

Lois Phernetton

The Story of My Life

A Memoir

EARLY YEARS

Since I consider this to be the last chapter in my life's story, and many people have mentioned that I should write my life's story, I will attempt to bring out events in my life which were unusual (not main stream) for a woman, no matter what age. Also there were many family events of interest and family members whom you might identify with. It is a story about a long life lived with adventure and sometimes exciting events in areas that were rural, political, and metropolitan.

I was born at St. John's Hospital in Helena in 1924. Mom said I only weighed four pounds, and the doctor had told her after ten days in the hospital, that she had to be really careful with me or she would lose me. Mom named me Lois after a friend of hers whom she admired and Adele after Fred Astair's sister who was a beautiful dancer. Mom loved to dance and was very good at it. Guess what - I am now 95 years old and writing this memoir. Besides, at this time we are experiencing the pandemic corona virus, and everyone is told to stay at home, so it is a good time to write my story.

I am trying to write my story chronologically. My first memory was of an event when I was two years old. It is a little vague, but I remember my Grandpa Gross and Uncle Fred saying I had a pretty mouth. I know this was in 1926 as Grandpa Gross died that year of pneumonia. I also remember my Uncle Bud, Dad's brother, staying with us while he was going to Mount St. Charles College in Helena. I believe he stayed in the basement.

Mom, Katherine Gross Winfield, was born in St. Paul, Minnesota, of German ancestry. Her father was Peter Gross and her mother Mary Madeline Markus. Her father was born in Wisconsin and her mother born in Minnesota, and their parents were born in Germany. Evidently they came to the United States in the 1800's. As a girl, Mom's family moved to Waverly, South Dakota, where five of her siblings were born. Mom had five sisters: Theresa, Gertrude, Josephine, Dora and Helen. She also had three brothers: Fred, Peter and Edward. Mom's parents were married in Minnesota where the four older children were born. They did not live long in Minnesota before moving to Waverly, South Dakota. I remember Mom telling me when they lived in Waverly, South Dakota that her parents had gone on an errand one day and left her in charge of the younger children. She happened to walk by one of the windows, and was terribly frightened as there were Indians outside and one was looking in that window. She tried not to alarm the children and she was very good at that. Anyhow, the Indians finally moved on and her parents arrived home safely.

When Mom came to Helena, before she was married, she worked as a housemaid for the Hibbard Ranch. No doubt she needed money so she could enter the Helena Business College. She graduated from the school of business and afterward worked for Western Life Insurance Company. I know she used Pitman shorthand which she used on her job. In my studies I had learned the Gregg style, so in later years, we would compare the two. I always thought Gregg shorthand was much easier. Mom met George Harry Winfield at the Business College. Dad had just returned, after being discharged from the U.S. Army and now also studying at the Business College. Not long after they were married in September, 1923.

Dad had grown up in Crookston, Minnesota, where I understand he would ice skate to school down the river. Grandpa had a meat market there, and according to Aunt Pearl, he was an astute businessman, as they were quite wealthy. They also lived in Duluth, Minnesota, as Grandpa would sell meat to the railroad there. From Crookston they moved to Montana where they homesteaded and built an adobe house with walls as thick as a foot. They then lived out of Jordan where Grandpa ranched and also had a meat market. Dad did not care for ranching, and had moved to Helena. From Helena he entered the Army, and served in World War I in France. He was in battles there and was wounded with shrapnel in his legs the rest of his life. When he returned to the States he was sent to Fort Dix in New Jersey where he contracted the Spanish Flu. He was seriously ill, and it damaged his heart. Consequently, he was 100 percent service connected. He was discharged from the Army there and then returned to Helena, Montana.

One of the stories which came down through Dad's family was that Grandma, Dad's Mom, favored George, and when he was about four years old she dressed him in little Lord Fauntleroy clothes, but I don't think Dad cared much for that. Another story was that Dad didn't like the name George, and during the time he was in WWI, he changed his name to Joe. Uncle Bud always said he liked the image of GI Joe and that is why he changed his name to Joe. Mom always knew him as Joe, Joseph Harry, and was baffled when his family would be around and call him George.

We only had a one-bedroom house, which was at 610 Raleigh Street in Helena. Mom had a sun room built off the kitchen at the back of the house. It was such a nice room. The sun would shine in and it was really warm. It was a room where Joe, my brother and I could spend time and play. By this time my Uncle Bud had moved out. Joe was born in 1926 at home, and I remember after that I slept in the dining room.

