

# WALK WITH ME



By  
HARRY BRILEY



## Chapter 10 – Hitting My Stride

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## Chapter 10 – Hitting My Stride

### **Preface to this Chapter**

1990-1999

There is a somber reason that it took thirty years to re-visit the 1990's decade in my memoir. Despite significant peaks in my professional life, emotions deeply colored that decade with dysfunction as a family that nearly ended in divorce and explosive decisions by all members that flung the family spinning apart for decades.

This chapter hints at but does not explain specifics about family mental illness. I finally decided in 2020 to omit a parallel chapter about the family because the psychological pain still runs too deep. Time heals some wounds but we were not the happy family seen on 1950's television. Neither Anne nor I came from such docile functional families. With brief intrusions, this chapter focuses mostly upon my work and church transitions.

Therefore, what might interest you in this sanitized chapter? In this decade, I participated in these significant life events worth exploring.

#### Computer Usage

- the change from computers solely for clerks to tracking tools for managers
- the cutover from mini-computers to micro-computers
- the closing of Briley Software retail PC software sales
- the nascent beginning of not-yet-published Agile Programming concepts
- the design of recursive object-object database tables prior to Oracle
- the arrival and demise of Oracle Fifth Generation software development
- the intensity of national worries over Year 2000 (Y2K) computer bugs
- the cutover from stand-alone applications to browser-driven databases

#### Interpersonal

- the use of meeting facilitation within technical groups and projects
- the thaw in nuclear weapons tensions between Russia and the United States
- the push by homosexual activists from mere acceptance to enforced approval
- the web-support role in lobbying for moral issues in Sacramento

#### International Trips

- observations of Russia Perestroika, especially upon Russian Christians
- observations of Guatemala exiting their last year of Civil War

#### Churches

- the design of academic teaching of the Bible in six-week chunks
- the hyper-liberalism of the United Methodist Church in California
- the grand tour of local conservative denominations

### Emotional Overview

From 1989 to 1993, we did not write a newsletter. I pulled data from my computerized calendar at work to observe this angst-laden decade from a distance of thirty years.

Professionally, my work became significantly worthwhile with a deep sense of purpose on a national and international scale, culminating with helping design the database application for tracking weapon-grade nuclear materials by the Russians in Moscow.

On the other hand, as mentioned, the family went off the rails and we nearly ended in divorce. My skills as father and husband proved wholly inadequate. People ameliorated my analysis saying that we did so much for our adopted children. While I agree the early years felt palatable, I still wanted to run away as an abject failure as a family man.

For church, I made significant contributions locally and explorations internationally. I proposed, designed, and implemented an adult Bible series of classes at Asbury United Methodist (1989-1994). It offered no adult classes at the time. I led and mentored others to present each book of the Bible in six weeks. My methodology offered multiple entrance and exit points for adults, as opposed to an age-based prayer group, which our church was not doing either. I easily recruited teachers for these six-week segments. A deeper crisis of liberalism within the pastoral staff, along with the negative influences of hedonistic worldviews showing up in my teenagers finally drove me from Asbury UMC.

We spent five years at Calvary Temple Assembly of God. I went on a data-centric mission awareness trip with Wycliffe Bible Translators to the highlands of Guatemala in 1996. Calvary had no adult studies. I used my Guatemala trip to launch topical six-week classes. I easily recruited teachers and plan for six-week classes. My son's unacceptable sexualized behavior in their youth group brought about our sudden dismissal as a family by the elders of that congregation.

This chapter ends with our 1999 move to Trinity Southern Baptist needing a teaching sabbatical and emotional recovery. They had a loving class for parents of teenagers. We chose this congregation because our teenagers willingly attended the youth group. The congregation helped us heal as troubled parents, which leads to the chapter **Recovery**.

I will let Anne talk first about her severe medical struggles in this decade. That will help in cross-matching events within her medical instability. I will then shift to the incredible events in my career and faith-based activities that significantly marked this decade.

### Continuing Disability

By Anne Briley, 11/11/1996 (edited for length, bolding added)

I felt overwhelmed [filling out this form in 1996]. The **chronic fatigue** is still present, but slightly different since I work hard to pace myself. I can do errands or cleaning, but then deep tiredness sets in. Fatigue will set in for no explicable reason. My stamina is very low. At a shopping center with my kids, I re-parked at four different stores during a 90-minute trip. That drained me. I was achy, nervous, and very tired. My daughter took me to the mall. After two stores, I had to sit in a rest area while she finished.

The **depression** baffles me. Because of bearing with grief of two people who lost loved ones to suicide, this has never been an option. For months, I have been in a deep-blue achy state, where life hurts physically, emotionally and spiritually. I want to hide in a hole, believing things will stay [as bad] or get worse. Dr. Armstrong helped line things up in perspective, rather than having everything collapse into chaos, but **despair** remains.

Meeting people frightens me [beyond **social anxiety**]. In church when everyone [stands to] shake hands, I sit making notes in my bulletin or slip out for a drink of water. I can greet my neighbors now, but not talk with them for long without feeling nervous. I do not do well in crowds, or anywhere there is an angry person, even if I am not involved.

[I feel] my **brain is at half-speed**. I consider everyone and everything to make any decisions. Sometimes people talking feels like a timed delay, as if talking to me in a different language and my brain has to translate - always a few sentences behind. I have trouble concentrating. I am losing the desire to do any reading.

I usually **feel inadequate** to get anything done. If I "drop the ball", I usually beat myself up more than the offended party ever would.

I use Ambien for **insomnia** since awake until 2 am. Dr. Schlies added Zolofit. I began serious **panic attacks** as if someone held a gun to my head saying, "*Get those three data sets collated correctly in three-minutes, or I'm blowing your brains out!*" He reduced lithium and the attacks subsided, but when he increased Zolofit, the attacks resumed. My cardiologist thought of angina and prescribed nitroglycerine patches. The [cardio] treadmill showed [no physical] problems, and that the attack was stress induced.

**Complications of diabetes** accelerated the past few years. I experienced severe and constant stomach pain. My gastroenterologist, Dr. David Lin, diagnosed gastroparesis [caused by] a **neuropathy of the digestive tract**. Although I take medication for this, it still takes hours to digest a meal, which [disrupts] blood sugar levels. I can [no longer] "time" food absorption with the peaking of my insulin. I feel overly sluggish at times.

Regular screening by my endocrinologist revealed **kidney damage** at an early stage. I take Vasotec and have a low-protein diet. I see Linda Michaelis, RD, as a Certified Diabetes Educator, bi-weekly. She adjusted my protein amounts during various parts of the day for the greatest possible stability; but good control here eludes us.

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Pan-retinal lasers in both eyes in 10/84 greatly reduced my chances of losing my sight due to retinopathy. During the past two years, I experienced significant lens clouding which substantially reduced my vision. Dr. Savell said that this at age 40 was likely attributable to diabetes. He performed an **[intraocular] lens transplant** in each eye.

I had a **carpal tunnel** injury in 1980, resolved by splinting and cortisone injections. In 10/1995, I experienced an ache in my right wrist, with tingling and numbness. **Nerve conduction studies** showed problems in both wrists. I had surgery in my right wrist and scheduled the process on my left wrist.

I experience a severe, consistently, burning **pain on my tongue**. Cracks and fissures appear. ENT specialist, Dr. Tolan, said this was candida, directly related to diabetes.

In 3/1993, I had a painful case of eyestrain, and within 24 hours, had a severe case of double vision and crossed eyes. Two doctors and a neurologist yielded a diagnosis of **cranial neuropathy** with no possible treatment. They estimated six months [to recover but fortunately only lasted three months].

[A month ago,] on 10/15/96, I felt severe pain from a boil. My physician sent me to the surgeon immediately, which he said was a carbuncle only seen in diabetics. He drained it in his office. The next day it spread. The day following, he sent me for immediate emergency surgery for an "**opportunistic, flesh-eating bacteria**". After three weeks of a visiting nurse, one wound almost healed, and [today,] the second is coming along.

I have had many **serious dental and gum** problems the past few years, beyond the scope of general dentistry. My general dentist, endodontist, and periodontist, each tell me that diabetes plays a substantial role in my dental problems.

Good diabetic control eludes me, despite being on an insulin infusion pump, multiple blood tests daily, and working with a dietician. For the past two years, I [gratefully] lost 50 pounds, and have a great many more to go. Coordinating insulin reduction to [significant] weight reduction has frustrated everyone. Although I have not lost consciousness from insulin shock since 1973, I came close several times during the last month. My target blood test [should be] between 100-199 mg/dl (normal is 60-120 mg/dl), but my range is drastic. Last Friday, my results ranged from 32 [comatose] to 492 mg/dl [which is high, but not the extreme 600 level as prior to the insulin pump.]

I seem spooked by many things. I could not open the [envelope of these] forms. My husband had to do it. My therapist read it to me so I would not be so jumpy. I am jumpy about bills even though we budget and shop wisely. A pharmacy clerk once treated me very badly. It took three days to talk to a supervisor. It took a month to go into the store during this clerk's shift. I had to bring my high school daughter with me. Once, being alone, I turned and walk out, and got my prescription the next day.

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## Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory

### Change from User Focus to Manager Focus

The computer revolution moved from its already heady technical gallop into a mind-spinning user interface overhaul. Lab managers required that we change all reliable, stabilized, terminal-emulator, character-mode, and protected-by-isolation software on dedicated servers to significantly unstable and risk-infested distributed web applications.

First, we up-ended each application to work with a mouse-aware user interface. Each PC thus contained a duplicate of the front-end logic for the presentation of the application to the user while the dedicated server merely sat in the background hosting the database.

It slowed down the previously fast data entry by an enforced networked round-trip from the PC to lock the database, get an acknowledgement, send the changed data entity, and release the lock. With the prior terminal emulator process, all logic including the locking steps resided upon the server with no wait times. The original PC traffic was merely refreshing the remote PC screens as presented upon the server.

The immediate problem became apparent with now a hundred copies per application of the front-end software scattered across the mile-square research site. We chased our tails trying to insure that each of the connected PCs had the latest front-end logic. Instead of an overnight single point correction of a bug at the server (which delighted the users), we had to delay pushing software updates as bi-weekly or monthly releases just for sanity sake (which annoyed the users to wait so long). Invariably two or three users had an older copy of the front-end software, which reintroduced data errors back into the database previously solved through the latest software upgrade.

Eventually, application designers settled upon a lowest-common denominator tool called a web browser (now ubiquitous) to handle the mouse navigation and commands back to the dedicated server. That second complete revamping of all administrative software with web browsers occurs in the chapter *Recovery*. In this decade, we struggled with distributed, unmanageable, customized, but still superior user interfaces. We could still easily program, easily debug, and repair components as encapsulated modules.

The managers mostly wanted visual eye-candy rather than functional tasks. The power-users hated the changed interfaces and complained about carpal tunnel syndrome from the constant mouse usage. LLNL spent considerable time on ergonomic issues, new chairs, and defining proper elbow heights for mouse motions customized to each user. We continued to provide short-cut keystrokes from the old way of doing things especially for the power users. We did not use the term ‘power user’ lightly. These data clerks could complete three or four times their workload using the keyboard as opposed to using mouse navigation (which their managers loved but so infrequently used back then).

Upper managers began monthly searches to evaluate performance and health of their application data. They never understood the keyboard methods and had no desire to learn it. They far preferred the intuitive spontaneity of the cumbersome and slow navigation

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with a mouse. To them, the new visual navigation screens felt breezy and speedy. They compared this paradigm shift to asking a staff member to prepare a paper report for the following day. From that myopic perspective, they could just activate the application front-end to check their data for themselves. I cannot fault their objectives, but the enormous cost and increased labor by the data providers begged the intended benefit.

We thus imposed an enforced schizophrenia upon our databases. We tried to balance high-speed data entry with high-speed data inquiry, two antithetical goals.

We copied each database into two camps. We designed the live database for quick data input, edits, and updates. We tuned this first version to satisfy the data entry clerks.

We cloned a “snapshot” copy overnight for the managers. We modified that copy to break all rules of third-normal form of database design. This meant that we duplicated data fields into subservient data tables that allowed indexing on just about every field.

Each copied database thus ballooned in size and became impossible to edit a specific record (now replicated in many places). However, these “flattened” data tables felt more like the old-styled 1970’s punched card files well suited for ad-hoc sorts and reports.

My supervisor, Mike Piscotty, implemented our first multiple data warehouse that served various managers by collecting these flattened database copies from across many administrative applications into a single access tool. To get the performance wanted by management, he stripped out ‘create’ and ‘modify’ features, leaving essentially read-only access. That limitation settled incessant arguments between departments over whose accounting report was correct. Since they all used the identical unchanging snapshot, a report for a 9am meeting exactly matched a report generated for a 3pm meeting (since we copied the live clerical data into the Data Warehouse only at midnight).

### **Bay Area Excelerator Users Group (BAEUG)**

Prior to Oracle CASE tools or Microsoft PowerPoint, necessity was the mother of invention for programmers. Our department purchased an expensive drawing tool for me. InterSolv Excelerator 1.9 in 1990 (or earlier?) let us draw Data Flow diagrams, Hardware Networks, and Entity Relationship diagrams. It could auto-generate COBOL (an unused feature since we programmed in fourth generation languages).

I jumped in and became the treasurer for the Bay Area users group that met through 1992. We created a newsletter, hosted panel discussions, and each member company spoke about a specific project using the tool. In two talks, I showed its use for project management, task tracking, and diagramming for breaking apart hard-to-describe software aspects into understandable diagrammed pieces for customers.



### **My Projects**

I earned both my 15-year (1991) and 20-year (1996) service pins. My home department had several name changes but still managed all administrative data processing software developers. They farmed us out as subject-matter teams to various departments that needed boots-on-the-ground software creation/maintenance.

As a side task, I enjoyed implementing speech synthesis hardware in 1990 for the Visitor's Center connected to a Commodore PET microcomputer.

I started the decade briefly working on an HP-3000/58 with the Inventory Management team in the Procurement Department before moving to the building next door to Human Resources on their HP-3000. We held a shutdown party for the slow HP-3000/58 on 1/16/1992 as that Inventory team upgraded to a HP3000/S980 the month before.



**Figure 2- HP3000/58 introduced 1985 (HPMuseum.net)**

While working under Bill Cook (my favorite supervisor) for Human Resources (HR), I soon became embroiled in a hostile environment. We software jockeys are headstrong and I clashed ferociously with another developer. The Human Resources folks rounded us up to bring sanity to our team. While the other developer, an external contractor, soon found work elsewhere, the effective process of group facilitation deeply impressed me.

This led to my secondary calling, first as a Group Facilitator (1991) and then as a Systems Design Facilitator (1994). Once word got out about my unusual side-role, departments across the site used me several times a year since 1992 to be their impartial facilitator on their own difficult change process, often strategic in nature.

### Applicant Tracking System

My pride in this decade started in 1987 with the complete control, design, and production of tracking job applicants using Speedware and TurboImage databases upon an HP-3000 minicomputer. We originally linked to HR's Wang word processing system to print acknowledgement letters to applicants. The PC terminal emulators attached to the HP-3000 took advantage of the old HP Terminal keyboard function keys F1 through F8.

The software handled recruiting efforts through the hire process. I created a user focus group to determine which features (much later called 'user stories') to implement next. Instead of releasing a monolithic application years behind schedule under the waterfall model of software development, I introduced rapid deployment of only those modules most needed, when needed, and conforming to the most up-to-date specifications (which changed frequently in government circles). This method implemented key aspects of the yet-unknown Extreme Programming and Agile Programming methodologies.



Figure 3 – Dilbert User Stories (S. Adams, United Features 1/2003)

Unlike the above Dilbert comic, the overall project continued while we launched early heavily modules for daily use. The users enthusiastically valued partial releases of the important components first and not have to wait months for the completed package.

The successful applicant-tracking project lasted through 1993. HR tasked me to cutover their data to a commercial product called Resumix, which left us with a shutdown party of their HP-3000 on 12/30/1993. With that closure, our HR software team sent me off to my next team on 02/1994 assigning the identifying attribute they saw in me: Integrity.

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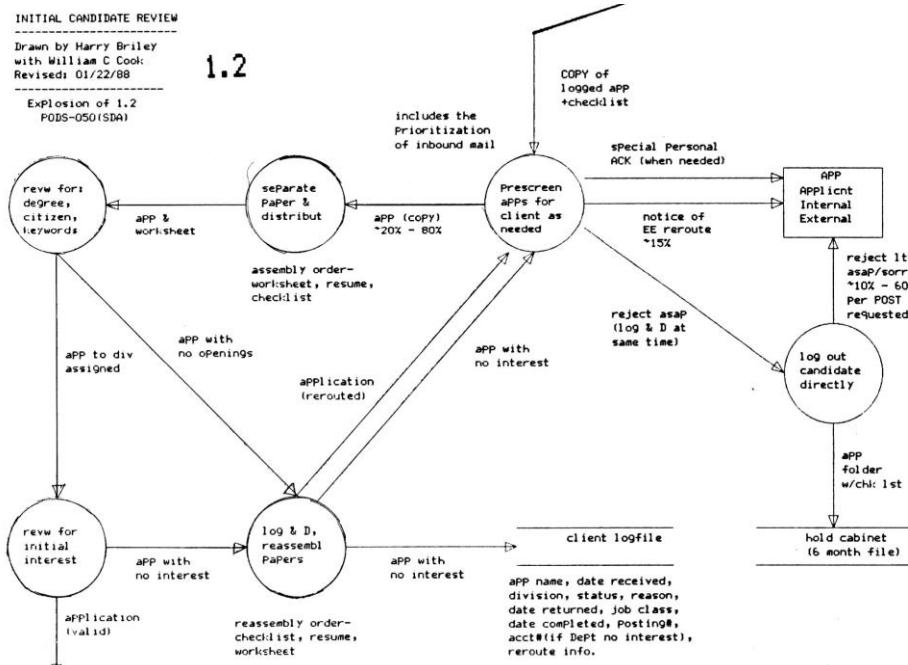


Figure 4 – An early Data Flow Diagram – 1/1988

The above low-level detail page during the System Design Analysis phase (SDA) follows a freshly logged employment application until it passed either initial interest or rejected. Each circle defined a ‘user story’ activity using the vocabulary known by the customer.

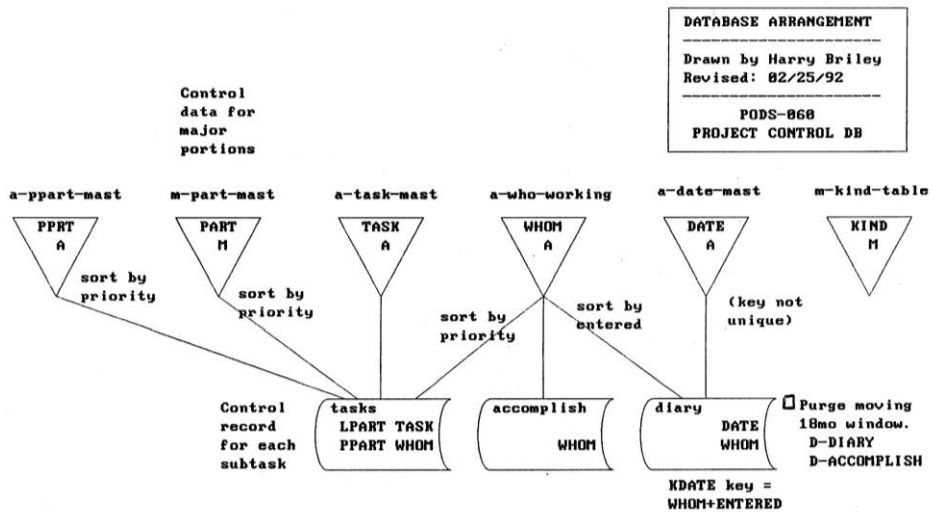


Figure 5 – A very early Entity Relationship Diagram – 2/1992

The above simple database structure defined my Timekeeping and Task Tracking application, which I called “BOSS” (but the department called PODS-060). It let any software team track their known tasks and retain accomplishments for their annual review. The department could not justify buying everyone Microsoft Project Manager in 1992. Therefore, this simple tool solved a real departmental need for a couple of years.

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William (Bill) Cook, my supervisor, wrote on my former LinkedIn account:

*I retired 12/1997 and there are certain persons I keep on my remember-list that helped me during my career and, Mr. Briley was one of them. His organization, structure, analysis, and attention to detail are skills he taught me and I continue to use today. I volunteer much time helping folks that have minimal computer skills. I teach [them those] skills and rebuild their broken computers. I credit my success to the upfront planning and analysis techniques I learned from Mr. Briley.*

*Technology has changed much over my career but basic analysis and organization techniques continue to be the requirements for success. Thank you, Harry Briley, my friend and colleague.*



Figure 6 - Thank You ATS Plaque for Office Door

### **President Bush Visit in 1990**

On February 7, 1990, President George Bush, Sr. visited. No other President visited LLNL and the strictest security kept it as a surprise to most employees. My office at the time in Building 571 had a clear view of the painted landing pad for helicopters. In my career, I had never seen that landing pad used as LLNL is restricted airspace. Later, the Laser Ignition Fusion project paved over the unused pad for their target assembly area.

The unexpected whop-whop sound of a large helicopter flew low over our building from the rural east. It had no markings, no numbers, no flag insignia, and sported a completely black paint job. Rumors from conspiracy theorists said such unmarked black aircraft were some sort of New World shadow government. I had never seen one. Thus, it caught my attention as an anomaly. It touched down for about 30 seconds and then shot straight up in the air. Soon a second helicopter touched down outside the pad, which appeared to carry the honor guard and Secret Service men to set up a perimeter. Seconds later, the dark green and white Presidential helicopter (“Marine One”) flew over our building and quickly swooped down to land. The black helicopter circled high overhead as the President and his entourage exited after his helicopter blades stopped turning.



