By John R. Schaffner
ASN: 33 563 021

Jim,
Since you sent me the list of stuff that folks born after 1926 had to put up with, I thought I would burden you with a list of my own. I call it"trivia" since it is not yet organized and whenever I think of something to add I open the document and slide it in. I just sent this off to my girlfriend Madeleine so I'll just forward it to you. If you want to talk about me I will deny everything.
Warmest regards,
John

John Schaffner

Dear Madeleine,
Over these many years I feel that we have become perhaps closer than just friends so I am sending you something to read that I have been accumulating for the fun of it and maybe to pass on to my kids, g-kids, & GG-kids. I think it is self explanatory but I need another eyeball to see what has come from my memory of the "good old days" and comment. I doubt that I will ever be able to turn it into a bio but maybe just entertainment and a look at the past. There are lots of topics to cover yet.
Love & hugs,
John

COVER PAGE

My Dad once told me, "When you are not talking, you are learning."
I never forgot that and as time went by I find that I have become a much better listener than a talker. So, as a result, I am what one might call, "a non-aggressive conversationalist." When others have a need to do the talking, I just let them. And, by the time they finish, and usually hit on a new topic, I have forgotten what I wanted to say in the first place.

Now I have taken to writing things that I might have talked about during conversations long past. It's really strange how the mind and memory work. It must be like a computer in there. Let's see what the output looks like, shall we?

ELECTRONIC COPY IN DOCUMENTS FILE AS - "trivia"
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CONTENT---
tentative Page

27. Trip West 1988
28. First Cruise and 1975, 1995, 1998
29. Insert TV Shows-
WW II From Space
30. Insert Armydaze - www.indianamilitary.org
31. Insert European tours 1992, '94, '98, 2002, '04, '08, '12 www.indianamilitary.org 32. Talks-Interviews–
Library of Congress -AM LEGION
Eisenhower Farm-Annual WW II Re-enactions Encampment 2017 & 2019
Towson Times
Martin King
Michael Collins
Floret Plana
Patrick Dax
Jelle Thyes
Travis Aldous
Carroll County Media Center - Dick Slechter (Westminster TV)
Kim Monson (Americhicks, Colorado radio & Facebook)
Ross Simpson (Frederick, MD radio WDVM 25, Facebook, Blog, CD)
Christopher Russell
Gregory Fontenot

Title----------IT'S NO SECRET Updated Sep 27, 2019
Date born 11 August 1924
1. Early life

I started out life at a very young age at St. Joe's Hospital on Caroline Street in Baltimore. My memory had not yet started to record things but I've been told that my parents lived on Oliver Street at the time. At age 3 we moved to 714 McCabe Avenue in the Govans area of Baltimore city. That was my home until I married and during that pre-war, growing-up, period there were many kids in the same age group to foster friendships with that lasted until recent years when they began to die off one by one. Now at age 95 it is time I record some things that just might entertain my heirs. There are things that were commonplace when I was growing up that are only found in museums today. These are a few. The anecdotes are not in strict chronological order and for that I must apologize, but go at it anyway. Lots of other stuff here too that happens to folks if they live long enough.

I never heard how much formal education my Dad and Mom had but when I was a child that sort of thing didn't matter to me. Dad was a consummate reader of everything from the classical writings to the daily newspaper. He could be engaged on just about any subject. I suppose some of that rubbed off on me as I took up reading at an early age. My mother told me that in the warm weather some of the kids on the block would come to the front porch and I would read out loud to them. I still have some of those books on my shelf. They are action stories about WW I and the explorers and famous aviators of the 30's and written at a child's level.. Charles Lindbergh became my idol and I still hold him in the highest regard. I believe that also gave me an interest in building airplane models as a child and I am still engaged in doing that. Also, I always had the ambition to learn to fly and I accomplished that as soon as I could after the Army experience.

Our neighborhood had a lot of couples living there who had children of my age and we developed an early friendship. We were welcome in each others house, played together every day, had meals, went to school and church together, and yes, sometimes punished together. I was not 100% pure as a kid, but I would like for people to think I was. Age has

made me selectively forget certain things, like when I almost burned the house down..

2. Ice Boxes -

There was a show on TV lately that was about the refrigeration business. It covered the practice of cutting and sawing the ice off fresh water lakes in the winter, storing it in the ground and barns insulated by hay bales, and using it during the warm months to preserve food. All this reminded me of growing up not too long after that era. By then ice was being produced commercially, but it was before everyone had an electric refrigerator. Most of the families had an "ice box." Every day the "ice man" would service the neighborhood to deliver the blocks of ice to his customers. Mom would place a large card in the window that was printed with 5, 10, 15, and 20. What ever number was in the "up" position was the size block she wanted. The ice man would cut a corresponding piece and bring it into the house and drop it in the top of the ice box. He carried the block of ice with tongs and usually had a burlap bag folded on his shoulder to catch any drippings. Melted ice in the icebox would drain into a basin and would have to emptied. Our ice box was in a pantry that had a crawl space beneath it so Dad fixed a drain pipe through the floor to the outside. It was a daily routine. Mr. McCray, a neighbor, had an open pick-up truck and worked as the ice man in our neighborhood. He had a daily route serving ice to people with ice-boxes. He had an ice-axe to cut the appropriate size from a large block to deliver. I have one of those axes yet in my garage. I also own an ice-tongs which makes me qualified to deliver ice, if you can find an ice-box somewhere. McCray lived on Alhambra Avenue, just around the corner. When we kids expected him to come home we waited at the alley and when he turned in we jumped on the back of the truck and salvaged the chips of ice left over while riding down to where he parked in his back yard. Mr. McCray tolerated it and it was great fun for us kids.

3. Our House,

It was a typical row-house, now called "town-house." It was heated by a "hot-air" coal fired furnace that was in the basement. It was two-story with the bath and three small bedrooms on the second floor. There was also a covered deck on the rear, accessed from a bedroom. The basement had the coal bin, furnace, hot water heater (no tank), and a shower and toilet. Dad burned coal and anything else that he could get in the furnace that would burn. There was a grill in the floor directly above the furnace that delivered warm air into the house. He ordered coal by the ton and it came in a big dump truck. There was a cellar window facing the street and the coal was sent into the coal bin via a chute from the truck to and through the basement window. It was a dirty operation. The coal company was McComas and I believe they are still in business, though I doubt there are many houses heated by coal these days. In later years Dad had hot-water radiators installed, still heated by the same type of furnace. Hot water for baths, washing, etc, was heated by a gas fired heater in the cellar that had to be turned on and off and lit manually.

There was a small yard in front and another slightly larger yard in the back that had to be mowed. That became my job. We had a reel-type push mower and after doing the front I had to push the mower around the end of the block and down the alley to the back yard. I was not big enough yet to pick up the mower and carry it through the house. This experience did come in handy when I spent weeks at a time at the grandparents home in Shady Side. My cousin, Vernon (Whitey) Wilde, and I could make a quarter by mowing Aunt Florence's yard.

Dad planted Barberry bushes around the edge of the front yard. I think that he thought it would discourage any animals (or kids) from playing in there. (It did. Those bushes have stickers.) He was also a rose fancier and the back yard was beautiful in the summer with

the variety of rose bushes and other flowers.

The first telephone we had was the "pedestal" type with a speaker (mike) on the top and the receiver hanging on the side. When we were issued our number it was on a "party-line." I was too young to be using the phone so I don't recall just how the "parties" cooperated with the use of the phone. However, it wasn't too long until we were issued our own number. I suppose it depended on the phone company installing poles, wires, switchboards, and progress with the latest technology, etc. Our phone number eventually was in the "Tuxedo" exchange.

This house, 714 McCabe Avenue, is now gone. The neighborhood reverted to slums in the 1950-60's and this house and the one next door (712) burned out and both were razed. I found this out by scanning the neighborhood using the Google satellite map in the computer. A friend who had been a police officer in Baltimore City warned me that it would not be safe for me to drive through there any more. It seems that you can't do away with slums, you can only re-locate them. Sad.