Around this time, maybe 1928, I remember Mom cooking something in the wood stove oven in an iron kettle which caught on fire. There were flames coming out of the oven, which overwhelmed me, and I ran out of the house crying. Brother Joe was just a baby. Somehow Mom got the fire out by herself.

I was about four years old when Uncle Fred Gross, Mom's brother, who was a frequent visitor with us, took me on the train from Helena to Townsend. I think he was on a business trip. I loved the train ride and thought it was really great. I believe that started my love of travel, which was something I enjoyed most of my life.

It was about 1928 when my Dad took us on a trip to Miles City. I know Joe was just two and I was four years old. At that time, I believe my grandpa and grandma Winfield had moved from Jordan, Montana, where they had homesteaded coming from Crookston, Minnesota to Miles City. Grandpa Winfield was a very astute businessman according to Aunt Pearl, Dad's sister, as he had had meat markets in Crookston and Duluth, Minnesota. He sold meat to the railroad and Aunt Pearl said they were very wealthy. They had moved to Jordan because Grandpa thought the railroad would be going through there.

I'm not sure how we managed to get to Miles City, but around that time my Dad had a Star car. I remember having a great time there meeting the Winfield cousins and grandpa and grandma. There was Phyllis Winfield, Uncle Walter's daughter, Joyce and Hazel Drennan, Aunt Nellie's daughters and Joe and I. I remember Dad taking me to the park and seeing the squirrels there. It was not long after that my grandma died in 1929. Uncle Bud told me he found her lying on the kitchen floor. It was a terrible shock to all of them. Grandma had been very active in the Jordan community, and a friend told me years later that the people of Jordan were so very pleasant and friendly.

According to the obituary for Grandma Winfield, which I have, her name was Fredericka Wilhelmina Ohm. She was born in Germany June 9, 1872 and died October 31, 1929 at the age of 57. She came to the United States with her parents at eight years of age. She lived in several towns in Minnesota including Crookston where she met and married Joseph Winfield in March 1890. They lived there until moving to Jordan, Montana in 1913. They were well known in the Jordan community where she had been an active member of the Presbyterian Church and of the Royal Neighbors of America.

Aunt Pearl and Uncle Bud told me many things about their family. One thing that was so interesting to me was how they came to Montana to homestead. Joseph, grandpa and Nettie, my grandma's nick name, or Wilhelmina, moved from Crookston, Minnesota to homestead in Montana about the time the railroad was being built to the West coast. I was told Grandpa and his two older sons, my Dad and Uncle Walter, came here in the fall. They found land near what is now Jordan, Montana. Since Grandpa thought the railroad was going through there they settled on a plot which was more or less northwest of what is now Jordan. There was also a spring of water in the area. That winter the three of them stayed in a cave or hole in the ground, which I was told they had dug. My Dad and Walter must have been in their teens, and I guess that is why Dad never wanted to live at all near there. I don't know what they ate to survive, but they did.

Grandpa Winfield, Joseph, had a meat market in Jordan plus the ranch. He was a very astute businessman. After some time though his oldest son, Walter, took over the ranch and Grandpa and Grandma moved into Jordan. Pearl said they had a very nice house with a white picket fence. They had seven children: Walter, the oldest, then my Dad whose given name was George, (which he changed in the Army to Joseph), then Pearl, Nellie, Hazel and Ruby, and then James Russell, called Bud. After Grandma had passed away, in 1936, Grandpa Winfield and Bud came to visit with us. I remember he specifically was looking for a place to stay with family in his old age. I guess Dad told him we really did not have room to do this, and I know his daughters would not take him in, so he eventually went to live with a niece in Sarnia, Ontario, Canada. It was there where he passed away. We also had relatives on Grandma's side who lived in Flin Flon, Manitoba, Canada.

Finally we moved to a larger house at 312 - 13th Avenue in 1932. I was in second grade, but think I was only six, and I walked to school by myself, but it was only two or three blocks. I know when we first moved there Mom would have tea parties for Joe and me. We had a children's table and chairs and beautiful white and gold-rimmed dishes and teapot. I think Mom served us tea and cookies. When I was in grade school both Joe and I were in school plays. I

think Mom would sew the costumes we wore. It wasn't very long after we moved to 13th Avenue that I was running along the side of the house to the curb at the sidewalk when I tripped, fell and broke my arm. It was horribly painful and I was screaming. Evidently Aunt Dora was living with us then and she came running out of the house, picked me up and somehow fashioned a splint for my arm. They took me to Dr. Flynn who put my arm in a cast. He was a wonderful doctor and took care of everybody at that time. I had a cast the full length of my arm, and it was a really hard time for me.

