

AS I RECALL...



**A collection of recollections, ruminations,
vignettes, and snippets from the life of
John-William Bunting
in his own words.**

Memories, like history, lend perspective to the present...

My Parents



My father, John Franklin Bunting, married Miriam Swartz on Oct 31, 1940. Miriam and their unborn child died on Nov 23, 1940 during a C-section that took place due to

hemorrhaging during her sixth month of pregnancy.

My mother, Eathyl Frances Hildebrand and George Robert Salisbury had been married since 1932. They had three children:



- Maggie (Mary Margaret - Aug 4, 1933)
- Betty (Elizabeth Anne - Feb 20, 1935)
- Bobby (George Robert (Feb 25, 1941)

George Sr, with lifelong hypertension, suffered a cerebral hemorrhage in the winter of 1942, dying on May 4, 1943 when George Jr was two.

Both having lost their mates, John and Eathyl found comfort in each other's company and married in 1944. I was born in 1945 and Bruce came along four years later, 1949.

What to call my father, since George Sr had been "Daddy"? The family decided on "Pappy."

My Story

I, John-William, born March 19, 1945 at Providence Hospital in Seattle, Washington, was a preemie that weighed 5.5 pounds and subsequently lost a pound. There were no incubators available because of World War II, so the doctor told my mom to take me home, and he did not expect me to live. Well, here I am 78 years old writing my memoirs. I was told that I was so weak that I could not nurse, so Mom and Betty would feed me by dripping milk droplets into my mouth.

Betty would sometimes miss supper because she wanted to get me to take two ounces of milk but I kept falling asleep. She would poke me, jiggle me and tickle my feet. I was told that my first bed was the bottom drawer of a dresser, removed and propped up with a block of wood or a brick.



We lived in Alderwood Manor till about September, 1946, when we moved to the Florence acres area of Monroe. We came to call our 40-acre property "The Place," or "Bunbury Hill." There, we (Mother, Pappy, Maggie, Betty, George, and I) lived in an 8' x 10' cabin until the cottage was built.

When I was old enough to be walking, I would play out in the bracken ferns; sometimes when Mom would call me, I would hide silently in the ferns.

One of my first memories was walking down to the blueberry patch in Bothell with my grandpa, William Arthur Bunting. He passed on in June of 1948, so I must have been between two and three years old.

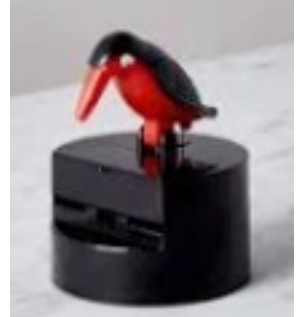
At the Bothell home of Grandpa and Grandma Bunting it always smelled like the Presto logs they burned in the kitchen stove. It seemed that Grandma Bunting (Marian Adelia Chandler Bunting) always sounded funny when she talked. She was born with a cleft palate. Of course, at my age, I didn't understand.



As I got older, when we would visit the Buntings at the Bothell place, I spent time looking through all the stuff that was left or stored in Pappy's shop there. Then, of course, there was Uncle Herb's

radio shack: we used to listen to him talk to some of his ham radio buddies from all over the world. That was always exciting.

Aunt Ethel and Uncle Pete (Roy) Sullivan lived in a little house on the Bothell compound also. Aunt Ethel always made such a fuss over us kids. She had no children of her own. I think she even used to pinch our cheeks. Aunt Ethel would give us boys the strangest things for Christmas. One time she gave me a woodpecker toothpick dispenser!



Sometimes when we would visit the Bothell folks we would stop and visit one of Pappy's sisters who lived just up the road about two miles. That would be Aunt Mildred and Roy Mellecker. Their house was interesting because one end of it looked like a boat. I was told that Uncle Roy started to build a boat and then turned it into a house.

The Mellecker cousins, John, Mary, Shirley, Linda, and Nancy, were the only cousins we ever saw or spent time with on the Bunting side. The only other cousin was Robert Morrison, son of Harold and Miriam (Bunting) Morrison. They lived in California, and I only recall seeing them a couple of times.

When I was four years old, we went to the Evergreen State Fair in Monroe. I had my picture taken by a newspaper photographer, which was then published in the paper.

The cottage bathroom was not plumbed, so we used an outhouse behind the woodshed. At night it was scary and I would take the green lantern, a battery powered flashlight, and wave it back and forth to check for any boogieman or wild



animals. After I got to the outhouse, shut the door, and did my business, I would have to work up enough courage to get back to the house.

One night as I was getting ready for bed and went outside by the front porch to take a leak over the bank, I got sprayed by a skunk. I thought I had peed on myself. Apparently I did not notice the smell, but when I went back into the house, everyone else sure noticed. I had on my red bib overalls and they had to be buried in the sand in the root cellar for a while to descent them and I got an unscheduled bath.



Just before Bruce was born, Pappy, George, and I gathered up clumps of grass sod and made a lawn in front of the cottage to surprise Mom when she and Bruce came home from the hospital.



On the day Bruce was born, April 13, 1949, there was a big earthquake. Pappy and I were at the Bothell property getting some glass panes for his shop windows. The ground began to shake and roll like a swell on the ocean, which made the trees sway back and forth and the shakes on the roof of the shed where we were getting the glass just rattled. The earthquake measured 6.7 on the Richter scale.

Domestic Water

Our household water came from Woods Creek, which required carrying one gallon empty glass jugs down to the creek, filling them, and carrying them back up to the house, about 200 yards each way. I remember it like it was yesterday: the sound of the air escaping the jug as the water displaced it, and watching the minnows, periwinkles and the water striders in the creek while the jugs filled.

Later, Pappy dug a well between the shop and the road that went down to the creek. He installed a pump that ran

off a generator that pumped water up to a tank that was about 15 feet above the cottage. From there, the water flowed by gravity down to the cottage. Yay, no more carrying water from the creek. Wow, we were living high! We still only had running water in the kitchen but no bathroom.

One day, I got a glass of water from the kitchen faucet and noticed that there was some small hair in the water. Yikes!



We went up to the water tank which had a cover to keep out rain and

leaves and found a chipmunk had gotten in under the cover and fallen into the tank and drowned. So we fished it out, and, sure enough, it was chipmunk hair. I am convinced that after drinking Woods Creek water and tank water with chipmunk hair and who knows what else in it, we all developed very strong immune systems.

Adventuring

One time George and I were down at the creek, south of the power house and on the west side of the creek where the neighbors had some pasture and some Hereford cattle. We had been just goofing around in the creek, chasing some eels and trying to catch some crawdads. George got to teasing a calf

and all of a sudden a mama cow came out of nowhere and charged us. We took off running for the fence line and just made it



through the barbed wire fence before the cow got there. A barb inflicted a laceration on George's scalp that bled like crazy, which shook him up. Wow, that was close.

Another time, George and I were down at Pappy's shop in the old chicken house on Stucky's farm. There was a family living in the old house at that time. I believe their name was Hostetler, and they had a daughter that was about a year or so older than me. I was about 6 or 7 at the time. Anyway, we started chasing a calf and would catch hold of its tail let it pull us along while we slid on our feet like we were skiing. That came to a stop when some adult yelled at us to knock it off.

We used to park our car in a shed by the chicken house/shop during the winter months when our road was not passable by car. We would all climb onto Pappy's tractor and head for the cottage.

The first hill after we left the farm was mostly clay, so when it was wet (which was most of the time from October to May) the tractor was the only thing that would make it up "Clay hill."

The second hill was mostly sand so we called it the "Sand Hill."

Coming home late at night when it was dark and raining, riding in the scoop of the tractor with George, I'd see the rain drops in the beam of the headlights. When I would look back where the tractor's exhaust pipe pointed up from the engine, every so often a glowing spark would shoot out and fade into the darkness. Pappy would drive and Mom would sit behind him, facing backwards. Bruce would be wrapped up in blankets and nestled in the tractor's tool tray at the right of the driver. They were all under the roof while George and I were braving the elements in the front scoop. Sometimes we had an umbrella to share, but not always. This took place after Maggie was in college and Betty was married.

It's funny, we never really complained. It was just the way life was for us. When we

got up to the cottage, we would all stumble in the dark except where the headlights from the tractor would shine. Pappy would let the tractor run with the headlights on until we all got inside and got a lamp lit. Then Pappy would come in and build a fire in the stove. George and I would get into our PJs and snuggle into bed. The sound of the tractor's engine, a 1928 Chevy four cylinder with a straight exhaust and no muffler, still lives in my head.

Water Sports

July and August always involved neighborhood swimming at the swimming hole on Woods Creek by the north pasture of Stucky's farm where Pappy's shop was when we first moved to Monroe. One time there was a pretty good turnout ~ at least four or five families were represented. Anyway, there was a dugout log, kind of like a dugout canoe, in which I was riding while two of the older boys were pushing me back and forth across the creek. Some young joker dove in and grabbed the back end of my ride and flipped me out. I went headfirst into the drink. I remember it so clearly. I could see the minnows swimming by and periwinkles crawling on the bottom. I'm guessing the water was only 4 ½ feet deep, but not knowing how to swim, I panicked and took in some water. Just at that moment my brother George grabbed my feet and pulled me out and one of the older boys carried me to the bank where I sputtered and coughed for a bit. Other than being a little scared, I

was OK. There were other good times at the swimming hole, but that one stands out for me.

Before Maggie and Betty left home, there were times down at the creek in the summer when we were skinny dipping, swimming, and bathing. This is where I got my introduction to the female anatomy.

Before Maggie left for college, during the summer, I remember she was kind of sweet on Hank Anderson who lived west of us, across the creek, on the Florence Acres Loop Road. He went down to the creek with me a couple of times and gave me some pointers on how to catch trout.

When Will Gering was courting Betty, I remember we used to hear him coming with his 1934 Chevy pickup when he came down the hill through the swale before reaching the cottage. The mufflers were loud and the truck would repeatedly backfire.

I was six years old when Betty and Will got married at the Mennonite Country Church. It was one of the few times my Pappy dressed up in a suit. Weddings and funerals were the only times he wore a suit.