4. Dad and Mom's job(s) -

Dad worked at the Eureka Maryland Life Assurance Company and sold life insurance. He supervised a staff of men who collected insurance premiums "door-to-door." In those days of The Depression people bought just enough insurance to, maybe, cover the cost of a funeral. The benefits were usually in the amount of a few hundred dollars and the premiums collected on a weekly or monthly basis were small change, nickels and dimes, always less than a dollar. The premiums had to be paid forever and there was no accumulated cash benefit, only at death. The men wore a canvas bag on their belt to hold their collections and carried a "Debit Book" to record the payments. It was a job.

Mom had been making clothes since she was a young girl. Being the oldest of seven she learned to sew at a young age. She had moved to Baltimore and had acquired a small clientele of older ladies who were apparently hard to fit "off-the-rack." Custom making their clothes provided her with a small income. If the weather was decent I would act as courier between McCabe Avenue and the 2900 block of St. Paul Street where her clients lived. They would come to our house for "fittings." I delivered the finished goods to the ladies via my bike and they usually had something for me to take back home. Mom worked with needle and thread until her late nineties when she developed macular degeneration. It was hard on her to have to give it up. We still have much of her needle art that we treasure. Dad was a rose fancier and had probably 50-60 rose bushes in the backyard, plus other strange or exotic flowers. After buying the Miller Road property we transplanted the rose bushes here so he didn't have to abandon them. He kept them going until shortly before his death from a stroke. The gardens were a showpiece.

Ida Bernice (Rogers) Schaffner
Born 21 Dec 1889 at Shady Side, MD. To Robert Lee Rogers and Elizabeth (Atwell) Rogers, first of seven (7) children.

Developed talents as a dressmaker in late teen years and would commute to Baltimore via steamer, "Emma Giles," and on occasion with her father aboard the Bugeye, "Nettie Allinson,"

She would stay with an aunt (Lucy McCubbin) while in Baltimore to make dresses and other feminine clothing for various customers around the city. Her skills with needle and

thread became well known and her time was in demand.

While in Baltimore she met Peter Frank Schaffner who she would eventually marry. The wedding took place on the front porch of her home in Shady Side with family and friends in attendance.

The couple moved to Baltimore and for most of their married life lived in the Govans area at 714 McCabe Avenue where she continued to engage in the dressmaking profession for a few selected people on a very informal basis.

She was active in the Govans ME Methodist Church for many years and stayed acquainted with a few of the older members there in later years. Since 1969 she lived with Lil and me in the Cockeysville area at 1811 Miller Road.

Her 100th birthday party was held at Gray Rock Mansion on 17 Dec 1989 with many family and friends present. She even stood up and spoke to the crowd. I wish it had been recorded. In her later years she suffered from macular degeneration and that ended her needle work.

When I was a child my mother would make an occasional trip to Shady Side via street-car to the downtown W, B, & A Railroad Station to Annapolis, where someone would meet us with a car for the ride to her home on Parrish Creek.

5. School -

During those years I attended Guilford Elementary School #214. I don't have many memories about that time except for a few. An older boy, Frank Capone, who lived across the street and went to the same school would accompany me to school and back home when I was attending the early grades. It was a walk of 11 city blocks. One day he didn't show up and I had to do it on my own. I was not at all comfortable with that but did remember where to make my turns. I think after that experience I had enough self confidence to go solo. Then there was the usual bully who thought it was fun to make other kids cry. One day he picked on me and I punched him in the nose and made it bleed. That drew a crowd. I was summoned to the office and had to explain to the principal, Miss McGinty, what happened. She must have let me off since I don't remember any punishment. And, the bully never bothered anybody after that. After Guilford Elementary I spent one year (7th) at Govens Elementary, one year (8th) at Clifton Jr. High and then to Baltimore City College for high school. I usually used the streetcar to travel to City, but if the weather was OK I would walk home, saving the carfare, and often rode my bike to and from City. There was a large bike rack at City that was not guarded, but I don't recall any bikes being stolen. I wonder about today? There was pride in the high schools and lots of scholastic competition. The City/Poly annual football game was a classic and still holds the record for the oldest event of its kind in the country. It was always played on Thanksgiving Day in the Baltimore Stadium, but since then the schoolastic enthusiasm in the city has diminished and it is just another game. Too bad. During my tenure at City I played bugle in the Drum & Bugle Corps. Great fun. The best was when we teamed up with the Marching Band and played together. I was not a good bugle player, but I was loud. I marched in the rearmost rank. Mrs. Blanch Bowlsby was the music teacher and directed the school band and the Drum & Bugle Corps. Both groups played together in the auditorium with lots of brass and drums on occasion. Now THAT was LOUD.

High school developed a certain comradery among our home room students that prepared us for what was to come. We learned to not be loners. We needed the support and

cooperation of each other. Of course we had our classes and had to do what was required to progress. In those days a student had to earn his grades to pass. The school would hold you back to repeat a grade if necessary. No free lunch either. This was especially tough on me since, even though I was too proud to tell anyone, my eyesight prevented me from seeing things in class I should have. The U.S. Army gave me G.I. glasses that I wore for self preservation. I could have done better. Too soon old, too late smart. Another thing I had to overcome was the fear of standing in front of a group and talking. Beginning in 1995 the experience of my role in the CAP during a 20 year tenure certainly helped with that. I joined as a "senior member" and progressed through the ranks with increased responsibility until I retired out as a Squadron Commander with the rank of Major. The duties were voluntary and demanding but the experience was rewarding.

6. *Adolescence & kids in the neighborhood: -
John Burns, Ken Precht, Francis Small, Milt Davidson, Charlie Koontz, Bud Brown, Paul Watson, Sonny Groom, Harry Schipiro, Al Cramer, Walt Shields, Walt McCardel, Ralph Robinson, Cameron, Jim & Bob Snyder, Fred & John Meyer, Curtiss Chittenden, Louis Manley, Jack Norris, Lloyd Madden, George Stein, Sonny Gibbons, Luther Karst, Duncan & Conway Miller, Warren Ford, Bert Houston, Bill & Elsworth Mercer, Bill & Bob Harrington, and Lou Zirckel who delivered the Baltimore News-Post paper, and probably a few others..

There was not much auto traffic in the neighborhood those days. Not everyone could afford a car and the Number 8 street car line ran downtown only a few blocks away. So we kids often played in the street on McCabe Avenue. One thing I have never forgotten happened when I was probably about 5 years old. I was running across the street and I fell face down just as a car was approaching. I remember hearing the tires screech and I looked up and that driver stopped just short of running over me. He got out of his car , picked me up and said, “Where do you live?” We were almost in front of the house so he took me home and turned me over to my mother. That’s about all that I can remember of that event, but it is enough that I never forgot it.

Roy Tall lived over Mr. Schipiro’s grocery store at the corner of McCabe and Alhambra and drove the store’s delivery truck. He invited me to go along one day and I thought he would kill the both of us. It goes without saying that I never did that again. He drove wide-open with no regard to stop signs or passing streetcars on the left. It was suicide then, impossible today.

You may have noticed that I didn’t list any girls. At the time I thought of them as just soft boys, and not to be noticed. Growing up in this neighborhood was a good time. All of the kids seemed to get along well and I don’t remember any “gangs” or street fights.

We were in the house early enough to listen to our favorite shows; Jack Armstrong, the All American boy, Little Orphan Annie, Tom Mix, Gang Busters, ad infinitum.
It was very unusual to see kids roaming the streets at night. We had parents to reckon with who were concerned about our safety and future. Stashed away in a closet are a few items from the growing up days that my mother lovingly saved. There is a bag of marbles, a box of dominoes, a device a child can use to learn to spell and write sentences by sliding letters and numbers around in a track. There is an Electric (batteries) Questionaire that provides questions and answers about all things scientific. Several “Tootsie Toys” and tiny balsa models that I made from scratch were in an old cigar box and I have them in my display cases.

Our neighborhood was on the East side of York Road and the West side was Homeland.

Still is, I would guess. When Homeland was developed a group of small ponds were included in the landscaping. It was a very nice touch and as kids we thought that they were huge. So, we made sailboats and would take them to the ponds to "sail" them. If one made it to the other side it was always a big deal. Of course there were the usual snails about as big as a golf ball, a snake now and then, and a few other disgusting, crawly, creatures that we took home. And, if Mom was alert it would be in the front door and immediately out the back with an admonition to , "GET RID OF IT!!!" I have driven past those ponds in recent years and they seem to have become much smaller than I remember.