The great depression began in 1929 with the closing of many banks causing people to lose any monies they might own. I was born in 1924, so the impact on me was great. My Dad lost his job as did many other people. Dad at that time was an optician, and since there was no money for eyeglasses he was out of work. Mom was very frugal; it was amazing how she made pennies work for her. She and Dad would walk to the grocery store every Saturday to try and buy food for five of us. My youngest brother was not born yet. Mom would buy a roast on Saturday, cook it on Sunday, and we would eat it all week disguised by her creative genius. She could make meals out of nothing. She made her own mayonnaise, baked bread, sauerkraut, wine and root beer. She preserved eggs in brine which I thought was amazing. During the summers we would go to her sister's farm where she got the eggs and other food items. When the Depression was over, Dad went to work for the Veterans Administration at Fort Harrison in their Post Office.

Because of the same food so often, I wouldn't eat. Consequently, I became very run down. Mom and Dad finally had to take me to the doctor who said I had to eat a pound of liver a week. Poor Mom tried everything to get me to eat liver, and to this day I cannot tolerate it. I then had to give up music and tap dance lessons, but they couldn't afford it anyway. I was really good at tap dancing and picked it up without lessons.

I have always been fond of a good cup of coffee, maybe because as a girl I didn't like milk and wouldn't drink it like I should. Mom would pour a cup of coffee for me and put milk in it. That was for breakfast. This was during the depression, and we really didn't have that much to eat. I remember Dad would get up early to go fishing at Ten Mile creek and bring home enough trout to be prepared for our breakfast. We didn't know at that time that it was a real delicacy.

When we lived on 13th Avenue, there was a neighborhood grocery on the corner from our house which was owned by the Samson family. During the depression many people could not afford to pay for groceries so Mr. Samson would let them charge the items and pay for them whenever they could. I know my parents had an account there. They sold penny candy, and I know it was a treat to go there and spend a penny. Their daughter, Bette and I were friends for many years.

As a young girl I would have trouble sleeping, and I know Mom would come and check on me at 1:00 o'clock in the morning, and I would still be awake. I think my biological clock has always been geared to late hours. To this day I go to bed late and sleep late in the morning. Anyhow Dad would buy books for me, so I have always loved to read late at night. Our house on 13th Avenue had a huge dining room, and Mom had a beautiful table and chair set plus fine china dishes, and she loved to have big dinners for the family. During the cold winters, my brothers and I would build a fort using those dining chairs and a number of blankets. They would play

with cars and trucks, and we made roads with clothespins. This would be an outlet for us during the long winter. As a girl I had very few dolls. I was much more interested in sitting down with a good book.

In second grade at St. Helena School most of the students were studying to make their first Holy Communion and confession. I remember we had a very dedicated nun teacher, and she would have us practice receiving these sacraments over and over. Finally the day came, and I remember being a little frightened of this process. My Mom had a beautiful little white dress for me, and we received a gift of a picture of Jesus giving communion to a girl which I have cherished all my life. In fact I still have it hanging on the wall.

As Catholics we believe in the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, the host, and the blood in the chalice of the wine. In scripture, I believe in the Gospel of John, Jesus said "I will be with you to the end of time." I know this happens especially in the Eucharist where the bread and wine are changed to the body and blood of Christ through the power of Jesus which is handed down to His priests up to the present day. There have been a number of incidents throughout history proving this real presence. Recently I learned of an event which happened in Buenos Aires. A woman at Mass was receiving the Eucharist and dropped it on the floor. She would not pick it up, so a priest took it off the floor and eventually sent it to scientists in Los Angeles, California. Analyses proved that the host was real human heart tissue. It was then sent to a lab in New York where it was again analyzed with the same results. There have been many incidents which have been recorded and books written about the real presence, but not enough information gets to the people, and certainly it does not get in the secular press.