**Figure 7- Director John Nuckolls (leftmost) with President Bush (LLNL 2/1990)**  
Courtesy of Livermore Heritage Guild

Public Relations snapped photos and everyone entered the official Presidential limousine (nicknamed as the “Beast”) and chase vehicle. Our Security vehicles escorted the drive to the Building 123 Auditorium and the Building 111 Management tower (across the street from the auditorium). Within a minute, “Marine One” roared to life and all three helicopters headed for a nearby military base (presumably Camp Parks in Dublin). I never saw them return. No manager admitted to seeing the black helicopter. Its touch and go landing seemed to be a Secret Service maneuver to verify landing area safety.

### **Navajo Community College**

Excelerator and Group Facilitation training led to an opportunity to represent LLNL to the Accounting Office at the Navajo Community College (NCC). In 1990, I presented the Applicant Tracking System to NCC representatives. In 1991, I assembled notes about Group Facilitation, donated a copy of Excelerator, and passed along a notebook about Joint Application Design (JAD) for software. I had not yet been to FIND training.

Once in Tsaile' on campus in June, we set up a room for the Accounting Team to learn the techniques offered. After an evening private tour of the Cultural Center museum, I held a morning briefing about JAD and an afternoon hands-on training for their analysts using Excelerator along with an InterSolv training video about that tool.



Figure 8 - Main Building of Tsaile' Campus – 6/1991

I slept in a student dorm styled after a Navajo Hogan. A common central skylight-lit living room area allowed two-person bedrooms radiating from that core.



Figure 9 - Hogan Style Student Dorm – 6/1991

On the weekend, I drove rim drives of Canyon de Chelly (“de Shay”) and crosschecked remaining questions. In an embarrassing session, many Navajo students joined us for an hour engagement. When they heard that I wrote game software way back in the 1980s, it became clear that I had no graphics skills they expected of games during the 1990s.





Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California is providing Navajo Community College's Computer Services Department with the latest computer software and technical training. Standing are: L-R Tim Jennsen LLNL, Valarie Jim, NCC, Scott McKenzie, NCC, Preston Brown, NCC, Steve Grey, LLNL, Julia Posey, NCC. Sitting: Harry Briley LLNL, Michele Francis, NCC and Priscilla Jordan, NCC. (Photo by Ed McCombs)

Figure 10 - Navajo Design Team (E. McCombs, Navajo Times 6/13/1991)

I produced trip reports for the various members of the Navajo Nation/LLNL alliance. In 1994, I heard Navajo Nation Vice-President Marshall speak. Lastly, in late 1995, I led a two-day FIND workshop for a Broad Spectrum Radio proposal between their Legislature Budget Chairman and the Office of the President.

### **Object-based Database to LOV Tables**

During spare cycles in 1992, I developed a prototype object-based database using the HP-3000 and TurboImage. This self-defining structure documented any object that linked to other objects into a cascading explosion of parts, somewhat like a parts-explosion chart found in automotive shop manuals. Unlike a shop manual, my prototype could show all the locations where an identical lower level part fit different assemblies.

Here is a simple relational database example. A typical office key opened a specific door lock (One key to one lock). However, a supervisor's key could open multiple office doors (One key to many locks). Therefore, going up the explosion diagram, I could find all the office keys that opened a specific lock (One lock opened by different keys).

Instead of separate Oracle tables for each component layer, two tables of the database held the defining layers (and editable field names for the user screens as a freebie) and two other tables contained the data for those fields. Thus with only four tables and two user screens, I could recursively drill up or down any parts explosion diagram.

This strength leveraged the fact that nearly all databases used common generic fields suitable for such drastic simplification. The weakness was that certain significant objects needed much more defining detail than a few generic descriptive fields.

My first foray into using such metadata let me change the meaning of a database table depending on the owning object in hand. Because it used recursive looping, I named the intersection table as "Object-Object", pulling on one foreign key zipped me down the structure (show me what "this object owns") and pulling on the other foreign key zipped me upwards (show me the "owner(s) of this object").

This tight looping structure held no restriction as to the documentary depth it could satisfy. I used it for tracking office keys (as noted) as a test example. I next used it to map punch-down copper wire connections between the minicomputer I/O ports and hardwired office wall outlets to the PC components on each user's desk. I presented this working prototype to my new supervisor, Mike Piscotty, but he already had other plans.

My home department used Oracle Relational Database Software to build software. Those various applications lightly used my modified principles for a concept called Reference Tables. Oracle presented it with their CASE 5.1 tool. Simply put, we often used lists of valid values (LOV) for a common field, such as names of departments or colors of paint.

That way, I could change the spelling or descriptive text for a referenced value in a single record (the reference or LOV table) without updating thousands of records which used that value. For example, those database records could have a value of "15" for "Charging Department" which that valid value pointed to "Hazards Control". If the department changed their name to "Environmental Protection", I changed only that single text.



## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

This data propagation issue was the bane of flat files in the 1960s. Relational databases opened the door to easier maintenance of such merely referenced data. My contribution of that era for our administrative software developers was to take it a step further by using only two tables patterned after my Object-Object prototype.

One table contained the names of the various lists keyed to a second table that contained the valid values for each list. Instead of dozens of independent list-of-value (LOV) tables (and duplicative screens), all such LOV tables easily combined into my two commonly named tables across all software applications. One common user screen maintained all table names and all table contents. The developers and users so well understood my modified concept, that we stopped drawing LOV tables on our database diagrams (and/or entity relationship diagrams). We merely flagged which fields needed a LOV table.

### **Laboratory Administrative Document System (LADS)**

In 1992, I became aware of a faltering software project tracking classified documents. It desperately needed a database-focused developer. The project leveraged my Speedware/TurboImage skills. It ran on a 32-user HP-3000/925. Their software niche soon became my calling card within the amazing classified data community. Very few administrative projects required a Q-level clearance for business software developers.

I first met that client, Maylene Wagner, in 1/1993. She successfully pulled together a common physical process for handling classified documents across the many isolated classified project communities. The enabling factor was that most all the groups shared the common classified network established in the 1970s. By the time I arrived, she had a need and a suitable mini-computer in a locked vault room. She lacked the top-to-bottom analysis for making her dream meet the needs of so many disparate document handlers.

I spent five months bringing her original software (written by a non-database person) into a state of reliable production while learning her business model and vocabulary. By mid-1993, Mike Piscotty convinced her to convert to Oracle. Our software team gathered requirements based upon my deep-knowledge overhaul of her HP-3000 application.

Mike's original goal was to leverage image processing of each document in full rather than just her cross-mapped tracking of document titles and metadata. He wanted me to translate the HP tracking software into Oracle as a stopgap until the imaging system came on line. In short, the imaging system became a complete bust and LADS continued years after my retirement in 2013 because it met a specific well-defined business need.

In 1994, I formally joined Mike's data warehouse team. His project used Oracle 7, CASE 5.1 GUI on a UNIX environment via a Mac Power/PC using MacX and TelNet. My work friends used such acronyms and technical jargon daily, almost mindlessly, but for which it would take pages to explain. I tried to explain what I did at work, but my family glazed over instantly because translating the jargon into English still demanded concepts foreign to those outside the specific technical community. Of course, Anne could out-buzzword me about her former projects for injury compensation insurance rules.

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

I became an oddball data-centric player out of synch with the rest of my home department. To remedy that, Mike asked me to research and introduce Oracle Designer (an upgrade from CASE 5.1) to the rest of the department. As a side benefit, this task deeply prepared me for re-building LADS using that upgraded tool.

I finally used my working Object-Object prototype for a paying project. I used it to extract and document the LADS TurboImage database structure. I thus created a database to define a database. The printed results helped us map every TurboImage field to its respective new Oracle counterpart. I wrote software to dump the LADS data to flat files and our team wrote software to import those flat files into Oracle tables.

No one seemed in a hurry about converting Speedware LADS to Oracle on a UNIX server. The Imaging System was ‘imminent’ and taking much team attention. By May 1994, we built the Oracle Entity Relationship Diagram (ERD) down to the field level and got approval for that database design from our department’s Oracle database manager.

This let us quickly create the user screens and demonstrated an Oracle-version of LADS. Meanwhile, the HP-3000 Speedware version continued in production though most of 1995. By January, I got antsy to move forward regardless of the Imaging System.

Maylene’s document control staff still needed a database to handle marking and control of physical classified documents. I introduced the LADS staff to the Oracle version and by February, Maylene’s team trained their community through multiple sessions.

I assumed project lead in 1995 for LADS. We fully tested our cutover process with an old HP-3000 data snapshot that summer. Maylene’s community affirmed that we converted their data properly. We planned for a full week in August for the cutover based upon our timing tests, locked out the users from the HP-3000, made a fresh set of data dumps, and successfully imported that data to the Oracle version on schedule.

Two years later, I discovered a mini-Speedware version of LADS in a stovepipe but mothballed classified project. I converted the data myself using the same tools created back in 1995 even though I had to re-learn an arcane version of Speedware for the PC.

This early 1990’s effort caught the attention of two other cloistered document centers. I made presentations to Sandia Laboratory across the street and to what later became Homeland Security within LLNL. I arranged Work-For-Others contracts for my team to adapt the new Oracle version of LADS as a replacement of their in-house applications.

The Sandia team discovered that LADS could easily adapt to disassembly and inspection tracking of weapon components. It only required a couple of specialized database tables and user interface screens unique to their shop. LADS was not a tool available off the shelf for a typical business. The idea of an essentially souped-up library tool managing nuclear weapon disassembly was not on the radar of commercial software firms.

### **Client-Centric**

Mike briefly assigned me to supervise the LLNL budget planning software, not to do the development, but to run interference between the Budget Office and the software team.

This go-between role became my significant life purpose in nearly all follow-on projects. Due to facilitator training, I could translate requirements into measurable terms to the client and unambiguous enough for our software team. In this decade, I transitioned from the expert programmer in the latest software tools to not programming at all. They used the term ‘legacy software skills’ to describe my declining scope of software experience.

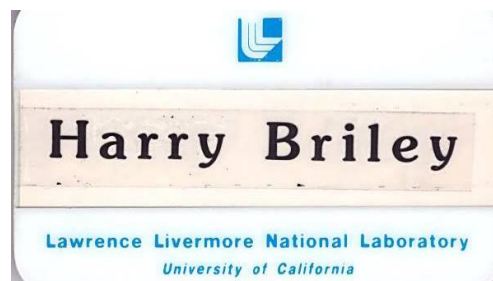
With lean funding, I complained to Fred Strange, an older consultant for my boss, about needing three clients to make ends meet. He caught me short by telling me to stop whining since he had twelve clients as a norm. That stern rebuke helped re-arrange my career. Soon after, my own timecards sometimes listed twelve or so accounts per month.

Other than designing database structures for customers, my main value at work focused upon synthesizing conflicting requirements into workable software solutions. Thereafter, when Mike talked up a potential customer for new software, he sent me out to secure the contract as if he said, *“I smell some money over there, go get that account.”*

### **Recruiting**

As I matured in projects and client interactions, I arrived at distinct ideas for ideal programmers to hire. Unfortunately, my department only sought those skilled in specific tools. It came at the cost of less-rounded developers for our unique customers.

I earlier recruited in the 1980’s at our two “go-to” computer colleges, Cal Poly at San Luis Obispo and at Chico State. I enjoyed posing questions about their qualms over working at a nuclear weapons facility. My atypical questions caught most of them unprepared and I could see beyond the confident faces into their analytical approach to problems. Some signed for an interview without the slightest clue as to our mission.



**Figure 11 - LLNL Recruiter Badge**

It thrilled me when the department selected my top choices for hire who stayed with LLNL long-term. It validated my gauge of the person who succeeded in our unusual environment. Eventually, software tools changed enough that I lost the ability to evaluate technical skills. In this decade, I recruited only once, early on, in October 1990 at Chico.

### Preparing for Y2K

Most computer centers worried about the year 2000. Dire warnings forecast software failures when the clock ticked from 12/31/99. All date checking logic (when and if such existed) would fail since 00 (for 2000) was less than all other two-digit years. This led officials and pundits to predict software that flew aircraft, operated satellites, and monitored public utilities would suddenly cause physical damage or abort outright.

*In 1998, the United States passed the Year 2000 (Y2K) Information and Readiness Disclosure Act, by working with private sector counterparts to ensure readiness, and by creating internal continuity of operations plans in the event of problems.*

*The effort was coordinated out of the White House by the President's Council on Year 2000 Conversion. The White House effort coordinated with the then-independent Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and an interim Critical Infrastructure Protection Group, then in the Department of Justice.*

*The Y2K issue became a major topic in most popular media. Disaster books and movies capitalized on it, as did numerous TV shows and computer games.*

[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Year\\_2000\\_problem](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Year_2000_problem) (extract)

Nearly everyone with 80-column cards coded two-digit years as a space-saving device. With early disk drives, their high cost and limited storage pushed programmers to eliminate every possible character. After the microcomputer revolution changed that, there were millions of software lines encoded to handle only a two-digit year.

Sandia labeled LADS as a mission-critical piece of software, which required my team to certify that the entire package handled four-digit years, both in data storage and in date-checking logic. We passed two separate inspections and the rigid certification process. A mission-critical designation meant that national infrastructure or utilities might fail.

While LADS did not qualify as mission-critical for tracking classified documents, LADS as installed at Sandia tracked same-day nuclear weapons disassembly. That pushed it into the mission-critical column. Sandia paid us to guarantee early Y2K compliance.

Regardless, there were hundreds of non-critical programs, which could cause many administrative headaches. Our department made a full sweep of all production software dating back to the 1950's. Fortunately, my 1980 department-wide software conversion project to the Univac 1100 meant that our holdings were relatively modern. Even so, we continued two-digit years since expensive disk storage controlled decisions in 1980.

At home, we prepared for the year 2000 by buying fresh camp stove fuel, canned/dry foods, and refilling the emergency drinking water jugs. While confident in our own preparations at LLNL, my trust felt much lower for the rest of the nation's software.

### **Many Educational Classes**

Part of my re-tooling for bridging across the many departments required classwork to learn a client's business while still keeping aware of new programming environments.

During this decade, these bridging aspects included:

- 1991 Space Shuttle Software management
- 1992 Dr. Lebedev (Russian optics scientist)
- 1992 US Security Policy
- 1992 Business Systems Planning at Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory
- 1992 Security briefing to Information Systems groups
- 1994 Classified Document Handling
- 1996 Nuclear Weapons Information Group (Multiple laboratories)

Oracle classes provided a one-stop-shop fifth-generation tool, which took off like wildfire in our administrative software department. I especially loved these tools because I got immediate payback of generating software faster than with HP3000 and Speedware.

The suite of Oracle tools built a fully contained proprietary application containing many encapsulated modules engaging a database server. However, each user's desk computer merely became a dumb terminal to execute those server-based business modules.

Happily, we could once again make a simple well-contained change to a single module and have it guaranteed to affect all of LLNL overnight. The release mechanics felt like the speedy updates of the character-mode days much to the delight of our paying clients.

These fifth generation tools required these classes:

- 1991 Oracle Application Environment
- 1992 Database Design Analyzer and Data Modeling
- 1992 Oracle CASE (Computer Aided Software Engineering)
- 1994 Oracle 5.1, Oracle 7 Features, and Oracle Reporter 2
- 1995 Oracle Designer 2000 (which replaced Oracle CASE)

The easy-to-use and easy-to-change Oracle Design suite suddenly became outdated with the widespread use of Java and browser-compatible HTML applications. No sooner had we nearly converted all administrative applications to a highly stable Oracle-based environment than the move was afoot to convert yet again, this time to the ubiquitous web infrastructure. The 8-fold increased labor costs and lack of modularity appalled me.

What took my team one day to develop with Oracle now cost us eight days with Java web development. Our clients hated the expense spike but the technology trapped them in an awkward position. If they wanted web-compatible software (as demanded by their upper managers), they paid dearly in dollars and in excessive delays. Some groups purchased off-the-shelf packages. These commercial tools rarely fit our government research needs. As a result, we wrote adaptive database logic. This made the overall cost higher than if we wrote their entire package from scratch.

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

Few highly skilled developers wanted merely to adapt commercial software. One did not get a degree in automotive design to change oil filters. The skill level of our software department plummeted as external software vendors picked off our premier programmers or other technical departments recruited them for custom experimental software.

Specialization became the norm for all software work. University students came to us as Java web experts in building user interfaces but they had absolutely no coursework in understanding data structures, much less, how to document the felt needs of customers.

We degraded to the old wooly days when programmers wrote software to suit themselves and completely lost sight of how applications made customer life easier.

Programming and design skill classes required Object Oriented (OO) programming concepts. I never used this material directly but needed the background to supervise my software team. Regardless of the latest OO tools, everything continued to cost eight times more than under Oracle Designer. My many complaints felt like standing in front of a steamroller. The former fifth generation tool yielded to second generation concepts.

Such OO classes included:

- 1992 OO programming concepts
- 1993 Future of Information Systems and intended server platforms
- 1994 UNIX (and UNIX Security MFE)
- 1995 OO infrastructure and OO design
- 1996 OO SmallTalk – Soon replaced by Java
- 1999 OO VisualWorks – Soon replaced by Java

I took people skills training, not learned through my technology/ geology college nor during my MSBA at Cal State Hayward. My training was technical and my supervisors noticed early that I badly needed people skills to succeed in my new roles.

These people-oriented classes included:

- 1991 Software Project Management
- 1992 Effective Listening, Effective Delegation, and Values Identification
- 1993 Seven Habits of Highly Effective People
- 1994 Empowerment Conference
- 1999 First Line Supervisor Class (after learning on the job since 1995)

### **Archeology Talks**

As a side note, LLNL encouraged employees to gather around common interests during lunchtime. I attended five infrequent Archeology seminars on the Bronze Age Sardinia, Polynesian Origins, Linguistics, the Incas, and Egyptian writing. The historians among us loved this intellectual diversion from our technical jobs.

### Facilitation

As mentioned, I attended a Group Facilitation class in 1991 led by Human Resources and became an ardent proponent of its usage. The class included understanding the best temperament for facilitators, basics how to facilitate a workshop, handling conflict, basic good meeting management practices, and the consultant process in helping groups.

By 1994, my home department seemed uncertain what to do with me. Programmers are typically not facilitators. A couple of supervisors attended technical FAST training in Chicago and interviewed possible candidates for such training. A month later, they selected my far-future group leader, Karen Gunn, and myself. We spent six 14-hour days (8am to 10pm) in Chicago with expert Gary Rush. This intense content-heavy class became a crucial career game changer. Gary was a member of the nascent International Association of Facilitators (IAF), which is how I learned about that organization.

Prior to that class, I arranged a facilitated workshop with Stanford Linear Accelerator (SLAC) on yet another stand-alone Work-For-Others contract. They wanted focus groups with the entire management chain (80 people) and the director. I kept them informed of my coursework and how it might change the workshops scheduled upon my return from Chicago. They welcomed the enhanced skills and had me lead seven focus groups in September. I held a positive follow-up eighth meeting with the SLAC Director and his Associate Directors in December.

We renamed the non-acronym FAST (meaning speedy) to FIND (which sated the government community that an all-capital word signaled an acronym.)

I facilitated in 1995 for multi-department, multi-company, and even one multi-nation system requirements and strategic plans. The method was simple but it took a dogged neutral objectivity, technical savvy, nerves of steel, and a thick hide. Here are some unusual non-computer meetings that used my system design skills and stretched them into entirely new arenas. In each, they wanted my technically-conversant background.

- Navajo Nation - Broad Spectrum Radio proposal with their Office of the President and Legislature (Budget Chairman).
- Washington DC- Community Services Network with 25 managers from three partner firms and four consultant firms.
- LLNL - Hazardous Waste Management department organizational changes and nuclear waste disposal requirements.



**STANFORD UNIVERSITY**

Stanford Linear Accelerator Center  
Business Services Division, MS 2

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(415) 926-4999 (fax)

December 13, 1994

Mr. David Seibel  
Administrative Information Systems  
Box 808 L-304  
Livermore, CA 94551-0808

Dear Mr. Seibel:

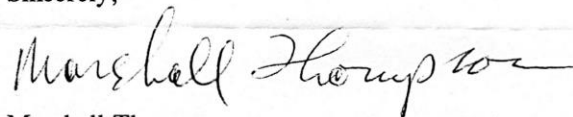
This is to confirm the successful completion of the facilitation services of Harry Briley. I want to thank you for your cooperation in helping us accomplish our information inquiry.

Since this was new to me, I just want to say how impressed I was with both the efficiency of the method and the professional skill with which it was applied by Harry. Not only were we able to obtain the information we sought, but the human interaction of the process was a valuable one thanks to Harry's excellent work.

I hope that our lab sees the focus group approach as a powerful means of not just information gathering, but facilitating communication in general.

Thank you again for your support.

Sincerely,



Marshall Thompson,  
Financial Analyst

**Figure 12 - Facilitation for Managerial Focus Groups - 1994**  
(David Seibel was our department manager)



## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

I wrote up a pros-and-cons list for this new focus group methodology referencing my first three FAST/FIND methodology workshops.

FIND = Facilitated INteractive Development (not just Design) – 3/29/1995

### **Recent Uses of FAST/FIND:**

#### **Stanford Linear Accelerator**

**Deliver:** Produce raw lists of prioritized budget system design requirements for each level of SLAC management hierarchy

**Sponsor:** Budget and Business Services Manager

**Members:** Project Leaders, Managers,  
. Associate Directors (ADs), Director of SLAC

. Eight separate FIND sessions for 80 upper managers

**Drawback:** Too much raw information collected, Hard to organize it.

**Benefits:** Faster, less complex, much more collaborative buy-in than with mailed surveys, First time the ADs agreed on budget specifications wanted by their project managers, Software team were excluded from biasing the findings (apparently an issue seen by managers from past meetings)

#### **Business Management Working Group**

**Deliver:** Produce raw list of prioritized budget system design requirements for both large and small LLNL projects

**Sponsor:** Business Manager

**Members:** Program Managers and Resource Managers

. Two separate FIND sessions for about 25 people

**Drawback:** Small and Large projects were in separate sessions

. Small projects felt they were an afterthought

**Benefit:** Similar priorities discovered with no uniqueness per size

#### **Hazards Control Department vs. Health Services Department**

**Deliver:** Produce raw process diagram, function lists, linkage needs

**Co-Sponsors:** One manager from each department

**Members:** Incident investigators, Medical classifiers

. One FIND session for about 12 people

**Drawback:** Major/minor functions as separate agenda items

. (Major/minor was an artificial distinction).