I got into making airplane models at a young age. One could buy a kit for 10 cents back then. It usually came with balsa wood material and a paper plan to outline the wings, tail, and fuselage and no more. After all, I did say 10 cents. One needed a very sharp knife, a razor blade that had a stiff backing, and sand paper. The kits were made by the Megow Company and they went on to market flying models that were rubber band powered (29 cents) and even later "gas" models that were "free flown" or if one had the money and expertise, radio controlled. I didn't get into the RC until my own son was ready for that. He has become an expert in the field and has made me proud. One could always identify a model builder back then by the way his fingers were "sliced" and/or had glue stuck on them. Now one can buy an airplane model ready to fly out-of-the-box. There's no real satisfaction in that.

Lots of the kids had roller skates and they must have been fun but my mother never would let me have them. The best I could do was run on a skate box. When an odd skate turned up we would separate it front to back, get a 2 by 4 about 30 inches long, nail ½ of the skate to the front and ½ to the back of the 2 by 4. Next we could usually scrounge an orange crate from the local grocer (that's the way oranges were shipped then) and nail it to one end of the 2 by 4. Then by nailing a stick across the top of the box for handles we were ready to scoot. To top it all off an empty tomato can (or two) could be nailed to the front with candles placed inside for headlights. It was all one-foot power with no brakes except shoe leather. And, I have to insert here that holes in the sneakers were frequently "healed" with cardboard inserts.

Grandparents & Family -

I never got to know my grandparents as well as I wished I had. My paternal grandfather, Johann Adam Schaffner, was a cement mason, according to my father. The family lived on Russell Street and he worked on construction in Baltimore City. Unfortunately he died from pneumonia when I was only one year old (1925). Dad's mother, nee Mathilda nee Taubenheim, re-married Gotfried Frederick Yeager, who I do remember well as he treated me like his own grandson. I don't ever remember meeting any of his side of the family. (???) They lived in a small house at Stemmers Run near the old railroad underpass. In order to visit we had to ride the streetcar to Essex, then take a cab (or walk) to where they lived. There was no plumbing in the house. They had an artesian well and outhouse and a barrel that caught water that ran off the roof when it rained. I think my grandmother used the rain water for washing clothes. (?) I can remember seeing mosquitoes in it. The visit took all day by the time we returned home. Before he died my Step-Grand Dad (G. F.Yeager) presented me with a gift that I still have and will pass it on to my Grandson, John. It is a tool box that was presented to him upon his completion of his mechanics apprenticeship at Wendell Bollman's Boatyard in Canton.. It contains tools that he made and used and also a few that I made and used when I took a course in machine shop in high school.

Dad had two brothers, Adam and Christian. I heard that there was a fourth child (boy) who died as a child. Adam lived at Lansdown and had, I think, six kids. I never got to know them well since it was an all-day trip to their house also. And, Mom had a low regard for Adam's wife, Adeline, ever since Mom didn't get a "thank you" for making a confirmation dress for one of the girls. That never got smoothed over. Dad didn't learn to drive or get a car until 1952 when his job required it. Chris never married until he was in his sixties (?) He worked at the United Cigar Store at St.Paul & Baltimore Streets. When I was in my teens I got a job in the summer waiting on the tobacco counter in the store. Mr West was the manager. It didn't pay much, but it got me out of the house. On my lunch break I roamed Baltimore street or St. Paul Street north to the War of 1812 Memorial Park.

We did visit my maternal grandparents, Robert L. & Elizabeth (nee Atwell) Rogers more frequently since my mother's brother, Robert A. Rogers, did have a car and he would pick us up to travel to Shady Side, MD. Many summers I would stay with my grandparents for weeks at time since there were plenty of cousins and things to do on Parrish Creek. My Grandad had a small building, actually a part of their outhouse, where he had his tools and worked on small projects. One day he had me in there to watch as he fashioned a rudimentary "sailboat" for me to play with in the creek. Using a short piece of board he took his hatchet and shaped a pointed end. Then he drilled a hole and inserted a dowel for a mast. Next came a triangular piece of cloth for the sail. I then had a sailboat to put in the water. The outhouse itself was built over a cut in the bank of the creek. The tide always kept it cleaned out. It was before the EPA and a lot of other regulations.

The nearest store was in Shady Side at the head of the creek, along with the "rooming house" known as Andrew's Hotel where people from the big-city came in the summertime to get away from the heat. The easiest way to get there was by rowboat. I (or we) would use one of my grandad's rowboats and with one oar, skull the boat over to the wharf, shop at the general store, and skull the boat home. Of course, Grandmom was good at providing us kids something to put in our mouth. Sometimes it was bacon strips fried real crisp or sometimes it would be a pan of a hard taffy not unlike the old Sugar Daddy candy. Buddy (Frank) and Whitey (Vernon) Wilde were cousins about my age and we played together often. A few times we took a rowboat out into West River off Neiman's Point and went skinny dipping. If anybody ever noticed us we never heard about it. I could take a rowboat to Wilde's house that seemed like a long way then. If the wind was at my back I would open my shirt and let the wind propel me along. Going the other way, up-wind, was a different story, hard work. Buddy had a dog, a black Chesapeake Retriever (or Lab), named Rover. Rover lived under their house in the crawl space. We could toss oyster shells into the creek and Rover would jump in and dive to the bottom and bring up the shell. Rover was lonesome during the war when the boys went off in the Navy. Every day he would swim the creek looking for them. There was no plumbing in my grandparent's house either. At night a "thundermug" was kept under the bed and kerosine lamps were used for lighting at night. There was an artesian well dug behind the house. One had to drop a bucket on a rope to the water and bring it up a bucket at a time. It would be heated on the wood burning stove and there was a basin to wash up in. After the war some improvements were made when the electric lines came in. They were good days growing up. My Uncle Bob and Aunt Helen (nee Eschelman) didn't have children but they often entertained their nieces and nephews and made frequent trips to Shady Side. On a few occasions they would bring the younger ones to their house in Baltimore and entertain them at Carlin's Park, the Baltimore Zoo, and other places. I was included in that as well. It was about the only time I played with girls at that age.

8. Gas Street Lamps -

Our neighborhood was equipped with lamp posts that were gas burning. There was one on every corner and usually one in the middle of the block. Every evening the lamp post would be lit about sundown. The man lighting it used a device on a short stick to reach the mantle, turn it on and light it. I suppose he had to turn it off in the morning as well. I never thought about it. Of course, if we kids didn't want the light when it interfered with our games, like hide-and-seek, we could always climb the pole and turn the gas off. He also serviced the lamp posts by removing the glass globes and washing them periodically in a bucket of water. He had a short 4-step ladder and carried it and the bucket from pole to pole. I never thought about where he might be getting the water? Probably the same guy was doing this who did the lighting.

9. Games in the Street -

There were few places (lots) large enough in the row-house neighborhood for a ball game so most of the activities took place in the street. Not every family owned a car and those that did were using them in the daytime. There was baseball of course, roller skate hockey, red rover come over, dodge ball, caddy, hand tennis, hop scotch, and many more. If we had a nickle we could buy a ball called "The Rocket." It looked like a baseball, but had a cloth cover and the insides was hard packed sawdust. It wouldn't take much of a beating "as is," so we wrapped it with "tar-tape." If, by chance, it would roll into the storm drain we would lift the iron plate and lower the lightest kid down to retrieve it. I never heard of anybody getting a mashed finger doing that. There was a vacant lot on Glenwood Avenue that we used for a pick-up baseball game in the summer when there was enough kids to make up two teams.

There were other times in the evenings when some of us would set on the front steps and just talk. Some of us had lead soldier casting kits where we melted lead and poured the soldiers. After they cooled we painted them (with probably lead-based paints) and played with them. The EPA would have a fit if kids still played with lead now. Of course there was the old stand-by of Checkers, Monopoly, and jig-saw puzzles. I worked a lot on airplane models, couldn't you guess? We always had books to read and I did enjoy reading about my heros. It was then that I selected my "idols." Charles A. Lindbergh was, and still is, my most revered idol and if you are reading this and don't recognize the name I would ask you to do some serious research about him. I still have some of those "boy's" books in my personal library and read one now and then. The "idols" most kids look up to nowadays just don't cut it.