During my grade school years, girls sang in the church choir, and I believe we began from the third grade. They said girls didn't need to know math, so we were taken out of that class. We were instructed in music and Latin as we had to sing the Latin funeral Mass, and our choir sang hymns at the early Sunday Mass. We really did learn music but were deficient in math. In church at the Cathedral, our choir was situated in front of Mary's chapel/altar, so I think at that time most of us were dedicated to the Virgin Mary.

I have always believed in devotion to Mary, but she takes you to her son, Jesus, and in turn Jesus said I will send you the Holy Spirit (but we need to ask Him for the gift of the Spirit) and He will always send us the Holy Spirit who will lead us to God the Father. I really think we need to grow in our relationship with God. That is the most important thing to do in this life. I told a priest one time I felt I had graduated from Mary. I think he was a little shocked. But you know Mary has appeared in person on earth to children and others giving a message and asking for more prayers of all people.

Winters in Montana were cold and harsh. Consequently, the Bishop would close the main part of the Cathedral and move the Mass and other events to the basement. It was much warmer there, and they had as many pews as upstairs. It was easier to open the doors. Since the doors to the main entrance were so heavy, many times I had to wait for someone to come and help me. Anyhow I loved the Holy Thursday Mass (a celebration of the Eucharist) which was always held in the basement of the church. Young girls were selected, and I was one of them, to carry baskets of rose petals in procession and scatter them before the Blessed Sacrament which was

carried from the main altar to the side altar. All the girls had beautiful dresses. It was a special time and one I will always remember.

Two major events in grade school were receiving the sacraments of first Holy Communion and the sacrament of confirmation. I received my first holy communion in second grade after much preparation at the age of six or seven. The sacrament of confirmation was given to sixth graders at that time. I think we were much too young to appreciate as this sacrament is a powerful affirmation of our faith. At the present time the minimum age is now sixteen. Anyhow my Mom had beautiful white dresses for me.

During this time we had to make our own fun. There were no programs for the kids at school. Outdoors we played kick the can, anti -I-over and mumbly peg. We used jackknives for this game, which was really fun, and nobody worried about getting cut. Our Mom would just tell us to be careful. On Sunday nights several neighborhood kids would come to play cards with us and my Dad. He taught us a number of card games and did not always let us win. Mom always made cocoa and grilled cheese sandwiches for us and the neighborhood kids.

It was in October 1935 when a dire disaster hit Helena. I was in fifth grade and brother Don was only two. It was between 9:00 and 10:00 P.M. when the earthquake violently shook, frantically scaring everyone. I was in bed for the night as were my brothers. All of a sudden the bed shook hard, and I could hear dishes and pictures falling and breaking. It was so frightful I squirmed further down in bed and pulled the covers over my head. When the shaking stopped Mom came and took us all outside in the cold. She would not take us back in the house. At that time my Dad was working for the Veterans Administration at Fort Harrison so we were packed in the car, and Dad drove us to the Fort where Mom's sister Helen lived. Mom still would not go into the houses with us kids. Our house was not damaged too much except for all the things that fell and broke inside and the brick chimney which had collapsed. Our neighbors across the street suffered the collapse of the walls of their house, and everyone could look in and see everything they possessed. It was eerie! We had driven around the city, and there were many houses that had collapsed. The stores on Main Street were really damaged too.

After much deliberation at the Fort, tents were set up for the people to stay in. I think we were living in a tent for at least a week and it was cold. The next thing I knew Dad was taking all of us to Mom's sister's house in White Sulphur Springs. Aunt Theresa was so good to let us stay there with her family. I remember we had to double up with our cousins in the beds as there were about ten kids plus parents. Joe and I entered school there, and I remember we went to the most wonderful Halloween party at that school. It was a great time as there were so many games for kids like pin the tail on the donkey and bobbing for apples which was a little sloppy but fun. After our house was cleaned up, we finally came home just before Christmas. That year things were pretty sparse, and I don't remember Santa leaving us any gifts.

Some years later my brother, Fuzz (Harold) took my husband, Bob and me to the Winfield homestead. The adobe house was still standing. The walls were about a foot thick and the windows were very small. There was one large room when you entered the kitchen door which contained quite a large pump for water. This was a multipurpose room used as a kitchen, dining room, etc. Then there was a small living room and a bedroom. Grandma's sewing machine was still in the parlor. I believe the kids slept in the attic as there was a staircase from the living area.