**Benefits:** Long-simmering disputes resolved in minutes

**Observers:** Software team learned several undocumented processes.

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

I led nine more facilitated on-site workshops for local departments in 1995. I attended a class for “Facilitation of Self-Directed Work Groups” in June that year.



**Figure 13 - Facilitation Class (MW Corp 6/14/1995)**

### **Process Improvement Ideas**

In 1991, Rapid/Joint Application Design (JAD) introduced requirements as “user stories” written from the customer’s perspective, which become tangible deliverables. Each story became a computer screen recognized by the customer as completing a specific business function. No software development behind the scenes counted as a client deliverable.

During my high use as a Facilitator in 1992, our department sent most of us to a class in Total Quality Management (TQM). It introduced the Juran method. The far superior Process of Process Improvement learned in London was yet future, but this pushed us to think how improve our software. We spent a year as small teams writing up Quality Statement of Guidance for each of our assigned topics. Nothing tangible came to fruit and our programmers soon tired of the regular unproductive meetings.

### **International Association of Facilitators (IAF)**

The newly formed International Association of Facilitators (IAF) merged from several similar groups. It became the primary professional society for facilitators of all types.

Each annual conference, normally in January led with two-day pre-conference classes about specific techniques of various kinds of facilitation to make best use of attendee travel costs and time. My department justified the costs since my workload warranted staying abreast of the latest facilitation skills and training during the 1990s.

I attended the third (but my first) IAF conference in Tulsa, Oklahoma in 1997 both as a facilitator practitioner and as a committee member for the 1998 conference. LLNL paid for my chosen 1997 class called “Planning Skills for Successful Work Sessions”.



**Figure 14 - Planning Skills for Sessions (APLAN Info Services 1/17/1997)**

My technical facilitation took me in 1997 to San Francisco for a DOE-wide system engineering effort and to Washington DC about Public Key Infrastructure policy.

Our Bay Area IAF team members met monthly to plan the theme, arrange conference logistics, act as local staff, and help the national team host the fourth IAF conference in Santa Clara in 1998. Given famous bridges spanning the San Francisco Bay, we titled our well-attended conference as “*The Art and Mastery of Facilitation: Creating Bridges to the Future*”. The Golden Gate Bridge served as our logo for conference materials.

In 6/1997 by word of mouth, after no activity for a year, I facilitated three separate local workshops. This led to four local workshops in 1998 but only one workshop in 1999.

IAF formed my self-image and role as a systems facilitator within the DOE community nation-wide. I attended the fifth IAF conference in Colonial Williamsburg in 1999 and then their sixth (my last) in Toronto with Anne in May 2000. As usual, I appended vacation days to explore regional historic sites.

### **Family Days**

Twice every five years, LLNL opened the gates for a two-day “Family Days” weekend, in which an employee escorted family or guests on tours of many unclassified displays. We stored away and swept the entire square mile of all classified material.

In May 1990, my mother, my brother David, Anne, and our kids visited. In September 1992, LLNL celebrated its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Five years later in September 1997, I escorted with the Protocol Office community guests invited by Lab management.

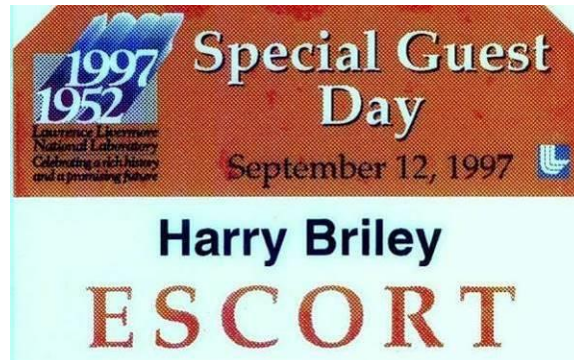


Figure 15 - LLNL 45th Anniversary – 9/1997

### **Homosexual Celebrations at LLNL**

In 1994, I gathered info about homosexuality and the Bible. I became aware of those in the Transforming Congregations movement in the UMC and wanted to know the biblical basis for our conservative theological understanding, especially the transforming aspect.

LLNL campaigns surprised me in 1995 enforcing employee full approval of homosexual behavior that asked us to leave our faith-based morals at the fence line. A Roman Catholic deacon presented the homosexual agenda. The Bishop of the Oakland Diocese claimed this presented church doctrine. The event literature quoted only liberal church leaders from centralized denominations calling homosexual acts as a gift from God.

Since LLNL management funded this travesty, I met with a group of employees weekly to research the literature for four months, including attending a debate with Bay Area homosexual activists. We then filed a formal letter of protest from a position of informed knowledge. They never acknowledged our letter, but forced desensitization training ceased. We sent reasoned letters to the Catholic Bishop and our liberal congressional representative. I met the Bay Area staff of the Exodus ministry during the "Promise Keepers" Convocation in Oakland. I next urged financial aid for ex-homosexual groups whom were the lonely voices of experience in this cultural war on traditional faith.

We uncovered a well-funded intentional political movement since 1975 by intellectual and political elites. This was not a movement by impoverished oppressed masses. Their members filled the highest government jobs, college administrations, and the highest corporate offices. Since 1975 (see their book "*After the Ball*" for their manifesto), the movement went undetected by churches for over 20 years. The activists did not widely publicize national same-sex marriage or transgenderism as goals back in 1995.

When the Supreme Court forced same-sex marriage in 2015, the activists parlayed a further 20 years of court battles and wide public desensitization. Their playbook came from Marx and Lenin. Like Stalin and Hitler, they implied, "*Give us your children* [to educate] *and we will overhaul this* [bigoted Bible-centric] *society.*" By 2018, the call for "mere acceptance" became a full frontal legal push to silence and criminalize opponents.

### **Ex-Homosexual Speakers**

In 1998, two employees and I attended a rare panel debate between homosexual activists and ex-homosexuals at Fremont Adult School. The uncivil behavior of the activists caused even the openly homosexual moderator to call them out for their unruly and rude behavior. Such disruptive behavior appears commonly at UMC General Conferences.

With that knowledge base, the BSG hosted Michael Johnston (returned to homosexual behavior a decade later) and coordinated his speaking at Celebration Center and Calvary Temple in Livermore. A month later, the BSG hosted low-key Redwood City Choices Ministry (Floyd Shaw, deceased) for an ex-homosexual noontime seminar for the Christian community. A year later, we hosted an ex-homosexual panel advertised more broadly but poorly attended. We held it at the off-site LLNL Visitors Center to allow videotape and public access. Lacking attendance, we gave up hosting such seminars.

### **Committee on Moral Concerns**

My research in response to this Orwellian re-education of employee values propelled me in 1997 into an active role with the Committee on Moral Concerns. This lobbying group in Sacramento led by Art Croney examined hundreds of California bills for morals issues.

Art often gave the only response to legislators with morality arguments based on a reasoned impact analysis. In the summer 1998, I was his aide-de-camp as he spoke to Stockton Berea Baptist and Davis First Baptist churches. They did not know what to do with a charismatic-friendly Methodist, but they could not fault my social credentials.



**Figure 16 - COMC Presenter's Badge**

### **Bible Study Groups at LLNL**

Regarding those Bible Study Groups (BSG), I proposed and got general agreement in 1991 to change our governance into a quarterly board structure with responsibilities spread among the participating study groups. They still designated me as the General Secretary (a one-year office) but now required the leader of each study group as a team to plan the Lab-wide events for the BSG.

I led a single study about Bible Geography in 1994 during this decade. My work and decaying home life with teenagers severely limited my role in authoring weekly studies. I still regularly attended weekly studies led by other employees.

The combined groups jointly held a "Good News Faire" in 1996 for all employees. Similar to insurance enrollment fairs, health fairs, travel fairs, and energy fairs, we used the identical concept of booths, entertainment, and a non-confrontational style. There was loving unity among participants across barriers of church, denomination, ethnicity, and gender, and all aspects occurred with appropriate site and management approvals.

While sparsely attended, blowback treated us as if we acted criminally and were the Inquisition incarnate. A sudden management ban on publishing about the event stunned the editor of the in-house newspaper. As an avowed liberal and not a fan of religion, even that editor was at a loss about the hostility towards this tame event, especially given that our diversity in practice especially exemplified overall institutional social goals.

By 1997, the BSG settled down to four annual events: Good Friday speaker/songs, National Day of Prayer, Thanksgiving speaker/songs, and a Christmas Carol sing-a-long.



## Moscow, Russia (1997-1998)

### Lab to Lab Exchange

As early as 1970, Soviet delegations of scientists visited LLNL. It seemed bizarre throughout the Cold War with our workplace closed to the American public to see our avowed Soviet enemies escorted through buildings where I least expected them.

#### Scientists learn to say “Da, Da” (edited)

*Last year [1969 when LLNL was called Lawrence Radiation Laboratory], and so far this year, LRL scientists met with Soviet scientists twice in Vienna and once in Moscow to discuss peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Since neither side speaks each other’s language, we filtered all talk through interpreters.*

*Associate Director Glenn Werth, who attended all meetings, decided to do something about the language problem. Six LRL scientists are now taking a course in Russian. “Learning Russian, in addition to being the courteous and diplomatic thing to do, will make future meetings more valuable,” Glenn said.*

*The course, planned by Berlitz, emphasizes conversation. Consequently, the instructor presents a mind-bending three-in-one program of alphabet, sounds, and vocabulary. The program began in mid-June; with two-and-a-quarter-hour sessions held twice a week. These will continue until each student feels somewhat competent in the language. – LRL Newline, 10/1970, Vol 1 No 2*

After Perestroika and three decades of staff exchanges, I visited Moscow twice as part of the Lab-to-Lab program. With the break-up of the Soviet Union and rising of rogue terrorists, we DOE Lab counterparts felt the world would be much safer if the Russians tracked their nuclear materials with a computerized database and each of their far-flung facilities accounted for nuclear materials uniformly.

Up to 1997, they used paper logbooks with no centralized verification that something shipped had in fact arrived. Our joint effort was part of the DOE-wide Controlled Materials Protection Controls (CMPC) and Highly Enriched Uranium Transparency (HEU) programs. Other DOE facilities joined the team.

My training of our developer staff for Oracle Designer 2000 attracted the attention of the CMPC team leader, Sandy Taylor. Their team chose Oracle tools for the Russian system and they sought someone with patience to explain it across the language barrier.

Anne valued daily e-mail contact. Home thus seemed minutes away when I checked from the Moscow hotel on my LLNL-provided laptop. Our Security Department secured that laptop to detect physical tampering. Software viruses will cause more dangerous computer intrusions but our counter-intelligence people worried about cameras and transmitters tucked into the laptop case upon my return.

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

### **Database Design Consultant (1997)**

Here are my experiences from two trips to Moscow and related stateside effort. The terribly uncomfortable flights on 10/28/1997 took 25 hours in each direction due to layover changes. Boeing built seating for a man of 5'8". At 6'4", my knees painfully wedged and straddled the seat in front of me. This became impossible when the traveler in front leaned his seat into my lap. I secured wider exit rows for the flights home.

I arrived in Moscow to meet Melanie Gillespie, Senior Data Resource Administrator from Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and our equivalent Russian database design team. Melanie was already in town for two weeks. Her assignment in Moscow was from 10/1997 through 2/1998. The rest of the US team stayed home that winter. Thus, I learned international relations without experienced team members to guide me. Melanie explained whenever I made cultural errors and shared her hard-won wisdom.

I spent 17 exhilarating cold days in Russia that November. Melanie and I helped the Russian team design the core database that AtomInform (Atomic Information Systems) for Russian MinAtom (Ministry for Atomic Energy) to account for their raw nuclear materials. Each distant facility had local tracking but no uniform central reporting.

Before the trip, I modified the Oracle-provided design dictionary reports to print in both Cyrillic and English alphabets. I made the report titles and column headings bilingual and added a side-by-side column that let the Russian team enter their translation of the English definition for each entity, table, and field. Thus, the computer retained both the English and Russian definitions whenever they needed to print a fresh data dictionary.

Melanie was my counterpart designer. She stayed at the apartment of our interpreter Svetlana Savosina. Melanie and I instantly melded as a team coming from the same technical 'geek' mindset. She shared her PowerPoint slides for training technical facilitators, which explained why Sandy chose us for this first-draft database. Our roles back home cut us from the same cloth. I lost contact with Melanie after 1998.

Svetlana and a spare interpreter hovered stone-faced near us all three weeks. It seemed she preferred a cold distance. I think the ice broke a bit with a laundry load mid-trip.

She owned a small washing machine and Melanie suggested that I walk the several blocks to their apartment Monday night. Svetlana probably thought that I might dismiss her tiny walk-up flat. I gave her my Sunday newspaper colored comics for her son.

After I overloaded or caused an overflow with her tiny washer, I figured I lost all credibility. My new black socks colored all my whites a dingy gray. I trundled my still soaked clothes back to dry in the hotel bathroom. She made no mention of the mess.

We were part of the effort between peer agencies DOE and MinAtom in the third year of the Highly Enriched Uranium Transparency Program. I was the mentor from LLNL helping the AtomInform team bridge the differences between their Oracle provided coursework in using Designer 2000 and its practical use.



## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

This small international team blended well, I with my tiny Russian vocabulary and their limited but quite suitable English. They were ill at ease to speak English aloud but read manuals and text in English without problems.

As a classified project (for them), they did not let me touch their keyboard. We had the same rules back home. This left me pointing often to the computer screen knowing that the Russian team competently knew sufficient English from their Oracle class.

My validation of the database design involved back-translating text into both Russian and English until the two translations meant the same thing for each database item. This is a common method used by Wycliffe Bible Translators for validating newly proposed text.

A word-for-word translation does not work and likely not possible. We had trouble defining the data-modeling concept of an “Entity” from English, as there was no equivalent Russian word. Exactly what was this ‘Entity’ that their Oracle teacher frequently mentioned? We humorously jointly settled on the phrase “Data Thing” and called our Data Entity Diagram a “Thing Diagram”. The wording had no value unless all players correctly understood the underlying concept. We dubbed it “Thing Analysis”.

Our two stumped interpreters purchased five different scientific, computer, and technical English/Russian dictionaries during my visit. Technical people invented words that went out of use before publishers could print dictionaries. Fortunately, their computer staff could read English and sufficiently familiar with database concepts to work with me.



**Figure 17 – Oracle Designer 2000 Session - 11/1997**  
R-L: Nina, Tatiana, Svetlana (Interpreter), Self

### **Itinerary (1997)**

Early weekly Microsoft Windows updates could become lengthy when it worked, and more so if it did not. The same principal applied to Oracle tools in those years. While not difficult, it required calm and toleration for PC problems.

Thus, I reloaded my laptop with the Personal Oracle Database tools twice and once on Melanie's laptop. This let us use our laptops to show what our Russian database team should do on their Windows NT units. I then imported my modified bi-lingual data dictionary report files and set up our laptops to handle both English and Russian keyboard layouts. I set up a temporary Data Dictionary scratchpad in Microsoft Word.

While we were doing that, we waited the first week during the physical network wiring in the AtomInform building, installation of Windows NT, setting up Oracle 7 roles, and setting up the local network by the Oracle Consultant in Moscow.

On Monday, I installed Designer 2000 on Melanie's laptop. I already installed Personal Oracle before the weekend. Something went afoul and I had to re-install the Designer 2000 repository the next day. By Friday in the second week, Melanie needed Windows95 reloaded to resolve some problem she observed.

We both verbally worked with the Russian team on their desktop PCs daily. The laptops helped us communicate by e-mail and test out proposals before adjusting their Designer data. By Thursday, we were testing Designer 2000 with them on their official PCs.

I enjoyed the database skills of Nina Poluestova, Tatiana Sargina, and Galina Taranenko. I never knew any last names until I received an address book as a closing gift. While they often wrote their names as first and last, they uniformly wrote their names as last and first in the address book without a comma, as in: Briley Harry.

By the closing Thursday night, we accomplished our primary goals and the Russian team gave us a simple banquet. They were used to Americans quirks over the years, but never met a non-drinker. When toasted by the leader who offered to pour me some Vodka, I lifted my water instead saying "*Voda*" (water). His face showed that I made a significant cultural error. Thinking quickly, I made a toast by offering to pour water into his now-empty glass. He immediately saw the humor and a hearty laugh ensued.

The American team suggested I give wall calendars for 1998 as low-weight gifts in my luggage for the twelve around the table. All twelve people later appeared at meetings in Livermore. I saw most of them again in Moscow during my 1998 visit.

I highly valued my co-developer Melanie and our main dedicated interpreter Svetlana. The balance of the Russian team of AtomInform supervisors, programmers, and management included Yuri Brystrov, Dr. Vitaliy Sergeevich Chernykh (Head of IT), Lena, Valentin Smirnov, Stanislav Sergeev, Anatoliy Dolgushev, and Natasha.

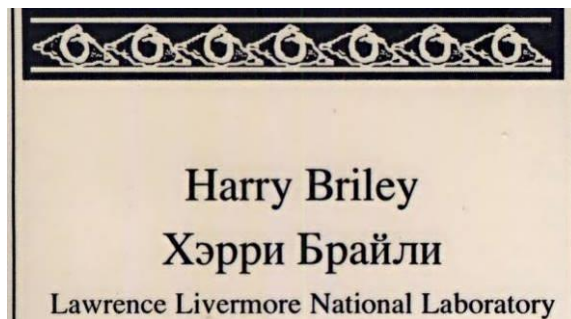
**Facilitation (1998)**

We met during 1998 in the United States and Sandy asked me to facilitate in May when the joint team met in Livermore. My peer from Mike Piscotty’s team, Grant Johnson participated at the detailed technical level.



**Figure 18 – AtomInform Planning Meeting - 5/1998**  
L-R: Grant (LLNL), Svetlana (Interpreter), Self, Melanie (ORNL)

On 10/9/1998, the international flights with better connections returned me to Moscow. San Francisco to New York City took 6 hours and then to Moscow took 10 hours (nearly 9 hours faster overall than 1997). My knees still did not fit well in the cramped seats.



**Figure 19 - Badge for Russian Meetings**

Svetlana, the interpreter from 1997 met me with a bear hug and a kiss on each cheek. Compared to the decidedly cool reception the year prior, this genuine Russian welcome completely caught me off-guard and I hope she was not offended at my startled response.

Our large US team came from several DOE facilities to hammer out data usage for twelve days. My role this time was solely that of a meeting facilitator since my database training met their original needs in 1997. It was Grant’s first trip and my last trip

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

Melanie from the first trip and I shared the duties as accomplished technical facilitators and database designers. We split the joint team into sub-groups with one of us leading each subgroup. The Russians did not want any meddling American (me) to facilitate their private conversations. I correctly understood it to be cultural and acquiesced, but our leadership team became livid with the Russians for my dismissing my role.



Figure 20 - Facilitation at AtomInform - 10/1998

Our Russian hosts bought a ticket for me to attend the opera *La Boheme* sung in Italian at the elegant Bolshoi Theater (10/15). I made the serious cultural error of turning down an offer for a ticket to the Tchaikovsky ballet *Swan Lake* in 1997. They were quite pleased that I enjoyed the 1998 Opera (much to my own surprise).

### **HEU Transparency Database**

Two years later, a multi-Lab team that diluted Russian Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) tapped me to lead a software team to define the business requirements from LLNL's perspective as compared to the team at Oak Ridge. Grant and I worked this together.

We did not meet any Russians in our role even though our work involved the blending of HEU shipped from Russia into non-reactive glass. The database in theory recorded the findings that our scientists found at the Russian facilities. There was some international fudging of weights, which our database analysis was supposed to catch.

The LLNL role on the data side collapsed under over-analysis of that database, which we did not own, much less control. Even so, we sensed forward progress in keeping the communication links open with Russian nuclear scientists.



**Figure 21 - HEU Transparency Program - US/Russia (2004)**



## Moscow Excursions and Culture

### Excursions in Moscow (1997)

On both trips, we worked full days but saved evenings and weekends to tour. All was in Russian but some menus had English subtitles. My knowledge of Koine' Greek aided me since Cyrillic was Greek-based and the religious vocabulary had many Greek words.

The signs in Moscow stores have a French origin or English words printed in Cyrillic. I sounded out the names such as Veedeo Center, SooperMarket, Mahgahzine, Sooveeneer, Meenee-Market, and McDonalds. They used English words as a foreign language to appear suave and contemporary.

The Moscow Metro was a wonder. Unlike the Bay Area BART that spaces trains every 20 minutes, the Metro ran trains at 2-minute intervals since 1935. Each well-lit station had a unique artistic theme with marble everywhere. I sat next to US Shuttle astronaut Michael Baker on the flight home and marveled aloud about the stations. He said that I missed the crown jewel stations and would be even more impressed on my next trip.



Figure 22 – Novoslobodskaya Metro Station – 10/1998

They mistook me as Russian bundled up for winter on the street. Mothers with children in tow earnestly asked directions to stores and young men asked for lights for their cigarettes. I had no clue what they expressly said and felt intimidated saying “Nyet”.

I visited the Polytechnic Museum (1998), a Methodist seminary, a Methodist service with chai afterwards, New Circus, and Mossovet Theater. I ate at ethnic restaurants (Georgian, Uzbek, Indian, Italian, and the Russified American Cowboy Bar & Grill).

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

On Saturday, Melanie and Svetlana took me to the outdoor flea market. I purchased, on the second weekend, books \$25, Postage samplers, and a Soviet submarine clock \$35.

On Sunday, Svetlana agreed to follow me around to tour the Kremlin (meaning ‘Fort’) grounds, famous St. Basil’s (Vasily in Russian) on the south of Red Square, and observe portions of the service at the active Orthodox Church on the north corner of Red Square.

The church was packed standing room only as is the Orthodox custom. I stood off in a side aisle watching. The more fascinated I became with what I clearly understood, the more anxious Svetlana wanted to escape an environment that made her translation effort obvious. She was not enamored as I and after a short while anxiously tugged me out of the building. I could not account for why else she hurriedly wanted to leave.