Provisioning

About 1950, I remember I got up early one morning and was determined to

help provide for the family. I dressed quietly and went out to the woodshed and got the gaff hook and headed down to the creek. The salmon were running and I wanted to get one. Remember, I was only 5 years old. The gaff hook had about an 8 or 9 foot pole/handle, so I watched until I saw a big salmon with no spots on it (which meant it was fresher than the ones with spots) and put the hook across it and gave a good jerk which set the hook. The trick was to drag the fish onto the land before it came off the hook. Well, I managed to do that without losing it. My guess is that it was somewhere between 24 and 30 inches long. I couldn't lift it, so I dragged it all the way back up to the cottage with the gaff hook. That evening, we had salmon roe and salmon steaks for supper.

Another time, Pappy and I had just left the chicken house shop and were heading back to the cottage. We had just reached the top of the first hill and saw a doe standing on the knoll on the left side of the road. Pappy stopped the tractor, picked up the Iver Johnson 12 gauge single shot, loaded with .00 buckshot, took aim, and BOOM, the doe dropped in her tracks.



We put it in the scoop of the tractor and headed home. Pappy hung the deer in the woodshed.

The next day, Bob Nash, a friend of Pappy's, came over and offered to skin the deer out and quarter it. I still have the Iver Johnson 12 gauge.

More from Mother Nature

One fall day Mom, George, Bruce, and I were at the cottage. There was a horrific thunder storm, heavy rain and wind. All of a sudden, there was a loud BOOM and the house even shook.



A lightning bolt had hit an old dead tree snag on the hill just above the house. The snag exploded and some of the pieces landed down next to the house.

Well, Pappy was down at the chicken house shop looking up in the direction of the cottage and saw the flash, heard the boom, and saw pieces of wood flying everywhere and thought it had struck the house. He dropped everything and ran all the way up the path through the

woods to the cottage, about a quarter of a mile, in the pouring rain to find us all OK. That was kind of scary. I think it was after that when Pappy put a military surplus set of field phones in the shop and the cottage, stringing flexible wire between. Piezo-electric crystals eliminated the need for batteries.

Hydro-Electric Headaches

One day, the neighbor at the falls came and told Pappy that their water power generating system was not working right. The water was just barely coming out of the turbine exhaust. I went with Pappy to check it out. Pappy thought there must be something blocking the flow, so he had them shut off the water at the top of the penstock. Then, because of the way the turbine housing was built, he had to cut out a section on the top of the housing with the cutting torch. When he opened it up, he found a large beaver draped over the screen that kept debris from getting in the turbine. It was enough to almost stop the flow of water. With the dead beaver removed, the section welded back in place, and the water turned on, they were back in business.

Another time, Pappy was asked to do some maintenance work on that same power plant. The commutator needed to be dressed and, because he could not bring the part to the shop and do the work in the lathe, he had to build a fixture to hold the cutting tool and mount it right on the generator. Then,

with the brush assembly removed, he could dress the commutator with the generator running (pretty ingenious). I learned a lot from Pappy just by observing how he did things. I would watch for hours when he was doing a job on the lathe, and the same with the mill or any other piece of equipment. I felt like I had served an apprenticeship by way of visual aids.

I have fond memories of making egg runs to the Hepper farm at the falls. George and I would hike to the top of Bunbury Hill and then follow the old logging railroad grade north to the falls. Then we would walk across the diversion dam to the house on the west side of the creek, taking empty egg cartons up and carefully bringing full ones back. Because of the maintenance and repair work that Pappy did on the hydro power plant at the falls, we always got all the eggs we could use.

Outside School

By the time I was in school, it seemed that the summers were just too short. School started the first week in September, and if we had a warm and sunny “Indian Summer,” it was pure torture for me to be in school. After getting off the school bus at Stucky’s farm, I would take my sweet time walking home. A lot of times, George would go on ahead because I was dragging my feet. Many times, going through the cow pasture, I would kick over cow pies and pick up angle worms

and put them in my pocket. Then, when I got home, I would transfer them to a tin can or jar to use on the next fishing trip to the creek. Sad to say, some of the worms did not get used soon enough, and they would rot. Boy, would they stink!

Once, coming home from the bus stop, George had gone on ahead, and when I got to the cow pasture at the old Stucky farm, Mr. Stucky was either harrowing or disking, and he waved for me to come over to the tractor. He had put a saddle over the cowl of the John Deere for one of his grandsons, and he asked me if I wanted a ride up to the north end of the field. How could I say no? So, I climbed up on the saddle and he told me to hang on tight but not to touch the exhaust pipe. I grabbed the saddle horn and he engaged the clutch. Those older John Deere tractors (I think it was a John Deere A) had a hand operated clutch.



The front end of the tractor came off the ground about a foot, and, of course, he laughed. Then he did it again. I managed to hold on and that was my ride on a John Deere bronco. After the

bucking, the rest of the ride was relatively smooth. I think that was my first love affair with a "Johnny Popper." When we walked home from the bus stop, we had a choice to stay on the road or go across the pasture and through the woods on a path which I think was a little shorter. One day, I had just crested the first hill (the infamous "Clay Hill"), and from that point, you could look to the west and see down the fence row at the north end of the cow pasture. That fence row went all the way down to Woods Creek. I saw something move out of the corner of my eye, and when I turned to look, there was a cougar just jumping over the fence and going into the woods. It kind of startled me, but I wasn't really scared. This was one of three cougars in the wild that I have seen in my lifetime.

Just the Berries

This is more about how a family tradition got started, at least for me and my immediate family. This starts out with my sister Maggie as told to me by those older than me. Maggie was out picking blackberries (the small trailing ones, not Himalayas or Evergreen). She was picking on one side of a big burned out stump, and as she worked her way around the stump, she came face to face with a bear who was working its way around the stump. She threw her can of berries into the air and ran for the cottage. It seems the bear ran just as fast in the opposite direction.

From then on, many times when I accompanied her, that earlier encounter did not dampen her berry picking spirit. I have many fond memories of picking blackberries with Maggie and Betty. As time went on, even before I was married, my bride-to-be and I would search out and keep secret our favorite blackberry picking spots. Until we moved away from Western Washington, it was pretty much an annual affair. You ask anyone from my family, and they will tell you little wild blackberry pie is to die for.

When Emily and I lived on our piece of "The Place" on Hand Road, the tree trimming people (Asplundh) were working on our road and needed a place to dump their mulch. We told them they could dump some on our property. I think they must have dumped 8 or 10 loads on the edge of our garden next to the woods. The next year, the little wild blackberries took over that whole pile of mulch, and we picked and picked, putting 22 quarts of berries in the freezer.

More Time with Nature

Spending a day at the creek was always special for me. First, I had an early breakfast, probably corn flakes, and then I took off to the creek. Things to take were a fishing pole, matches, and a pocket knife. The fishing pole I had at the time was kind of a makeshift modified job only about 5 feet long. A short pole was almost a necessity because it was so brushy, you just had to be able

to poke your pole out between the bushes wherever you could. What did I do all day? Hey, exploring, wading, and digging fresh water clams (I never did eat any of those). Then I had to find bait for fishing. Sometimes I would use clams, catch some periwinkles, or turn over some rocks or rotten logs to find worms or grubs.

Then, around noon when I got hungry, I would catch a trout, build a little fire, and roast the fish on a green forked stick.



That way, I never had to pack a lunch. In those days, we would drink water right out of the creek. I would pretty much spend all day enjoying nature. I always felt right at home in the woods among the sounds, smells, and beauty of creation. I never had any close encounters with wild life.

Once in a while, I would see a raccoon or beaver, or a weasel. There were always chipmunks and squirrels. I don't recall ever seeing a bear, but I was pretty sure I

heard one once or twice. When they were running away from the smell of people, they sounded like a tank going through the brush. There were always lots of birds; if you were quiet, you could hear them singing. The squirrels will let you know if someone or something is about.

The birds I remember best were the kingfisher and the dipper down at the creek. In the woods and meadows, there were the smaller birds, chickadees, wrens, bushtits, cedar waxwings and goldfinch. The larger birds were crows, hawks, and the occasional grouse or pheasant that would fly up and startle you. Sometimes we would see ducks down at the creek. Deer were always about, and if I didn't see them I would hear them, either snort or stomp or both. Life for me was never boring in nature.

In the summer, trout were not the only thing on the menu. There were salmon berries, blackberries, huckleberries, thimbleberries, and for salad there were bracken fern fronds, dandelion leaves, cattail shoots, and miner's lettuce. I



have had several people, including my wife ask me, "Wasn't your mom worried about you?"

Apparently not, she was a woman of great faith and must have trusted that my spirit guides or guardian angels would do their jobs.

I was always very aware of my surroundings. Having grown up in and around nature, I learned and knew what my boundaries were, like don't walk out on slippery logs or rocks and respect fast-moving water. Don't climb trees with dead limbs, and when hiking, always plan for an alternate route, especially if it is steep up or down. I always had a good sense of direction and knew how to pick out landmarks. I can truthfully say, I have never been lost, and could always back track by recognizing things I saw on the way in and could find my way out. On longer one-way trips, you have to lock on to bigger and more distant landmarks. These skills served me well in life.

Almost every country boy owned a slingshot and knew how to use it. I have had several, and all of the early ones I made myself. Innertube rubber made the best sling straps, and the frames (handle) could be just a forked branch. I got pretty good at hitting what I was aiming at, but every young sling shot shooter always dreams of the day he will graduate to a BB gun. I was looking



forward to that upgrade, and when the day finally came, I was one happy camper. The only down side was that I had to save my pennies to buy BBs.

Ways I could earn some money included peeling cascara bark. We would spread it out, usually on a low-pitched roof, and let it dry in the sun. When we got enough dried, we would crush it up, put it in a burlap bag, and take it to the feed store. I think some hardware stores would also buy it. We got ten cents per pound for it.

Another source of money was collecting pop bottles and beer bottles which we could sell for two cents each. I didn't have a source for bottles when we lived in the country, so I had another way. Pappy used to keep his brazing rod stored hanging from the ceiling joists on nails. Because the shop was heated with wood, anything that was up near the ceiling would get smoky and black. Brazing rod works best if it is clean, so Pappy told me that if I would polish those rods with steel wool, he could pay me a penny for each one. The rods varied in diameter from 1/16 to 1/4" and were 36 inches long. It was time consuming and dirty, but on a rainy day, working by the stove where it was warm, I could make two or three dollars when there was nothing to do outside. I still have some of that brazing rod in my shop.

