions down by the lake. The day before they had positioned plywood geese decoys on the ground around the lake so the geese would think there were other geese poking around in the grass. The decoys looked so real that a hawk decided to attack one. After the loud crash, we all looked to see the hawk staggering off away from the flattened plywood. I imagine he had a headache after that. But, as “bird dog”, I drove a pickup truck slowly down the dirt road that led to the lake, just as the farmer might. As the truck got close to the lake, the geese that were on the ground took off in flight giving the guys a chance to shoot. This was the only



chance they were to get during the weekend because of the club's rules.

The club was run by the man who owned the farm. He limited the membership to just a few people and allowed only one hunt during the season so as to conserve the geese and not frighten them away from the lake they frequented during their migration.



But, during this trip, I had the unexpected pleasure of acquiring a pet owl. The owl was a Pygmy Owl, a daytime hunting owl of only about 6" in height. He had been injured in the wild and had a broken wing. He could no longer fly silently, so he could not survive in the wild. The people who had been taking care of him had acquired the proper permits to have him and often let him fly throughout their house. Unfortunately, an owl is a hunter and he killed their pet

parakeet.

My friend convinced them that I could take good care of the owl and so they transferred the care to me.

Being a small bird, he did not have a very long life span, but he spent several years with me before dying of old age. I fed him on raw chicken breast and the occasional young mouse purchased from a pet food store. He had the run of the house and loved to perch on high places.

One year, he chose to be the ornament on top of the Christmas Tree.



My formal education began around the age of five at St. Elizabeth's Day Home in San Jose, California. It was really a kindergarten and I don't have many memories of being there, other than the overcooked vegetables that were included in our cafeteria lunches. I seem to remember a Christmas pageant that was my first time on stage.

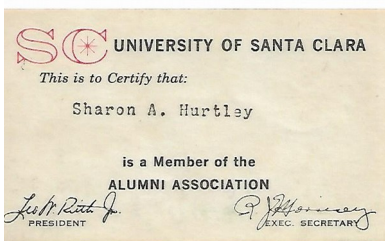
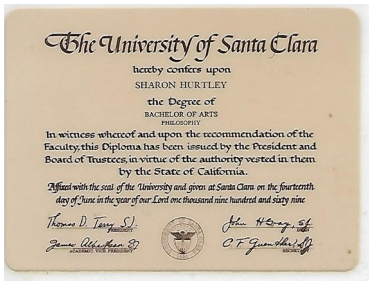
This news clipping from 1951, is lost in my memory, but I guess I was there It says it's me in the swing.

May Day and a Maypole that same year is vaguely familiar. Though, for some reason this photo strikes me as very Soviet.



RED FEATHER LEADERS—Mrs. Morgan Dillon Baker and Don S. Fuller entertain children at St. Elizabeth's Day Home, Community Chest agency. Mrs. Baker and Fuller fill newly created positions as vice-chairmen of 1952 Community Chest campaign. Enjoying ride in swing is Sharon Hurtley, while Kathy Fernandez stands alongside awaiting her turn. Fuller is holding Jeffrey Waldrop and Winifred Mayle.

From there my



education progressed to Mariposa Private School, a small two room school where I studied first through fifth grades. Then St. Mary's Grammar School, a Catholic school where I studied sixth through eighth grades. I graduated from Los Gatos Union High School in 1964. Then I attended the University of Santa Clara, where I graduated with a Bachelors of Arts in Philosophy with minors in physics, math and art in 1969.

While at the university, I was able to take a class in introductory Russian language. It was not an easy class as there were no language lab or tapes to practice with. The class was not very popular having only a handful of students, so the university dropped it from the curriculum the next semester.

But, at least I had a chance to learn the alphabet and a few phrases. I kept my textbook, hoping to continue learning, but some years later on, a friend “borrowed” my book, moved out of state and that was the last I saw of it. I have since acquired more textbooks.