Each evening was unplanned. Melanie snagged tickets for 45K (\$8) to *Jesus Christ Superstar* sung in Russian and re-staged with Russian aspects at the Mussoviet. We attended Tuesday where I met a man in the cloakroom that led to a Thursday excursion.

The Russian team bought us tickets to the Moscow Circus. Svetlana interpreted. The “New Circus” had its own building in the round and hydraulic replaceable floors that exchanged for the act (horses, ice-skating, and dance). The building itself was a marvel. The ringmaster elegantly addressed the audience in a foreign language (English) as ‘Ladies and Gentlemen’, not unlike us using French in the States to appear sophisticated, as any ringmaster should.

After the lewd harassment endured at a comedy club in California for my daughter’s birthday, I sought to escape from all ringside seats and backed up a few rows. It did not work. Out of 2000 people, I was the first picked out by the clowns. I received a wonderful marker pen portrait where I sat (a second man was pulled into the ring for a mild comedic set-up). Unsure of my nationality, they complimented me in German when it became clear that I was not Russian. Their smile felt positive.

On Thursday night, I ventured on my own to a Methodist Seminary (see below) using the Moscow Metro to observe a class. I talked up that visit at work and told my crew that the leader pastored a start-up congregation. Melanie and Svetlana consented to go. Melanie was enthused. Svetlana was reserved but willing since not an Orthodox setting.

On Monday evening, I walked alone to the Moscow House of Books (Moskva Domo on Nova Arbot) instead of taking the Metro. It seemed a short distance on the map but took nearly an hour with odd sounds in the shadows that kept me alert. A woman approached me from the opposite direction asking for the time. I showed my watch and asked for directions to Nova Arbot. She pointed behind her and left me unmolested. It seemed an odd encounter, almost as if my hosts were making sure that I was safe. I toured a food supermarket as the only store open. I purchased nothing and took the Metro home.

On Tuesday night, I returned to the Seminary (see below).

### **Names and Contrasts**

Russian names usually follow a set pattern. A man has no vowel endings. A woman had the letter 'a' ending each of her first, middle, and last names. The middle names of both men and women were their father's first name, followed by ovich (son of) or ovna (daughter of). For example, Aida Mikhailovna Skripnikova (daughter of Michael).

Livermore was on the opposite side of the globe. It snowed in Moscow. The Bay Area had 80-degree balmy weather. They wear wedding rings on the right hand. My wedding ring on the left marked me as a foreigner. Smoking and tobacco ads were ubiquitous. A table at a restaurant was yours for the entire evening if desired. Coatrooms staffed with attendants were part of their winter routine and the tip was only 1K (17 cents).

### **Russian Foods**

Crisp cold tomato wedges accented a breakfast of French toast. Hot cereals with melted butter were for lunch and became fully compatible with real mushroom soup having a dollop of sour cream. I never considered a tomato earlier than lunch and cereal never after breakfast. The Russians made ordinary meals alive with color and zest.

Many Muscovites must supplement their food with vegetable gardens and canning for the winter. They spend August almost entirely as a 'vacation' to harvest the gardens at their Dachas (serviceable frame and plywood cabins) among poplar and ash trees. These small garden plots are the life support system for many families.

Tables always offered fresh tomatoes, cucumbers, and onions. Along the highways, dozens of hopeful farmers displayed long strings of winter onions for sale.

Svetlana described her necessity of invention during the collapse of Communism when all she had available were eggs, potatoes, vegetables, and soups for 18 months. She did not want to see another egg or potato for the longest time. However, I most enjoyed their eggs, potatoes, vegetables, and soups ... but definitely not for 18 months straight.



**Flying Home (1997)**

I paid a portion of my hotel bill with excess rubles (thus having no exchange loss).

One memorable purchase were a dozen chocolate bar gifts (65 cents each) at a chocolate factory outlet. My carry-on with those foil-wrapped items went through the airport x-ray machine. Packed tightly together, the machine saw them as possible explosives.

“Ah-kreet!” the officer commanded as I unlocked and unzipped my carry-on bag.

“Shokolad?!” he said in amazed annoyance as he roughly waved me through.



Figure 23 - Dark Chocolate -1998

At the open-air flea market, I purchased a heavy wind-up CCCP submarine porthole-style 7-day clock (\$35). I put this ‘timer’ in the same bag as my chocolate ‘explosives’. It later required repair in 2015 using a part scavenged from an identical clock. The repair cost \$65 in parts and labor, which I gladly paid purely for sentimental reasons.

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

### Eating on the Cheap

My favorite meals were at the employee cafeteria at AtomInform. Lunches were simple, cooked perfectly, nutritious, tasty, restful, and quiet enough for us introverts to talk.

Borscht soup, beef stroganoff 17K (\$2.90)

Cauliflower cream soup, cabbage salad, beef with hash browns 22K (\$3.75)

Vegetable soup, whitefish, pea salad, egg soufflé, mushrooms 13.5K (\$2.30)



Figure 24 - Cooks at AtomInform - 10/1998

Marriot Grand Hotel – Eggs, Fried potatoes, fruits, OJ 114K (\$19.50)

Patio Pasta Restaurant – Russian meat in pasta (pelmeni) 90K (\$15), 2 Milks (\$4)

Uzbekstan Restaurant - Horse meat sausage (not kosher, but tasted like beef jerky), lamb pieces, onions, pear juice, green tea, uzbek bread 90K (\$15.40)

Gruuzia Restaurant – Georgian Food

Cheese pita, cucumber/tomato plate, Pork/Potato, Sprite 80K (\$13.75)

At dinner a second time, we were the sole customers.

India Restaurant – Lamb in Curry 117K (six small pieces), Ginger Ale 12K, bread 6K (However, VISA charged 397K or \$68. The team told me not to contest it.)

I ate once at the Russified American Cowboy Bar and Grill but disliked the noise.

A highly popular McDonalds existed near Red Square. The hamburgers were half the American size due to the expense of meat and the lines stretched out the door.

Instead, I preferred to absorb as much of where the locals ate their fast food. In 1997, I discovered “Olympic Pizza” down the street from the hotel and in 1998, Nadia and Nina took me to a take-out décor-free Russian Bistro for delicious pierogi.

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

### **Economic observations in 1997**

K = 1000 Rubles (pyb) = 17 cents ... 5840pyb (or 6K) = \$1 US in 1997

I changed \$200 into 1200K at the hotel and had currency left over.

Russia paper money changed out in 1997 at a rate of 1000 to 1. Both old and new bills circulated. Brochures carefully helped Russians tell the old from the new. The old and new bill had the same value. They merely lopped off three zeros in the 1997 version.

As I made purchases, the change provided the best examples. My main source came from the AtomInform employee cafeteria. We paid the man sitting at an empty table near the door with an open cash box full of pre-1997 bills and outdated coins

Many in touristic Russian cities considered dollars to be “their” national currency rather than uniquely American. I followed the official travel rules and carried only Rubles.

Moscow felt like San Francisco placed in rural Tennessee. Moscow was artificially hyper-inflated and modern in its pricing compared to non-tourist areas.

### Housing (1997)

- Marriott Grand Hotel cost \$188 plus tax per night (at discount) or \$6000/month
- An old two-bedroom Moscow 1950's style apartment rented for \$2000/month
- A two-bedroom apartment just outside of Moscow sold for only \$6000 (but no one had that kind of cash earning only a high of \$150 a month)

### Personal Income (1997)

- A government non-manager worker in Moscow earned up to 1M (\$170/month)
- Nuclear power plant workers earned 850K (\$75 to \$150/month)
- Pensioner income was typically 300K/month (\$50/month)
- Translators working overseas earned in just one week more than in nine months locally (However, that worker took unpaid vacation leave from their regular job and was absent from their family for that 3-month lucrative position).

### Privation (1997)

- Most Russians have not eaten out since 1989 due to expenses just to live.
- Power plants provided pre-school day care (7am-6pm) for \$9/month.
- Shortages of toilet paper (It is sold behind locked glass counters)
- Tip a Coat Clerk by handing the claim token on top of a 1K bill (17 cents)
- My tip to the airport taxi driver of 50K (\$8.60) was overly generous

### Bottle/Can of Soda (1997)

- 18K in Patio Pasta Restaurant (\$3)
- 12K in India Restaurant (\$2)
- 8K at Vendor kiosks (\$1.35)
- 5K in Vending Machines (85 cents)





Figure 25 - 1:1000 Re-valuation - 1997





Figure 26 – Withdrawn pre-1997 Rubles ... 100 Rubles = 1.7 cents

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

### **Poschtovbie Marke in Moskva, Rossee** Postage Stamps in Moscow, Russia (1997)

Moscow hosted an international stamp collector convention in 1996 and prices remained inflated in 1997. My stamp sources were a wet drizzly outdoor flea market and the Moscow House of Books (Moskva Domo on Nova Arbot). Stamps were literally not worth the paper printed upon because of 1,000-fold inflation. A Ruble was .017 cents and a kopeck was 1/100 of that. A domestic 50 Ruble stamp thus cost less than a penny.

Charlotte sent \$50 to purchase stamps for her collection. I only spent \$25 having missed a chance to buy a \$25 binder of a 1000 stamps. She returned the stamps to me in 2005.

This is how I spent her \$25 for stamps:

- Active Use (Plain) \$3.60 21K for 18 active domestic stamps
- Sheet – Space Race \$1.71 10K for full sheet of 24 commemoratives
- Sheet – 15 States \$1.71 10K for full sheet of 30 commemoratives
- Book – Transport \$9.58 56K for 75 thematic stamps
- Book – Mixed \$8.56 50K for a mixed collection

Like the USPS, the Post (Poschta) only operated during work hours. They did not sell commemoratives. Being subsidized, pennies mailed letters domestically. The clerk was puzzled at so much postage until Svetlana explained that I sought them for my collection. The clerk counted out change to the Ruble (in coins no longer used, gaining me a coin collection as well.) The hotel charged double and only offered the 3000 Ruble stamp.



**Figure 27 – Active Domestic Postage**

I purchased two of each denomination (3000 Rubles was highest ... 51 cents): 50, 100, 250, 500, 750, 1000, 1500, [2000 was not available at that branch], 2500, and 3000.





Figure 28 - Single-sheet 7-kopeck Mailer - 1991

I purchased a still active 1991 CCCP (USSR) 7-kopeck preprinted mailer. The postal clerk cancelled it undated for me as “*Poshta Rossee – Moskva*” (Russia Post - Moscow).

Russians list address lines in reverse order of the American method: zip code first, then city, then street, and finally, the person’s name printed last. Six-digit hand-written zip codes were machine processed when written in the style shown on the overleaf.

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

The Moscow House of Books was a half-block two-story bookstore containing coin and stamp collections, antiques, household silverwork, and Soviet Era medals. A separate clerk managed each glass-topped specialty counter. A customer requested an item and the clerk hand-wrote a sales slip. The customer walked that slip to a cashier to pay and then walked back to redeem that item. This proved inefficient for both buyer and vendor, but people carried purchases in the store unmolested since the aisles were public space. The supermarkets operated likewise except some clerks had their own cash registers.

In this store, I purchased two sheets of commemorative stamps not found elsewhere. Russians did not use commemoratives and my purchases bemused my Russian team.

Those under age 30 said, *“I never saw those stamps when I grew up.”*  
The older staff confirmed that only collectors purchased commemoratives.

At the stamp collections counter, the clerk ignored a suspicious looking man with a large satchel. Imagine someone in your local bookstore standing between the stacks right in front of a clerk offering to sell books out of an old suitcase. As I neared, he asked if I wanted to buy. I refused not seeing anything of interested. He tried again showing his best full sheets. He undercut the clerk even though she had nothing similar. Since he had a personal stock, no cashier kiosk trip was involved. He provided an envelope to protect the two sheets from the rain but only after my asking for it with many hand motions.



Figure 29 - Space Exploration - 1989

This 1989 sheet of six sets of four 25-kopek stamps (now worthless) depicted American and Russian space achievements and Martian dreams (English spelling in the artwork):

- Russian lunar robot explorer (I saw a clone of this unit at Polytechnic Musee)
- American with Apollo Lunar Lander
- Future Mars manned landing
- Mars colonization





Figure 30 - Fifteen States in CCCP - 1991

This 1991 sheet of two sets of 15-kopek stamps (thus worthless) depicted celebrations from the fifteen states of the former CCCP. One line on each stamp is in Russian and a secondary line on some stamps displayed the ethnic script used by that region.

L-R (top to bottom):

- Sleigh (Rossee = Russia)
- Winter tambourine (Ukraine)
- Advent Candles (Belorussee = Belarus)
- Women dance (Uzbekistan)
- Horsemen tug-a-war (Kazakhstan)
- Masked ball castle (Gruzee = Georgia)
- Women (Azerbandschanie = Azerbaijan)
- Maidens with braids (Leitvey = Lithuania)
- Plow (Moldova)
- Fire Jumping couple (Latvia)
- Wedding horses (Kergezee = Kyrgyzstan)
- Stilts and drums (Tadschekestan = Tajikistan)
- Little girl with Jar (Armenia)
- Men wrestling (Turkmenistan)
- Boys pull-up game (Estonia)

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

I visited the open-air flea market twice, admission 2K (35 cents), first to scout the layout and prices. I purchased on the second weekend. That delay was a mistake. A man with two large binders of stamps stood outside for \$25 each. I was not prepared to spend that much and I could not find him or another large collection that second weekend.

One kiosk sold stamp sets sorted by themes. The \$10 price (56K) was a tad high. I preferred the theme approach and settled on a transportation theme. The Purple book barely embossed as “*Poschtovbie Marke - Postage Stamps*” contained:

- Blimps, Sail-planes, Helicopters, Air Mail Stamps
- 60-Year anniversary of Aeroflot airlines (first day issue- 9/2/1983)
- Icebreakers, Science ships, Warships
- Horse-drawn vehicles (I purchased in honor of Jack Rittenhouse)
- Locomotives, rail-cars, steam engines



Figure 31 –Treasures: Aeroflot 60<sup>th</sup> 1983 and Horse-Drawn Vehicles

The next week, a walking vendor offered stamp sets at \$15 each. Knowing a co-worker paid \$10 the week before, I avoided the man until he and a co-seller chased me with a larger selection. I learned to offer in even 10K increments to ease making change. The vendors sold in even \$5 dollar amounts for the same reason. The final price depended on who hesitated first and I got it for 50K, even though the man hoped for a full \$10.

The Green book labeled “*Marke*” (Stamps) contained a mixture of topics:

- Soviet Patriotism
- Artworks (Rembrandt, St. Petersburg Hermitage Musee)
- Campaigns: Traffic Safety, Postal Zip codes
- Olympics (I had the 1980 Olympics Russian Bear Mascot in my office)
- Russian Fairy Tales
- Democracy (first day issue – 10/11/1991) and other anniversary stamps



## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

- Birds, Fish
- Moscow scenes in Soviet history
- Famous Russians
- Space, Apollo-Soyuz (first day issue -7/15/1975), Helicopters, Icebreakers
- Lighthouses, Industry
- Transportation, Horse-drawn Fire engines (in honor of Jack again)



Figure 32- Treasures: Zip Codes 1977, Democracy 1991, Apollo-Soyuz 1975

The “Democracy” stamp displayed tiny Russian tri-color flags in a crowd surrounding the Russian White House on 8/21/1991. However, the first day issue of 10/11/1991 showed the Soviet “СССР” country name and cancellation mark.

## **Russian Faith**

### **Brief Religious History**

In the middle 800's, two Greek missionaries brought Christian faith to Slavic peoples. Without an alphabet to copy the Bible into Old Slavonic, these missionaries created the Cyrillic alphabet, mostly of Greek letters. When the prince of Russ later converted in 988AD, the entire region adopted the eastern orthodox faith. The Russian Orthodox reveres the Old Slavonic. Some church words in Russian came from Biblical Greek.

The icon of Jesus seen often in Russia matches the face on the shroud of Turin. Some think that the shroud was displayed folded up in a frame with only the face showing in Edessa. You cannot avoid seeing this face in Moscow.

For the next 900 years, the country expanded and consolidated with the Orthodox Church at hand. This is similar to the Roman Church in Europe during the middle ages. This did not mean religious freedom. As is Europe, the Czars mistreated Jews. The last czar had other problems. The Orthodox Church enabled the feudal system. Therefore, the Soviet atheist replacement treated the church as the enemy of the people for multiple reasons.

However, the former serfs/peasants did not hold that same animosity and clung to their beliefs. In the drive to secularize Soviet society, soldiers removed 500-year-old icon paintings from churches, defaced them, turned them into sidewalks, and used them as target practice. They rescued some icons as trophy art to show the triumph over the backward and repressive beliefs of the czars. Joseph Stalin not only purged the communist party of dissenters and crushed internal resistance by the Cossacks, but he established a systematic destruction of synagogues, churches, Bibles, and pastors.

The Soviets kept open a few churches for the babushkas, the grandmothers, to claim that there was freedom of religion in the Soviet constitution. The guidebooks of 1980s stated that every religion had facilities of worship in Russia. They left unsaid that they allowed only one building per religion for millions of people. The Soviets converted all others into warehouses, stables for horses, or museums.

Stalin left the Moscow Baptist church of the late 1800's open as a trophy church. Even in 1998, I saw mostly grandmothers, the babushkas, attending this church. For most of the population, the Soviets effectively erased Jewish and Christian faiths from the national memory. similar to the 70-year exile of the Jews in Babylon.

This continued through the darkest hours of the Cold War when Nikita Khrushchev proudly proclaimed that he would soon parade the very last Christian in Russia before Soviet TV and place the very last Bible under glass in the national historical museum.

In the 1960's, a series of books spoke about Russian Christians and missionary activity in the underground. These books portrayed the depth of suffering ordinary Christians faced day by day under the Soviet secret police (popularly known as the KGB).

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

The Soviets jailed pastors and separated families. The Soviet education system was similar to Hitler's claim to children. Separate the children from their parents and build a new society without parental religion. They taught that only the State was supreme and it disproved traditional Christianity and the Bible. Yet while Soviet leaders died, the church continued under the surface of society. The average older citizen secretly respected Orthodox traditions and rituals. Most youth wandered lost without bearings.

The Orthodox built churches dating to the 14th century around tall cylinder silos capped with an onion dome. As a result, these huge buildings have little floor space for the standing congregation. They painted the interior of each silo from bottom to top with saints and angels. Near the top but still in view, would be a painting depicting God the Father, the Son Jesus, and the Dove as the Holy Spirit.

Sadly, the churches within the Kremlin only served the czar and the head prelate. They are now strictly museums. The one exception is the completely rebuilt Cathedral for all of Russia called the "Church of our Savior Jesus Christ". Stalin destroyed it with dynamite and put in a public swimming pool. The Orthodox rebuilt the cathedral using old photos and artwork. As poetic justice, they dynamited the swimming pool.

Women wore scarves and men removed hats in churches and chapels. There is this push and pull of public secular life and private longing for rituals. I saw Russian news reports of people of faith protesting pornography sold to their young people by a government publisher. They held up signs calling the government to a higher moral code.

In 1997, people had freedom to wear a cross, but not as popular jewelry in the West. To the Orthodox, forbidden for 70 years, such jewelry reflects their deep religious heritage. Many atheists sell religious trinkets to the tourists but of course never wear a cross. To them, a cross marks a person (however superficial) as drawing from ancient faith.

### **Circumstantial Miracles (1997)**

The following felt so unusual that I best tell nearly the whole story while omitting last names in light of variable Russian legislation about faith outside the Orthodox Church.

One evening after work in 1997, Melanie from Oak Ridge and I attended the Mossovet Theater to see a new staging of *Jesus Christ Superstar* that cost 45K (\$8). Our Russian protocol/security officer at AtomInform could sing all the songs ... in English. The songs here were in Russian for families and teenagers. It had some risqué scenes. Revisions placed the Russian Mafia and Communist era leaders as the enemies of Jesus. I half expected a raid on the theater. The Russian audience relished the regional revisions.

While waiting to collect our winter coats from the coatroom, I noticed a man about my age and height wearing a Methodist 'Cross and Flame' lapel pin. Vladimir with his 12-year-old son was a seminary student who gave up his job as a TV news anchor to pastor near an unstable part of the country. He moved from the hometown of President Mikhail Gorbachav to Moscow to get his seminary degree.

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

There were no phone books. People were sensitive to strangers knowing their last name much less their phone number. He gave his first name and a phone number. He passed me to the seminary director Tobias, who passed me to a young teacher Sergei. They had 30 students. I was to go to an unmarked building, look for a certain color door, and ring a bell. It may take the next generation to work through the cautions needed under Stalin.

### **Thursday Biblical History**

They invited me to visit a two-year certificate program for training lay leadership within the churches. The students meet twice weekly for 3 hours each night to attend classes. The seminary students teach four of these evening classes each week. This visit was a personal breakthrough because I rode the Metro without my translator for the first time. This tested my city navigation with Cyrillic signs at night.

I found the Tagan-skaya Metro (“skaya” is Russian for ‘the road to’). While well marked inside, I took a wrong turn at street level. I could not find street signs. I stopped at a pharmacy. (Think about visiting a convenience store and asking for help in Malaysian.) The young manager spoke some German, walked me out to the empty snowy street, and pointed me back to the correct ‘strasse’. After thanking him in German and Russian, I soon discovered my mistake. I know so few German words, and the shop manager was already gracious enough, that it seemed best letting him think I was a clueless German.

I found the specific building as described, found the door, rang the bell, and met the face of a worried student. Things cleared up when I gave the director and teacher names.

I had to fend for myself with the high-speed Russian lecture and class participation. The first icebreaker tested who could recite the names of the books of the Bible by memory. They applauded. One surprise: They recited Paul’s letters after Revelations.

The evening covered geography and history from Solomon through the Judean Civil War. Names in Russian used the Hebrew and Greek soft ‘Y’ (Y’huda) instead of the harsh English ‘J’. I caught only a few words even though I am well versed in that material.

God (boga) was not in my phrase books. The publishers presumed that tourists did not discuss faith. There were many variant words for liquor, reflecting tourist priorities.

### **Small Sunday Service**

Sergei invited me to where he preached a week before their fourth anniversary. We left at 9:45am to meet our guides at the Perova Metro at 10:30am. They escorted us through the streets to an unmarked elementary school with revolutionary red Communist posters inside on all walls. As a school for the blind, I have no idea for whom the posters served.