After we moved to town, I went with Pappy many times out to the shop on Saturdays. These Saturday trips almost always included a stop at Joe Moore's wrecking yard. It was fun picking through all the junk barrels looking for treasures. Pappy would almost always come away with no less than 40 or 50 pounds of goodies. I guess that is why we had to haul away over 85 tons of steel after Pappy passed on. I promised my boys that I would not do that to them. "Pappy, you are forgiven, no regrets."

Pappy once built a prototype pea vine sheller/thrasher for a customer and we got some fresh peas out of the first test run. Another time, he built some portable bandsaw sharpeners to be used in shake and shingle mills.

We used to spend a lot of time at the creek in the summer. We would swim, float on logs, and build rafts. Pappy found an old airplane fuel tank that was rectangular in shape and was made from rubber, similar to what truck mud flaps are made out of. He cut the top out and put a board at each end for seats, so now we had a barge/boat. The boat made it through one summer, but during the winter the creek rose and the barge/boat got stuck under a log jam and we could not get it out, so that ended that.

Power Unleashed

One day when Pappy was working at the chicken house/shop in Monroe, the power went off and then came back on.

One of his bench grinders started revving up, so he jerked out the plug and went outside to see what was going on. He noticed some smoke and blue arcing coming from Raymond Hand's place. He jumped on the tractor to go check it out. Raymond had cut down a tree in front of their house and it fell onto the power line (7200 volts). The power was arcing through the tree and into the barbed wire fence and searing a hole into a now-dead cow lying on the ground next to the fence. Pappy yelled to Raymond to go back into the house and stay there. Pappy drove the tractor back to the shop and got a long dry wooden pole and fastened a hook to the end of it. Driving back to the power pole where there was a fused disconnect, he climbed up on the roof of the tractor, and with the long pole, he pulled the disconnect, which shut off the power. Well, the damage was only one dead cow thanks to Pappy's quick thinking and knowing what to do.

We did not have any electricity at the cottage originally. Most of the time reading was just by kerosene lamp. Then Pappy installed a 24-volt battery system for lighting. He also put in a 24-volt dyna-motor to occasionally supply 110 volts for playing the radio or 45-rpm record player. On Saturday nights we could listen to the Grand Old Opry. Later on, Pappy got really high tech and built a dam across the swale southeast of the cottage and put in a pipeline from there to the creek level which was maybe a 60-75 foot drop. The pipe was salvaged

from abandoned pipe from along the Pipeline Road. That line supplied Everett's water.

Next to the creek, but back far enough to not get flooded, he built a small building about 6' x 8' feet and installed a Pelton wheel driving a 1700 watt generator and power lines that went up to the cottage. When it was first working, Pappy or someone had to walk all the way down to the power house at the creek and open up a valve so water from the pipeline would turn the turbine. Then Pappy, ingenious as he was, (besides not wanting to walk all the way down to the creek, especially in the dark or in the rain) rigged up a remote control which consisted of a battery powered DC motor that had a gear drive that would rotate the valve to open or shut off the water to the turbine. Now with extra wires between the power house and the cottage, all we had to do for hydro power was to throw a switch, one way for "on" and the other way for power "off." There was a battery down at the power house to run this, and it was kept charged by power from the hydro unit. The only down side to this set up was that there was only enough water in the reservoir behind the dam to operate the hydro power in the winter months. But hey, when we had it, we had it good.

Around 1950, Pappy started to build his new shop up at "The Place." ("The Place" was generic and "Bunbury Hill" was Bunting/Salisbury hybridized.) It

took about a year to get the shop closed in and the machinery all moved from the chicken house/shop at Stucky's. We were still off the grid, so Pappy had his own generator system for the shop. It included a gas powered generator and some lead/acid batteries in glass containers. I think Pappy told me they were used originally in submarines.

He must have also had an inverter to change the DC current to AC. I don't remember all the details on that, but we could always tell when Pappy was running his machinery because we could hear the generator running. The battery set provided power for the 24-volt lighting system for the cottage.

It was not until the County built the extension on Hand Road which connected it up with the Pipeline Road up past the falls, that Pappy was able to get electrical power from the PUD, about 1956 or 1957.

When they were putting in the new road through our property on the north side of The Place, they had to blast some rock just above where Pappy's shop was. On that day, they gave Pappy a warning so he stayed outside so he could see if any rocks were coming his way. Well, sure enough, when the blast went off, a rock about the size of a large grapefruit came down and went through the roof of the shop. Other than the hole in the roof, there was no other damage, and the County paid to fix the roof. Then Pappy was able to get the shop all wired and

hooked up to the PUD. That was a huge improvement and was a real convenience – no more generator or gas or batteries (except for backup). After the new county road was in, Pappy's friend Ray Fox came with his D6 Cat and made a new driveway that connected to the new road. This driveway was closer to the shop and was another big improvement.

Flying Fish!

Pappy had a good friend, Howard Hyde, in Everett. Howard had his own airplane (I think a Piper Cub), and he would fly over our place at Christmastime and drop us a crate of kippered salmon by parachute. I think he did this two or three years in a row, and boy, was that ever exciting. It was a good thing that the leaves were off the trees so we could find the parachute. It would sometimes get hung up in the trees. I think only one time it landed in the open orchard area.

Sometimes, in the summertime, Howard would fly over and buzz the tops of the trees. We would hear him when he made his first pass, and if we were in the house, we would run outside and watch for the next pass. We would wave our arms, and after three or four passes, he would rock the wings to wave goodbye. Howard eventually sold his ownership in the plane, and we missed the flyovers. Thanks, Howard, for the memories. The last official flyover of "The Place" was done by me in 1969 in a Cessna 150 when I was taking flying lessons and after I had soloed. More on that later.

Away from Home

The summer after first grade I went to spend a week at Will and Betty's first house in Redmond. A strange sound coming from the kitchen woke me up several times during the night. It was the sound of the refrigerator starting and running, a sound that was new to me.

During that visit, there was a neighbor boy about my age, and we played together. There was a gravel road that went from where the house was up to a reservoir. I think it supplied water for the town of Redmond. We hiked up to it and I remember how clear and light blue the water was. All of a sudden, this kid pointed and said, "Look over there. I see a tiger." He started running back down to the house. Well, I didn't see any tiger, but I wasn't going to hang around there and make sure, so I ran also. I knew he had just made it up, but this was not country that I was familiar with and I was a long way from home, so I have to admit, I was a little spooked.

One day that week, I was invited to ride along with the neighbor kid and his parents. They were going to return a small utility trailer that they had borrowed, so the kid (I don't remember his name) and I rode in the back seat watching the trailer out the rear window. All of a sudden, the trailer came loose from the car and went into the ditch. Luckily, it stayed on our side of the road. I don't think the kid's dad knew it came

loose, so we hollered and said the trailer came off. He stopped and we went back to get it. The trailer didn't seem to be damaged, but the hitch was jammed into the dirt. He got it hooked up to the car again and we were on our way. The rest of the trip was kind of quiet. I think his mom and dad were kind of shook up. My guess is that he forgot to latch the lock on the hitch the first time, and he had no safety chains. For me, it was quite the day to remember. I don't remember much else from that week (kind of hard to top the trailer adventure), but it was different being away from home. I always enjoyed spending time with Will and Betty.

Urban Struggles

We moved to town in July 1953. This all came about after mom started teaching school. The winter before, mom was driving to school in the '37 Chevy, and the roads were icy and she was spooked by an oncoming car while crossing an icy bridge surface. Someone stopped and helped her get back on the road. It was then that she was determined to move to town. That made perfect sense to her since she was teaching in town, but for me, I had mixed feelings. Moving was exciting and all, but on the other hand, I was being taken out of my element, and I soon learned that I was not very street smart.

Our new two-story house was huge compared to the cottage. We had three bedrooms and two bathrooms - no more

trips to the outhouse. George got his own room, and Bruce and I shared a room with bunk beds. We also had a refrigerator for the first time and a telephone. Wow!

The house was on four lots, so there was a good-sized back yard. For me, that was a lifesaver. There were three fruit trees and a filbert tree and plenty of room for me to plant a small garden. All of this I adjusted to quite easily. It was the things beyond my back yard sanctuary that took longer and got me into trouble more than once. Living in the country did not prepare me for life in the real world, or even in the small town of Monroe, which in the 1950s was pretty laid back as towns go.

My first round of trouble took place at the Five and Dime Store. Some kids from my school who I thought I knew asked me to hang out with them. They suggested going to the dime store. I thought that sounded like fun, so we went into the store which was full of candy and toys and all kinds of neat stuff. Well, these kids, who I trusted, were not trustworthy, and they were not my friends. They were shoplifting candy and stuff and gave some to me, which I thought they paid for.

All of a sudden the store clerk yelled at them to stop. I got scared and ran out of the store and all the way home. I did not know what happened to the other kids. I think the store clerk grabbed at least one

of them. Well, when Mom got home later in the day, she got a call from the Monroe Chief of Police asking her to go to the store and settle some things. I told her my story and that I did not know what was going on, and when the store clerk yelled at us I got scared and ran. We went to the store and explained everything to the clerk and the police. Mom paid for the candy I had eaten, and everything was OK. The police said there had been trouble with those kids before and advised me to not hang out with them in the future.

Well, after that, those kids had it in for me. They would bully me at school and after school they would chase me and push me around. If I had any books or papers, they would end up on the ground. So, the challenge for me (because there were usually two or three of them) was to evade them or outrun them. That worked most of the time, but I always had to be looking over my shoulder. Mom and I came up with a better plan. I would get on one of the school busses and ride over to the school across town where she taught and I could help her after school. I would clean the chalk boards, dust the erasers, and empty the waste baskets. That worked out well for both of us.

When we moved to town, Bruce was not old enough to go to school, so while George and I were in school and Mom was teaching, Bruce would stay at Grandma Gering's house across the

street kitty-corner from Central Grade School. When Bruce was old enough to start school, the new Frank Wagner Elementary School on Dickenson Road had just been finished west of the Junior High school. Mom then moved from the old Park Place School to Frank Wagner and taught second grade there.