During my college years, I often took the train up to San Francisco to visit friends that lived there. It was the Hippy Years and San Francisco was the center of the action. One day when walking down Haight Street in the Haight-Ashbury District of San Francisco with some of my friends, and being around lunch time, one of them suggested going to a Russian deli to get pirozhki. I had no clue what that was, but I have always been interested in trying new foods. That was my first taste of pirozhki and now it is perhaps my favorite snack food! Or add a couple more with different fillings and you’ve got dinner.

While I was at the university, my father bought a retired Naval launch. His plan was to rebuild it and keep it as a fishing boat. The boat was named “The Teal” after a type of native California shore bird and was kept at Moss Landing, a fishing harbor in the central part of the Monterrey Bay. I did a little fishing on it, but not very much. He kept it for a few years and was eventually forced to sell it as the harbor fees were getting too expensive.



Photo of the boat during modification and repairs.

Ready to launch and in the water.



Photo of my parents celebrating the launch.



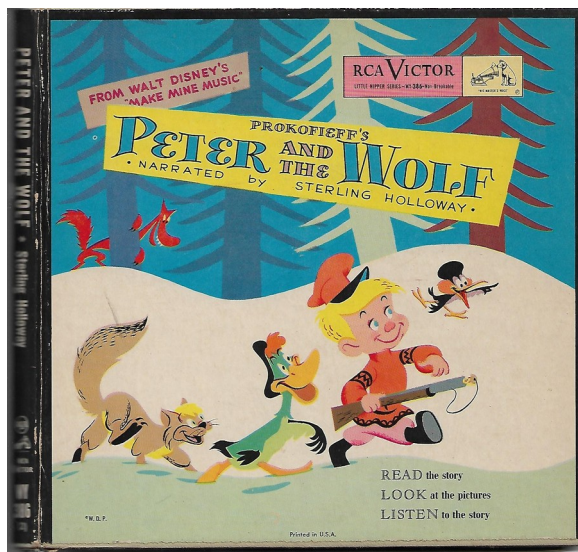
After I graduated from college, a friend from school and I decided to go into business together. We scraped together our savings and rented a storefront in Old Town (a renovated grammar school turned into an art themed shopping center) in Los Gatos. We got our business license and resale permit and opened a record store, Yazoo Records. The partnership only lasted a year, as my friend and I differed too much in our business methods. I left the business and he

continued on for a while, eventually giving up on the project as sales were not that great.

While still working in the store, I got to know a couple of guys who were working as bar tenders in a restaurant upstairs. Jim was an artist and we got along very well, each appreciating the other's talents and working out ideas together for paintings. He was a pretty well known young talent in Taos, New Mexico and was back home in Los Gatos, taking a six month break after a divorce. We had gone to the same high school, but he had graduated a year before I had started school there, so we never met back then. Jim and I remained friends for many years, but living several states apart, we eventually lost touch with each other. I still have some of his art work, though.

I had met a few of his other friends and together we often made trips to Taos, visiting Jim after his return there. On one trip, I hung out for a few months, working at The Blue Door restaurant, in Santa Fe, New Mexico as an assistant to the chef and owner. The restaurant was a block from the Capitol Building and some of the government employees frequented us for lunch. It was fun learning the restaurant trade in a small intimate restaurant that served only lunch and dinner. I've always loved to cook and this gave me a chance to develop some more commercial skills.

After returning to the San Jose area, I still hadn't found the direction that I wanted to take my life in. But I knew that if I wasn't doing something creative, I wouldn't be happy.



I enrolled in the Music & Arts Institute of San Francisco to study classical music and composition for a couple of years. As a child, my parents had given me a Disney record production of "Peter and the Wolf" by Sergei Prokofiev. It immediately became my favorite and I think that's when I fell in love with classical music. I still have the records!



Still not finding my true direction in life, my father introduced me to Rod, a young man that he had been mentoring in wrought iron work. He had a small company, The Iron Rod, making pool fences, gates and such. After proving to him that manual labor was something I could do, I got a job in the shop, hauling and cutting steel and learning welding. I also worked as an architectural designer drawing gates, fences, railings, window guards and other custom items for his customers.