In those days there was almost no traffic on McCabe Avenue so I could safely "fly" my rubber powered model off our front porch to land in the street. I didn't have to chase them far as the power ran out very quickly. But they did fly, and that was a great satisfaction. I built a rubber powered "hi-performance" plane designed by Dick Korda that flew exceptionally well. I needed a lot of clear space for that one. They were all "free-flight" planes and required a certain amount of prayer when launched. Before I got too old I graduated to planes with fuel powered engines and radio control, but at age 18 went into the U.S. Army and then there was a long dry spell with the flying models until son, Paul, became interested and we both joined the Westminster Aero Modelers. He became an expert builder and flyer of R/C airplanes. He is an important member of the WAM Club.

10.* Skinny Dipping -

When we in the neighborhood were teenagers and one of the guys had the use of an old car we would chip in nickels & dimes for a little gas (15c/gal) and drive out in the county to the reservoir for Baltimore City (Loch Raven) and swim (skinny dip) in the summer. Six of us did this one hot day. There was a dirt lane that went through the woods to a secluded cove that we used. While splashing around in the water we received a

uniformed visitor who ordered us out of the water. He lined us up, read the riot act, and demanded our names. (Uh oh, wait 'til we get home.) The boy on my right whispered in my ear, "Don't give him your right name." The boy on my left was Ken Precht. So, when the uniform got to me and demanded my name, I said, "Ken Precht, sir." That wasn't my right name. As it turned out, he ran us out and we never went back to that spot again, and we never heard any more about it. I can still hear that Ranger laughing. The car we used was a very old Ford with a rumble seat. Three could ride up front and we could squeeze three or four skinny kids in the rumble seat. Bud Brown drove it. I think he might have been the only one old enough. The old car was in bad shape and had to be cranked or drifted downhill to get it started. One day when we loaded up and were driving north on York Road there was a streetcar ahead of us and another car abreast of the streetcar. It so happened there was someone waiting for the streetcar. The streetcar was stopping, the car abreast was stopping (it was the law), Bud stepped on the brake pedal, but this old car was not stopping. Three of us up front grabbed the parking brake handle and pulled, but with no visible effect. It looked like we would run into the rear of the streetcar so Bud swung the wheel left to go around the streetcar on the left side and, you might know, there was another car heading straight for us. That driver was alert and had just enough time to swing right and avoid us. We cheated death again. I can still see that car bearing down on us.

A lot comes to the surface when I am going to bed or waking up. Of course everyone I tell this to says, "Carry a pad and pencil....." Easy for them to say. Just today I was thinking about the old neighborhood and the flat roof "row-houses." periodically the owners would have to hire roofers to re-tar the roof since the sun would dry out the tar and it would crack creating leaks, not good. The crew would set up heaters in the street and unload the tar that was in a solid state in large metal drums. We kids would watch the operation. A man would use an ax to open the drum and hack large chunks out and toss them in the "cooker." When it got to a liquid state the tar was tapped off into buckets and hoisted to the roof where some one took a big mop and spread it around. During this operation chips of tar would fly off the ax and we would collect it and play with it. some of the braver kids would ever chew on it. I'm sure that Mom wasn't watching when we did that.

During those teen-age years when I was too young to take on a serious job there were other things we could do to make a buck. There were three movie houses "in reach" that employed ushers to assist in seating as, in those days, anyone could enter the theater at any time regardless of the time when the movie was in progress. It was helpful to have an usher with a flashlight to help find seating. We also changed the marque lettering and the poster displays outside. Ken Precht and I often worked the usher jobs together. The theater provided the Tuxedos that we wore and the flashlights. The 3 houses that we worked were the Waverly, Boulevard, & Senator which operated under the Durkee Enterprises Co. Perhaps I should also mentioned that there was a French Bakery next door to the Waverly movie. They made the most delicious pastry that could not be kept overnight. So, when the bakery closed for the night and had some of this great perishable stuff left over, the girls working there would invite us in the grab up what ever we would like to take home. Our parents were always awake when we got home to sample the treats. Of course we reciprocated by passing the bakery girls into the movies when ever they wanted.

Ken and I also took on pin setting at the local (duck pin) bowling alley. I believe that we received 10 cents per game, not enough for the risks involved when we had a strong arm bowled. Pins would fly.

11. Streetcars/tokens -

Streetcars were depended on during those "depression" years. One could reach almost any neighborhood, with maybe a short walk to their destination. The fare was 10 cents and you could ask for a "transfer" ticket that allowed you to change from one line to another. Also, tokens were available to special regular riders, like students, for 5 cents per. During the summer, when the temperatures made staying in the house in the evening oppressively hot, "Cool-Off" rides were offered. Few people had air-conditioners in their house. For one fare you could ride the streetcars with the windows open around town all night if you wanted. Occasionally a streetcar would break down and the transit company would send their tow truck, called "Big Bill" to service the problem or tow the car to the barn. The transit company also had a work car outfitted with a huge snow plow. They would send it out to clear the tracks in the event of a big snow storm.

The Street-car lines were mostly in the middle of the major streets and for passengers to safely board and get off an area adjacent to the tracks was designated for them to use. It was "protected" by a concrete platform about six inches high to stand on which, in turn, was headed on the "up-traffic" end by a concrete buffer about four feet high, wide, and deep, topped with a blinking light. Woe to the motorist who drove into one.
One day in the late summer of 1942 the quiet of the neighborhood was shattered by the wailing of sirens from the direction of York Road. This usually only happened when there was an accident, so myself and whoever was with me ran to the point of the excitement. There had been a convoy of Army 2&1/2 ton trucks rolling south on York Road and the lead truck struck that Safely Pylon and upset with the following trucks all piling up behind it.

A good friend (Ken Precht), recently deceased, who I grew up with, took a job driving a streetcar after the war with the Baltimore Transiit Co.. He had some interesting tales about his experiences. We have a Streetcar Museum here and one day I will visit it.

12. Corner stores -

Corner stores were once common to a neighborhood. Usually they were established by renovating the first floor of the house by opening up all of the rooms into one big room, shelving the walls, building a counter, installing a larger front door and, sometimes replacing the front wall with a display window. They were usually specialized by the products they sold. Some were equipped with a freezer and sold meats along with a line of groceries and fresh vegetables. Some were confectionaries with candy, ice cream, soft drinks, and tobacco items. A quart of Hendler's ice cream was a quarter and it had three flavors that one could actually taste. Also, if they sold tobacco one could buy cigarettes for a penny each or a cigar for five cents. Some specialized in dry goods, fabrics and other sewing materials. There were hardware stores, pharmacies, paint stores, and garages with gas pumps were privately owned. The proprietors usually lived in the same building (or house) and if one was in a bind for something special after hours, a call or knock on the door would get you service. These were independent businesses and most of them kept a "book." Many of the small grocery stores would take an order by phone and deliver it to your door. I don't recall my mother ever using this service since we lived as close as one block to two corner groceries. Credit could be obtained on a handshake, just so you paid up regularly. The bread bakers placed a "Breadbox" on the sidewalk outside of the grocery stores so the early morning delivery drivers had a place to leave the day's order before the store opened for the day. No locks were on the box and if a neighbor wanted a loaf before the store opened he would help himself and pay later. There was trust in those days. How times have changed!
One day the A & P grocery store on York Road had a sale on pineapples. Mom decided that

she would take advantage of the price and make some pineapple preserves. So, taking me along pulling my coaster wagon, "Snappy Boy," we went to the store and loaded the wagon with pineapples. On the return trip home I decided I would get in the wagon with the pineapples and coast down McCabe Avenue as it was downhill all the way to our house, and there was no traffic to worry about. It was a wild, risky ride with no brakes, that I really didn't expect and I just held the handle and steered the wagon straight ahead. I think that I was sweating bullets. Anything else would have surely been a disaster. We made it home unscathed and Mom made enough pineapple preserves to last all year.

There was also Scheinbergs confectionary at the corner of McCabe and Alhambra. It was a dwelling that had the ground floor converted to a store. It was most attractive to the kids since they stocked a big display case of penny candy, soft drinks, and an ice cream freezer. Tobacco was also stocked and there was always an open pack of cigarettes that sold for a penny apiece, and five-cent cigars. Hendler's ice cream could be bought for "A Quart for a Quarter," and it came in three flavors. Another Mom & Pop grocery was Exler's at McCabe and Ready Avenues.