Bruce and I didn't do a lot of things together because of our four year age difference. It was the same with George and me – especially after we moved to town. We each had our own friends and tolerated each other as best we knew how. But when it came down to green apple fights, we were all on the same team.

I helped George when he had his paper route. Once we rode our bikes up Wagner Hill to George's friend, Jerry Senner's house. On the way home, coming down the hill, the front wheel of George's bike glanced off a large rock and he went over the handlebars and bounced along the blacktop on his shoulders and face. He was OK, but it was kind of scary.

On another day, I was fishing at the river, standing on the cement bulkhead where the sewage dumped into the river. George and his friend Paul Pitzinger were throwing rocks in the water from behind me, so I yelled at them to stop scaring the fish away. I stood up and turned around and WHACK, a rock hit me right in the head. I was lucky I didn't

fall backward into the river. I put my hand on my head and then looked at my hand. Blood, and lots of it. They escorted me back to Paul's house which was about three blocks from the river and cleaned me up as best they could. Then George and I headed home. I didn't need any stitches, but it did leave a scar.

Bruce and I made homemade go-carts. At that time, they had no motor, just push or coast. But Bruce mostly hung out with his "brother from another mother," Scott Cedargreen, who lived only a block or so away from us.

Bruce and I had guinea pigs. We would put them out on the lawn in their boxes with a chicken wire bottom so they could eat grass and clover. At night, we would bring them into our bedroom, but they were noisy and stinky.

When George left for college, I got his room and Bruce got our shared room.

Now that I lived in town, there were more opportunities to earn some spending money. One way was picking strawberries. The first time I picked was in a field down by the river. My heart wasn't really in it. I think more berries went in my mouth than in the berry boxes. There were six boxes in a carrier, and I managed to fill only four carriers. When you would bring your berries to the checker, they would punch a card with your name on it. I kind of goofed

off the rest of the day, so I didn't have much to show at the end of the day. I think they paid 25 cents per carrier and I only picked four, so I got paid a silver dollar. The checker kind of gave me a dirty look, like if that's all the better you can do, don't bother coming back. Well, that suited me just fine since I didn't like picking berries anyway.

Mowing the lawn for my third grade teacher, Mrs. Peterson was far better. She would pay me a dollar to mow and 25 cents if I would rake the lawn. I could mow and rake it in 30 minutes, so that sure beat bending over picking berries.

At 13 or 14, I could go with Mom and pick raspberries at George Keck's farm. That wasn't as bad as you didn't have to bend over, and if you were lucky, you could pick on the shady side of the row. I think for two years in a row, I earned enough money to buy new school clothes. I even got a compliment from the clerk at JC Penney's when I paid for my clothes with my own money. It made me feel good and made Mom proud of me.

Time in Skagit County

The summer between my 5th and 6th grades, I had another chance to be away from home. My 5th grade teacher had a meeting with my mom and told her that without some summer make-up time, she was not comfortable moving me on to the 6th grade. So arrangements were made for me to go with Maggie and her

husband, Hank, up to Western Washington College in Bellingham. Maggie was taking some post-graduate courses and Hank did some janitorial work at the college. I was able to take classes to qualify me for 6th grade. There were some fun times that summer also. It is interesting that I don't even remember the classes I took, but I do remember going on outings with Maggie and Hank. They were both the outdoorsy type which suited me just fine.

One weekend, Hank rented a boat and had planned a trip out to Waldren Island which is about 15 miles west of Bellingham in the San Juan Islands. Maggie and Hank had some friends that lived on the island, and it was going to be a weekend trip. However, the weather did not cooperate at all. The boat that Hank rented was about 16 feet long. It had a windshield but was all open. It was equipped with an outboard motor, maybe 20 hp. It wasn't raining but the wind came up and it was cold and cloudy.

We got across Bellingham Bay and started through Hale Passage. That's where things got rough. The swells got to be over five feet high, enough that when we were in the trough, we could only see land looking down the trough, fore and aft was just the tops of the swells. Finally, Hank decided to turn back after the motor almost got flooded out with water from the high waves. It was kind of scary

turning the boat around and thankfully the motor didn't die on us. Going back, the wind was at our back but we still had to fight the swells until we got well into Bellingham Bay again. Every time we hit the next swell, water would splash over the windshield and we got a little wet. Until we got into calmer water, the backside of the swell would push our boat and almost come in over the stern. I know that was the thing that scared me the most. The calm water of the Bay was a welcome sight. Even though we didn't get to where we were going, it was quite an adventure.

We went on several drives, one was up by Mount Baker and several times we drove down Chuckanut Drive where Maggie and Hank had some friends. On one visit, the friends had a boy that was about my age. We went out and played in the woods. They lived just above the highway, and that summer the state road crews were putting new asphalt on Chuckanut Drive. So he and I decided to go see for ourselves. We literally climbed and crawled like monkeys in and over the Ocean Spray bushes until we got close to the highway where we could watch the road crew.

I felt something bothering me on my arm on the inside of my elbow. I pulled up my sleeve and found a wood tick stuck in my skin. I carefully pulled it until it came out. Then I tried to throw it into the road (we were up on the bank about eight feet or so). When I raised my

hand to throw it, it fell out of my hand and landed on my shoulder. The kid that was with me grabbed it and threw it on the road just as the asphalt roller went by. That was my plan all along. Good riddance to that tick.

When we were leaving their place, the kid gave me a set of golf clubs. I wasn't crazy about golf, but Hank was, so I thought maybe I'd play some golf with Hank. I did hit some golf balls in the athletic field next to the apartments where we stayed, but later I found out that the kid had stolen the golf clubs from his neighbor. I told Hank about it and the clubs got returned to the owner.

I met another kid who lived in the neighborhood by the college. We would play in the woods behind the apartments where we stayed. We built a fort and made trails and had a lot of fun. Behind the apartments a hill led up to the woods and we found some fossils and coal there. We made slingshots with rubber bands and used bobby pins for ammo. We looped the rubber bands between our first and second fingers and slipped the bobby pin over the rubber band, pulled it back, and let it go. It worked pretty well if you spread the bobby pin a little so it would not hang up on the rubber band.

I was shooting at some birds that sat on the wires connected to the apartments. One day, the neighbor lady lectured me on how I shouldn't be so cruel, and that made me feel bad, so after that I only

shot slugs. There was always plenty of ammo available because in those days all the women and girls used bobby pins in their hair. So we could find them in just about any parking lot or sidewalk. They were free to the finder. I'm sure if people saw me stooping to pick up a rusty bobby pin, they might think me a bit strange.

On my twelfth birthday, my best gift was a six foot fiberglass pram — my own boat! My uncle Roy Mellecker was building these little boats and thought they would sell like hotcakes. I think he sold a few, but not as many as he'd hoped. Pappy made a deal with him to get one for me, and boy, was I a happy camper, or at least a happy fisherman. I had also saved up a little cash, added my birthday money to that, and bought a brand new Wright and McGill fiberglass fishing pole. I was on cloud nine with my new boat and new fishing rod. I still have the boat and fishing rod to this day.

Our house in Monroe was just five and a half blocks from the Skykomish River, and Woods Creek joined the river right close to where I could launch my boat. The boat was light enough so I could carry it on my back like a turtle shell. So, any spare time and sometimes whole days when there was no school or chores to do at home, you could find me and my boat down at the river or up Woods Creek. I would go anywhere that I could out-row the current.

I even found an old outboard motor and an old lawn mower that had a vertical shaft that ran well, and Pappy made me an adapter plate to fit it onto the outboard bottom end. Now, I was really first class. I think the motor was only 1.5 hp, but it was faster than rowing. So, I spent many hours on the river come rain or shine. If I did get caught in a rain shower, I would just park the boat under the Lewis Street Bridge and fish there out of the rain. Even walking home in the rain, carrying the boat on my back kept me dry.

A lot of times I didn't catch any fish, but that was OK with me since I was not much of a fish eater. That probably stemmed from the fact that when we lived out on "the place," every fall when the salmon would run (spawn) we would eat quite a lot of fish and they were always kind of greasy and fishy tasting because they were spawning and old and about to die, not fresh like the ones caught in the salt water. But, even though I didn't like to eat fish all that much, it sure was fun to catch them. There were times when the fish were just not biting, and that gave me the chance to explore every inch of accessible water way. I would go as far up Woods Creek to where the grade school was. Once a friend and I were just starting to drift back down the creek to the river from the school when we spotted, guess who? Remember the bullies I talked about? Well, a couple of them were on Buck Island. Buck Island was between Woods

Creek and the Skykomish River. These two bullies had BB guns and they started shooting at us. I told my friend to lie down in the boat, which we both did. With BBs bouncing off the side of the boat, we just drifted down the creek until we got out of their range.

Those bullies just kept showing up in my life. Another time, I was with a friend on the creek behind the grade school, just minding our own business. One of the bullies was across the creek on Buck Island with a bow and arrow. He yelled at me and said "Hey, Bunting, I am going to shoot you." Then he laughed and he did shoot at me. I saw the arrow coming straight at my stomach, like the slow motion in a movie clicking one frame at a time. At the last second, I turned and pulled back my mid-section and the arrow whizzed past me and stuck in the bank. We didn't stick around but got out of there in a hurry. That was the last encounter I had with that bully, and that suited me just fine.

One time I went up Woods Creek from the river, almost to the back of the Central Grade School. I used the outboard motor to go up stream and then drifted back down toward the river. When I got close to the mouth of Woods Creek, I decided to start up the outboard again. When it started, nothing happened, no thrust. I shut the motor off and tipped it up and realized the prop was gone. It just fell off somewhere upstream. I did find another

propeller later at the junk yard that fit the shaft, but it was a little bigger in diameter so it kind of lugged the motor and did not provide the same thrust as the original one. Sometime later, I gave away or traded the outboard motor to someone.

When the motor had the original propeller on it, I would go out in the main current of the Skykomish River and, with the motor at full throttle I would just stay in one place, so I could never go up stream in the river where the current was the strongest. I had to stay close to the Lewis Street bridge. The furthest I ever went downstream from the bridge was maybe 200 yards. My favorite spot was under the bridge and at the mouth of Woods Creek which covered about 100 yards.

About Those Green Apples?