One of my designs was making a couple of life sized topiary frames for the Old Town garden area, a seal balancing a ball and a giraffe nibbling from a nearby tree ranch. They grew ivy on them. Photo of Jerry's mother with the giraffe topiary.

I've always had an attraction to stuff of the Middle Ages and during college, I was introduced to The Renaissance Faire that was held every Summer in an oak forest north of San Francisco. It was an affair of dressing up in Medieval garb, listening to folk music, watching dancers and other entertainers, eating foods of the era, and shopping for primitive arts and crafts. It was a lot of fun to attend.

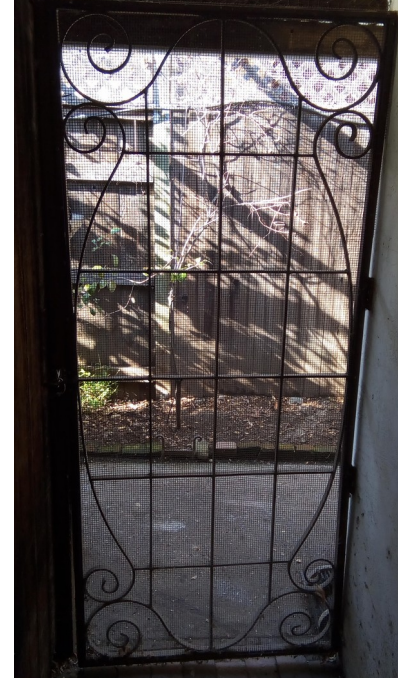


One year, at one of the food stalls, I saw sausages being grilled using long handled toasting forks. I thought they were very interesting and since I was working at the wrought iron shop at that time, I decided to make some for use on

the BBQ and with camp fires. They are about 4' long and I keep them hanging on the wall above our fireplace when they are not in use.



My father had enclosed a patio area at the back of our house with a wooden fence and partially covered it with a wooden roof. Over time this area became a work shop and a sort of storage place and I decided to make some gates for the two entrances to make it a more secure area.



Although these two gates are the same style, they are different sizes to fit the openings. We plan to bring these gates to our new house to use along the sides of the house.

I had long ago given up on having a front yard lawn. It didn't seem to serve any useful purpose other than the exercise of mowing it every weekend. I decided to convert it into a garden and grow vegetables. I was tired of the neighborhood dogs digging it up and built a fence to surround the yard. This is the front entrance gate to the yard. It will be used on our terrace at the new house.



Somewhere in this time frame, of the late 1970's, a friend had taken me to a hockey game. It was love at first sight! I had never had much interest in sports in school, most of it was boring to me. The only thing I enjoyed was running, but there was no track team for girls. But, hockey was fast! You couldn't blink or you'd miss the action.



The team was The California Golden Seals and their mascot was Sparky the Seal. It wasn't long before I had season tickets. They had a boosters club which I joined. The club had regular meetings and also organized trips for the members to attend the away games. It was fun to visit Canada.

The women of the group decided to form a hockey team and I joined...as goalie, of course! We rented time at a local ice skating rink after their business hours and we played every Tuesday night at 10pm. Another group formed a Sunday night (again 10pm) "broom ball" team at an ice rink closer to home, which was nice. Broom ball is supposed to be like hockey, but played with specialized brooms and tennis shoes instead of skates. But, we voted to use skates. (my jersey)



One of the perks of the women's hockey team was that the rink was fairly close to the professional team's stadium and some of the players would come to our practices and help coach and act as referees. We learned a lot from those guys and it really perfected our games.