Both Melanie and Svetlana sat beside me during this Methodist service. The songs were familiar tunes and I was happy to try to sing the hymns in English from memory.

Afterwards, Svetlana sniffed that congregational singing seemed so rural and amateurish. She heard professional choirs in churches that she visited in America, which caused me to do a double take. She never mentioned any church visits prior to that comment.

Vladimir joined us with his son. I discovered earlier that he was about to start his Hebrew language courses. Before my trip, a member of my church handed me a side-by-side Russian and Hebrew version of the New Testament. As I handed this book to Vladimir, he tried to hold back tears as he explained he had a dream wondering how he could buy such a book. He said his class next quarter was going to be the Hebrew language. This gift deeply moved him and he offered a German-made pen in return.

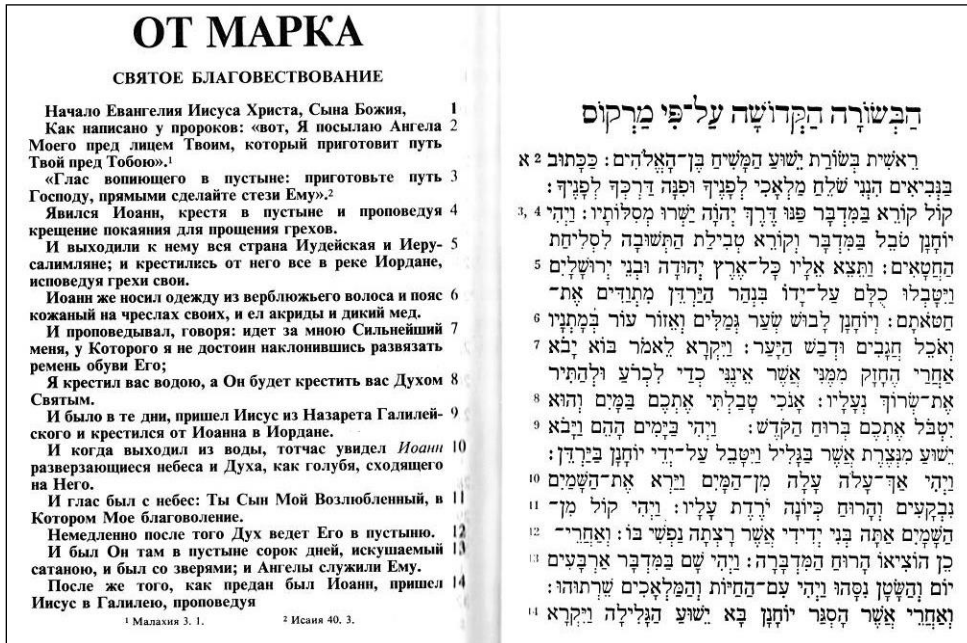


Figure 33- Mark 1:1-14 Russian and Hebrew  
(Society for Distributing Hebrew Scriptures, Edgeware, England)

We had chai (hot tea and biscuits) with discussion until 1pm. They questioned Melanie and me about how our churches did effective evangelism and dealt with various issues. They told us to tell our churches “*bolshoi dobra djeen*”, a big ‘Hello’.

Their four prayers were for spiritual vitality, for a permanent place to hold services, for effective evangelism, and for release from alcoholism in society (men and women)

### Thursday Class on Teaching

Sergei invited me to speak at his Tuesday evening laity class. His American wife Debra coordinated guest speakers but had not heard me greet the class on Thursday. After clarifying whom this foreigner was that her husband picked up off the street, and an exchange of intent, he and I jointly worked on an outline.

They had speakers about various ministries but no one spoke directly on the "The Grace Gift of Teaching". Instead of explaining how one teaches, he asked me to encourage the students to be available to God’s Holy Spirit. I used seven passages to distinguish the gift of teaching as it differs from schoolroom teaching and from the role of pastor.

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

Sergei offered me tea, bread, meat before the hour class. It caught their attention that I taught adult Bible classes for 25 years and yet was so young. Debra scowled at me the entire hour from the back row and I never discovered why. I described ways that a pastor or a church can identify (and affirm) the gift of teaching in an individual.

Members of the class included an elderly woman, a few middle-aged men, many women, and a respectable showing of college students. One of their books in this Methodist Seminary was a book by the Presbyterian R.C. Sproul ... in Russian of course.

As I usually run classes, I posed questions and answered earnest questions as a means of covering the material. Sergei adeptly interpreted in both directions.

The elderly woman (perhaps 75?) was a professor of languages during the Soviet years. At barely five feet tall, she protectively escorted me to the Metro and spoke in flawless thoughtful English, “*I know why you make such a good teacher. You are an analyst and break things into understandable pieces.*” Her affirmation provided a wonderful tonic.

Sergei later received his doctorate from Perkins School of Theological in Dallas and became president of his Moscow Theological Seminary of the United Methodist Church. He received the E. Stanley Jones professorship of Evangelism. Jones was a long-term missionary to India and a welcomed family friend to Gandhi.

### **Russia Easter Eggs**

Upon leaving in 1997, my Russian hosts gave me a book of Russian Easter Eggs, with several having inscriptions of the first letter from two Russian words: 'Christ Risen'.

Unlike American baskets of colored eggs and rabbits, the Russian concept was a single hand-made egg presented from one family to another as a sign of faith and friendship. To receive a Russian Egg on Easter Sunday was a gift of the highest honor.

Instead of crucifixes common in the West, scenes portrayed a glowing Jesus rising out of the grave. His resurrection was proof of his claim as Messiah. The Russian name 'Anastasia' means 'Resurrection'. The Greek word means to get up from a static position - ana (against) stasis (static) - Anastasia is the message of these eggs. Therefore, the Soviets destroyed (or sold for hard currency) these “absolutely useless” faith symbols.

Illegal to make or display one, the Soviets tolerated only eggs with non-religious scenes. Believers reminded one another to hope in Jesus upon gifting an egg.

Giver: “*Kristos voskrese!*” (Kris-tOs vOs-kr-yes: Christ is risen!).

Receiver: “*Voistinu voskrese!*” (voy-sti-nU vOs-kr-yes: He is indeed risen!).

Once Communism fell, the arts of making pre-revolutionary eggs along with a few Christian symbols revived. Most egg samples in the book date after 1995.



### **Russian Christian Radio (1998)**

In September 1998, Eugene (deceased) of Livermore asked me to contact Nadia, the bookkeeper of Russian Christian Radio and her 15-year-old daughter Nina. They shepherded me through the Moscow Bus System, Tretykov Gallery, Polytechnic Musee, Russian Christian Radio studio, and Moscow First Baptist church. On first phone contact from my hotel, I asked to attend their church that coming Sunday.

They said, *“Oh no, you must want to attend an English speaking church.”*

*“No, I would like to attend your church,”* said I.

After several puzzlements, they met me at the hotel that Sunday morning. In route, they changed their mind and took me to the Moscow Baptist Church. The Soviets left this solitary Baptist church open in all of Moscow as the showpiece of “freedom of worship”.

After Perestroika, formerly closed churches re-opened and this specific one added many young families. The usher apologized that the only seating was upstairs by the choir at the rear. With standing room only, it felt as the best worst seat in the house. The choir was concert quality and few others saw the elegant pipe organ tucked out of view.



**Figure 34 - Moscow Baptist Church Organ and Choir Loft - 10/1998**

After touring, Nadia and Nina took me on the Metro to the studios of Russian Christian Radio, an unmarked one story white building sharing space with other Christian ministries. Nina enhanced her English by translating e-mail and faxes for her mother.

Together they stuffed booklets and Bibles into envelopes for people who responded to the broadcasts. Last year, they sent out 15,000 packets or Bibles and Bible materials through the Russian mails. Instead of asking me for books from America, she pointed along the wall of brown parcels fresh from the printers and asked how many I could use. I took two books describing faith stories of famous people whom Russians respect.

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

I never got to their church, which they said had a Korean pastor leading a Russian language congregation while encouraging them to learn about Jewish roots of Christian faith. They followed up on this Korean's advice. They attended several Shabbat candle lighting in homes of Jewish friends and learned to dance the hora, a high-spirited circle dance. Since I was learning Hebrew, I taught them a line using phonetic Russian letters.

In the middle of the Polytechnic Museum in Moscow, an American and two Russians read a blessing in Hebrew, saying: *'Baruch atah, Adonai elohenu, melach ha olam'* (Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe).

Surprised at my vocabulary, Nadia asked:

*"What do you call a person who knows many languages?" ".... A Polyglot"*

*"What do you call a person you knows two languages?" ".... Bilingual"*

*"What do you call a person who knows one language?" ".... An American"*

Nina talked about telling friends at school about Jesus and church. She said that her friends wondered what a church was and why someone would attend. Instead of cynics as in America, the students were genuinely puzzled. It sounded so foreign to them.

### **Echoes of Fahrenheit 451**

Here is a brief diversion. Ray Bradbury wrote a dystopian novel in 1953 called Fahrenheit 451 (F451) at which temperature paper bursts into flame. The snowy ending with leafless ash trees in the 1966 film version amplified a haunting winter of loss.

However, the book conjured images that no movie could fully portray. That mechanical hound with the syringe needle terrified me. Darth Vader in the 1977 Star Wars movie played upon that Bradburian fear of syringe-injecting robots. F451 flashed into my mind when that opening scene appeared in Star Wars. An Orwellian chill ran up my body.

The robotic hound was not in the F451 film and the producer did not mention books of the Bible. In the book, Montag finds a Bible and hides it to read. In the film, it is "David Copperfield". Gone is the English professor offering to take the Bible ("*the only one left*", Montag says) to have it reprinted. In the closing film scene, Montag becomes a book by Edgar Allan Poe. In the book, he becomes the Biblical book of Ecclesiastes.

Bradbury felt the chill of the Cold War. What more horrifying thought to the largely religious West in 1953 than to hunt down unassuming defenseless people in their homes merely for owning a Bible? Unknown to Bradbury, the Soviets did just that. The role of Guy Montag reflects dozens of young military Soviet agents who hunted down Christians and confiscated hymnals, Bibles, and samizdat (illegal, hence treasonous) publications.

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

There was no secret about this "cleansing from religion". The Secret Police took the mantra "Religion is the opiate of the masses" seriously. The breadth and horror of these arrests and Bible burning did not leak to the West until the 1960's. Bradbury was concerned about the overreach of our own government. While many knew about the Communist Manifesto and closing of churches, few in 1953 knew the scope of damage.

Oddly, F451 accurately predicted that behavior of the Soviets and the desperate measures that Soviet Christians took to memorizing books of the Bible. They tore out pages and distributed them among believers. If they arrested that one person, only a portion of the Bible was lost. They hand-copied their portion, passed the original along, and repeated the process similar to F451, out in the wintry forests on the fringes of Soviet cities.



Figure 35 - Nina at State Tretyakov Gallery – 10/1998

To probe her own depth of Biblical knowledge, I asked Nina to explain some of the many biblically themed paintings displayed in the State Tretyakov Gallery (Tret-ya-koff). She did well crossing a language barrier to explain the biblical story in the paintings. Nina, at 15 years old, already had English classes for six years. She interpreted nearly an entire day on that Sunday. At the end, her poor head ached.

She said in tired exasperated voice, "*Oh mama! I'm even thinking in English!*"

She exhibited an unusual knowledge of the Bible for her age and I asked her how she obtained such breadth and depth. I specifically asked how she became a believer. She explained it as a family tradition and credited her grandfather during the politically correct "cleansing" purges. He passed along his knowledge of the Bible just as the dying grandfather did in the closing scene of the F451 film. The Christian faith was highly valued over three generations while not physically safe to believe in Jesus.

I have applied post-1953 history into Bradbury's 1953 novel. However, his concerns became reality with his keen insights about human behavior. He omitted references to the Bible in media interviews, but for the film to expurgate references to the Bible ironically had the movie producers doing the very thing against which F451 railed.

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

Bradbury had an optimistic hint that someday, somehow, however faint the glimmer, this anti-religious physical harm upon fellow civilians would cease. In Hitler's day, it took a World War to stop. In the Stalinist reign of terror, it took 70 years. When strict Islamic warriors in Iraq bared their hostile colors in 2014, that glimmer remained faint indeed.

The most incredible oil painting in my visit to the Tretyakov portrayed John the Baptizer alongside the Jordon River. The foreground hosted life-size men (youth to elderly) in various undress from ritual immersion (akin to a mikveh) for the remission of sins. John points to Jesus in the distance. I could easily imagine that moment where John proclaims “*Behold, the Lamb of God which takes away the sins of the world.*” (John 1:29)



Figure 36 – Tretyakov Gallery: Appearance of Messiah (A. Ivanov, 1837-1857)

Alexander Ivanov (son of Ivan) took 20 years to paint this 18-foot tall by 25-foot wide magnum opus. It fills a room built expressly to do it justice. This painting truly requires your personal visit to comprehend its visual power. I had to stand back 30 feet to absorb its immersive quality. This huge painting alone is worth the gallery admission. Although the Soviets railed against religion as an opiate, they respected such art masterpieces.



**Sergiev Posad Orthodox Monastery (1998)**

On my last weekend in Moscow in 1998, we rode a chartered van an hour and half north to Sergiev Posad, a working Russian Orthodox monastery. This preserve was part of a circle of protective forts surrounding Moscow used by the czars.

Each new czar added a chapel or cathedral as the centuries passed. The priests have kept the traditions alive in their families for generations. This ancient fort is open to tourists but remains a place of serious ritual, study and, at points, given over to mysticism. Every icon and action carried meaning. People did things in threes. People crossed themselves hundreds of times. I took part and felt unable to keep up.

People packed the worship area of gold gilt icons and hundreds of thin candles. I could not get past the foyer and so explored nearby. In the arched catacombs beneath that hall, I happened upon a small service of 15 people standing waiting for a priest to bless water collected in liter bottles from the fountain outside. The service started with a censor flinging incense smoke into the group and around the small alcove lit only by candles.

Obvious to all that I was a novice, an elderly babushka approached me. I thought she tried to beg and showed nothing to offer. In frustration, she pointed to my hands and made a motion to take off my gloves. I was crossing myself with my gloves on.

Sensing my good intentions, she proceeded to direct my hands in the Orthodox right to left shoulder crossing. Once I understood these two basics of protocol, I was accepted and she went back to her station with a broad smile that creased her weathered face. She communicated the sanctity of this ritual without a word.

The priest dipped a flat polished brass cross into three plastic buckets of water while holding the arms and dipping three times. He held out the wet cross to any who wanted to kiss it. All crowded around and he extended the cross into the group to those who showed an interest. I did not step forward but I am sure he would have included me.

He next sprinkled with water, which I deduced was from Ezekiel chapter 36 and Hebrews chapter 10 asking us to let God sprinkle our hearts clean from sin. This priest did not sparingly use the water. His wide thick brush held enough to fling 20 feet with accuracy.

I showed a prayerful interest and he duly met me from across the room with a thick spray of water. He deliberately sprinkled everything: Icons, candles, furniture, people, ceilings, and walls. A man and woman sung an ancient and beautiful chant in two-part harmony. For the profusion of water, it extinguished only one candle. This service reminded me of the Exodus Tabernacle where the Aaronic priest sprinkled everything with the blood of the sacrificial lamb to make even the furniture set apart for a holy purpose.

### Asbury UMC (1990-1994)

#### Adult Bible Class (1989-1994)

In spring 1989, I proposed a five-year Adult Bible Class (ABC) to the current pastors. The master plan covered the entire Bible using a series of six-week classes that alternated between the Old and New Testament. It reserved the seventh week as a break for a “Super Sunday” guest external speaker usually chosen by the pastors.

This became the first continuous adult class in the Bible at Asbury in decades. We hosted seven classes per year. I taught the initial classes and then recruited teachers for half the other classes. I tested whether this impulse came from God by starting in June (summer vacation) and chose the longest and most boring books: Kings and Chronicles. If none showed up, I was off the hook. The initial class attracted an enthusiastic dozen.

I patterned the class format after the Bible Study Groups at LLNL. I researched hard and prepared supporting material. Someone invariably said, “*Oh! That was in my footnote in my NIV Bible.*” This happened frequently enough, that the class gave me a NIV Study Bible (with those crucial footnotes) for Christmas 1991.

This particular copy remains my daily study Bible. By 2017, I marked it up with sidebar notes and underlined phrases. Each book’s title page bears the last date that I read that specific book as part of my four-year reading cycle, now in starting my fifth cycle,

I hit my stride both teaching this Bible Survey program and mentoring others how to teach any book within six weeks. No one would commit to teach a full year, but a six-week run encouraged several men and women to volunteer. We began with one class at 9am and built up a teacher pool of seven men and two women.

Instead of published material, each leader dug into references and presented six key topics, chapters, or persons of particular books. Each leader told me that the books he/she taught became those most remembered. This activated the classroom principle that the teacher learns the most. They were capable perhaps much to their own surprise.

From 1992 to 1994, we offered topical classes at 11am, allowing the ABC class to continue with the new teacher pool at 9:30am. Associate Pastor Chuck Johnstone offered three topical classes: The (Gnostic) Gospel of Thomas, Faith Foundations, and a Bible overview called “Dust off the Cover”. I led four topical classes: Mediterranean Geography, the book “Mere Christianity”, an overview of C.S. Lewis, and a Bible overview called “User Friendly Bible” (using material I wrote for a class at LLNL).

We left Asbury in July 1994 and thus I only saw four years completed of the five-year program. Almost the entire Bible was covered. I felt this master plan was my most significant contribution while at Asbury. My class notes filled multiple binders.

### **Holy Communion**

From 1990 (and years prior) through mid-1994, I helped serve communion at least quarterly. When I preached at Socorro Christian in 1971, we had Communion weekly, as did Catholics. I served during my bi-weekly preaching turn. After that first year, it seemed too rote and I welcomed the Methodist frequency of monthly or quarterly communion. However, I soon found quarterly too distant. Bi-monthly seemed just about the right cycle to evoke the sense of mystery and contemplative aspects within the congregation. Each Methodist congregation chose their own preferred frequency.

We practiced a faith-based open communion to all those who desired to earnestly follow the Christian faith. Ushers excused by row when space opened up near the podium. Since not obligatory, we encouraged those not in a state to receive to pray instead.

Two teams on the left and right of the center aisle offered the elements of handmade bread and intinction of a piece of that bread into the cup. Sometimes I held the loaf of bread and other times held the cup, saying alternatively “*The body of our Lord Jesus, given for you*” or “*The blood of our dear Savior, given for you*”.

We were not Catholic or Lutheran expecting the bread/wine mysteriously or literally to become the body/blood. Still, we followed Jesus’ direct example in saying “*This is my body/blood given for you*” (when he made these alarming statements while plainly remaining whole). Thus, visitors from other Christian branches could take our statements as literal or as symbolic as necessary to deepen their faith. Like Catholics and Lutherans, we treated communion as a means of enabling grace within the imperfect believer. We knew Jesus spoke metaphorically at his Last Supper, but the encouraging presence of Jesus settled among us during communion. That intuition made it more than a ritual.

### **Conferences on the Holy Spirit**

A small percentage of United Methodists, but enough to pack a large auditorium, sought to present the Wesleyan concept of orderliness and sound teaching about charismata. This California specialty conference met for three days in different cities once a year. Anne attended in 1992 and I in 1993. Five years after leaving Asbury, I attended my second and last conference in 1999 in Sacramento. During this weekend, the coordinator called for a message in tongues from the pulpit. I stood up near the back row. The chair acknowledged me and let me calmly speak one of the few times in tongues at a public gathering. Someone a few rows over gave an interpretation, which the audience assented as worthwhile. A pastor sitting next me, leaned over and asked how I ever came to learn that language, not knowing it was an unknown tongue to me.

### **Christmas Pageants**

In 1990, I planned the lighting with David Darlington and other men in our Chapel. David had the unusual task of sitting cross-legged with a spotlight up in the cramped soffit at the rear of the room. He needed a 12-foot ladder to hoist himself into that narrow space. He depended upon me to retrieve him after the pageant ended. In 1991, I planned the lighting again while Karen played Anne’s Cello as part of the pageant.

### Super Sunday Speakers

The pastors arranged the Super Sunday speakers at the seventh week break between classes. I skipped some as far too liberal for me. I heard guest speakers on substance abuse (1990), understanding the Arab world (1991), Russia after the Yeltsin coup (1992, by my LLNL friend Ted Saito), and Jewish Holy Days (1992, by Rabbi Dobin).

In 1991, a chemist invited his brother-in-law Phillip Johnson to the Men's Breakfast. Philip spoke about his new book "Darwin on Trial". At the time, the chemist believed in evolutionary theism and remained so even after Phillip's arguments. He later told me that his worldview dramatically changed towards special creation, not because of scientific verbal battles, but by being present at the physical birth of his grandchild.

In 1994, we had presentations on the prison version of Cursillo, one talk about KAIROS (for prisoners) and another talk about KAIROS Outside (for wives and mothers). We had no idea that Anne would need and value this weekend herself in 2000.

### Jewish Challenge

Asbury invited various religions to speak Sunday evenings. Rabbi Dobin of Beth Emek (then of Livermore and teaching at University of the Pacific) spoke in January 1993.

He did not buy into the typical Jewish mindset that all churchgoers and secular non-Jews represented Christian faith. He spoke of Jewish history, his European roots, and the absolute necessity of believing in the resurrection of Jesus for Christians. He called himself a liberal but he treated scriptures as more trustworthy than did conservative Christian scholars. If Rabbi Dobin called himself a liberal, then what did this say about our own liberal theologians? I recall three emphatic quotes that need commentary.