There were other conflicts that came up in the neighborhood. The family that lived just behind our house in town had five boys. The three oldest seemed to have it in for George and me. Two of the fruit trees in our back yard were apple trees. I'm not sure who started it, but we got into an apple fight. The green apples were about the size of golf balls or just a bit bigger, and somehow one or more would become airborne. If they came from the south, they started it. If they came from the north, we started it. Most of the time, things never got out of hand (pun intended). But, one time we were having a little shouting/name calling. I

was standing on our back porch which had a waist high railing that was closed in below. Truth be told, I was egging them on, thinking that if they threw an apple, I could duck behind the railing. The oldest one of them let one fly, so I ducked down and the apple went through the kitchen window and landed right in a cup of coffee that a friend of my dad's had been drinking. Wow, bad move! Well, Pappy came out and grabbed the poor kid and made him sit in a chair in the kitchen until my dad's friend left. Then Pappy marched the kid home where he got in big trouble because his dad had to pay for a new window pane.

Another time, one of the same neighbor boys and myself got into a knock down, rub your face in the grass kind of thing. Someone called the police (I think it was my mom) and Charlie Hill, the police chief, came by and had a talk with us boys and made us shake hands and apologize. After that, things seemed better between us and the neighbor boys.

When I was 13, I got to spend a couple of weeks with Maggie and Hank at their first little house in Vancouver, Washington. I was excited because I got to ride the bus from Everett down to Vancouver all by myself with my fishing rod and suitcase. It seemed like a long ride because the bus stopped at almost every little town to pick up and drop off mail. I remember it was almost dark when we got to Vancouver and I was sure

glad to see Maggie when she met me at the bus station. Those two weeks turned out to be full of fun things. We went blackberry picking, and that was the first time I tasted Grape Nuts with blackberries on them. That has been a favorite of mine ever since, and if I can't get blackberries, blueberries or Marion berries will do just fine.

One day we went up the Columbia River to Stevenson and I got to meet Hank's mom and dad. From there, we continued up river to Carson and drove up along the Wind River to a hot springs where I got to drink some mineral water. It was fizzy, like soda pop. Up the Wind River from there we visited a fish hatchery and saw some really big fish, but they were off limits. Another day, Hank and I drove up to the Wind River again and fished for steelhead. Hank had made a few casts but no bites. I told him you have to spit on the fishing lure before you cast. He looked at me kind of funny, then spit on his lure and cast way out into a deep spot. Wham, he hooked a nice six pound steelhead. We were both grinning from ear to ear after he landed that one. When we got home, he barbecued it and I thought it tasted so good. He knew how to season and cook it just right.

Another day, we took Hank's boat, an eight foot pram just like my little boat, only longer, and we drove up the Columbia River, past the Wind River, to Little White Salmon River where we put

the boat in.

I was determined to catch my first steelhead. We started trolling and I was using a fluorescent red flatfish lure. They kind of wiggle when the boat is moving just the right speed and make the tip of your fishing rod bounce. All of a sudden, I felt a drag on my line and thought I had snagged on something. Hank said, "Jerk your rod and set the hook. I think you have a fish on."

Sure enough, I set the hook, and the fight was on. The fish made several runs and even came out of the water once and tried to shake loose, but I kept the line tight and played him till he was tired enough that I could start pulling him in. My heart was pounding, and when I got him close to the boat, Hank got ready to grab him with the gaff hook. Suddenly my line broke and the fish slowly sank and swam away. I was so disappointed and I came so close to diving in the water to try and grab my prize. I just sat there thinking I cannot believe what just happened. Hank felt so bad for me. Oh, well, it was fun as long as it lasted. I did catch a steelhead; I just didn't get to keep it. That gives a whole new meaning to "catch and release" which phrase didn't even exist in those days. I got over the loss and remembered it as a fun time. I found out the reason my line broke was because the eyelet on the tip of my fishing rod was faulty. The line had worn a groove in the eyelet, and with all the tension on it, the line frayed and broke. Hank took me to a sporting goods store

and bought a new eyelet with a glass liner, so the problem would never happen again. So, off with the old, and on with the new. That eyelet is still on that fishing rod and good to this day. You probably figured out that I keep things a long time. You're right, I do.

When I was there that summer, Hank decided to paint a car that he had. It was a 1940 Chevy coupe. I got to help him with that project. We wet sanded the whole car and then masked off all the chrome trim and window glass. Hank then rented a spray gun and painted the car all white. It turned out pretty good I thought. Maggie and Hank drove me home in their 1955 Pontiac, not the white Chevy.

I spent some time in several local lakes which included Lake Roesiger, Wagner Lake, Woods Lake, and Lake Sixteen, to name a few. One of the first times I remember having my boat at Lake Roesiger was with the youth group from church, the Stuckys, Senners, Unruhs, Blocks, and the Buntings. Anyway I had been playing around with my boat when Jim Stucky wanted to try it out. He was a big strong farm boy, and the next thing I knew, I saw him pulling so hard on the oars that he broke one. That ended the fun for the day. I made a new pair of oars out of cedar which were stronger than the first pair. Several years later, one of them broke, and I bought another pair that I still have today.

Another time at Lake Roesiger, I was with Mike Curtiss, and we were the farthest away from the boat launch in the third part of the lake (Roesiger has two main lakes with a smaller one that connects the two). Some teen-age girl was driving her parents' power boat irresponsibly and kept going around us as close as she could and almost swamped our boat. With two people, my boat only had about six inches of freeboard. Mike was really scared because he could not swim. We did have flotation safety cushions, but he was pretty shook up. Finally someone from one of the cabins close to where we were yelled at the girl. She laughed but left us alone. The guy from the cabin asked if we were OK, and I said we were a little shook up but OK. I don't think Mike ever went out with me in my boat after that episode.

Years later, I took my two boys, Jim and Mark, to Lake Roesiger for an outing. We had packed a lunch and planned to spend a few hours on the lake. They each had something to float on, an inner tube and an inflatable raft. I had picked up another outboard motor at a garage sale, so I towed the boys out to the middle of the lake where they played around on their floaties and I fished. We ate our picnic lunch and I towed them back to the boat launch and called it a day. I still have that outboard motor.

Music for the Ears?

When I was in junior high, seventh and eighth grades, I decided I wanted to learn to play the violin. I took lessons from one of my teachers, Mr. Carter. I learned the scale and how to read music (sort of), but my heart wasn't really in it, so I lost interest after a few months. I have thought many times, and still do think about practicing on the violin that my pappy made. I pick it up every so often, but no one likes to hear my squeaking.

When I was about 15 or so, I got a guitar and have been self-teaching for the last 60+ years. I don't consider myself to be very good, but I have fun and find it relaxing.

Upgrading to Cars

Around that same time, I worked with Ted Both for Mark Merritt. I bought a 1946 Mercury 4-door sedan with a flathead V-8 for \$25 from a widow who lived near Mike Curtiss. Mike towed it over to our house for me, and I tinkered with it and cleaned the spark plugs, points, and carburetor. I bought a used battery from the wrecking yard for \$10. The car would not start with the starter, so we towed it over the Ben Howard Hill to Ted Both's house. Then we towed it down the road to Mark Merritt's house. I put it in second gear, let out the clutch, and all of a sudden it took off and started running. There was no water in the radiator, so we stopped at Wayne Merritt's house, let the engine cool off a bit, and then added water.

After that, it started pretty easy if you pushed the car about 10 feet and dumped the clutch. I drove that car out to Pappy's shop and all over the gravel roads, Hand Road, Pipeline Road, etc. One day, I had Ted and Mike with me and we were spinning brodies and goofing off. Ted was in the front seat with me and we had just spun a donut. I needed to back up to get going again and Ted thought he needed to help me shift gears, so he shoved his foot on top of mine on the gas pedal, and with it in reverse, I let out the clutch. The rear differential just started jumping up and down so I put in the clutch, took it out of gear, and let the clutch out. About that time, Ted grabbed the gear shift and jammed it into reverse with the clutch out and the gas pedal to the floor. BAM, it blew the first and reverse idler gears right out the side of the tranny. Thanks a lot, Ted. Well, now that first and reverse were gone, we were able to get started in second gear and make it back to Pappy's shop. I never drove it again but sold it for \$35. So, I got my money back and never did anything like that again. Chalk that one up to fun and foolishness. No one was hurt and I learned a lesson or two.

My second car was Mom's hand-me-down '51 Chevy. I think I paid her \$150 for it. I took my driver's test in that car and passed. On the way back home, making the turn into the driveway on Madison Street, and not being used to the hard steering of that car, I hit the

curb on my side and blew out the front tire. Of course, mom was with me but didn't say a word. She just got out of the car and went into the house like nothing happened. I parked the car, changed the tire, and replaced the spare with a brand new tire that I had found in the trunk of my '46 Mercury before I sold it. Another hard steering incident happened with that car when I was going out to Block's house to pick up my sweetheart. When I turned in to their driveway, I overshot it a bit and drove a little bit on the lawn. Thank goodness no one was watching or I would have been embarrassed. I had the '51 Chevy for a little over two years, then sold it to my dad and bought a '48 Chevy coupe from my brother-in-law, Will Gering. Will had replaced the engine with a newer 6 cylinder completely rebuilt, bored, head shaved, and balanced from Precision Engine in Seattle where he worked. The engine also had a Fenten dual single barrel intake manifold, so the car was more than stock engine-wise. I think Will told me that car dynoed at 45 hp at the rear wheels. The car had less than 40,000 miles on it so it was clean and tight. It served me well until the vacuum assist shift gave me trouble in Fort Wayne. I sold that and bought my first new car, a 1966 VW bug. From 1965 to 1969, the little sea blue bug served me well. I believe we put over 180,000 miles on it before I gave it to little brother, Bruce.

School's Ups and Downs

I didn't really enjoy school much until I got past the 8th grade and was able to pick some of my own classes. My first choice in eighth grade was art class with Mr. Blomster. As a freshman in ninth grade, I was able to choose wood shop, one of my favorite classes. I still have one of my first projects, all built with hand tools, a mahogany night stand. My shop teacher, Mr. Beal, and I got along really well after he found out that I had my own power tools at home. I got to be the shop aide which allowed me to use some of the power tools in shop class. Everyone else had to use hand tools or be supervised by the teacher or myself. I thought that was pretty cool. I pretty much had that same role in wood shop for the rest of high school. I had Mr. Beal for two years.