13. The Milkman - et al

Milk was delivered door to door by the dairy, Western Maryland Dairy in our case. There was also Koontz's, Cloverland, and a few others delivering milk daily. In the '20's the milkman drove a horse pulling a wagon. The iron rimmed wheels of the wagon eventually gave way to automobile wheels and tires as on the automobiles. The horses were so used to the daily route that the milkman could just walk beside the the wagon and the horse stopped at each customer's house. Later the dairies acquired trucks. I can imagine that the trucks made it harder on the milkman since he couldn't have it follow him down the street.. In cold weather the milk sitting on the stoop would freeze and force the little cardboard lid off the bottle. Neighborhood cats would find it. Cream would rise to the top of the milk bottle and some bottles were molded to catch the cream so it could be poured off separately. The customer was provided with a special "Cream-top Spoon."

In those days there were other vendors doing business house-to-house. One was the Rice's Bakery. The driver carried basically bread, but also a variety of other baked goods that the house-wife could have delivered to the door.

There the Jewel Tea salesman who canvassed the neighborhood with tea and coffee and other products that earned premiums for use in the house.

Then there was the "Scissor Grinder". This was a guy who carried a stone grinding wheel mounted in a frame operated by foot power. He would stroll the streets calling out, "Sharpen your knives and scissors !!" in a loud voice. The women would bring him their knives and scissors and he would make them sharp while they waited. I can imagine that he made a decent living doing that. We even had a music teacher who went door-to-door looking for likely students. I could play the kazoo.
Also the hucksters could be found out on the street every day with their horse drawn wagons selling any and everything in season. They would use their voice also to announce their presence. They sold hard crabs, oysters, fish, and what ever produce was in season. At this writing I believe that there is only one still doing that in Baltimore City. The few others are using pickup trucks, but they too are on the way out. They all were in business for many years but the advent of Super-Markets heralded big changes in the food distribution business. No milkman, no bread man, no corner stores, no hucksters, no grinders, no ice man, no insurance man, all gone.

I might also mention that every neighborhood had a barber shop, often set up in the basement of the barber's house. Haircuts were 25 cents unless your parent had a clipper, then you received a clipping at home. (OUCH !)

14. Cars, Seat Belts & Front Opening Car Doors

Back then little was thought about driving "unsafe at any speed" automobiles. Seat belts were for airplanes and Indy race cars. An automobile was frequently designed with doors that opened from the front. I think that it may have appealed to the ladies who always wore dresses in those days. It made it easier for them to get in. Can you imagine what happens if that door came open when you are driving at a high speed??? (Guess what? Today 10/18/2019, I watched a TV show about the Rolls-Royce Automobile Co, Ltd. (Now a BMW company.) Their new models, priced at $270,000 have doors that open from the front. What goes around, comes around.) Hydraulic brakes didn't appear until the middle '30's and then disk brakes came along much later. I remember being with my uncle who had an early Plymouth, '30's something. It was equipped with front opening doors and mechanical brakes. No seat belts of course. Right after Richie Highway (MD Rte 2) opened with separated lanes we came north at 70 mph in that car one night. I think a guardian angel was watching over us.

Dad never bought a car until 1952 when his job required it. I tried to teach him in my '39 Chevvy but couldn't, so he had to take lessons from a pro. He never did get enough experience to drive a stick shift correctly. The clutch was repaired several times in that car.

Right after the war cars were hard to come by as car makers were building military vehicles right up to the end. I found a 1939 Chevvy 4-door that had literally "been through the war." All 4 fenders needed to be beaten out and the paint was bad. With a good pal (Francis Small) we beat out the fenders and I got a $29.95 paint job. I kept it for about 4-5 years then bought '49 Ford. Over the many years since we have gone through a Ford '49er, a Studebaker, a Plymouth, a series of Cadillacs and Lincolns and I am now driving a 2008 Lincoln Town car. I doubt I'll wear it out.

I had a '54 Studebaker Champion that I bought used from a neighbor who sold cars at Marsden Chevrolet. When I went to his house to pick it up I couldn't figure out how to start it. I had to ring his doorbell and ask. Turns out the starter button was on the floor under the clutch. This prevented trying to engage the starter while the transmission was "in gear." It also had a "hill-holder" that prevented a drift-back while stopped on an up-grade. The new cars have taken away the skill that drivers needed for those cars.

One nice summer day Lil and I put the kids in the car and drove to Annapolis for a lark. We parked the car on the "Circle" and walked to the waterfront to spend some time. As we walked back to the Circle we heard the sounds of a fire truck on the move and hurried along to see where the excitement was. Behold! The excitement was at our Studebaker Champ! We had left the windows open and someone had apparently tossed a lit cigarette into the car where it had burned a hole in a seat cover before it was noticed and the firemen were called to the scene to extinguish it. Time to start home anyway.

The Studebaker was the most fun to drive. One afternoon while parked in front of our house on Cinder Road a big Pontiac convertible ran smack into the rear end of it pushing ti clear up onto our neighbor's front yard. It was "totaled" by the insurance and I collected $75. It still ran OK so I replaced the bumper (you could actually "bump" with those bumpers) and the trunk lid and drove it until we got the '63 Caddy.

The '63 Cadillac Convertible was by far the classiest of the batch, a beautiful machine. We bought that one (used, of course,) from a fellow who, I think, had stopped making

payments on it. The car was at Chesapeake Cadillac Co. in town and that is where we picked it up. Driving out on the street I noticed the gas tank was empty so we stopped at the first gas station. In those days a driver stayed in the car while an attendant pumped the gas. When this attendant approached my window I didn't know how to lower it. Ah, the four little switches on the door. I tried them all until my driver's window went down. I said, "Fill'er up." The attendant pulled the hose around the rear end on the car, came back, and said, "Where does it go?" I said, "I don't know. I've only had this car for ten minutes." We searched around and finally discovered the gas cap hiding behind the rear license plate. It took 22 gallons to fill the tank but gas in those days was not nearly as expensive as today. On arriving home I parked the car in the driveway along side of the bedroom window. I don't remember how many times Lil and I got up during the night just to look out the window to make sure the car was still there. Never did buy a new car.

15. Pocket knife -

Every boy in the neighborhood carried a pocket knife. The whole time I never saw any blood. If a kid carries one to school now he might be arrested, at the very least expelled. We played a lot of "Mumbly Peg." It was a game where you scratched out an area in the dirt and threw the knife at it. When the knife stuck up you scratched a line in the direction of the blade, thus making a smaller target. You took turns. The one who could stick his knife in the smallest area won the game. Also there was a knife game called, "Baseball" we played with our pocket knife. You would need a knife with two blades, hinged at the same end. With the long blade fully open and the short one half-way you would flip the knife over a wooden board. If it didn't stick that was a strike. If it stuck on the small blade and resting on the butt it was a single. If it stuck on the small blade and resting on the long blade it was a double. If it stuck upright on the short blade you had a triple and sticking upright on the long blade was a home run. You needed a soft pine board for the game to work. Of course nobody carried a board around for playing this game. We mainly used the "bread-box" at the corner grocery store. It was apparently built of soft pine and was ideal for sticking a knife into. The damage was minimal and I don't think any had to be replaced because of the little wear and tear we kids inflicted. Of course the pocket knife had many other uses, none of which were meant to cause harm to anyone.

All of my grandsons received one from me on their 12th birthday.

In later years I have somehow acquired a variety of pocket knives as gifts and a few as NRA premiums for renewing membership. Also I still have my wireman's knife (TL-29) that I picked up in the U.S. Army during WW II. Most of these are just a bit heavy to carry around in one's pants pocket so they mainly reside on the shelf and in the dresser drawer. A real man without a pocket knife is handicapped.

16. Bikes -

Ah, the bike. I think that I may have been about 12 or 13 when on Christmas morning I woke up to find I owned my first bike, a brand new Schwinn with balloon tires. It was a beauty. It probably cost my Dad a week's pay. Unfortunately I did not have much experience and when I took it out for the first time I ran smack into a curb and bent the fork. I had to drag it back home with my head hanging in shame. How could I have done such a dumb and embarrassing thing? Dad was able to straighten it out but eventually I had to get a new fork. If my mother ever knew how far I went on that bike, often with my pal, Francis Small, she would have had a fit. I rode that bike many miles and still had it when I entered the Army in March 1943. While I was away Dad sold it to a fellow worker for his daughter. I was ready for an automobile anyway after I was discharged.