- Speaking of Adolf Hitler's year studying for the Catholic priesthood, "[You cannot be selective,] *you have to take your bad Christians with the good.*"
  - [Hitler repudiated Christian faith, obsessed about the Occult, and replaced the cross with the swastika over the altars in German Lutheran churches. He did not follow Jesus at all except in the minds of the oppressed Jews.]
  - [*"The church in Poland suffered appalling losses during the war; the Nazis murdered twenty-six hundred (2600) priests."* – John Dwyer, Church History: Twenty Centuries of Catholic Christianity, page 374]
- *"Your job is to convince me that you are right, and my job is to convince you that I am right. [We cannot both be right]."*
  - [Rabbi Dobin correctly delineated the primal differences in our two faiths and he countered the post-modern thesis that all faiths are equivalent.]
- Speaking in an exasperated angry tone, *"If you do not believe in the resurrection [of Jesus], you have no business calling yourself Christians."*
  - [This completely truthful quote left our audience in stunned silence. However, it succinctly undermined his claim that Hitler was a Christian. Sitting near the front, I inwardly responded, *"Amen. Preach it Brother!"*]



## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

### **Committees and Roles**

Family members could not sit on the same monthly committees. Each committee participated in the Chaplain-led afternoon worship service at the Veteran's Hospital in Livermore. With so many committees, Hospital services worked out to twice a year.

I continued as a Certified Lay Speaker with an annual affirmation by the local Asbury community but stopped attending annual training. I gave my brief testimony from the pulpit in 1991, gave an apologetics class talk about faith healers, acted in two skits (one as Nicodemus) in 1992, and gave a final sermon in 1994.

Asbury rotated the lay worship leader (akin to a master of ceremonies) every week. I filled that role two or three times a year. I made the announcements, welcomed visitors, prayed over the offering, and announced the hymnal selections.

Between Anne and myself, we covered significant ground taking our membership vows seriously (our time, talent, and treasure).

- I was on my final year with the Nominations committee in 1990.
- I was on the Visiting committee in 1990-1991. We visited newcomers to Asbury.
- Anne was in the Staff-Parish Relations committee from 1990 through 1992.
- I was on the Adult Education committee in 1992 through 1993.
- Anne was on the Worship committee in 1993 through 1994.

### **Theological Bluntness**

My correspondence about passionate theological disagreements in this decade was not diplomatic and worded much stronger than tact indicated. I did not edit them as how the potential recipient might have received my missives.

My logical arguments, though reasoned, mostly distanced a relationship than redeemed the faulty theological point. The letters felt like the blunt attacks from St. Augustine to St. Jerome (fighter to fighter), without allowing the recipient a gracious way to admit their error (friend to friend). It reduced pastoral willingness to engage me for further Lay Speaker pulpit assignments. They probably saw me as a "loose cannon".

Due to such negative feedback, needed editing severely cripples me for days over a letter about a controversial issue. I want to persuade without burning a relational bridge.

### **Lil Spooner**

Our elderly church donations bookkeeper called on me each quarter for computer help with the donor statements. She valued my confidentiality with this private data. I attended Bob and Lil's 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary vows renewal in 1990. After Bob later died and seven years after I left Asbury, she called on me one last time to help her understand the replacement church financial software.

### **Parachurch Missions**

In January and February 1992, I planned, advertised, and hosted a Sunday evening video and speaker series of my favorite para-church missions. I presented two of the videos in lieu of a speaker. Few people in many local churches knew about these agencies.

- Sudan Interior Mission – My dentist Dr. Bill Sands spoke of his year in Jos, Nigeria - Video: "The Race"
- American Bible Society – Speaker: Paulson – Video: "Russia"
- Jews for Jesus – Speaker: Kimmel - Video: "Still Not Ashamed"
- Mission Society for United Methodists (later The Mission Society) - Nelson
- Wycliffe Bible Translators - Video: "The Good Seed"
- Slavic Gospel Association - Video: "Nation in Search"
- Language Institute for Evangelism (later Asian Access) – Speaker: Hilary Lynch, Missionary from Livermore to Japan

### **Homosexual Advocacy Breakpoint**

The Northern California-Nevada UMC (Annual Conference) began leaving traditional faith well before 1980 in favor of homosexual/feminist/liberation theologies. I contended 18 hard years for historic faith. Most of our local pastors were Wesleyan. An exception in 1983 caused me to spend the summer at Trinity Baptist served by Pastor James (and Ginger) Morton. A pastoral change at Asbury brought me back for ten more years.

In 1990, Anne became our Asbury congregational delegate to the Annual Conference. She spoke for traditional Wesleyan understanding about homosexuality. She had the support of the Evangelical Renewal Fellowship (ERF) in our Conference but felt intimidated with a video camera shoved in her face as she stood at the floor microphone.

She was stunned at the animosity against her short heart-felt comments given she worked with homosexual employees in San Francisco. Several ERF pastors gathered around her afterwards to give her time to recover from the intensity of that moment.

I contribute to the UMC Transforming Congregations caucus. They called homosexual behaviors sin but provided a caring environment that let one become 'transformed by the renewing of your mind' (Romans 12:2). Only 30% of California pastors then supported the Transforming position. The local bishops rapidly purged this minority from pulpit ministry in the 1990s as clearly a homosexual agenda. They gave evangelical pastors the poorest churches or treated them as such outcasts that they sadly resigned their lifelong ordinations. Along with ERF, I grieved the loss of each conservative man and woman.

Nearly all liberal California pastors adopted the homosexual agenda as their own contrary to the Social Principles of the UMC. On 7/17/1994, our own pastors announced their intent to become a "Reconciling Congregation". This was "UMC-speak" for celebrating the homosexual lifestyle including ordination of militant homosexuals. I never thought our moderate congregation would cross that line. It became our last Sunday at Asbury. In 2019, Asbury militantly campaigned with local news editorials for homosexual clergy.

## Church Tour Observations (1994)

### Methodical Grand Tour

Usually, only special events drew me to other churches. Yet, I felt at home in whatever congregation that heart-honored Jesus. Of special interest was the

- 1991 Easter Vigil at St. Martins Catholic Community in Sunnyvale (for my mother's adult Confirmation service)
- 1993 Cedar Grove Church for a "Dad, The Family Shepherd" seminar (I thought it would help me better father my pre-teens. I still failed as a father.)
- 1994 Russian Christians visiting the Presbyterian Church
- 1994 Baptism service a co-worker's infant at St. Charles Catholic Church
- 1997 Christmas eve service at Our Savior Lutheran Church

However, upon our July 1994 breaking point, I took a sabbatical from teaching for a grand tour to visit Livermore congregations mostly compatible with Wesleyan theology.

My "grand tour" was good in general terms. Each church served a niche within God's master plan with something unusual, new, and familiar. I created web page to help people to find a "home church" among twenty local choices. For five months, I visited ten churches on my own and then re-visited five with the family.

I visited:

- Tri-Valley Bible Church (defunct)
- First Baptist Church (renamed Cedar Grove Community)
- Celebration Christian Center (formerly People's Church and New Covenant)
- St. Matthews Missionary Baptist (see below)
- Calvary Temple Assembly of God (see below, renamed Sunset Community)
- Trinity Southern Baptist Church (see below, renamed simply as Trinity)
- Lynnwood UMC (then moderate, now fully progressive)
- Calvary Chapel Tri-Valley (moved to Pleasanton)
- Coming King Community Church (Christian and Missionary Alliance, defunct)
- Cornerstone Fellowship (then renting the Shriner's Hall)

I heard a preponderance of short choruses unique to each congregation. It felt like school cheers with few words. Each compensated for lack of content by singing the chorus five to ten times through. Anne enjoyed it but I left People's Church (now Celebration Christian Center) partly because they sang the same five choruses repetitively in 1977.

### **Black Missionary Baptist**

A lively local black Baptist congregation was the closest to our radically evangelical UMC college fellowship in Socorro NM. I saw at least three transferable concepts.

Their four-hour service recalled when 1800's pioneers attended for the day. The time had so many pieces and variety that the day seemed short. It was a major undertaking to hook up the horse and wagon for church. Members brought food for a potluck and enjoyed the rare social time. What else did you plan to do anyway? It was a day of rest from hard labor on the ranch or farm. After socializing, the pioneers gathered for an afternoon song service, giving time to hitch up the wagon and get home before dark.

The main service here started immediately with an altar call with many responding. This was their starting point and not the anticipated ending as with many churches.

They used an ancient pattern of walking (and dancing) to the front to give their contributions. Three containers designated a building fund, an operating fund, and a mission fund. Their joy was infectious because of the privilege to honor God by giving. The ushers excused givers pew by pew as if for a communion service.

Since I attended their men's Sunday class that morning, I had newfound friends to sit with in the main service. I was the only white person that Sunday. After the service, a few corralled me for the potluck lunch, and sing a well-known hymn with their competing team at the anniversary celebration competition that afternoon. While a one-time visit, I enjoyed many aspects.

The congregation later got behind in mortgage payments on their church property and defaulted. They next moved about renting various facilities.

### Calvary Temple AOG (1994-1998)

#### Change of Station

Anne and the kids moved in July 1994 to Calvary Temple Assembly of God (AOG) church while I explored the available field. Our two pre-teens felt at home, which cinched the deal after my grand tour. Anne joined the women's ministries.

We discussed church membership in January 1995 and formally joined in May. Special events that year included watching baptisms in a member's swimming pool and quarterly services seeking physical healing. I attended the large Promise Keepers gathering (from many conservative denominations) at the Oakland Coliseum with their men's group.

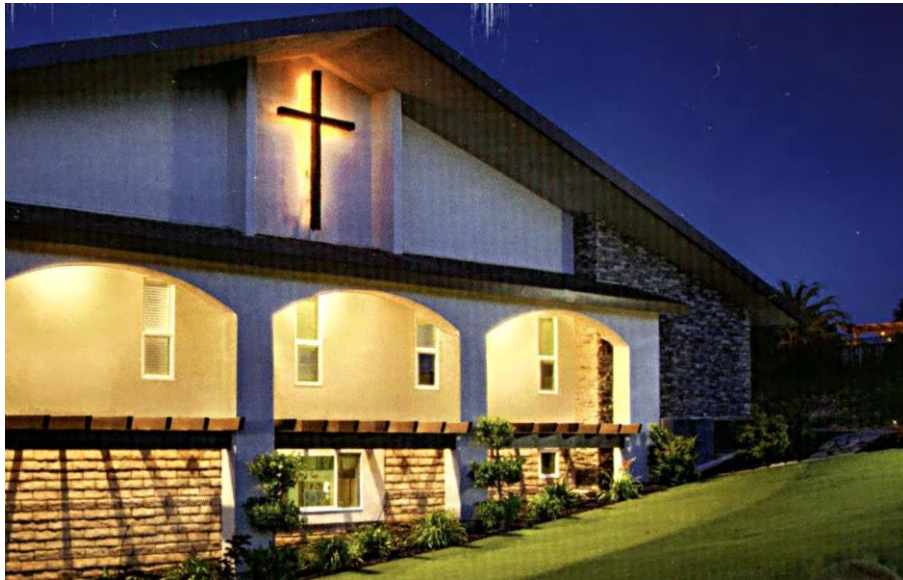


Figure 37 - Calvary Temple AOG

Like Asbury, they had no Sunday adult classes. After over a year off from teaching, I offered a three-week class in December called "Christmas Myths and Mall Mania". I joined the Adult Education committee and helped design their new member material. I proposed my successful ABC model from Asbury. Instead of the five-year program, they asked for a solitary overview class (my "User-Friendly Bible" seminar). Within the year, we went from four dubious adults to 25 regular attendees whenever I taught a class.

I wrote a class in 1996 called "Jesus in Isaiah", which categorized 63 messianic passages from Isaiah into seven roles of Jesus, new data even to me. We rotated teachers and topics every seven weeks and worked at growing new teachers. Thus, I wrote only two adult classes that year, "Evidences for the Resurrection" and "Christian Apologetics".

In 1997, I joined a men's accountability group as a carry-over from Promise Keepers in 1995. I attended a monthly series of AOG missionary speakers on Sunday evenings. At a 1997 AOG Woman's Conference in Alamo, Anne identified the camels in her life (see Rebecca's story in Genesis.) In 1998, I taught a class called the "Return of Jesus".

### **Sudden Dismissal**

AOG polity was not UMC polity. In September 1998, the church summarily dismissed the entire Adult Education committee without notice. Simultaneously, the elders met with Anthony about his out-of-control behavior and sexualized conduct towards church youth. They spoke firmly to Anne and me without sympathy. They expected us to yank Anthony's chain, long since unmanageable with his bipolar disorder.

The pastor assured me that there was no problem with theology nor class content. The preferred polity was suddenly to have each elected elder run an age-leveled class for three years. They implemented an "elders-as-the-only-teachers" model. The laity had no option even to learn to teach. Licking my wounds, I came under the care of Baptist Pastor Dr. James 'Die-to-Self' Meek, who graciously helped me see parenting as my primary duty that year. My long-time mentor Pastor Roger Lewis of Monarch Ministries, who well understood what it felt like to be 'let go', tended to me. My spirit yearned to fulfill my life-long calling as a Biblical course developer and mentor of adult teachers.

### **Brit Ahavah Messianic Congregation**

Prior to learning about Brit Ahavah congregation, I attended *Christ in the Passover* presentations through Jews for Jesus. They held these at churches around Livermore.

In spring 1997, I once sat next to a woman from Israel at Calvary Temple AOG. Polly wanted her three boys, born in Israel (called sabras), to learn Hebrew before returning to Israel. She invited me to her children's class at home to fulfill my dream to read Hebrew.

Messianic Rabbi Kevin Lind led the class and through that class, I first met him and learned about his Brit Ahavah (Covenant of Love) congregation. No self-study books could take the place of a class where I could hear the words in liturgical use.

Polly briefly moved the family to the United States possibly due to a divorce. I soon attended Brit Ahavah on almost every holy day mentioned in Leviticus. These events included Passover, a Bar Mitzvah (for Zev, one of the Israeli boys), Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Hanukkah (John's gospel).

Polly moved back to Israel to live in Beersheba working at a Crisis Pregnancy Center. I presume her sons grew up to serve in the IDF and have since raised their own families.

## Guatemala 1996

### January

Both New Mexico Tech (NMT) Alumni (undergraduate alma mater and original source of interest) and Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL, the academic service arm of Wycliffe Bible Translators) offered a tour of Guatemala. This was my first passport trip.

Thirty-six years of civil war tore at the country. Our State Department made cautions after deaths of two Americans in a hotel, guerrillas stopping tour vans in daylight, and rumors in rural areas of Americans kidnapping Mayan children to harvest organs. NMT cancelled their tour. SIL had a favorable 30-year history with the people. The Pope's arrival in January 1996 brought calm but armed soldiers guarded every bank and market.

#### Guidebook Notes (edited):

*Be careful of wiring for hot water in hotel showers in Flores. Vendors raise their prices by two or 3 times. They know that your airfare exceeds their annual income. Children grow up watching their mothers. By age seven, they become adroit at separating tourists from their cash. Bandits are holding up tour vans between Flores and Tikal. The State Department warns of highland roads, especially at night. On some roads, they hold up tour vans in daylight. There are machete-wielding rapes in daylight in Guatemala City.*

#### Front-page news in the Valley Times on 1/22/1996 (edited):

*[Fifty miles south], El Salvador reports that returning youths sent to the US are bringing back a gang violence that offends even the guerrillas. A Salvador doctor said, during the civil war, he was stopped on the road, addressed as doctor, took leave of his cash and let go. Now, gangs stop you on the road, rob you, beat you, and take your car. Residents are yearning for the peace of the Civil War.*

E-mail keenly whetted my interest from those who went or were on the field or visited in our home. Few people had access to or experience with e-mail from their home in 1996. Anne was a novice e-mailer, as were some of the Wycliffe staff members. Parts of San Francisco are dangerous and so I presumed similar problems in Guatemala.

#### Richard, of the NMT Alumni Association wrote in January (edited):

*We canceled our NMT trip. Two days before payments due, the Albuquerque Journal reported that two women tourists were killed [at Lake] Atitlan in a resort lounge and robbery was not a motive. I was sure that had a chilling effect. Compared to the violence in Albuquerque, we might be safer in Guatemala.*

#### Carol West, of Wycliffe, replied from Dallas (edited):

*Safety is a major factor. If they feel that we should not come, they will let us know. They gave us input to the safe areas and hours to be "in" at night. You have a healthy attitude and a great sense of humor to keep it in perspective.*

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

### February

Rick MacArthur, Solola, Guatemala, wrote:

*I would not get too worried. Everything you read has happened, but we get many thousands of tourists yearly. Down here, everyone is worried about going to Miami. San Francisco and Los Angeles are more dangerous. A policeman visiting us from Canada said to tell you not to worry. Most everything [for the mission tour] is taken care of and you will travel with experienced drivers.*

An Assembly of God magazine "Mountain Builders" carried several articles that month about the churches in Guatemala. A co-worker, Bob Sherwood described his visit to Tikal back in civil war 1979 while traveling with Gideon's International.

The Pope felt safe enough to visit but only with a two-fighter jet escort and the military on alert due to a recent assassination attempt on the President. The insurgents took part in a cease-fire. Judging from the Pope's recent visit in 1995 to the US East Coast, there should be a sense of well-being. Even jaded New Yorkers became civil during his visit.

A British tour book explained (edited)

*Gun-toting civilians near rural towns and markets are citizens organized by the government to protect their critical roadways and markets from remaining guerrillas. Most banks and some shops had machine gun armed soldiers. The soldiers are in a defense role and help direct tourists or answer questions.*

Mario Aviles, a co-worker at LLNL wrote:

*My brother-in-law arrived in Guatemala this past Saturday. He mentions that most of the so-called bandits are there to keep the freeways open from guerrillas. Most people are afraid when they stopped by civilians not in uniforms. It is one thing to listen to news reports but very different then listening from people that are there. Go. You have the greatest of protectors on your side.*

### Flight to Guatemala (Monday 2/19)

Once on my way, Anne enthusiastically followed me by her newfound use of e-mail, before wireless laptops and cell-phone text messages existed.

*"Flight delayed 3 hours in Houston (engine gauge failure). I arrived safely here [Guatemala City] past midnight." - Harry*

*"I am praying that your trip be refreshing to you, body and spirit. A plane did a belly landing [in Houston] (from NYC) the same afternoon you were there. Maybe they fixed it and sent it to your gate?!" -Anne*

Due to the long delay, we landed after the airport in Guatemala City closed. The passenger terminal building was dark. A skeleton crew rolled out the mobile staircase and promptly escorted our luggage through the custom agent on our behalf.



## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

Oran and Carol West were our guides from Wycliffe/SIL. Since there was a single woman and myself among the tour, Oran became my roommate and Carol became her roommate. That gracious act kept costs low and gave me insider stories from Oran.

### **Guatemala City (Tuesday 2/20)**

After awakening at the El Dorado Hotel, we breakfasted with area director Roy and Rita Peterson. We toured the National Palace, the Cathedral and a giant relief map of the country in a park. Vendors at the park sold Fanta Orange drinks dispensed into plastic bags with a straw. We walked through the Central Market held within what appeared to be a multi-level parking garage with its open-air meat booths.

*“Anthony was a big help. It sure was humbling to ask your junior high kid to get you out of a computer mess. Be sure to come home.” - Anne*

*“As warned, armed guards protected banks, stores, and automated tellers. I heard a wonderful testimony from a Tzutuhil Mayan going for his Ph.D.” - Harry*

After lunch, we toured the Wycliffe Translation Center, known locally as SIL (Summer Institute of Linguistics). Young Pedro Samuc Pablo explained his translating the Psalms into Tzutujil (Zoo-Too-Hill). In his life story, he explained the devastating civil war left many widows and orphans. His Christian Mayan teenage youth group donated and distributed rice and beans to local widows. Oran reported later in June, *“Pedro Samuc now helps many pastors improve their preaching in various languages.”*

Patricia Powell, Guatemala City wrote to Anne:

*I am learning e-mail myself. As I typed the last line, my straying finger hit some key and it printed. A handy trick if I only knew what I did. Harry will have access to e-mail at the SIL center today. The Lord [will] deepen his knowledge of this mission field and his faith in Him through this experience.*

In the process of going down a hallway to their computer area, I walked straight through a plate glass door. While I was unhurt, the non-tempered glass shards exploded in all directions. Freshly cleaned, the hallway lighting provided no reflection to warn me. I quickly paid \$40 for its repair. When I returned on Monday, the repaired door sported a new sign stating, *“Welcome to the Central American Branch Computer Services Department. Please be sure to open the door before walking through it. Thank you.”*

### **Antigua (Wednesday 2/21)**

A mini-bus drove us to Antigua (founded in 1543) to the Antigua Hotel. In the morning, we toured the Cathedral ruins from a 1600's earthquake. Patricia Powell talked over lunch in the former Convent with vaulted brick ceilings. Her Mayan co-worker Roduel Perez talked about Bible distribution among the Cakchiquel dialect (Cawk-Chic-Kell).

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

Patricia assured Anne by passing along my scribbled messages:

*I returned from a lovely luncheon engagement where I met your tall bearded husband with 11 others. He was most friendly and generous, giving us a VHS video tape [of Livermore] to show around. Until there is direct communication, he did scrawl the following in the hopes that I would be a faithful scribe:*

*// Harry made it to the Antigua and met several wonderful Christians. Healthy and well cared for. Video taken of several colonial ruins. Visited Jade Factory where he met a young salesman who shared his faith about a local youth movement for Jesus after he saw Harry's Cursillo cross. //*

### **Iximchi (Wednesday afternoon 2/21)**

In route to Chichicastenango, ('te-nan-go' is Mayan for 'the place of'); we met Mildred and Manolo Padilla in their home in the town of Iximchi. This couple became believers in Jesus during a successful music career. They visited the United States often for concerts. I purchased three cassette tapes of their songs (in English and Spanish) for \$20.

The hair-raising two-lane highway to Chichicastenango in the mountains forced the bus to make hairpin turns taking up both lanes. Once in town, the narrow streets forced a building-edge-to-building-edge turn for one particularly tight 90-degree elbow corner. (Chichicastenango is at 14.944 Long 91.110 at Elevation 6821feet)

The Santo Tomas Hotel interior three-story atrium hosted a marimba band on a second floor causeway. The string bass that accompanied it had only three pegs for catgut strings. That specific bass design only handled three strings.

The hotel computers only connected to the Internet at noon and 5:30pm. Aside from extreme nighttime caution, I felt safe. I was grateful for the field translators passing along e-mail, some hand-carried to remote towns.