In 11th grade, my shop teacher was Mr. Fulkes and we also got along very well. He also was the craft class teacher which was another one of my favorite classes. Mr. Fulkes went to visit some family and friends in the Tri-cities area of Eastern Washington. He knew the people who owned the Howitt's Bow Company, and he got me a 48-inch Howitt's Recurve bow for \$25.00. It was a prototype that had gone through all the testing before that model went into production. I thought that was pretty cool, and I still have it. For me, at the time, that Howitt's Recurve was a huge upgrade from my pappy's long bow, and I don't even remember what happened to the

long bow.

In tenth grade, I learned a valuable lesson in human nature. I hated English class, and that year my teacher was Mr. Anderson. He and I got along OK for the most part. One time, he asked me if I would be interested in some baby bunnies that he had found abandoned and motherless. He thought I would be the one to rescue and take care of them. I got them, but they only lasted a few days. I think they were just too young and wild. Mr. Anderson had a little chat with me about my grades being below par, and he asked me what my goal was for his class. I said I just wanted a passing grade. He told me if it was just a passing grade I wanted he could give me an A and be done with it. I took him at his word and just coasted through the rest of that year. Well, at the end of the year when I got my report card, I got an F and flunked English. Well, Mr. Anderson did not keep his word, giving me an A like I thought he said he would. Stupid me, I should have gotten it in writing and signed by both parties. Lesson learned. I had to take both tenth and eleventh grade English the following year. With a different teacher that year, English was not so boring, and even though I still did not like English class, I managed to get passing grades. Let's face it, I would much rather have been down at the river drowning worms.

In ninth and tenth grades, I took mechanical drafting, but in my senior

year of high school, I took architectural drafting. That and art class were my favorites. Mr. Fulkes had moved on, so we had a new shop teacher, Mr. Jockimsen. We hit it off right away. In architectural drafting class we had to draw up a full set of house plans. I went one step further and built a scale model of my house. I entered the plans and house in the school science fair and got a first prize ribbon. I was the only entry in my category, so it was a slam dunk.

Another project in shop class was a cedar chest I built for my sweetheart, which we still have. I also made several wooden bowls on the wood lathe, and we still have three of them. When I was in senior shop class, two of my teachers, Mr. West and Mr. Redfield requested that I build them a boat, an eight foot pram. That was kind of special. Classes that I took as a senior were German, wood shop, architectural drafting, and chorus.

While I was in school I worked summers for several farmers during haying season. I worked for Stuckys, our neighbors on Florence Acres; Blocks, my future father-in-law; Ben Saner, Ben Stucky, Hank Gerber, Clarence Schwartz, Emil Senner, Joe Schwartz, and Abe Unruh - all farmers from our church. The earlier ones I worked for put in loose hay; later ones were baled hay. When I worked on Hank Gerber's farm, we hauled the hay in bales to put into Clarence Schwartz's barn. Hank and Clarence were brothers-

in-law. Hank had a 1950 Chevy pickup which I got to drive in the field. When the pickup had a full load, he let me drive it to Clarence's place, which was less than a mile away. I didn't have my driver's license at that time and didn't have much experience. When I got to the barn, there was a little incline to get lined up to the barn door. The pickup had "three on the tree" gear shift and I had it in second gear. I rode the clutch and burned it a little, enough that you could smell it. I got yelled at by Hank for that one. I was about 14 at the time.

After that, I would work for Clarence Schwartz on Saturdays. My mom or dad would drop me off on Saturday morning and I would do chores all day which included filling all the feed hoppers in the two big chicken houses. I would carry the pellets from the feed storage bin at the front of the chicken houses and fill up three or four hoppers in each chicken house. The hoppers were two feet by eight feet, thirty inches deep, and it took at least twelve or more five gallon buckets to fill each one. The chicken houses were about 30 feet wide and 80 feet long, so that took a lot of walking back and forth to get the job done.

Once a year, we would clean out under the roost on each side. This involved backing the manure spreader down the center of each house between the roosting racks, then lifting the racks and forking the manure into the spreader by hand. I worked with Clarence's son Roy

who was about nine years older than I was. Roy had two dogs, Blackie and Bowser, who caught rats that lived in tunnels in and under the manure. That was one stinky job.

Roy Schwartz became one of my best friends and we did a lot of fun things together; fishing, catching skunks, hunting, blowing up stumps with dynamite, and double dating. My first real date with Emily was a double date with Roy and Linda (Merritt). We went in Roy's car to the World's Fair in Seattle in 1962. We had lots of good memories.

Ka-BOOM!

Speaking of blowing up stumps, I helped Roy set charges under all the old growth stumps in the field west of their house on the corner of Old Owen Road and Woods Lake Road. After we set the charges under about 15 stumps, we called the phone and power companies to come out and stand by just in case any damage was done to their lines. Then Roy started on one side of the field and I started on the other side lighting all the fuses. Then we waited, and when they started to go off, it was like a war zone, pretty awesome. After all the dust settled, no damage was done to the power lines. There were a few small chunks of stump that ended up on Woods Lake Road that we picked up. That was a fun day, a real blast (pun intended). Years later, when I cleared my property on Hand Road, I blew five stumps by myself. Back in those days, anyone could buy stumping

powder, caps, and fuses. People were trusted to be responsible for their actions. Sadly times have changed. When I was a senior in high school, Emily was a freshman. I remember sitting in my German class watching the clock and waiting for the right time to look out the window in the class door when she would walk by on her way to the cafeteria where she volunteered as a server. That was always the highlight of my day.

I actually did somewhat enjoy my senior year of High School because all but two of my classes were electives. When I graduated, I even had two more credits than I needed. What a relief to be done with my 12-year sentence and to move out into the real world.

My best friend in High School was Mike Curtiss. Mike and I had lots of adventures together. Our adventures began in sixth grade. I remember the first time I went with Mike and his grandparents to the Sultan Basin. They had a mining claim with a small cabin on the Sultan River. I think the claim was on Red Mountain. That was my first trip into the Sultan Basin. When Mike and I were older and he was driving, we made many more trips there. The last three summers of high school we worked part of the summer for a Canadian mining engineer and did prospecting which involved finding copper outcroppings and recording the locations on maps. We would spend one

or two weeks camping out and exploring all the creek beds and canyons looking for float (traces of copper ore). For us, this was like a paid camping trip. We got \$10 a day for having fun. We even got in a little fishing and lots of exploring and sightseeing. The only hard part of these trips was back-packing in our gear and food. I think the heaviest pack of mine weighed 62 pounds, not bad for a 16 year old.

At the end of the last summer, the weather was already turning. I think it was sometime in September. There were some core samples that needed to be brought down off the mountain from two thirds of the way up Vesper Peak. That day, Mike was not available, so I asked another friend, Ted Both to fill in. The boss and Ted and I drove up into the Sultan Basin and then hiked up to where the core samples were. We each packed three boxes of core samples, weighing at least 25 pounds each, back down to the Land Rover on the valley floor in the almost freezing rain. Ted and I got down to the road about 20 minutes before our driver. The Land Rover was locked, so we set down our packs, and just because it was raining and cold, we kept walking back and forth at a brisk pace to keep to keep our circulation active and to prevent hypothermia. Our driver finally arrived and we were able to load everything up and head home in a warm and dry vehicle. What a day!

Another time for a fun trip, Mike and I decided to hike up to Copper Lake. The trail, if you could call it that, started at the end of the road up William's Creek. There was an old cabin there which we wanted to check out. It had seen better days but most of the roof was still intact. On a shelf in the cabin, we found a jar with some popcorn in it. We decided to take it with us. We made it up to the lake about noon or so and spent the rest of the day hiking around the lake. We never made it all the way around because of the steep terrain, but we explored and did a lot of rock picking. We found a giant slab of granite that was leaning against another boulder, which made a great shelter where we set up camp for the night. I fixed supper after which we popped some of the popcorn we found at the cabin. It was the best ever! Mike and I had a lot of good times together.

Our first trip working in the Sultan Basin, we hiked up to Vesper Creek and then up the Hog's Back Ridge above the falls and set up camp. Mike will never let me forget the next morning when I cooked some scrambled eggs in bacon grease for breakfast. It did not set well with our stomachs - never again! The next day, we climbed all the way to the top of the ridge between Vesper and Little Chief. On the way back down we stopped and ate our lunch. All of a sudden, we heard a clatter-ing sound like someone running over loose rock, and a mountain goat ran past us hell bent for somewhere. He disappeared down over

the edge of what we thought was a cliff. We went to check it out, and sure enough, it was a cliff with just a few ledges on the way down. Somehow, that goat made it down to the bottom, about 300-400 feet and was running across a snowbank about 200 yards away. Mike and I just looked at each other and shook our heads. How did the goat do that?

Another good friend, Roy Schwartz, and I took my boat and fished Wagner Lake, Woods Lake, and Lake Sixteen. We had some fun times together. Once fishing Lake Sixteen, it was almost dark and the mosquitos were so bad that we each lit up a cigar to puff on so the smoke would keep the mosquitos away. I think Roy even had some beer with us at the time. Roy looked at me and said, "Wow, if Emily's mom could see you now!" We both had a good laugh. That time, I caught the biggest croppie I had ever seen, 11 inches long.

The last time my boat was in the Skykomish River was in the late 1990s when Jim and Mark, George Frei, and I floated from Sultan to the Ben Howard Hill. George and I were in the boat, and Jim and Mark each had a flotation device. Emily drove us to Sultan where we put in and then she drove to Ben Howard Hill to wait for us. It took longer than we thought, but we had fun. It was a good thing Emily had a book to read.

In 1985, I did some repair on the boat. I took out the original transom that was starting to deteriorate and replaced it with marine grade 3/4" plywood, sealed it with fiberglass and also rebuilt the keel. I sealed the inside floor to make it more waterproof and gave the boat a new coat of epoxy paint. Then I made some oarlocks out of heavy duty Delron. In 2018, I sanded and refinished the wood trim and seat, all good for another 60 years.