I really would have liked to take that sewing machine, but everything now belonged to the new property owners. My Dad and his other brother and sisters sold their land to their brother Walter. Grandpa had purchased a section of land for each of his children, but only Walter wanted to stay and farm in that area. Dad had moved to Helena and Nellie married and lived in Miles City, Montana. Bud, his name was James Russell, lived in many different places. Pearl moved to Portland, and Hazel lived in Salem, Oregon. Ruby had moved to California.

In 1936 my Dad packed the family in his new car, which I believe was a DeSoto, and we drove out to Oregon. It was a hazardous trip in those days as there were no freeways. We traveled through the middle of Oregon from the eastern part to the western, through the Cascade mountains to the coast. We must have stayed with Aunts Pearl and Hazel, and for me the most wonderful part of the trip was picnicking on the ocean beach. Aunt Nellie was also there at that time with her girls, and Barbara, our cousin, really took a liking to my brother Don. They were about the same age, just three, but she would not leave him alone. For us, it was pretty funny. The Drennans were there to pick berries. There were so many delicious berries, and I think they were working in the canneries. On our way home, the trip was very tiring as there did not seem to be any place to spend the night. Dad finally had to knock on a motel office door to get us a place to sleep and that was across the Idaho border in Montana. Finally we made it home.

During the years--1931 - 1938, I attended St. Helena grade school. The building was a solid, magnificent structure, which I thought would last forever, but it has since been torn down. All the children, when they arrived at school would line up, two by two, in their particular grade, and march into the building to their classroom to the music of Stars and Stripes Forever. This would be every morning, and then we would have prayer before class started. We had a cloak room adjoining each classroom where we left our coats and overshoes (snow boots), and lunchbox lunches. There was the utmost discipline as the classes were so large. I think there were fifty kids in my eighth grade class. Every class was taught by nuns, and some were very elderly and very strict. There were a lot of tests, but I don't recall much homework.

We always had to walk back and forth to school. In fact we had to walk everywhere, and I remember we would have holes in our shoes and would insert cardboard in them to keep our feet dry. About the time I was in sixth and seventh grades, I would walk across town down Lawrence Street and up to Park Avenue to the Helena Public Library for their story hour. They had a wonderful narrator who would read the stories and explain a lot of them. I remember the story of *Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates*. He was an excellent ice skater on the canals of Holland. This really sparked my interest in different countries and their cultures. In fact a few years later I read the book *New Worlds to Conquer* by Richard Halliburton who had explored the ruins of Machu Picchu in Peru. It was so fascinating I thought it was some place I would like to see, and later on, I was fortunate enough to do just that.

Before our graduation, the seventh and eighth grade classes went on a field day trip to the Broadwater Natatorium for a picnic and swimming. I remember what a wonderful place that was. The pool was huge and the architecture of the buildings was gorgeous. It was so impressive to us young people.

I graduated from St. Helena grade school in 1938, and this presented me with a huge decision to make. Would I go to Cathedral High School or Helena High School? I had an excellent eighth grade teacher whom I really liked. I was considered one of her pets, but there were other teachers whom I did not care for. This was a big influence on my decision. Therefore, I entered Helena High School in 1938/39.

TEEN YEARS

As a freshman at Helena High, I discovered I was far ahead of the other kids in my classes, and I think they resented the fact. I didn't know any of these kids, and it was a little hard for me to make friends. I excelled in English and Latin, and was very good in science and social studies. In fact I was somewhat a 'pet' of the science teacher. But I nearly flunked Home Economics. I remember we had to cook which I was not good at, and then we had to make a dress.

For this dress Mom bought the very best blue/green batiste material and a cute dress pattern for me. She thought I could really learn to sew. I tried and got the dress cut out and sewn, which I thought was perfect, but the teacher said I needed to 'pink' all the seams. To me this task was very tedious, but I attempted to use pinking shears on all the seams only to cut a hole in the back of the dress. What a disaster! Then this teacher said I had to patch that hole. I tried to do a good job but it never looked right. I guess I was never cut out to be very domestic. I think everyone in the class received an 'A' on their project except me, and after all my efforts only received a 'C'. I think Mom was disappointed in my sewing since she was an excellent seamstress and made most of my clothes and shirts and pants for my brothers.

In that particular science class we were experimenting with many different things, and I remember I had to dissect a frog. I'm not sure all the students had to do that, and to me it was exceedingly distasteful, but very interesting. I guess we were learning about different bodies. Probably had I delved into science more, I might have gone into research. Then there was the gym class, which I didn't have much interest in taking, and when I did show up for the exercises, they said I didn't qualify. I don't know who said I was too frail, but they made me manager of the locker room. I didn't think that was necessary for a high school diploma, but I guess they graded me on it anyhow.