After playing on these teams for a few years, I was invited to play in a special tournament that was for high school ages girls. They needed an extra goalie for one of their teams and it didn't seem to matter that I was around 30. The tournament consisted of a few girl's teams playing each other and the team I was on was put against an all adult male professional AHL (American Hockey League) team. Talk about miss-matched skills! My defense team just stood and watched these guys skate past without even trying to defend the goal. Somehow, and I have no idea how, I managed to survive for the first 15 minutes with a shutout (no goals scored). Then exhaustion hit me and I could do no more. After I recovered enough to go and sit in the bleachers with a friend of one

of the Seal's players, he commented that he was amazed I could play so well and was going to tell his player friend all about it...my moment of fame.

Years passed, the popularity of hockey as a spectator sport in our area waned and so, with ticket sales down, eventually the professional team left town. Our teams interest in playing also waned and our teams dissolved. So, I no longer played.

While visiting Western Canada for hockey games, I became interested in the Native Canadian art. I picked up a couple of prints and progressed to learn more about the art styles of the Pacific Northwest indigenous tribes.

The wrought iron shop was located in a small strip mall and all the shops there shared a dumpster for our garbage. One of the shops made and sold pottery. There was often interesting pots and such in the trash. Most had small defects. They were fired but never glazed. I rescued a few and painted them in the indigenous style.



In the above photo: the two prints are ones I bought in Vancouver, British Columbia, the plate and the three pots were unglazed ones that I painted, and the "harpoon" is more or less a theatrical prop I made out of a long drill bit and a branch from an apple tree with a bit of cord wrapped around the base of the drill bit. I made the two metal hangers out of steel strap.

When I was very young, I learned a lot of domestic skills from my mother that included cooking, gardening, and various sewing techniques. I loved cooking and in another chapter, I will go into more detail on that. Gardening, well, it

seems that I do “jungle” well...my fruit orchard is an example of that.

When I learned to sew, I started designing and making a lot of my own clothes. I learned a lot of needle crafts: knitting, crocheting, weaving, etc.



These leaf pot holders were made from crochet thread that is a lot heavier than regular thread, but not as heavy as yarn. It is also made from cotton instead of wool or acrylic.

This hooded wool jacket kept me warm through a lot of hockey games and on trips to Canada. On one trip returning from Canada, the custom's agent at the airport wanted to know if I bought it in Canada. I think he wanted to charge me duty on it, because, he seemed



very surprised when I said I made it.

I later attended the local community colleges West Valley College, in Saratoga, California and Mission College, in Santa Clara, California from 1978 though 1984 to study drafting and later electronic design. The drafting was mainly to improve my architectural design skills so that my drawings would be more impressive to Rod's clients. But, later after Jerry and I met and got married, the electronic design skills were something I would need for our new company.



My first knowledge of Russia was from a plastic globe bank which I was given as a small child and still have to this day. It is mounted on a plastic axis and has a slot in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean to drop coins in. There is a screw in cork in Antarctica where you can remove the coins. The world was fascinating to me. The terrain is three dimensional so you can see and feel the mountain ranges. All of the countries were color coded so you could tell where the boundaries were, though most of which have changed drastically over the years. The Soviet Union was, of course, the largest country depicted in a deep rich green, the color of cooked spinach, one of my favorite foods, which I then loved and still do. So, I reasoned,

if the Soviet Union was made out of spinach, it must be good! No?

All my life, theatre has been one of my main interests from childhood school plays to high school and college performances, both on stage and back stage in set, costume and make-up work to performing in community theater groups and eventually to directing and writing.

My mother always encouraged my participation. When she was in high school, a rather famous actor, John Barrymore was in town for a summer stock production and visited the school to coach the students in acting. When my mother read lines for him, he was so impressed that he wanted her to move to Hollywood and pursue an acting career. However, her parents were completely against the idea. So, nothing came of it and I believe she wanted to live the dream through me.

During high school, 1960 to 1964, I had a minor role, the part of "Curly" in a production of "Peter Pan". I also co-wrote and co-acted with my best friend a Punch & Judy styled puppet show for a school and variety show, and was part of the general backstage crew for most of the school's productions.

In 1962, I received the Second Place Award in the Northern California Original Oratory Competition. I also was a member of the high school debating team.