17. Slide Rules and Other Now Unused Things

I still have a couple of slide rules in my collection of worthless objects. It is a basic, non-electric, hand-held computer of sorts used to solve math problems. Batteries were not required but one couldn't do all of the things a "smart phone" will do today. How DID we ever get by???? What ever device we pick up now is bound to be loaded with advertising to be ignored before it becomes useful.

Disk records came along even before my time. I think Thomas Edison had a lot to do with that. The record disks turned at 78 rpm initially and then 78 and 45 were cut on both sides, and LPs (Long Play) came along with multiple songs on one disk. And then there were audio tapes and VHS tapes and the special devices to use to listen to them. We had audio tapes with 8-tracks and "surround-sound" that was really neat, but they never achieved high popularity. Autos left the factory with all of this stuff ready installed. One could hear a convertible coming up the road with music blaring across the neighborhood. Now one can have a car with all of this entertainment plus a GPS that will lead you to your destination from anywhere else. Next is the driverless car.
To qualify for my Pilot's license I had to learn to use a chart and Weems Plotter. We also used a circular plastic device for navigation that was loosely known as a Flight Computer. I believe that a GPS in the aircraft (or Smart Phone) will do the same for you today. Flying today in densely populated areas is strictly controlled and I am glad I did it when it was fun.

My garage has a ton of tools that never are used any more. Many are hand-me-downs from my father and/or grandfather. A few obviously had some kind of heavy use but I have yet to discover what it was. Progress was OK once, but it has gone on too long.

18. Return to civilian life -

I had not been home long from the Army when my Dad talked to me about becoming a Mason. Some of his friends who I knew were Masons and they were men that I respected very much. I learned that one of the tenants of the fraternity was that of brotherhood and charity and that is about all that I knew. So, wanting to know more, I applied to be accepted as a member of Concordia Lodge #13, my Dad's lodge. I received the necessary instruction and was raised as a Master Mason on June 12, 1946. I found that the Masonic fraternity is the oldest fraternity in continuous existence and is exclusively a charitable organization. The 'spin-off' organizations are Shrine, Demolay, Eastern Star, Tall Cedars, and many more. In order to join as a Mason you must have a belief in God and have a good reputation.

The Masonic Creed is: "I, as a Freemason, believe in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. I will do unto others as I would have them do unto me. I pledge my loyalty to the Government of the United States of America, a government of the people, by the people, and for the people and will not countenance disloyalty on the part of others. Freemasonry is founded on these principles and I will use my utmost effort to preserve them for posterity. So mote it be!" – (Just in case you don't know what a Mason is.)

Not long after I had become a Mason in the Concordia Lodge #13 AF & AM in 1946 I attended a dinner meeting at the Masonic Temple downtown in Baltimore on Charles Street. One of the gentlemen seated at our table was a man whose name was Hutchinson. I had noticed that he wore a rather large heavy ring. It drew my attention so I asked him about it. It turned out the he was the same George R. Hutchinson that I had

read about in the late '30s. He was apparently wealthy enough to have owned his personal airplane. He had toured the United States with his wife and children in a Stinson Reliant visiting each state in turn, and afterward publishing a book of the adventure titled, "Flying the States." I had read the book when it was published in 1937. (the book is still in print.) I asked about the ring as I thought it was most unique and his reply had us all ears. He said that as he was already an experienced pilot prior at the start of the war he wanted to participate in some significant fashion. He was past the age to be trained as a combat pilot, but was offered a duty ferrying aircraft to England during the war. After one of his deliveries he was staying overnight in a London hotel. That night the German Luftwaffe made a bombing raid on the city and bombs struck the hotel during the very time Hutchinson was taking a bath. A bomb exploded near his room upsetting the bath tub on top of him and raining debris on top
of the tub. Although not wounded he was effectively trapped under the tub. Once the "All Clear" sounded and the rescue teams got to work searching the damaged area for casualties he could hear the activity nearby, but needed to attract the attention of someone outside. His heavy ring was the answer. Using the ring as a hammer he kept tapping the side of the tub until the noise was finally heard and he was rescued. He considers the ring as having saved his life.

My pre-war pals were coming home one at a time so we had to get re-acquainted. I know it sounds strange, but while we may have talked about the various parts of the world where we had been, we never talked about the times in combat. Some “shrink” will have to do an analysis on that. I have the feeling that those of us who had been in harm’s way thought the listener would not be able to understand what it was really like. In later years we came to realize that they were there as well and also survived the same kind of experience, only at a different place. Finally being able to talk was a release from the stress. PTSD is real though and never lets go altogether. Reminders can bring on an emotional attack that can’t be controlled, any time, any place.
19. Going to work -

I had worked the period between HS graduation and entrance into the Army, about two weeks and a couple of days, at the B & O Railroad Erection Shop at Mount Clare. I was hired as an apprentice to a shop mechanic and our work was on the construction and repair of steam locomotives. They were coal powered beasts and dirty. After a day in the shop it was necessary to wash up and change cloths before going out to the street. I must have looked like a coal miner. The pay was 52 cents/hour and was simply something to do at the time. I actually did very little and learned nothing, except how to hide from the boss. The mechanics I worked around either did not have much to do or the shop was ‘way overstaffed. (I think they were simply lazy and not motivated by anything.) I was not cut out for that job and definitely not going back to it. So after being discharged I was approached by my uncle who had an interest in a company that manufactured, pasta products and potato chips. They had trucks on the street that serviced grocery stores, restaurants, schools, etc. and sold a variety of food products. I went to work for them. I was making a living at it, but the business was not keeping up with the competition and instead of growing, it was declining. I was working on a commission and could see the handwriting on the wall. I had to find another line of work. By this time we were married, had two kids and one on the way, a mortgage and the regular bills to pay. In December of 1956 I went to work at a company then known as Aircraft Armaments, Inc. It was a company working on Defense Department contracts designing and developing various products for the armed services. At that time they needed someone to operate IBM accounting machines and I convinced the personnel guy that I could learn to do that. The starting pay was about what I had been making so I had nothing to lose and everything to

gain, including perks that didn't exist at the other job. I stayed with the company and retired December 1989 as a Senior Computer Systems Analyst after 33 years of service. It was a good move. Retirement has been comfortable and I have kept in touch with those nice people who I worked with.

20. My girl. -

One day in 1946/47 I was going home after work, riding a streetcar with a friend, (Francis Small). We were standing (strap hanging) since the streetcar was crowded, and sitting in front of us was this beautiful girl. WOW! I made a remark to my friend and he said, "Oh, I know her. Want me to introduce you?" He did and before it was time to get off the streetcar we had set a date to get together. I knew right away that this was the girl that I was going chase. Oh my, how life did change from that moment on. Everything that had happened to me before was immediately forgotten. As the old saying goes, "That's all she wrote." She was 19 at the time and was all that I could think about. (Guess what? She still is.) If I was driving out York Road after we met, my car automatically turned in Hollen Road to Lil's house. I had no control over it. She was top priority in my life and always has been. That was in 1947 and we were married June 12, 1948. I remember that day like it was yesterday and I have liked streetcars ever since.

I could write a lot more about my life with Lillian, but for now let me say that I was blessed to have met her. She always supported me with anything that I wanted to do. And, that includes reasoning with me to discourage me from doing those foolish ideas that I thought of that would NOT have been good ideas.

April 26, 2019, 12:36 AM

We were in the ER at St. Joe., me, to be treated for minor facial cuts and scratches after a fall in our driveway. Bob, Barb, and Lil were in the waiting room to support me, when Lil was stricken with a seizure of some kind. The hospital team all dropped what ever they were doing and rushed her to a room and hooked up all those wires and tubes. She never regained consciousness. I was holding her hand as she slipped away.
I remember saying, "Is she gone?" And, someone said simply, "Yes."

The diagnosis was Type B Aortic Dissection

Every man should be so blessed as to have had such a wife.