Dad was an excellent ice skater. He said he would skate down the river to school in the winter. Evidently this was where they lived in Minnesota. Anyhow he still had his skates and would take us kids to one of the lakes out of Helena where he liked to skate. My brothers did okay on their skates, but I could only skate on the shoe part as my ankles seemed too weak, so I spent my time in the warming house.

One summer around this time Dad took me and my brothers fishing at the Smith River. It was a remote place, but fish were an excellent source of food for us at that time. Since we did not have fishing poles Dad broke branches off the willow trees and fashioned a pole for each of us on which he attached a long string for a line. Then he tied a safety pin to the string for a hook. We then had to put a worm on that pin for bait. We had brought tins of worms in dirt from our back yard. I couldn't stand touching those worms and putting them on the safety pin, so someone had to do it for me.

There was no problem catching fish as you could see them in the river. I know we were pulling them out as fast as we put the lines in the water. Fishing was not something I particularly liked, but I know we all got fish. We had a lunch before we left the river, and I know Mom did most of the cleaning of our catch. Most of the time she had to do that chore, but she didn't seem to mind it. She would do an excellent job of cooking them.

Another event that I remember was all of us going to McClellan Creek for a picnic and swimming in the summer. I remember it was a beautiful spot, but swimming was something else as the water was icy cold. We didn't dare stay in very long. Another time we were on a picnic with Aunt Helen's family (Mom's sister and our cousins). It was at a picnic ground where there was a large pond. Somehow we found a raft to float out to the middle of the pond with my brothers, me and cousins Bob and Bill all standing on the raft. Evidently there were too many of us on one side and the raft tipped over and we all fell in the water. All the boys could swim, but I sank to the bottom of the pond, so I just walked out on the bottom. That experience left me fearful of getting my face in the water.

Starting in my sophomore year in high school I was in the chorus which I really enjoyed. I sang second soprano, and the teacher thought I had a good voice which blended well with the other groups. They had two wonderful Gilbert & Sullivan productions which I was in: H.M.S Pinafore and the Pirates of Penzance. Rehearsals were a lot of fun and took most of the school year. Our costumes were ordered by the school, and I'm sure my parents had to pay for them, which probably was almost too much for them. Anyhow I have always liked the music from those operettas.

In High School I had a friend Gloria whom I would play tennis with. We would ride our bikes to the tennis courts at the Civic Center around 6:00 o'clock in the morning. It was a real workout, but exhilarating. We would also have snack parties at LaVerne's house on Friday evenings when she would have around seven to eight friends.

It was around these early High School years that the Barker girls, Helen and Maryann, would visit with us, and Joe and I would spend a week or two at the Barker ranch, which was my mother's sister's home. Out in the country, which we had no knowledge of, was an exciting time for us. I believe this was around the late thirties or early forties, and I remember the ranch did not have electricity or indoor plumbing. My aunt would go around the house every evening and light the oil lamps for light. There was a pump in the kitchen for water and potty jars in the bedrooms, and of course, an outhouse.

When the Barker girls came to Helena we would spend hours on the backyard lawn playing mumbly peg and drinking lemonade. We would go downtown to look in the stores which they seemed to really like. It was a different life for them, as it was for Joe and me to go to the ranch. Every day we gathered eggs from the chicken coop, and then we would go to the garden, which was huge, to pick strawberries. I will never forget a time we were picking berries when I stepped on a snake. It sure startled me and I ran out of the garden screaming. After that incident, I never cared much about spending time in a garden. We also were able to spend time at the horse barn, which was the best time of our visit. We rode a couple of the horses around the corral and thought that was really great.

Over the fourth of July, the Barkers would have our family, Aunt Gertie and Mom's other sisters for a big celebration/picnic. It was a lot of work for my Aunt Gertie, but she had her daughters to help her. All the sisters would bring a dish of food, and my Mom would always bring potato salad. Of course we always supplied lots of firecrackers. I know we had sparklers and some bomb-type firecrackers which we would light and throw in the creek to watch it splash. Anyhow it was fun! There was a very cold water creek which ran near the side of the house. The creek had a house built over it where anything that needed cold storage was kept. I remember they had slabs of meat hanging there and many other food items were stored there. The picnic was wonderful with fried chicken and home-made ice cream which we all helped churn. I don't recall picnic tables. We just sat on blankets on the ground and just enjoyed it.