Also, when in high school, I was a member of the after school Future Business Leaders of America club. One of our tasks was to assemble the high school athletic teams' rosters into programs. Then have them printed by the local newspaper, The Los Gatos-Saratoga Times Observer. We also sold these programs before and during the games to fund the cost of the printing

Another after school activity was working for the art department. A few of the better art students were asked to volunteer for various art related projects.

These included renovating the cheer leader's megaphones with fresh paint and the school's logo.

We also made two feet wide by eight feet long butcher paper publicity banners to hang in the halls and cafeteria of the school. These advertised candidates for school politics: president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer of the junior and senior classes. They also advertised school plays, dances and other events. It was pretty much a full time job as there was always some new event occurring throughout the school year.

The town held an annual Winter art competition open to the high school students. The local businesses offered their windows for the students to paint with Christmas themes to celebrate the season. In 1963, a classmate and I got to paint the local office of the California State Auto Association. It was a nice big window about 6' by 3' and we painted it with a scene depicting a church in a snowy mountain setting. We won!! And there was a write up with photo about it in the Los Gatos-Saratoga Times-Observer, December 24, 1963. The clipping is faded, but the picture of our painting is on the upper left.



Another project I had in my junior and senior years was being one of the two high school photographers. We attended games and other events taking photos and later developing the film and making prints for the high school newspaper. As the newspaper was only a few pages long and came out monthly, this was not too much of a time consuming task.

Between 1966 and 1969, I was part of the backstage crew for most of the productions at my university, including the summer productions of California Shakespeare Festival. In 1966, I had minor walk on parts as two different characters, "Demon" & "Attendant to the Goddesses" in Shakespeare's "The Tempest".

I also worked on the school's literary magazine, "The Owl", and learned even more about publishing than I had done while working on the athletic team programs in high school. I learned about type setting and how to tell all of the shades of "white" paper apart.

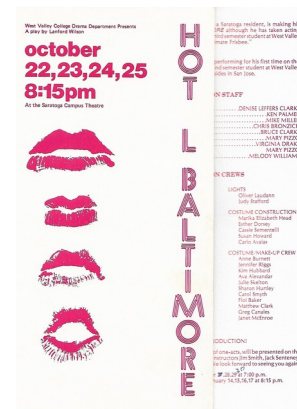


When I first started taking classes at West Valley College, it was primarily to pursue my hobby of acting. That's when I started getting involved with community theater groups. I studied various theatrical arts, including acting for stage, film and TV, diction, dialects, make-up (photo to right was part of



an "alien" make-up exercise from make-up class), mask making (left photo is one of the mask projects), stage fighting, and directing.

I worked as part of the costume and make-up crew on the 1980 West Valley College production of "Hot L Baltimore".





During that time, I worked on some community theater stage productions. In 1980, I had a small part in the role of "Mrs. Blacktooth" in a production of "Annie Get Your Gun" produced by the Saratoga Community Players.