There are wives and then there are wives. I was blessed to have had the best. We were in love with each other from the start, and what ever disagreements we had were minor and quickly resolved. We had three beautiful children who grew into responsible adults, have families of their own, and make us proud to be able to smile and say, "These wonderful people are my family." And, then think, "Everybody should be so blessed."

21 Flying -

When I was learning to fly an airplane it was rather basic compared today's aircraft. The aircraft was a Piper J-3 Cub. It was powered by a 65 HP 4 cylinder engine, and carried 12 gallons of gas in a tank installed in front of the panel. The fuel gauge was a cork that floated in the tank with a wire attached vertically that protruded through a hole in the gas cap. By watching the wire as it got shorter one could make a good guess as to how much gas was remaining in the tank. It was two-seat tandem accommodation and the instructor always sat in front. As a result, sitting behind him one could not see the panel and gauges.

The only gauges in the panel were Altitude, Airspeed, Compass, Turn/Bank, and Oil Temperature. It had no electrical system and had to be hand-propped to be started. The student, more or less, had to learn to fly by the "seat-of-the-pants" method. Flying this airplane solo was done from the back seat anyway to compensate for balance. The day I soloed was unforgettable. My usual instructor was Bob Mays, a former USAAC fighter pilot. We took off as usual for some practice time and after a short circuit he told me to return to the field and land. After landing he told me to taxi back to the end of the runway for another take-off. When I got there and turned the airplane into the wind, Bob said, "Hold it here, I'm getting out. Take it around and shoot a couple of landings for me." All of my blood immediately drained into my shoes, who me? I then thought that, if I could do it with him, I can do it without him. One must come down, right? With no passenger up front the Cub fairly jumped into the air. I made it around the pattern and lined up with the runway and began to descend. What I had not thought about was that the Cub, being lighter, with only one aboard, had a tendency to descend at a slower rate. As a result I was still a couple of hundred feet in the air over where I should have been touching down. Bob was down below waving his arms for me to go around again. So, with that lesson learned I shot a couple of three-pointers and he qualified me to solo. I acquired my Private Pilot License after about 30 hours of total stick time and before the ink was dry on my license I took Lil up for a ride in a Piper J-3 Cub.

Piper sold the last Cub off the line in 1947 (I think,) but there are still a lot of them flying. Of course, if you found one to buy today it would be dearly priced with today's dollars, probably about $20,000, new they went for a bit over $1,000. It is a fun machine. One old pilot was once heard to say, "The Cub is an airplane that can barely kill you!"

Renting a light plane in those days was affordable once in a while as gas was a lot less and the aircraft were less sophisticated and expensive to maintain. A Cub could be rented for $5 per hour at the time and a Cessna 120-140 was not much more. During that time I also earned my sea-plane rating in a Cessna 120 on floats at Whipp Field in Glen Burnie on Furnace Creek. A couple of years later Friendship Airport (later re-named BWI) opened with the traffic pattern such that Ed Whipp had to close his operation. In later years I qualified in most of the popular Piper and Cessna 2 and 4-seat airplanes While working at AAI it was no problem to round up 3 of my friends at work to take a spin and split the cost 4 ways. It was a great way to stay current and didn't tax the wallet. The cost was $50 per hour while we were doing it.

One of the last machines that I flew around in was a two-seat experimental named The Maxair Drifter, I was owned by a friend, a fellow employee at AAI Corp., Victor Rude. Vic had a small farm in Monkton, MD, that was suitable for keeping the Drifter and we used it a lot. Unfortunately Vic died and the next day his son sold the Drifter. That was the end of that.

During those days I was able to take my Mother for ride around Baltimore City and our kids and even one time my Aunt Alice Griner, from a field at Deale, MD.

22. Friends again -

November 30, 1945 was "Discharge Day" and I was home again and it was time to insert myself back in society. Except for those who were not going to be coming home, the guys were gradually arriving back into the neighborhood. Unless we were really tight friends when we left it was not the same. Our personal experience during the war had affected our personality, some for the better, some not. We found that it was difficult

relating to one another depending on where we had been and what we had experienced. We tried by going out in a group, drinking beer, talking, trying to relate to the other guy, but we all had our "ghosts" and there was a barrier that never did come down. Still today there are things that bring on an attack of emotion if one tries to bring them up. Only those of us who were really close childhood friends were able to work around it and remain friends for life. I believe that is because we silently understood and supported one another. It is why reunions of wartime units are important. The members can, and do, support each other. Friends we made as children continued to be true friends in later life. We continued to play together and supported each other in times of difficulty. At this writing (2019) Bud Simmers at 98 and I at 95 are the only ones still alive of that group.

23 Two houses

The First House - After living in an apartment in a house we did not own (or like) at 1409 Carswell Street it was apparent we needed our own home. There was a 1/4 acre lot for sale at 39 Cinder Road in Timonium that was near Lil's two older sisters and their families. We liked the location, the price was $1,250 and we had the money, our first child, Bob, was born, so we bought it. Next, we had to have a house built on the lot and there was a reliable contractor in the neighborhood. We met with Mr. Irving Ensor and agreed on the plans and the price of $11,500. It was not easy to get a loan. Although we had enough for the down-payment, we had not established credit. Finally after some negotiating, we were granted a loan from Arlington Federal Savings & Loan and construction commenced. The house was built over the winter of 1951-52 and we moved in April, 1952. The monthly payments were $74 and the mortgage was paid off ahead of schedule.

In 1968 when it became apparent to Lil and me that my parents were in obvious danger living on McCabe Avenue in the Govans neighborhood we decided that the time had come to move them. The once very nice houses were being vacated by long time home owners at greatly reduced prices and rented to former slum dwellers who had no intention of keeping the neighborhood up. If the doorbell rang Dad went to the door with a short length of pipe in his hand. After Dad suffered two strokes, that he recovered from, Lil and I decided that the time was ripe to do something. We bought a lot at 1811 Miller Road in the Butler area ($5,000) and contracted to have a house built ($33,000) to accommodate all of us. Lil was then working at All-State Lumber Company in Lutherville (Ron Alessi) and acquainted with a building contractor, (Stanley Groves,) We met and decided on the plans, again negotiated a loan and went ahead with the new house. It was built over the winter of 1968-69 and we took possession in April. In a short time we had Dad and Mom sell their McCabe Avenue house and move in with us. Dad lived until August 28, 1974 when he suffered a stroke. Mom lived until August 20, 1997 and died at the age of 107+.

24 St. Timothy Lutheran Church

After moving to 39 Cinder Road, Timonium in 1952 with our small family we began to get acquainted with our neighbors, many of whom fit in nicely with our age group. Some of the local folks* were looking to establish a convenient place of worship in the Lutheran faith and after a few visits from them Lil and I decided that we would join with them. Initially there was only one church in the neighborhood and it was United Methodist. I was raised in a Methodist Church in Govans so I probably would have been comfortable there, but Lil was raised Lutheran and we were married in the Lutheran Church, so that's the way we went. Arrangements had been made with the Timonium Fair Grounds to hold a Sunday service in one of their buildings and that worked out fine and the group adopted the title of St. Timothy Lutheran Church. Of course a pastor was

required so the group recruited the services of the Pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church in Jacksonville, Pastor Haulk. He would serve as Pastor of both churches temporarily since both congregations were relatively small. The venture enjoyed success in attracting a sizeable congregation to the point where we found it practical to acquire an unimproved lot at the juncture of Timonium Road and Greenmeadow Drive and lay the plans to build a church. All went well and the building was consecrated and dedicated formally in 1954. It served the neighborhood until about 2015 when declining membership forced a sale of the property.

There were a series of pastors, but the neighborhood changed. Older members moved away or died and the younger generation were not interested, who knows? Currently we are members of the Timonium United Methodist Church. It too is threatened with the same membership situation.

*Ken Smith, Carroll Davis, Bill King, Ken Precht, Carl Walters, Bill Crosby, Hubert Greene, etc.

25. ABC Turning Point 50th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge

It seems like a long time now as I think of it. Year 1994 was the 50th Anniversary of the battle of the Bulge and there was great interest in Europe primarily in the areas that suffered most during the battle in December 1944 - January 1945. The significance of the Anniversary (I think) was mostly with those veterans who were involved and their families. The ABC News weekly hour-long show hosted by David Brinkly and titled, "The Turning Point," became interested in producing a program commerating this important event. The production team visited veterans across the country, filming and recording their personal experiences to be integrated with clips of file-film shot during the battle. Three of us veterans from the 589th FABn were featured, including John Gatens, Walter Snyder, and myself. There was also a battlefield tour of the Ardennes area in 1994 organized by Galaxy Tours that hosted a group of 106th Division veterans and family members around the area of the battle. Again the 589th was well represented by veterans and a memorable time was had by all..Both Lil and I participated for our 2nd visit to Europe.