### **Chichicastenango (Thursday morning 2/22)**

They turn off electricity to remote cities at times and so we ate lunch in the darkened dining room of a dear Christian saint, an elderly Mayan woman. Estebana had the gift of encouragement to other women in many towns in the past and in Chichicastenango at present. Her home was an apartment-type adobe, humble but nicely plastered and well painted. Her son Eliseo attended college courses. They spoke Quiche (Key-Shay). My Socorro off-campus student housing had a similar structure (corrugated tin roofs, cinder block, adobe, plaster). Her kitchen had an open-pit fire beneath a large flat iron panel. She opens the windows and doors during cooking. Oran delivered an electric bread-making machine to assist her distribution of fresh bread to Mayan widows.

My Spanish improved daily and my comprehension got better. I still felt like a novice. Nearly all, in half-surprise that a tourist even took the time, returned my smile and a warm greeting. Some German tourists were outright rude in the outdoor Mayan market, making my feeble attempts gratefully received. Mayans are quite short. I towered over some by twice it seemed and was painfully aware of being the tallest person in town.

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

Eliseo became my market guide and directed me to a placemat set with matching napkins for \$6 from a reputable weaver friend. I wandered into a shirt store ignored by the tourists (due to the outdoor market) and purchased an embroidered peasant shirt for \$6. The woman shopkeeper was glad for at least one customer on market day.

I purchased a rough hand-woven 5.5x7 foot wool bedspread, “king size” to them, but the largest from any vendor. Tiny bits of random chaff remained in the weave. It could serve as a wall hanging in a fancy Santa Fe home. The vendor offered a price. I countered a little less at \$43 (250 Quetzals) which he readily accepted. I did not carry that much money and had to walk to the bus for cash. The vendor rapidly rolled up the weaving, left his booth to a friend, and chased after me nearly out of town. He was not going to let the sale escape. Being alone, I felt nervous at this, but the transaction safely took place inside the bus.



I discovered in 2022 that this heavy “bedspread” (used as my bed topper in winter) is actually a rug. Melecio (from Momostenango, Totonicapan) designed this uncommon but distinctive geometric pattern using a foot-controlled loom. I observed the grueling handwork of a weaver using such a Mayan foot loom later that afternoon in Solola.

Whenever I traveled from Livermore, I purchased a ceramic miniature for Anne’s cat figurine collection. I found a set three delightfully posed ceramic cats fired with floral motifs signed “Guate” (for Guatemala?) at the San Tomas Hotel gift shop for \$2 each. I did not find any other small cat figurines elsewhere on this trip.

### **Solola (Thursday afternoon 2/22)**

In Solola, Rick MacArthur showed off the Mayan-operated “Vine” studio for video/audio in the major Mayan dialects. Hosanna tape ministry in Albuquerque provided the modern hardware. Rick advised them how to do dramatized audio New Testaments. The studio just had its power restored, which enabled me to film their computer multi-track editing.

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

We visited a weaver nearby in an adobe home. It had no plaster in some rooms, some paint, with dirt floors in some rooms, and full of love. He was the key translation helper in his dialect and dubbed the ‘Jesus’ film project into his language at the studio. He was the voice-over for Jesus. I filmed his dirt-floor weaving room while he demonstrated his wooden foot-loom. This godly man reminded me of the apostle Paul, a tent-maker.



**Figure 38 – Wooden Foot-Loom (Sutter's Fort, Sacramento, 2023)**

### **Lake Atitlan (Friday 2/23)**

After an overnight at Atitlan Hotel overlooking Lake Atitlan (Ah-Teet-Lan), we motored by passenger boat across the large lake in the morning to visit a village. We met a family of four, favorably housed. Their two daughters greeted us in their elaborately sewn “Sunday Best” dresses. Their two-room cinder block home had a concrete floor, a sewing machine, a radio, and a flat of Coca-Cola in glass bottles. Aside from their rustic bed in one corner and a wood dining table painted cyan blue with bench seats, what more would a family need? A widow we visited only had a spinning wheel and a dirt floor. The husband, Pedro Rochee had four live weekly faith programs in the regional Mayan dialect. To reach the broadcast studio, he took the early-morning motor launch to Solano, caught a bus up into the mountains for unknown hours, recorded his four talks, and reversed his commute, arriving back home in the evening. Many surrounding villages tuned their radios to hear his popular programs in their mother tongue.

We returned by charter bus to Guatemala City and stayed again at the El Dorado Hotel

**Tikal (Saturday Day Trip 2/24)**

The side trip to Tikal felt like an Outward Bound experience (fly out, trek for three hours, fly back). Exhausted and thrilled, this lifetime experience felt well worth the extra \$120. I climbed Temple IV to the highest available level. Fear gripped me while climbing the top-most vertical hand-over-hand pipe ladder with my large video camera slung behind me around my neck. The 1977 ‘Star Wars’ crew installed this sturdy ladder to film its closing scene. The accent was not for the faint of heart but gave a spectacular view.



**Figure 39 - Tikal Plaza- Left (top) and Right (bottom) Panorama - 2/1996**

Patricia agreed:

*I climbed that ladder on Temple IV and then nearly stumbled in another part of the top so my [accompanying] friend had a touch of fear on my part.*



## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

We flew to Tikal by jet, but flew back in an aged Russian turboprop. Aeroflot designed it with delightfully huge viewing windows but the cabin seats seemed taken from a 1950's school bus. The propeller noise deafened me. The courteous stewardess offered lemonade from a pitcher into paper cups. When we disembarked from the rollaway ladder, one of the tour members pointed to the threadbare tires with cords showing.

Oran held a debriefing dinner among the team at a steakhouse. We shared our take-away observations. Many noted the humbling feeling that the Christian Mayans seemed genuinely honored to have rich American believers visit their impoverished homes. They gave the best of their little to welcome us. The open fellowship among believers crossed ethnic, language, and wealth boundaries. This friendship would not have occurred if we were self-important Americans touring secular Mayan homes (if they even let us in).

### Guatemala City (Sunday 2/25)

We attended a charismatic worship at Fraternidad Cristiana in the city. This mega-church had multiple well-attended services and televised. The president of the country was a believer and attended this specific congregation pastored by Dr. Jorge Lopez.

A leaflet (in Spanish) for visitors explained about the congregation.

[It answered several questions with supporting Bible verses:]

*“Why do we raise the hands?”*

*“Why do we praise God in a high [loud] voice?”*

*“Why do we sing in Spanish and in the spirit (in languages undiscerned)?”*

*“Why [do we use] musical instruments as part of the service of adoration?”*

[The leaflet gave the mission statement of:] *“A Christian church for the family. Proclaim the LOVE of God. Manifest the POWER of Christ resuscitated [resurrected]. Persevere in the COMMANDS given in the Bible.”*

[The translation from Spanish is my own.]

Water sold at 80 cents per half-liter. The tourist hotels and restaurants had filtration systems for table water, but even they had signs saying *'Don't drink water from the Tap'*.

Not wanting a heavy, formal lunch in a tourist-focused restaurant, I wandered alone to a familiar McDonalds down the street. I asked for cold milk with my hamburger.

*“y leche fria, por favor”*, I requested.

*“Leche fria ??”*, responded the stunned and puzzled clerk.

At this crazy request, the clerk filled a plastic cup with ice and poured in milk intended for coffee from a metal pitcher. They did not have sealed cartons of refrigerated milk.

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

I sat near a local mother and teen daughter. We engaged in conversation, my trying out my Spanish and them trying out their English. They clearly had the upper hand as they planned to visit Miami Florida in the near future. Even though the civil war had not formally ended, they worried far more about the crime stories in Miami.

After we visited the Institute of Anthropology and History for one Quetzal (16 cents), I finished this amazing mission-awareness tour.



Figure 40 – Translator Patricia Powell - Museum Pass (2/1996)

### SIL Compound (Monday 2/26)

I made myself useful around the computer center repairing old laptops, rebuilding crashed data, and relinking their Apple local network. I felt badly enough about the shattered glass door and wanted to provide them with some benefit of my skill set.

I took nine hours of video of Mayan co-translators at various sites in three dialects. I had no low-cost computer video tools back then. After long days back home editing these analog VHS tapes down to four hours by hand, I presented a missions class at Calvary Temple in August and sent a round-robin copy through the mail to our tour members.

**Flight Home (Tuesday 2/27)**

The SIL center hosted me overnight in a guest room for \$11. The "taxi" (a dilapidated small sedan with missing side windows) arrived at 5:45am. I later assembled the ephemeral from this trip into my Guatemala/Moscow scrapbook.

Carol West wrote on 4/4/1996 (edited)

*What a delightful person you are and how Oran and I enjoyed having you on the Guatemala tour. We are so glad that God directed you to us instead of the [NMT alumni] tour. You have a gentle, kind, enthusiastic spirit that is wonderful and tends to draw others to you. Oran enjoyed having you for a roommate and appreciated your thoughtful help with many details.*

*We were blessed with that final night to hear your amazing testimony of God seeking you out. His great plan for you, Harry, will unfold as the years go by.*

*Each of us will no doubt be affected by [the trip] and we pray that the Lord will not let us shelve that information, but continue to allow Him to use us in unique ways. People's hearts are always touched with the many physical needs [among the Mayan Christians], but the greater need is for spiritual food for those dear ones. We like to guide people to see that the Word gives hope and Wycliffe is doing this same thing all over the world. It is an exciting Christian life.*



CELEBRATORS BY THE THOUSANDS pack Guatemala City's main plaza Sunday to celebrate the end of civil war.

**Guatemala ends civil war**  
Rebels, government sign accord ending 36 years of conflict

**Figure 41 - Civil War Ends (Valley Times, AP 12/30/1996)**

Almost a year later, 6/23/1997, I visited Mission City UMC in Santa Clara to help prepare their youth team for Guatemala by using a few segments from my edited video.





General Jose Maria Orellana, President 1921-1926



General Justo Rufino Barrios, President 1873-1885



General Miguel Garcia Granados, President 1871-1873

Figure 42 - Quetzals (Guatemala 1996)

### **Trinity Southern Baptist Church (1999)**

We visited Trinity Baptist during times of conflict at Asbury UMC, especially in the summer of 1983, but nothing long-term. Anne attended a Self-Image class there in 1991.

#### **Letter to Pastor James Meek**

I attended a study of the Book of Acts by Dr. Jim Meek in 1999. At breakfast, he enjoyed commiserating about his Hebrew and Greek coursework in Seminary. Jim seemed not to hear that I attended Fuller Seminary or had Greek coursework. I puzzled over what he thought when I previously proposed a Greek class if I had not studied it.

Pastor Meek urged us in early 1999 to join. I delayed for some scary issues to reach some closure with my adopted son, likely the end of July. Anne and I joined in June. I wrote the following letter as my resume' for joining Trinity, ending my sabbatical, and returning to a Bible teaching role. Jim never acknowledged the content nor receipt.



**Figure 43 - Trinity Baptist Church - Livermore, CA - 2006**

#### **Should I Join Trinity?**

Trinity became a parental oasis to Anne and me. I gladly lent my shoulder to the wheel. I had some theological exploration over God's call on my life from my youth. However, should I formally 'land' with Trinity as my new home congregation?

It astonished me that anyone came aboard at Trinity without explanatory materials and no questions asked. However, it took many contacts before a person willingly joined. I encouraged this same open-entry policy with the Bible Study Groups at LLNL.

In a formal church, I still expected a newcomer's class (local history, polity, distinctive theology, local church contacts, diaconal implementation, service opportunities, et al). Our former liturgical community membership required a class that explained church polity and basic doctrines. I assembled and led such orientation classes at Asbury.

### Condensed Faith Journey

I explained in a letter to Jim about the crux of the matter between the UMC and myself. I described that I established, planned, wrote, and recruited teachers for the Adult Bible Classes, a five-year cycle through the Bible with two six-week classes per quarter.

I bullet-pointed my faith journey in that springtime letter. Whenever I recalled an aspect or two from this list over the years, he never commented on it.

Accepted Jesus as savior and friend at age nine through the Hour of Decision radiocasts. God places his call deep in my heart. No church. No biblical knowledge. Parents strongly against organized religion.

Baptized into water at age 16 after months being uncertain of my salvation after reading entire Torah on my own. All doubts fully resolved. The concept that Jesus as sovereign Lord was new. No church. Bible extremely unclear.

Baptized into God's gracious Holy Spirit a month later. My cousin's pastor read scriptures to me about the Holy Spirit. A few standard verses set the framework. After a 30-second prayer, I immediately begin speaking in an unknown tongue. The pastor and my cousin, taken aback, said, *'We haven't told you about that yet'*. Bible instantly clear and absorbing. Several letters with Rita Bennett, wife of Episcopalian Rector Dennis Bennett, about this within the Christian community.

Forbidden to attend church. Leader of prayer group at High School in 1970 and run afoul of principal's office twice for praying on campus lawn and handing out 'Jesus Papers'. Group resorted to pray behind school buildings.

Off to small college town of Socorro. Exercised newfound freedom by attending church selected by random. On my third week, the congregation (Christian Church) had me preach every other week for one year at age 17.

Helped start Christian coffeehouse in basement of the administration building. Conflicted with and threats by Administration. Called before Board of Regents. Received funding for fire codes and Regent approval for activity. Coffeehouse chartered and ran for 10 years before finally shut down by Administration.

Left pulpit ministry to join revival among campus students forming at UMC. Joint campus effort by students pulled together skeptical pastors from Baptist, Church of Christ, Catholic, AOG, and United Methodist churches. Unable to get on campus themselves, they rallied behind us as student leaders.

Mentored three weeks for county Jail visitation, then volunteer visitor weekly cell-by-cell for one year. Ministerial Alliance of town's pastors sponsored me. Presbyterian Church provided as many Bibles as I could hand out.

Co-led a Bible Bowl for Junior High students at Ridgecrest Christian Church in Albuquerque. Had not transferred to Methodist Church yet. Close friend of senior pastor. Elders accosted me after dark in parking lot and asked if I 'spoke in tongues' (I had not mentioned it.) Despite senior pastor's protest on my behalf and my giving a scriptural account against dispensationalist teachings about the gift, and the elders excommunicated me. Moved membership to Methodist Church. My co-preacher in Socorro, son of a Church of Christ minister likewise transferred. He asked in prayer and began easily to speak in an unknown tongue at the United Methodist Wesley Foundation college group.

Students invited to produce a weekend conference at Catholic Church. Parish priest reviewed our plans and helped us practice. We had full content control. Few of us speakers were Roman Catholic. We provided intense Bible drills on numerous topics. Priest hosted a second conference the following year with us.

Helped establish a Brother's House. Church of Christ minister accepted invitation to monitor us. Campus had no fraternities. First time ever knowing a motorcycle gang member who was homosexual. He lived with us for a year becoming a disciple in the faith. He became the first Christian martyr that I personally knew. He left on a mission to witness to his former gang and was murdered. Only the Methodist church bulletin in his pocket helped us learn of his fate and to retrieve his body for his Mormon parents in Utah.

I graduated and moved to Livermore. After a false start at People's Church (now Celebration Christian Center), I did not feel 'at home' until I joined Asbury Methodist. I soon became involved in the Adult Education program, eventually to lead it, write course material, recruit and train teachers, and launched the ABC (Adult Bible Class) concept of rapid Bible study. I became a member of the weekly visitation teams for Asbury (similar to Trinity FAITH visiting teams).

Trained as a Certified Lay Speaker, I filled the pulpit and designed services. In essence, Methodist pastors called on me handle the entire service. While used infrequently given the heavy competition [in the Bay Area], the fact that I was called at all seemed mostly due to word of mouth amongst the pastors.

I next explained my few years at Calvary Temple AOG (see above). I did not want Dr. Meek to find out secondhand about my past cross-denominational service and ministry activities. He never expressed reservations to me.



## **Other Faith Events**

### **Kairos Outside**

A Cursillo mailing brought a prison version to our attention in 1994. I attended a prayer vigil outside Vacaville Prison for a Kairos event for men inside the facility. Kairos means 'season' in Greek. Cursillo is Spanish for 'little course', one full weekend.

Anne and I then attended the closing session (called Kairos Outside) for their women relatives (mothers, sisters, wives, daughters) at Holy Redeemer Catholic retreat center. This same Holy Redeemer in Oakland hosted our own Cursillo weekends in 1984 for Anne (women) and myself (men). It felt like a homecoming and graduation event.

We had no anticipation needing to be the recipients of a Kairos Outside weekend for our own family at that same Prison. In March 2000, Anthony attended Kairos inside that facility, while Anne and Karen attend the Kairos Outside weekend. Due to the wreckage of having a family member incarcerated, Anne felt she got significantly more value from Kairos Outside than she did from her original Cursillo weekend.

Kairos materials followed the same elemental Cursillo material. However, Kairos Outside had wound-baring table discussions about the issues of prison impact upon relationships. Anne soon joined a planning team hosting such weekends. She gave a formal talk at the Kairos Outside weekend in 2006.

### **Billy Graham Crusade**

In April 1997, co-worker Bob Sherwood and I attended counselor training for the Billy Graham Bay Area Crusades. He held venues at three locations in October (San Jose, San Francisco Cow Palace 10/9-10, and the Oakland Coliseum 10/25-26). His prior crusade in Oakland occurred 26 years earlier in 1971 and much earlier at San Francisco in 1958. We carpooled for a logistics rehearsal and again on 10/26 for the Oakland venue. Andrae Crouch was the guest singer that Sunday night.

### **Redwood Christian Park**

The mostly Methodist conference grounds in the Santa Cruz Mountains nearest Boulder Creek was strongly connected with Asbury College in Wilmore Kentucky, specifically in response to the 1970 Asbury Revival. It promoted conservative evangelical holiness theology. We attended the weeklong Family Camp on alternating years since 1981.

They courted us for a weekend in 1990 discussing expansion plans for the property. Anne attended a Healing Conference there in 1992. We attended a Valentine weekend for couples in 1993. Anne and I last attended Family Camp in 1991 and 1993.

Later, with most evangelical pastors purged from the UMC Conference by various means, the camp became more of an independent campground. I noticed a decline of the sweet spiritual fellowship. People went through the motions without engaging with the Bible speakers or morning devotional times. In particular, the tiny prayer chapel in the redwood grove appeared completely unused by the last time I visited the Park.

## Vacations and Trips

### Short Wedding Anniversary Trips

With lively elementary-age kids, increased responsibilities at LLNL, and a time-consuming software business, our marriage seriously suffered in the romance department.

Fortunately, friends sometimes took our children for three days on our wedding anniversary. While we observed our monthly dinner date, it only lasted an evening. Here are some of our brief anniversary travels (even if local) to rekindle our romance.



Figure 44 – Sally Forth Romance (G. Howard, North America 4/1989)

In 1990 (our 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary), we toured the Monterey historical museums and the famous Monterey Bay Aquarium. Anne and I both ordered the seafood sampler plate (my first and last) at the Old Fisherman's Grotto on the local pier. It contained blanched white slithery rubbery things that looked as if they were still moving (“*crab legs, calamari, scallops, clams, mussels, prawns, in an authentic rich Italian [white] sauce*”, said the menu). I am sure they intended our expensive dinner to be elegant, but I nearly lost my lunch trying to partially eat it. I much later discovered that none of the writhing creatures on my plate was biblically kosher and my stomach fully agreed.

I won a hotel getaway voucher at work in 1992 for a late April Saturday evening, even if only 30 minutes up the road. We visited Grace UMC there on Sunday, while the kids attended St. Martin's Catholic Community with my mother in Sunnyvale. This meant we committed to four hours of freeway round trips south to my mother to let us drive to a fancy hotel only 20 miles north from our home.

On our 19th Anniversary, we toured the expansive Golden Gate Park in San Francisco. We saw the Dead Sea Scrolls special exhibit at the De Young Museum and then had the most incredible dinner in our lives (sea bass) at the Cliff House by the Pacific Ocean.

For three of our wedding anniversaries 1995-1997 and partly due to having teenagers at home, we took days trips instead of distant vacations. These included Treasure Island, San Francisco wharves, Ardenwood Historical Farm, and San Jose Historical Village (during a Civil War reenactment on Memorial Day weekend).

### **1990 Regional Family Trips**

At work, I had a circle of friends who knew Ted Wilson with a captain's license at the Berkeley Marina. As a University of California staff member, he could borrow a single mast boat owned by the University. He took us on three late summer sails (1990, 1991, and 1993) to Angel Island inside the San Francisco Bay from Berkeley. We took our kids on the third trip. We left early in the morning, anchored in the sheltered cove used by the ferry from Sausalito. Arriving on a small sailboat, we only brought our brownbag lunches and bottled water. We hoofed it nearby where a bicycle would have been more conducive to tour the island. We left to sail back to Berkeley by dinnertime.

We made four summer field trips in 1990 with the kids. The favorites were an antique car fair at Ravenswood estate in Livermore, Sacramento (Indian Museum, Railroad Museum, Sutter's Fort), a road trip to the Sausalito Hydraulic Bay Model on our way to Fort Ross State Historic Park (the southernmost fort of the Russian Fur Trading Company), and the wind-swept beach of Half Moon Bay (with my brother David).

### **1991 Jack Rittenhouse Died**

Anne flew to Albuquerque in February to visit her father. His cancer started to take its toll. I visited him before his steep decline during my June work trip to the Navajo Nation. Jack Rittenhouse died a month later. Anne flew again separately to help her Mom take stock of things. Being on work travel to Washington DC, I flew back to Albuquerque a few days later to help with the memorial reception of his many professional friends.

Anne wrote in her life summary (2008):

*My father, born November 1912, died in August 1991 of cancer at about age 70. He always had skin problems and nasty case of psoriasis. I [since] learned that was an autoimmune disease [which also contributed to my own health issues.]*

In June 1997, Anne flew to Albuquerque to visit her mother Charlotte and her sister Susan on her mother's 75<sup>th</sup> birthday. The following June, Charlotte visited us for a week.