My first job after high school was for Great Northern Railroad. I had a '51 Chevy then. We worked jobs from Goldbar all the way up to just past Index. GNR had a crew bus that took the crew to the job site. I rode the bus a few times from Monroe, but after a few paychecks, I got insurance on my car and drove the last few times to the job site. One of the last sites I worked on was just east of Index where the railroad crosses highway 2. We did some reconstruction of the rail road bed and put in new ballast. We finished up right at quitting time, just before the westbound freight train was to try out our repair job. Because it was quitting time, I got in my car and left for home. When I showed up for work the next day, I found out that the crew had been there all night because the westbound freight had come through too fast and the road bed and ballast were a little soft, and the railroad cars started to bounce. At least two of the cars had derailed. What a mess, and I missed all the excitement. Just after I

arrived at work that day, the boss sent everyone home because they had worked all night with overtime pay. I didn't mind having the day off, and when I got my next check, it had overtime pay also. I asked my foreman about it, and he told me to just keep my mouth shut, so I did. I still have those memories every time I drive by on Highway 2 that I helped lay ribbon steel rails from Goldbar to Index. Ribbon steel rails, 1/4 mile long, were welded together to form a continuous rail, so there was no more clickety-clack. After dating Emily for a couple of years, her mother thought we were getting a little too serious, so because my number was about to come up for the draft, I started to think about what to do about serving my country. I actually considered joining the Army and inquired about serving as a non-combatant and getting some training as a medic or mechanic or some other technical trade. I was informed by the draft board that as a non-combatant, I would have no choice of training as they would decide for me. I didn't like that idea, so I decided to change my status to conscientious objector and serve my country in a peaceful and constructive way. Even though the Sargent at the draft board said I couldn't do that, I did it anyway and two weeks later I got my new status, 1-W. I started to make plans to work in a hospital in Fort Wayne, Indiana. I spent the next month working on Stucky's dairy farm until April 1964 when the plans were finalized by the Selective Service Board for me to go to Indiana. I drove to Fort

Wayne in my '48 Chevy. The trip took four days, Monroe to Boise, then Salt Lake City and then on State Highway 30 to Rawlins, Wyoming. Next came Cheyenne, Wyoming; Omaha, Nebraska; Des Moines, Iowa; and finally to Fort Wayne, Indiana.

My brother George and his wife Lola were living in Fort Wayne at the time. They had worked in a children's home in Fort Wayne for his I-W service and then he enrolled in Indiana Tech's engineering program. I stayed with them until they abruptly moved back to Washington due to Lola's brother's death in a car/train collision. Then I took over their apartment at 231 N. Bayer Avenue, and lived there until my service was over. The apartment was about a mile from Parkview Memorial Hospital where I worked.

I began my service working in the housekeeping department, mopping and buffing floors for about six months. Then I transferred to nursing and trained to be an orderly. At that point I got transferred to the hospital's South Unit where I worked swing shift for about 8 months. Then an opening came up for a transport driver, moving patients and supplies from the main hospital to the South Unit, which was about two blocks away. There I worked until I finished my two year obligation in April of 1966.

In 1965, when I was in Indiana, I built a

wood strip canoe. It was 16 feet long and had a 39 inch beam. I cut the ribs out of $\frac{3}{4}$ " plywood and stationed them 24 inches apart. Then I set up the ribs and inner keel, stem and stern on a set of saw horses and started planking and gluing over the ribs with $\frac{1}{4}$ " x $1\frac{1}{2}$ " pine that I ripped out of some clear 2 x 4 pine. Once the planking was done, I sanded the hull down and covered it with two coats of fiberglass and resin. Then, I flipped the canoe right side up and installed the decks, thwarts, and gunwales. I sealed the whole inside with Thompson's water seal. I think it took me just a little over a month from start to finish. I worked swing shift at the hospital, so I could work on it every day before work and on weekends.

After finishing my military service, I got a job working for Trennis Yoder, a contractor from the church that I attended. The work there was mostly repair from fire or storm damage. I worked for him for a couple of months. I learned a lot and enjoyed my time with him, but I was getting homesick for my sweetheart and family and Monroe. So I began making plans for my trip home. A while before that, I had started having trouble with my '48 Chevy's transmission. Rather than trying to fix it, I decided to buy a new car. I looked at the Chevy Impala Super Sport which was selling for about \$3,600. Then I looked at a new VW bug. Since it was only \$1,800 and I needed affordable transportation, that made sense to me. I

wasn't 21 yet and needed someone to co-sign for me, so Trennis Yoder agreed to do that for me. So, I had a new 1966 VW bug to make my trip home.

Homebound

I managed to get everything I owned into the car and tied my canoe on top, said farewell to my friends and co-workers that I had met in the last two years, and headed home to my sweetheart. I got more than a few strange looks from folks seeing a VW with a 16 foot canoe on top as I made my way home. I spent nights sleeping in my car in Wisconsin, Montana, and Idaho, reaching home on day four.

I arrived home to Monroe, 230 S. Madison, mid-afternoon and greeted my mom. It was a good feeling to be home again. Well, the best was yet to come. I unloaded my car and hid it in the backyard and got my mom to call Emily at work and talk her into coming over to talk about some church related thing. I shaved and got cleaned up with a good splash of Old Spice and waited upstairs for Emily to arrive. Wow, was I ever excited. When Emily finally got there, and after she and mom talked for a few minutes, I came downstairs and walked into the dining room. Emily looked at me for a couple of seconds and then we rushed into each other's arms. That was a hug I will never forget. After that, our relationship moved on where we had left off two years before. It was so good to be back in the arms of my true love.

I started working for Western Farmers in Monroe in order to keep making my car payments. Most of my time was spent working in the warehouse unloading boxcars of feed seed, hay, fertilizer, and other farm supplies with a fork lift. I loaded things for customers and mounted and balanced tires. I had that job for just over a year and then went to work for Don Creasy, a local building contractor.

That summer, 1966, Emily worked at the Monroe City Hall, saving up money to go to Grace Bible Institute in Omaha, Nebraska in the fall. That put us on a long-distance relationship which really sucked! My life then consisted of working five days a week and spending my weekends making improvements on the Hand Road property that my dad had given to me. I put in a culvert and driveway. Evenings were spent writing letters to my sweetheart. At Christmas break, Emily came home and we got engaged. Then she returned to Omaha until July when her parents picked her up for the trip home. They visited relatives in Kansas and Oklahoma before coming back to Monroe. My sweetheart, my fiancé, was back in my arms again.

That summer went fast, planning the wedding and getting the property ready. I put in a septic system and purchased a 10 x 52' Fleetwood mobile home. My mom co-signed for me because I had not yet built up any credit. The mobile

home, two bedrooms (sort of), bath, kitchen, and living room, was delivered to the bottom of our driveway and left there. Then, I had to figure out how to move it up the steep driveway. As it turned out, our neighbors, the Stuckys, had a John Deere tractor big enough to back the mobile up the hill and into place and another tractor hooked to the back with a chain helped to pull the mobile home. It was touch and go and very nerve wracking at the time, but we got the job done and our home was in place.

Emily and I got married on August 11, 1967. After our honeymoon around the Olympic Peninsula and to Mt. Rainier, we moved in. We didn't have electricity at first. We had to wait about a month for that, so we were camping out there with no power, water, or phones. We hauled water while I worked on digging a well. The day the PUD came and hooked up our power, Emily got so excited she got the hiccups. I thought that was kind of funny.

Digging the well was quite a project. I had Jerry Senner witch for the location. I also tried witching it and could feel the pull on the witching stick (a green vine maple forked stick). Jerry was also the one who helped me put in the septic tank and drain field. He had a backhoe and dug the first 12 feet of the well with that and set the first four well tiles in place. Then he backfilled around the tile. Since that was as deep as he could

go with his backhoe, I had to dig the next 10 feet of the well by hand. As I would dig around under the tile, it would settle and I would roll another well tile in place on top of the stack. Then I would go down a ladder inside and dig out some more. The inside diameter of the tile was 36 inches, so it was a bit tight with not much room to move around. I rigged up a windlass drum with an electric motor to lift a five gallon bucket to haul out the diggings.

Emily helped with running the windlass. She was always worried about dropping something on me, but that never happened. After digging out under the tiles, they made a groaning or scraping sound as they settled. I had to make sure that my hands and feet were not under the tile as it settled. I finally reached bedrock at 21 feet and the water was coming in slowly. I tried one more trick. I drilled with a star drill by hand about 6 inches into the bedrock which was diorite, a very hard rock. I put in 1/2 stick of blasting powder left over from when I blasted my stumps, packed some blue clay over the top of the charge which was wired with an electric blasting cap, climbed out, and moved about 30 feet from the well and touched it off with a 9 volt battery. BOOM, some small pieces of rock flew up into the trees. It was kind of a letdown because after inspection, it just cleaned off the top of the rock at the bottom of the well. It was fun, anyway. The water came in slowly at first but better after the fall rains. I hooked up a

shallow well jet pump and even added a pitcher pump as a backup in case the power went off.

Up In the Air

I started taking flying lessons in 1969 before Emily and I went to New Guinea. I wanted to learn the basics because almost all travel over any distance in New Guinea was by plane. I started taking lessons at Harvey Airfield in Snohomish from a young instructor. Before I soloed, I think I had maybe five or six hours with this instructor, I remember we were heading north to Arlington to do some touch and goes at the Arlington airport. I was making my downwind leg and then a 180 degree turn to line up for the approach to land when two things happened. There was a landfill or garbage dump just north of the airfield, and there were some fires burning in the landfill which created an updraft, making it much more difficult to lose altitude. I pulled on some flaps and cut back on the throttle which would normally make the plane drop fast, but we were sort of floating in all that hot air. Next, my instructor said he wanted me to put the plane down on the X at the end of the runway. We were still too high so I pulled on full flaps and he started to raise his voice and yelled, "I want you to land on the X." Not having that much experience, I pushed forward on the yoke and dumped the nose down to lose more altitude. Well, with how high we were and our air speed, that was not a good thing to do. We did lose

altitude, but too fast, and he grabbed the controls from me, pulled up the nose, and hit the throttle. We did a quick rollout and the eye bolt at the tail (used for tie downs) just touched the ground the same time as the main gear. I got a dirty look from my instructor and he said, "Don't ever do that again." We flew back to Snohomish in silence and I landed the plane, parked it, and decided I needed a different instructor. My next lesson was with a new instructor, an older man who was a really nice guy, and we got along fine. Side note: regarding the tail eyebolt. Before that incident happened, I was curious as to whether one could ever get the tail to touch ground, either on takeoff or landing. I had asked my first instructor that question, and he said if I could get the tail eyebolt to touch the ground, he would buy me a steak dinner. Well, he never did buy me that dinner - go figure.