EPILOG

While enjoying my life beyond my expectations and having not the slightest desire to see it end, I am just passing through. Nobody gets out alive, but I simply can't imagine what will follow. One only has to look around at the planet and what else must be out there in the great beyond. I hope that I find out.
I love bananas because they have no bones.

Something happened yesterday (26 Sep 2019) to kind of shake me off my perch. I'll explain. I watched a video that had a "voice-over" by Carl Sagan. He talked about the perspective of comparing the earth we live on to the rest of the universe, however big that might be. His conclusion was that, by comparison, the earth is but the most minute speck of dust relative to the rest of space and the objects that are out there. We should be smart enough now to accept that. Now, the kicker is to take a person, especially someone who views himself as really special, and compare him to the reality of all else that exists. It is sobering to think about it. I wonder if certain despotic rulers like Hitler, Stalin, etc., ever thought about this? Oh well, carry on.

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WORK IN PROGRESS
CDs----------
Books I have contributed to----
Warriors of the 106th - The Last Infantry Division by Ken Johnson, Martin King, & Michael Collins
The Battle of the Bulge by Martin King
Red Legs of the Bulge by Chris "CJ" Kelly
The Fightin' 589th by Col. Thomas P. Kelly, Jr.
Hell Frozen Over by Marilyn Estes Quigley
Voices of the Bulge by Michael Collins and Martin King
Damn Cold and Starving by Sgt. Marion Ray and Dan Brannan
On The Job Training by The 589th Group (Nwt in print-online at www.indianamilitary.org)
La Bataille Des Carrefours by Eddy Monfort (French)
L'Offensive Des Ardennes by Eddy Monfort (French)
Parker's Crossroads by CRIBA-BELGIUM (French)
How We Won The War by Charles G. Pefinis
America At its Best by Charles G. Pefinis
WEBSITES with my contributions
www.IndianaMilitary.org
www.106thinfdivassn.org
www.106thinfantry.webs.com
www.battleofthebulgememories.be
www.criba.be/fr/stories/detail/parkers-crossroads-revisited-50-1

Statistics of war-time production of military materiel during WW II are staggering. Here is one item to ponder, Liberty Ships. President FDR initiated the emergency ship building program that saw 2,750 Liberties—with the first, the S.S. Patrick Henry, constructed at the Bethlehem-Fairfield yard launched on September 27, 1941. It had taken just 19 days to go from it's keel laying to it's launch. Eventually, workers in 18 participating yards along the Atlantic, Pacific, and Gulf Coasts were able to reduce construction time in building Liberties, with the record from keel laying to launch being four days, 15 and ½ hours. The workforce at Bethlehem-Fairfield Shipyards was 46,700 men & women who worked around the clock. The only holiday they were given off was Christmas.
106th Assn --------1986 --
empty nest
TUMC
Travel U.S., Canada,
Deaths
VBOB (BOBA)
Civil Air Patrol 1955-1976
Kid stuff:
Fireworks
Deliver start-up newspaper

During those teen-age years when I was too young to take on a serious job there were other things we could do to make a buck. There were three movie houses "in reach" that employed ushers to assist in seating as, in those days, anyone could enter the theater at any time regardless of the time when the movie was in progress. It was helpful to have an usher with a flashlight to help find seating. We also changed the marque lettering and the poster displays outside. Ken Precht and I often worked the usher jobs together. The theater provided the Tuxedos that we wore and the flashlights. The 3 houses that we

worked were the Waverly, Boulevard, & Senator which operated under the Durkee Enterprises Co. Perhaps I should also mentioned that there was a French Bakery next door to the Waverly movie. They made the most delicious pastry that could not be kept overnight. So, when the bakery closed for the night and had some of this great perishable stuff left over, the girls working there would invite us in the grab up what ever we would like to take home. Our parents were always awake when we got home to sample the treats. Of course we reciprocated by passing the bakery girls into the movies when ever they wanted.
Ken and I also took on pin setting at the local (duck pin) bowling alley. I believe that we received 10 cents per game, not enough for the risks involved when we had a strong arm bowled. Pins would fly.

106th Assn 1986
WAM R/C Club
B&O RR Shop .52/hr Ditty.....sing mournfully.....
Please don't burn our outhouse down,
Mother has promised to pay.
Father's away on the bounding main,
Sister's in a family way.
Brother dear is acting queer,
Times are really hard.
Please don't burn our outhouse down,
or we'll have to ..... out in the yard.

Bill & Susan, June 2009
1. Following is the text of a letter that I came across in my collection. Since I have had a problem scanning to e-mail I have to send it like this.
Bob Ringer was a Lt. in the 590th FA Service Battery, leading a supply train to Baraque de Fraiture with supplies when he was cut off and never made it. He was able to send a few men, much to their discomfort. In later years (1970 in this case) he communicated with German General Hasso von Manteuffel. Since I was unable to scan & send I rewrote the letter and here it is for the interest of all those who were involved in the battle around St. Vith. When your former enemy gives you credit I believe that is better than a medal. Maybe you have room for this.
Best,
John S

Jan 26th 1970
Dear Mr. Ringer,
Many thanks for your kind and very interesting letter Jan 2nd 1970. I am glad to be informed by your letter that you came back (out of the war!) (un) injured and without being in captivity!! All places you mentioned in your letter are well known to me during the war and after the war, because I visited several times St. Vith, Bastogne, etc. The best report about St. Vith and about the 106th Infantry Division is in my opinion "Decision at St. Vith - The story of the 106th - the division Hitler smashed in the Battle of the Bulge" by Charles Whiting (Ballantine Books, Inc., New York, NY, and the official report by Hugh M. Cole, "The Ardennes: Battle of the Bulge", Office of the Chief of Military History, Washington, D.C. In 1965 I worked with Cole and (on) some other books (I have more than ten books in this matter!) I received the invitation for the reunion of the 106th Division for July last year not before July 18th (for July 19th) and so it was too far from Diessen to St. Vith, 635 Km! But I sent my speech, I had in view on this day, to the 106th

Inf. Div. Association for publishing in their magazine. I wonder that Bastogne has an honorable place in American Military History and St. Vith is barely mentioned! (I experienced that fact each time I has been in the States!) The Battle of the Bulge was not fought solely at Bastogne or by the admirable coming in to action of Patton's Third Army. Here at St. Vith were all elements of tragedy, heroism, and self-sacrifice which go to make up human experience at its most acute phase! The actions of our Army around St. Vith exerted a great influence on the issue/result of the German intention/purpose - and that in manifold regard - briefly,:the schedule of the right wing of my Army - a whole army/corps was delayed by your defense around St. Vith - in spite of the ill-fated elements of the 106th division - these troops in this area held up the German Corps five days longer than our time table allowed and so they forced to detour the attacking forces so much the more as my right neighbor (the 6th SS Panzer Army) have had no success. The 106th Division was outflanked and encircled and overwhelmed by the Germans! In their rear!! By powerful German forces and in superiority in numbers and arms! It is in my opinion very wrong to blame the 106th Inf. Division. Detail you may find in the mentioned book - I fully agree with the author.
It was of great interest for me what you wrote about the little boy and his father as they passed our and your lines in December 1944. The misfortune for your side was a complete failure of your Intelligence Service! The Operation "Greiff" (Skorzeny) was absolutely against martial law, against the usage of war and against my feelings. I was not informed about this operation before Dec. 16th in the morning!
I agree of course to quote my remarks at St. Vith!

All for now but if you have more questions in the field (St. Vith or the Battle of the Bulge) I am willing to give you more information later!

With kindest regards and my very best wishes, dear Mr. Ringer .
Yours sincerely,

(S) Hasso von Manteuffel,

Hasso Eccard von Manteuffel was a German general during World War II who commanded the 5th Panzer Army.

by John Schaffner *(proud to call him my friend - Jim West)*
10/31/2019