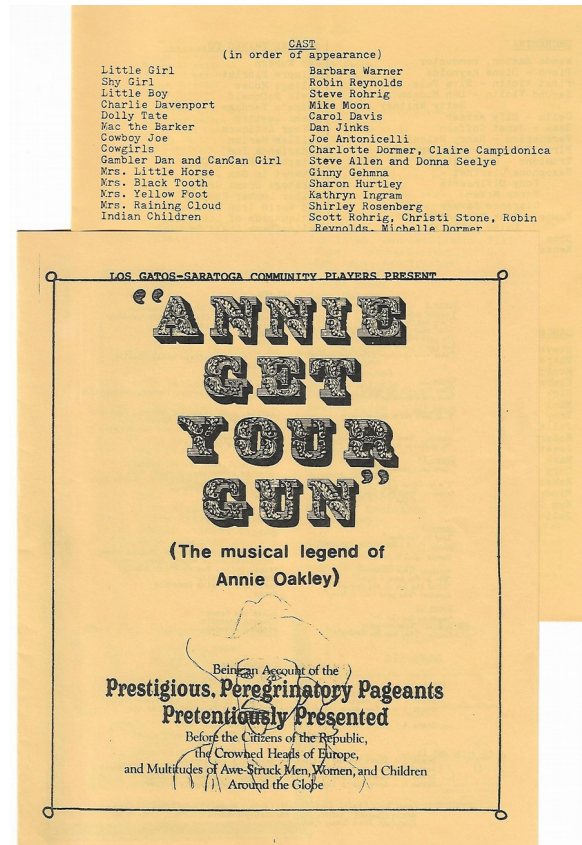


In the photo above, I am on the left.



In the above photo, I am third from the left.

To the right is the program from "Annie Get Your Gun" and a portion of the cast list.



Later that year, I was Stage Manager, and designed and made masks for the Saratoga Community Players production of "The Fantastics". This news clipping is wrong. The mask I am holding was a project from my mask class and was not used in the play. It was actually one that I made for one of the guys I worked with for his Halloween costume.



This is the mask I made for the show. But at the time of the interview, the mask was not yet completed. The reporter decided to edit the truth to make a better story. I think this was my first experience of "Fake News".

But, the lies came earlier than that. When I was in grammar school, I don't remember what year, but, I do remember being very young, we were taught that the United States won World War II. It was many years before I found out that that was a lie, as the Soviet Union had won that war several months before the United States won the War with Japan.

I have never really understood why the rest of the world has such a problem with Russia.

I remember countless drills in grammar school of hiding under our desks when the air raid sirens sounded because of possible Soviet missile attacks...as if hiding under a desk would help.

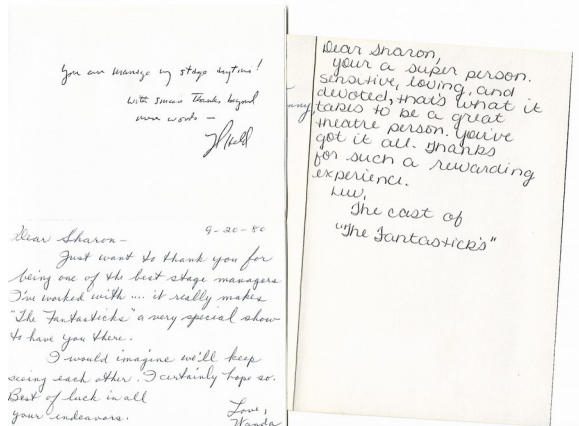
And, then there was the McCarthy era...how on earth does Communism threaten America? I didn't understand and still don't. If you think your country is the strongest in the world, how does another country's idealism or way of life threaten it??



Saratogan Gloria Strehlke, right, will handle props for the production by the Community Players of Los Gatos-Saratoga of "The Fantasticks," which will open Friday and Saturday, Aug. 22 and 23, with a champagne reception, at the Saratoga Civic Theater. In the picture, Sharon Hurlley, stage manager, is showing Mrs. Strehlke a mask that will be used in the play. The director of "The Fantasticks" is J. P. Held, of the West Valley College drama department. Chris Bronzich of Saratoga is light designer. Performances will continue weekends through Sept. 20. For advance reservations or ticket information, call Glen Singer at 395-4806.

(Photo by Cathy Hofstrand)

Photo of me working with the director on the script for "The Fantastics".