Always during these years, Mom and Dad would grocery shop every Saturday, and my brothers were either selling newspapers or off playing baseball. I would be home doing my chores which was dusting all the furniture, and everything really would be dusty. It was then that I would listen to the radio--an hour of Norman Vincent Peale. I thought his talks were excellent. He emphasized moral teaching and wrote the book "How to Win Friends and Influence People" which I have read, and think it did influence me.

About this time Mom and Dad bought Joe and I beautiful new bikes. Mine was a red girl's bike, and Joe's was dark blue, and I loved to ride mine. Anyhow, Harold (Fuzz) my brother would go to the YMCA with his friends to swim, and one day he rode my bike to the Y. He parked the bike outside the building, and when he came out to go home, the bike was gone--stolen. We reported the loss to the authorities, but it was never recovered, and we never had any knowledge of who took it. I think this has been a pattern in my life of people taking things from me and never any restitution.

In High School we always had to walk back and forth to school as there were no busses. In fact we had to walk everywhere, but it is something I have never minded doing. I really liked my Latin, shorthand, typing and science classes, and was very good at them. However, my social skills were somewhat lacking at that time so my Mom would try to have extra time with me. I realize now how good she was to me. I would walk home from school, and she would have the kitchen table set with her very fine china cups and saucers. We would sit down with a cup of tea and her freshly baked cookies for a little bit of conversation. I will always cherish these times together with her.

Also I remember walking to the Cathedral, winter or summer, every Tuesday with Mom for the Novena to the Mother of Perpetual Help. I know she prayed for all of us and she did this for 30 to 40 years. She must have been praying for me when I was in South America as I could have been in very serious situations. In later years Aunt Dora would go with her as she did not see well at all. The fortitude she had was amazing. Through our lives I am sure her prayers were our protection.

When I was a junior in High School, about age sixteen, I started to work at F.W. Woolworth. At first they had me begin in the glass section. This was not a place for a young girl with no experience. I think I broke more glasses than I was able to wrap and sell. Anyhow they transferred me to lipsticks. This was a fun job as I met many high school girls looking for the right lipstick. I worked Friday evenings and Saturdays, and on Saturday Mom would have lunch with me at the lunch counter. To this day I still like to have a supply of lipsticks.

Many times, almost every spring and fall, Mom and I would walk downtown to Fligamons Department store just to try on hats. Mom almost always had a new hat for Easter, and sometimes for the fall and winter. It was something that store always had a good supply. We had to wear a hat or head covering to church at that time, so I would get a new hat sometimes too. It was a fun time as many of the hats were either too big or small, and we would have a good laugh out of it. In later years I would write a poem about hats because men never went out the door without their hat.

In my Junior and Senior years in high school, I belonged to the American Legion Junior Auxiliary. I qualified since Dad was a veteran and a member of the American Legion. We met at least a couple times a month. Our group had a very classy drill team and before the convention would practice at least once a week. We had uniforms which were suits of royal blue and gold. In my senior year, our team went to the convention in Red Lodge, Montana. We were in State competition for drill teams. All of the girls were very dedicated, and we took first place. Of course, we all thought that was great. This was quite an experience for me as I had never been away from home like that before.

Mom and Dad belonged to the Helena Eagles organization. As I remember, they had dances every Saturday evening. Since Mom loved to dance, they would go quite often, and sometimes I would go with them. There was really good live music, but I didn't think I was very adept at following the different dance styles. I didn't think Dad cared much for that either, but there was a light luncheon served later. During these years Mom belonged to the Eagles Drill Team. They were pretty classy marchers, and competed at the State conventions.

In the summers Helena would have music, mainly piano, and dance recitals. Mom would take me, and we really enjoyed them. I especially enjoyed the dance programs and would come home and be able to do the dance which I just picked up on my own. When I was sixteen my parents had a big birthday party for me which I can still remember.

During the summers, I would go to Great Falls to spend a few days with my aunts Jo and Dora who lived there at that time. They would always take me to the movies, and we did see some of the great classics. I still remember the movie Laura. At home most of the high school students went to movies at the famous Marlow theatre. I remember they had ushers and a huge snack stand. It was not my favorite thing to do.