With my new instructor, I soloed in just 7 hours (which included the hours I already had). After soloing, I did a solo cross-country from Snohomish to Bellingham to Port Angeles, and then back to Snohomish. That was an interesting experience. When I got out over the Puget Sound between Bellingham and Port Angeles and also when I went back between Port Angeles and Snohomish, my eyes were glued to the instruments and my ears were listening for any unusual sounds, but all went well. I did touch and goes at Bellingham and Port Angeles and then

back to home base at Harvey Airfield in Snohomish.

One time, I flew to Monroe where there was an airport by the fairgrounds. I had asked Emily to stop there after work and watch me land and take off. There was a slight crosswind, so I was crabbing a little to compensate. Just before I touched down, there was a large cedar tree that blocked the crosswind which took me by surprise and I had to do a quick correction to stay lined up to the runway. That was a bit tricky, being so close to the ground and low airspeed. That went well, and I landed, taxied back to greet my bride and gave her a kiss before taking off again. I showed off a bit by doing a short field take-off. That's where you get up as much ground speed as possible and then, at the last moment, you pull back on the yoke and literally jump into the air. Then you have to level out so as not to lose too much airspeed and stall out. It looks impressive from the ground and feels like a roller coaster in the plane. Anyway, I think Emily was impressed and I got a rush out of it.

As I continued my flying lessons, I did some "under the hood" time. That's where you wear a hood that blocks out your view to the outside, leaving you with just the instruments. My instructor said I did really well, even said I would make a good commercial pilot. That made me feel good.

Another time, my instructor and I did a night time flight from Snohomish to Boeing field in Seattle. I was surprised

how much was visible at night. As we approached Boeing field from the north, I set up my downwind leg after contacting the control tower. I was told to land on the east run-way. My instructor acknowledged and said we would just do a touch and go, and the tower said OK. I started my right turn to make my approach. A twin engine Piper just flew in on the same approach right under us, and my instructor said "What the hell was that." Then the control tower called us back and told us to switch over to the west runway. I did that and we did our touch and go, departing to the north and back to Snohomish. I told my instructor that I hoped we would never do that again, and he agreed. Just a note here: night time landings are different in that when you approach the ground, because it is dark, you don't have depth perception. So you just set up a rate of descent that prevents the plane from hitting the ground too hard, and let the plane land itself. All you have to do is keep it lined up with the runway, and the landing lights give you enough light to do that OK. All the rest of my solo time was just to add hours and experience. One time though, I did fly to Monroe over Florence Acres where we lived. My pappy was still living at the shop, across the road from us, so I made a low pass over his shop just like his friend Howard Hyde used to do. That was a neat experience for me.

One time my instructor wanted me to experience a short field landing and takeoff, so we flew to Granite Falls which had a grass field only 1700 feet in length. The thing about a short field is just that, it's SHORT. It can be just the length or maybe an obstacle at one end or both. Granite Falls was just short with a fence at both ends. The trick is to get on the ground as close to the end as possible and then get on the brakes when landing. When taking off, lock the brakes, then full throttle, unlock the brakes, and get as much ground speed as possible. At the last moment, pull back on the yoke (or stick) and jump into the sky. Sounds like fun, right? Well, it is kind of fun as long as you don't hit something or stall out.

Another fun thing I did: after departing south from Harvey Field, I just kept climbing up to 5000 feet and then pulled back a little on the yoke until the plane stalled out. That was a little like going to the top of a roller coaster and then dropping down the other side. When the plane (at least a Cessna 150) stalls out, you can just let go of the yoke and the plane recovers by itself. Just be sure you have enough altitude and keep the wings level so you don't go into a spin.

I took my written exam and passed, but I only ended up with 23 hours of flying time which was not enough to take my flight test. That required 40 hours. But, I was glad to learn what I did and have

that experience. Someday, I hope to do some flying again, either in an ultra-lite or maybe even a mag lev vehicle.

Pappy
John Franklin Bunting was born on January 22, 1905 to William Arthur Bunting and Marion Adelia (Chandler) Bunting. Grandpa Bunting was a station agent for the railroad. When Pappy was 12 years old he came with his father to Washington and they bought a house on Queen Anne Hill in Seattle. Three months later the rest of the family came to join them.

Pappy went to high school in Seattle until 10th grade. After school, he went to his uncle's watch and camera repair shop and made deliveries with his bicycle both to customers and to the post office.

When Pappy was 18 or 19, he drove his Model T Ford bug back to Maine to visit relatives and spent most of the summer working in a cannery before heading back home.

When Pappy was around 20 years old, he worked for a violin maker in Seattle, and I still have one of the violins (one of five) that he made, dated 1924.

Around 1930, he built an airplane, including most of the engine. He took a 9-cylinder LeRhône rotary engine and converted it from a stationary crankshaft to a revolving crankshaft with 3

cylinders. He cast the pistons and the intake manifold from aluminum. His uncle, who ran a clock and camera repair shop, made the ball bearing retainers for the rear main bearing. Pappy assembled the fuselage and the wing in a garage on Queen Anne Hill in Seattle. Then he moved them out to Bothell where his father had bought some property and Pappy had built his first shop. There he painted and assembled his airplane. He pretty much taught himself how to fly. He told me he had 20 minutes of instruction. His first flight happened when he was just taxiing back and forth in the field next door to the Bothell shop. All at once, a gust of wind picked up the plane and he was airborne. After using up too much real estate, he was forced to stay up. Of course, at only half throttle, and the plane heading for a grove of alders, he had enough altitude to clear the alders but not the big tall cedar dead ahead. A quick decision to shove the throttle to the firewall allowed him to just clear the cedar. The next challenge was how to get back to the field and back on the ground. Well, having not done any turning or banking yet, he made the widest turn in his flying career to get lined up to that little strip of ground that he accidently took off from.

Thankfully, he made it back on terra firma with just a little bit of side drift. He told me it was just enough drift to kick up a little dust.

From then on, he flew whenever he had the time and loved every minute of it. After a little over a year, thanks to the State of Washington, many laws and regulations, license, insurance, etc. he sold the little Eagle. What little history we learned after the sale of the airplane was that the new owner taxied the plane through a drainage ditch and broke about 12 inches off one side of the propeller. He replaced the broken one (that Pappy had made) with a commercial one which never performed as well as the original. Anyway, he gave the broken propeller back to Pappy as a souvenir and I have it hanging on the wall in my shop. The new owner managed to ground loop the plane and dump it upside down. There was slight damage to one wing tip and some other minor dings. It was repaired and did fly again, but we do not know where it ended up.

A few more episodes from Pappy's flying days follow. One time, he wanted to land at the airfield between Everett and Marysville, but the crosswind was so bad he decided to land crossways. As far as he knew, no one had ever done that before. When he got the plane on the ground, he realized that with no brakes, he was going to run into the dike, so he jumped out of the cockpit and ran alongside, pushed the tail around 180 degrees, climbed back in the plane and taxied to the other side of the runway. There he did another 180 degree turn, this time in the airplane, and took off

again. He said some guys were standing by one of the hangers, just watching, with looks on their faces like they had never seen anything like that before.

Another time, while he was flying, one of the spark plugs failed, which caused that 3-cylinder engine to shake badly. He managed to get the plane down in one piece, but swore he would never use any more surplus (Navy, I think he said) spark plugs. A friend of his had gotten them for him. Pappy said from then on, nothing but premium brand new spark plugs.

The maiden voyage, or check out flight of his airplane was done by his good friend, Johnny Bixel, who was a licensed pilot. They flew the plane from Bothell down to Shelton, Washington where there was room for Johnny Bixel to do some testing to make sure the little Eagle was airworthy. Pappy said the only thing that made him nervous was when Johnny took the plane up high and did a dive straight down and then pulled it up at the last second. Pappy said he thought Johnny was going to rip the wing off. When the testing was over, Johnny landed and told Pappy, "That's a damn nice little plane you got there." Pappy also told me that Johnny Bixel always flew better with a pint of whiskey under his belt.

During World War II, before I was born, Pappy was exempt from drafted because

of his skills as a machinist. He had several government contracts, one of which was to make some little brass sights that went into a bomb sight assembly that was used in bombers. (I still have some sample parts). Another contract he told me about was some davit hinges for Navy tugboats.

Pappy did all kinds of repair jobs for people. He could do a complete engine overhaul in one day, 7 am to 7 pm. A customer would drop off the car at 7 am and Pappy would tear down the engine top end, including a valve and seat grind, block would include piston rings, cylinder bore if needed or new pistons, and then hone. He would drop the oil pan, replace connecting rod bearings and main bearings and seals, reassemble with new gaskets, and add engine oil. Job done.

Pappy also did some contract work for the West Coast Powder Company. They were just about a half mile north of Pappy's shop in Bothell. One day, a fire started at the powder company. All of the employees were told to each carry out a box of powder (dynamite) as they were evacuating the building. They sent out several people to warn the close neighbors, Pappy being one of the closest. They told him to open all the windows and doors in every building. Pappy said he stood on his tiptoes with his mouth open. He could see a greenish gray column of smoke rising from behind the trees where the plant was

located. When the plant exploded, the trees all lay back away from the blast. He saw a line shaft with pulleys on it that was used to drive the machinery. It went several hundred feet up in the air and when it came down it went so deep into the swampy ground that they never found it. The blast broke windows in buildings in a radius of about one half to one mile away. One chicken farmer claimed that their chickens quit laying and tried to sue the powder company. By the time all the damage was paid for, the company went out of business.

The powder company used to sell their powder in wooden boxes, and Pappy got lots of empty boxes and bundles of box sides, ends, tops and bottoms. They were all pine and Pappy used some of the material to cover the inside walls of the cottage at The Place. I still have some empty boxes and have used them for shelving in my shop. I even have several bundles of the box sides.

Pappy built a bulldozer, using the differential and undercarriage from a Cletrac and an older Chevy 6-cylinder engine with splash oilers for the crank main and rod bearings. Told he would never be able to dig basements without burning up the bearings, he logged, dug basements and never had a problem with the bearings.



RETURN