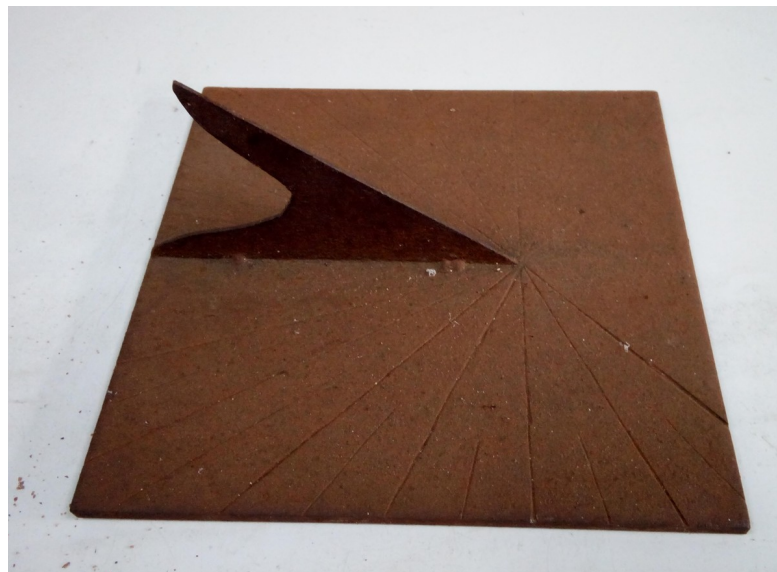


"Thank You" notes from the cast and crew of "The Fantastics".

I also had an interest in astronomy and took a class in it. One of the projects was to make a working sundial. Since I was working in wrought iron, it was relatively easy to make mine out of steel.

It's a bit rusty after spending many years hanging out in our garden.

The plan is to clean it up, add a stand, and modify the gnomon for the change in latitude from 37°N in Los Gatos to 44°N in Goryachiy Kluch so that it can work in the garden of our new house.



Religion and Spirituality...My father was Lutheran, but never went to church, and my mother was Roman Catholic, who did go to church. I was raised to be Roman Catholic. When I was very young, I went to Sunday school on Saturday mornings. They taught us to obey rules and do some arts and crafts, but, nothing meaningful. I went to church on Sundays and other religious holidays, again nothing meaningful. The only things I liked about it was listening to the choir singing and the smell of the burning incense.

Midnight Mass on Christmas was nice. Somehow the cold air and the singing seemed to suggest that there was joy in the air. I've always loved Christmas, not for the presents, but for the sense of something magic happening.

Later, after Jerry and I formed our company, it always seemed that we had to work through the holidays, which put a real damper on any celebrating. The Consumer Electronics Show every January was the culprit...our customers were in a last minute hurry to get their products ready for the show.

Now, we have an artificial Christmas tree with fiber optic "lights". It's small and sits on top of the TV cabinet. We leave it there all year and turn on its lights every night in defiance of the holiday spoilers...now, we just celebrate Christmas every day of the year! The photo doesn't show the lights well. There is a color wheel that rotates over a light changing the color. The camera caught it when everything was blue.



In Catholic grammar school they taught us that God was everywhere. So, I wondered why there was a separate "house" for God, and how could "sinners" be outside of God. And how can the Devil and Hell and Purgatory be outside of God.

When I got to college and took theology classes, in one, I asked what do we think when we use the word, "God", how do we envision the concept of "God"? We see a lot of pictures of an old man with a long white beard sitting on a throne in the clouds...is this what we think of as God? The teacher, a Jesuit priest, told me my question was irrelevant.

That's when I left religion and started to look for meaning elsewhere. It's

interesting that the propaganda was so intense in my religion that, for years afterwards, I felt a lingering guilt about leaving. They said, "You'll go to hell if you're not Catholic!!"

All my life, I've had this thought in my mind, "I want to go home." But I could never find it. (Well, I did eventually find "home", but that's in another chapter.)

I read a lot of books that were popular at the time that dealt with searching for the meaning of life, or in life...I found a lot of opinions, but, never found anything that felt right. I found a lot of people that think they know the answer to life and are ready to sell you the "magic pill" and shove it down your throat, but, it seems they were only after the money.

I haven't mentioned anything about romance. I had boyfriends off and on throughout my life, but, as none of them lasted, it doesn't seem worth mentioning. When I met Jerry, I knew it was right.

There are other photos that I would like to include but it will take a long time to sort through all of our photos to find them. Perhaps, as I find them, they will go in another chapter of our book. I am sure that I will find other memories as well.