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

### **1992 Vancouver Island**

We made our second trip to Canada. We used motels for two weeks in June and visited many of the same locations from our camping trip twelve years earlier in 1980. We visited our biology professor mentor Dr. David and Wealthy Shortess (retired to Port Angeles), dear friends Dan and Joann Hegland from Livermore working at the naval submarine base in Bremerton, and college friend Carol Pucci in Tacoma. There was lush greenery in Seattle. However, lacking reservoirs, the State imposed water rationing.

On our first trip out of country with Karen (12) and Anthony (10), they wore matching Livermore postal zip code T-shirts. If they got lost, I suppose someone could mail them home. Those T-shirts helped us find each other in crowds.

The 1992 circle trip north included Oregon Caves, Lane County Pioneer Museum in Eugene, Fort Vancouver, horses at the Hegland home, Vancouver Island (Ferry to Victoria, Duncan, Nanaimo, and Ferry to Vancouver), Vancouver Aquarium, and Fort Langley. Since our prior visit, Canada no longer had one-dollar bills. They used a quarter-sized dollar coin called a “Loonie” with a loon waterfowl image on the coin.

I threw a kidney stone overnight at our Nanaimo motel. With me doubled-over moaning in the front seat, Anne drove to an emergency room for a brief morning check-up (\$100 Canadian, \$140US). The kids were certain that I was dying and it seemed that way to me. We attended a Missionary Alliance church in Langley on Father’s Day Sunday.

The route south included Washington Locks, Seattle Omni-Dome Theater (about the 1980 Mount St. Helens eruption), Sea-Tac Museum of Flight, Columbia River Gorge, Lava Beds National Monument, and Lassen Volcano National Park.

At the Lake Washington Ship Canal and Chittenden Locks, we saw the large NOAA (National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration) *Discover* (R102, 1966-1996) leave her Seattle home port through the locks. We saw both locks working, the cantilever bridge raised and lowered, and the unaffected Salmon/Trout fish ladder.

The Columbia River Gorge Falls in Oregon ran full. The base of Latourell Falls gave a lateral blast drenching everything within 40 feet. At Multnomah Falls, we walked behind the falls of the upper pool. At Horsetail Falls, the kids swam in the pool at the base.

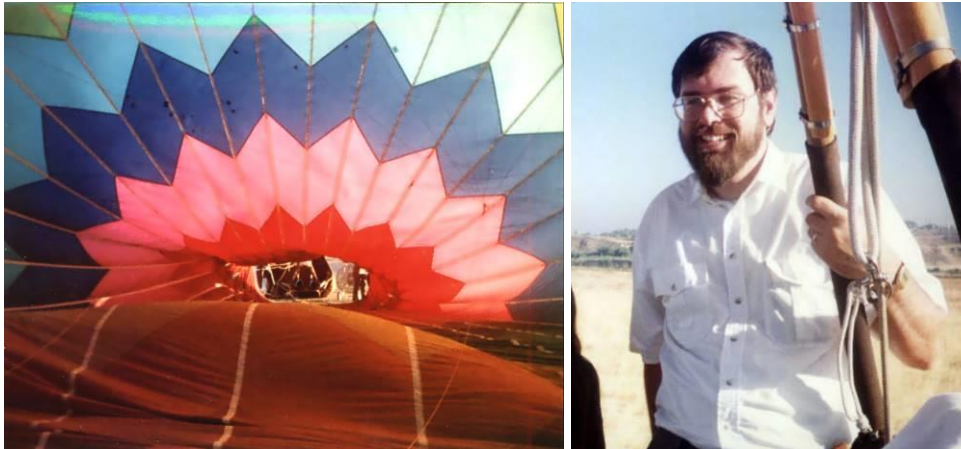
Lacking a suitable flashlight, we could not explore the volcanic caves of Lava Bed National Monument. I had not known of these when I last visited as a child. We resolved that oversight much later with the grandkids on a trip to these same caves.

Back in 1980, as footloose campers in our 1971 Duster, our 2566-mile trip of 10 days cost \$443. With motels and a rental car, our current 2603-mile trip of 14 days cost \$1913. A thick scrapbook compares memories from both similar road trips.



### 1993 Local Area Trips

There were four trips in 1993. My brother David suggested a hot-air balloon ride in Tracy. At \$85 each, David, Karen, Anthony, and I were part of a group for a lazy figure eight ride over an open area. Upon landing, the pilot uncorked a bottle of champagne to celebrate. Neither the kids nor I liked the taste. We can say, “*Been there, done that*”.



**Figure 45 - Balloon Ride, Tracy, CA – 7/1993**

I took Karen on a father-daughter field trip to Indian Grinding Rock Museum heading up into the gold country foothills as a pleasant quiet outdoor field trip.

As a guest member of the American Indian Club at LLNL, I explored the Bushy Peak private property the year before it sold to the Park District. This was a popular picnic area in the late 1800’s and the hideout for notorious bandit Joaquin Murrieta. We visited shallow caves with crumbling sandstone surfaces that had fragments of Indian paintings above the rubbed bare lower sections by sleeping cattle. We wanted to examine these pictographs before open access put that fragile archeology at risk.

At a Resumix conference in Monterey (to replace the LLNL Applicant Tracking System), I added a day to tour their local Maritime Museum.

### **1994 Grand Canyon Failure**

During summer 1994, Anne showed some balance issues walking. Her legs sometimes turned wobbly. Our early teens sought their own less-than-optimal roads to adulthood. I felt we had one last chance for an outward-bound camping trip to pull us together.

Anne and I previously backpacked the Bright Angel trail and camped at the Grand Canyon floor in 1977. The kids had fun overnight Scout campouts as children. Sadly, we never backpacked as a family and thus had no experience camping as a team. We just lived together in dysfunction with our own four separate divergent lives.

Many years later, I took Karen's pre-teens on a near-identical road-trip to Albuquerque but skipped all backpacking or camping. That road trip using motels was a success.

Thus, the road trip portions with my own early teenagers went fairly well. In mid-November, we drove I-5 south with rest stops to our first night in a Bakersfield motel.

We next stopped in Barstow to examine the Solar Two installation. A ring of mirrors focused the sun upon a molten salt boiler to generate heat for an electrical turbine. Fierce winds blowing clouds of sand marred our short visit. We drove on to Holbrook.

The first major attraction was 130 miles north to Canyon de Chelly National Park in the Navajo Nation. I visited on my 1991 work visit there and already knew the long rural roads to and through the park. We toured the North Rim overlooks, the entrance museum, and the South Rim overlooks ending with the famous Spider Rock. (Karen's children loved this identical location during that much later grandfather road trip.)

Back at the Holbrook motel the next morning, we heard that seven inches of snow fell overnight but was possibly melting. Our second attraction took us through the Painted Desert loop to the Petrified Forest museum, and back to Holbrook. We awoke to 3 inches of snow in Holbrook.

This bad news sent us to a Williams K-Mart store to buy four pairs of hiking boots for the unplanned snow. We discovered an available motel in Winslow (at a higher price given the snow) and we ended the day at the indoor swimming pool looking out at the snow illuminated by floodlights. In the morning, we watched Grand Canyon Railroad Train pull out from the Winslow station. After driving 60 miles in snow and ice, we arrived at the Park Village just in time to watch that identical train arrive.

The park required us to purchase cramp-ons for our new boots. This sent me in a panic to find a store in the Park Village that had only four pairs left in stock. Shopping delayed our descent by two crucial hours. The backpack phase came to a screeching halt at the trailhead. The majority of the trail was clear and the weather warm below. Our permits did not allow a change in schedule. None of this registered with our family who focused upon being angry at hiking after a tedious week on the road, shopping, and now watching an unstable mother take off down the trail without my physical presence to support her.

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

She promptly fell 100 feet away with howls of protest from the kids at how I pushed her beyond her ability. The rest of us had not even finished putting on our backpacks.

We re-loaded the car. I trudged to the park office to surrender our reservations and permits. Anne took the kids to the tourist shops. I decompressed at the quiet chapel, not really wanting to have a family at all. Their feeling seemed mutual about not wanting a father, at least this father. Eventually, we warily re-connected and headed back home.

The car headlights failed on that night trip to a Needles motel. I was mentally numb at yet another problem that same day. We drove by moonlight into Kingman to purchase fresh headlights, changing them out in the dark parking lot. The next day, we drove to Oildale on I-99 at 102 degrees. We had just left a half-foot of snow.

The tone of the trip relaxed while we toured the Kern County Museum and their outdoor Pioneer Village in Bakersfield. That positive experience redeemed the end of the trip and we had a calm drive home. Our camping gear went into deep storage and I never attempted another family vacation with Anne's deteriorating health.

### **1997 Washington DC Area**

After a distant work trip in 1997, I toured Germantown and Washington DC. As my first trip to this beautifully forested area, I expected to see a concrete jungle like New York City. Coming from a dry Mediterranean climate in Livermore where even our greenery is mostly a shade of tan, the overflight of Washington DC overwhelmed me with the expanse of a real forest blanketing the city in the deepest emerald and dark greens.

Many sights felt worth a second visit, including Mount Vernon (many buildings, tours, and a wonderful period-era restaurant), Chesapeake and Ohio Canal with Olmsted Island, the beautiful drive on Falls Road from Rockville to that Canal, the Air and Space Museum, the American History Museum, Fort Washington, and the Amazonia rain forest building at the National Zoo. In Germantown, I attended an Assembly of God church.

On the Washington Mall, I toured the National Aquarium, Union Station, walked past the White House, and toured Theodore Roosevelt Island. Down old Arlington way, I toured Civil War era Fort Marcy and Fort Ward.

In January 1999, I toured the Colonial Williamsburg triangle before and after the IAF Facilitator's conference including Historic Jamestown with its 1608 Glasshouse, the original Jamestown Settlement (archeological site) and the Yorktown battlefield museum.

I returned later in 2003 with Anne on our 28<sup>th</sup> Anniversary to tour both areas extensively (see the chapter *Recovery*).

### Briley Software and Computers

I ended the mail-order software business in 1996 after several milestone events pointed to where the microcomputer revolution headed without us.

In 12/1990, I scoured the enjoyable Mike Quinn’s electronics junkyard at the Oakland Airport. This store felt like a dusty old barn with bits of everything vaguely electronic jumbled together. I bought an old stand-alone inter-office messaging keyboard system. I hoped to communicate when Anne was bedbound if she needed me while I worked in the den at the opposite end of the house. The typist-oriented units worked but impractical for Anne to type out a message when she needed physical help. A simple voice-only FM wireless intercom with a single push button replaced the electronic junkyard marvel.

At the same time, I bought a used RS-232 compatible Racal-Vadic 300 Baud modem to hook up my IBM PC serial COM1 port (since my Commodore 300 Baud modem was not compatible). I replaced this modem in late 1994 by the board-based fax/modems that fit inside the PC chassis, first 14.4KBS, and then later 56KBS. When e-mail was strictly textual, these slow speeds felt blazingly fast (at 187 times faster than 300 Baud).



Figure 46 - Commodore and Racal Vadic 300-Baud modems

Microsoft released DOS-5 in 6/1991, Windows 3.1 (the first Windows version we purchased) in 4/1992, and DOS-6 in 3/1993. In the 1990’s, we stopped trying to be on the bleeding edge of technology and settled for these operating system upgrades after the initial bugs were shaken out (and long after the prices dropped significantly).

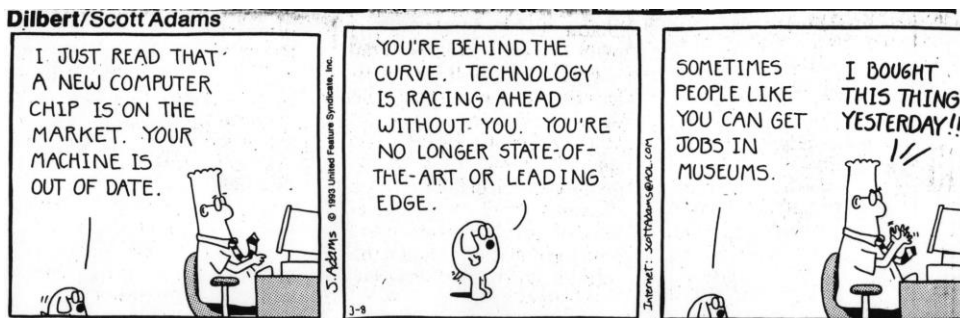


Figure 47 - Dilbert Outdated (S. Adams, United Features, 3/1993)

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

In 10/1991, I bought a used PC (an Intel 286). In summer 1992, I installed a 40MB disk drive (an improvement over its 10MB drive). In summer 1993, I upgraded it from DOS-5 to DOS-6 and installed an early CD-ROM reader.

In 1993, I upgraded our 1989 Tandy 1000TX PC (an Intel 286) to DOS-5. It had less than 1MB of memory and a speed of 12MHz. Only 12MHz! Only 1MB of memory!

By 2011, a typical PC had a speed above 3000MHz (3GHz), memory of 4,000MB (4GB, at minimum), and disk space of 500,000MB (500GB, at minimum). Our computer hardware 20 years earlier in 1991 was vastly underpowered.

By 1995, we bought a PC (Intel-486) with 48MB of memory but only 100MHz speed. I installed a 420MB Tape Cartridge Backup and an enormous (back then) 540MB disk drive in that primary PC among our collection of rapidly outdated PCs.

I leased a tiny office space downtown to keep our marriage intact. This separated the business from family time, but I spent many late-night hours in that office. I hired an office-temp typist to help me process the mail and orders in the evenings. In 9/1992, I closed the office due to low sales. I then moved the business back into the den at home, bringing the part-time worker with me. She especially helped create our bulk mail lists using our Commodore equipment for inquiries and registered purchasers.

Kopy Shoppe printed our stationary, flyers, and catalog printing. We rented a Pitney Bowes postage meter for our frequent first-class mailings and made good use of our bulk mail license for catalogs through 1993. I stored our finances on a Commodore-64 using software called TOTL since I had nothing comparable for the PC yet.

In spring 1993, I set up my Commodore-64's and printers for Karen and Anthony to aid their school homework. I taught only four lessons in BASIC to a friend's son and Anthony. Since not the video game playing they expected, both quickly lost interest.

I spent a year surfing the Internet in 1995 at speeds far better than the slow 300-Baud days with CompuServe. For \$20/month, I got unlimited worldwide access to mission-based friends. Only early adopters, former CompuServe users, and large businesses had home access to e-mail in 1995. Anne took two Internet awareness classes in 1996 and 1997. She became an avid e-mail buff to track my mission visit to Guatemala in 1996.

Each January, author Ron Gunn met with Anne and I to put together our advertising and products strategy for the calendar year. We released our highest and most robust version of LeagueBowl in summer 1993. In 11/1995, we met with Ron to agree about closing the business in 1996. We competed against new scorekeeping equipment at bowling lanes.

I ceased software sales and released the LeagueBowl copyright back to Ron. Our legal and banking business identity remained mothballed until my retirement 17 years later.

## Other Activities in this Decade

### House Improvements

I built two skylights in the garage den (two flat Plexiglas panels with an air gap between the panels). I confidently thought in 1990, “*How hard could this be?*” Despite my roof patching, the next five winters required buckets and plastic sheets under both skylights.

With early teenagers in the cramped house, we installed a metal shed in 1992. My brother David helped assemble it for my archival boxes. Two years later, I built a garden shed with corrugated roof panels. It leaked at every nail point for the next three years. I built a leak-free tilted wood roof in 1997 that sloped rain to the lawn. This created a clerestory for light and ventilation on the lifted side and made the interior fit my height.

We had more leaks the spring of 1995 with a rotted plank in the hall closet. In October, the roofer tore off two gravel roofs to replace several planks. Only thin tarpaper held the hall plank together, which crumbled to dice-sized wood cubes. He replaced my poorly built skylights with commercial units. I played cat-and-mouse with the fall rains, finishing painting before a December storm (100mph gusts with five inches rain).

We refinanced our mortgage in 1986 from 14.25% interest to a tolerable 9.75%. I applied the difference to the loan principle. Given that early payments mostly paid interest, the tactic suddenly shortened our loan term. We paid off our 12/1980 mortgage in 5/1993, meaning many others can pay off their own 30-year loan in 15 years.

Anne wrote a kind note (no date):

*I just wanted to tell you how much I appreciate your skills in handling money. You started out our marriage by having us have a budget. You began our life in Livermore by paying off your student loans. We are not in debt, not fighting about money, and financially secure. We have a nice home and great neighbors. You work hard for your money dealing with the good and the bad. I love you.*

In early 1994, due to either newly freed-up funds, pure necessity, or married obligation, we upgraded our décor from “Early American Garage Sale” to an oak and brass motif. An ugly smelly shag green carpet covered the living/dining area. We discovered a 1959 polished wood floor beneath. With the exposed oak flooring in mind, we purchased matching oak furniture (dining set, china cabinet, sofa bed, loveseat, coffee table, end tables) and three matching brass table lamps. Berber rugs accented the revived area.

Jealous of our expensive furniture upgrade, the washing machine died. We bought a new set, converting from electrical drying to the far cheaper gas drying as originally piped.

After 14 years of ineffective hand watering, I installed a sprinkler system. My neighbor, Don Salmi, used his van to bring home a rented trencher. Our malleable clay soil in spring had become hardpan adobe by July. That trencher bucked, bounced, and weaved as it barely scratched the surface. Don noticed and said that I rented a unit without a computer keyboard. With that duly earned jest, he guided me in handling the beast.



## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

We removed the 1959 metal-cabinet kitchen in 1995. Anne and I spent weeks on design. I demolished to the floorboards and ran electrical. David installed our floor replacement. A contractor installed wood cabinets and stylish tile counters. I re-deployed the upper metal cabinets to a garage wall and the counter unit to the garden shed. The kitchen remodel cost us a lot but Anne waited patiently twenty years for her modern kitchen.

Our friends Bud and Donna Jack in Colorado installed oak doors with brass compliments. After the kids moved out, I located solid paneled doors from Brazil that matched the Jack's home to replace our hollow veneer doors. David stained, varnished, and mounted the new doors in 2000. The wood grain reflected art within itself. The doors sported a cross image within the top four panels which emoted a sacred monastery air. These lovely doors gave quietness of soul, turning our once chaotic home into a hermitage.

### **Trailer Home for my Mother**

Over seven years, I purchased, repaired, painted, and barely sold a doublewide trailer for my mother without losing my shirt. Frequent rent increases in Sunnyvale and Santa Clara pushed out assembly line tech workers and office staff. In a vain attempt to help my mother, a debt-free trailer temporarily let her pay a low space rent and utilities fee.

After talks with banks and a lawyer, I signed on 7/26/1991. There was no tax advantage. My brother David replaced the carpet and faulty sewer piping. David and I moved her apartment contents two weeks later. In spring 1993, we (Anne, the kids, and I) scraped its faded avocado color, primed, and painted a sandstone base with chocolate trim.

After selling the trailer at a minimal loss in 1997, my mother was free from the park's merciless rate hikes that soon exceeded her former 1991 apartment rent. I stood to lose considerable thousands. David and I moved her again. Even though employed at 3Com, she found a Retirement Living apartment in 1998 where several friends from her church lived. She out-paced 'the youngsters' on the 3Com assembly line and loved the youthful comradery at work. Eventually, her painful shoulder bursitis forced her to retire.

### **The Old Duster**

My 1971 Plymouth Duster (first car in college) was still my daily driver. In 1990, I gave it new upholstery, a sunroof, a less-broken grill, and hood-mounted turn signals. Todd Cook, my supervisor's son did the bodywork and painting on the weekends, since I needed the car on the weekdays. In 1994, the Duster turned over 200,000 miles, yielding 100,000 miles on its second engine exactly as the handshake mechanic predicted.

In 1996, I rebuilt the engine a third time using a short block with a neighbor's engine hoist. Bill Cook helped me exchange the short block using his classic open-bed Camino. My first time to rebuild an engine was successful and my last. There was \$900 in further repairs in 1997. The old car still performs well on that third engine in 2020.

## Walk With Me – Hitting My Stride

### Local Area Theater and Concerts

Anne and I rarely attended movies as nothing captured our adult interest. We attended a few concerts and local musicals. My calendar for the entire ten years only listed:

- *My Fair Lady*
- a John Muir re-enactor
- *The Beach Boys* (a bit aging but fun)
- *The Continental Singers*
- *Annie Herring* (aging and formerly with *Second Chapter of Acts*)
- *The Liberated Wailing Wall* (the Jews for Jesus traveling troupe)
- *The Nuclear Whales* (an energetic fun saxophone quartet)

In 1997, our family saw an amateur Catholic youth production of *GodSpell*. Our teens thought they would hate it (since I recommended it) but each enjoyed it themselves.

### Comedy Club Failure

As part of Karen's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday in 1997, I treated her to a father-daughter classy restaurant date and a comedy club that evening on its premises. The comic had no intellectual content. His solely used physical comedy, often bordering on lewdness.

One of my co-workers partially owned the club and seated us in the front row. Unknown to me, this became a set-up that let the comic jump on my lap to simulate sex for laughs. I scowled at him. Since he had trouble getting me to smile, he asked me from the stage.

I responded, *"I would gladly laugh if you said anything funny."*

Briefly stunned, he said, *"You must be a teacher."*

*"I teach Sunday School."*, said I now standing to address the audience as well.

Laughing, he retorted, *"Oh, you will have quite a story for your little kiddos!"*

*"I teach adults"*, I calmly replied.

This left him speechless and he flailed away at regaining the audience with his final few antics. I stayed until the end, but left appalled, never again to attend a comedy club. My co-worker never apologized for the set-up and we barely talked to each other anyway.

### Anne gets the Last Word

During 1994, Anne served on school site councils, a curricula advisory group, for both elementary school and the district's home-school program. Anne adapted to her ever-changing environment by helping Karen through her high school classes and letting go of the close school supervision Anthony once required (but still needed at that time).



Figure 48 - Harry in 25 Words (C. Browne, King Features 7/1997)

Anne attached the above comic strip to her chosen 25 words. I only found both buried in my sock drawer thirteen years later in 2010 (some unknown days after she died).

She wrote in 1997:

*Harry loves God, me, is responsible, impish, serious, lovable, complex, committed, over-committed, educated, interesting, soft, strong, hesitant yet confident, intimate, loving, giving, lover, husband, friend.*

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