A couple of comments about my Mom and Aunt Jo, her sister: Grandma named Mom Katherine Gross. She didn't have a middle name, and she didn't like that, so she gave herself the middle name Phyllis. I have thought it wasn't legal, but she used it on different documents. At their homestead, called the Goose Ranch, she took care of the horses, so I think she must have been a good horseback rider, and her sisters were also. They always said Aunt Jo had back problems. As the story goes she was riding a horse which stumbled and fell on her. This must have been about 1919, and at that time there wasn't much treatment to help back pain. So my Aunt Dora took care of her for most of the rest of Jo's life. As I remember, Jo did work for a short time for some ranch families in Townsend, and Dora was working as a registered nurse in Helena. Jo died of cancer in 1968, and Dora lived to be 91 years of age.

From time to time Aunt Dora would stay with us. She came to stay with us when Mom started to lose her eye sight (after Aunt Jo had passed) which was a blessing since Mom was beginning to need the help. A few years earlier when she was with us and working at St. John's Hospital she was dating a man who was a distributor for Maxwell House coffee. He had a beautiful car with a rumble seat, and he and Dora would go for drives in the countryside. I remember a few times they would take me and Joe for rides in the rumble seat. We thought it was really fun--the wind would blow our hair until it stood up straight, and we would read the signs and yell "Burma-Shave." One time we got caught in a rain storm and were drenched, but it was still a fun ride.

Of course, football on Friday or Saturday nights was a big thing. Many times before a game there would be a bonfire rally at the high school which I went to occasionally with friends. After the games many of the kids would go to Wongs Restaurant in downtown Helena for noodle soup, and Wong's always served hard boiled eggs with it. Instead of eating the eggs many of these kids would throw them from booth to booth. It was kind of wild! I did not go there very often as it was not a thing I cared to do.

Every Easter Mom and I would dye hard boiled eggs. Then Dad and Mom would hide them in the backyard for us kids to search for the next day. That was a fun thing to do after Mass, and sometimes we would get a quarter for a particular egg.

The Vigilante Parade was/is more or less an "institution" for Helena high students. All the classes participated, and most students were in the parade. Many were on floats, horses, or old cars or they were walking and on bikes. This tradition started in the 1920's and everyone has always looked forward to it. The main theme has always been to honor events in Montana's past history. I believe I was in the parade my sophomore, Junior and Senior years. In my junior year friends MaryEllen, Esther and I got an award (honorable mention) for our float which featured an old cemetery. We had a flatbed truck and had made a grave yard with sod and tombstones. One of the grave sites was for Henry Plumber, a famous person in Montana history. Of course we

girls were pleased to receive that honor, and it had been a fun time preparing the float. The parade was always on a Friday and it was a day off from school.

In 1939 the State of Montana celebrated fifty years belonging to the United States of America, and the city of Helena especially recognized it as a great event. There were a number of celebrations, mainly a huge pageant at the Fairgrounds. Almost everybody in the community was in this production, which featured our past pioneer history, and depicting much of nature. My Mom and Dad were in a pioneer barn dance group. They dressed in old-time costumes dating about 1910. Mom had a beautiful, floor length dress which she made and a really cute bonnet she also made. I remember Dad had a beard and a classy bow tie. They really enjoyed the occasion as I did. I was in a group called the "trees." We danced a type of ballet expressing a forest, and all the girls had short green dresses. We had many days of practice, and there were teachers for all the different groups. This was something I will always remember. It was really a wonderful time where everyone cooperated and worked together, and it was a lot of fun.

In 1942 I graduated from high school. There were 203 students in that class--the largest ever for the school. We had yearbooks listing all the classes, freshmen, sophomore, junior, and senior. And it was a lot of fun to go around the school getting autographs of all the different students. I still enjoy reading some of the things they wrote. We had a celebration on two different days--one the Baccalaureate and then the graduation itself. All the girls wore white robes and the guys wore black ones. Of course everyone had a mortarboard hat with a tassel. These events were held at the Civic Center as the high school didn't have room for everyone. Since my name was Winfield, I was one of the last to receive my diploma, and Mom had a family dinner for me afterward.

POST TEEN YEARS - COLLEGE

My background had prepared me extremely well for all my future endeavors. I was a person of high integrity, with a subtle sense of humor and a deep religious faith. I knew I wanted to go to college and work in the business world, but I really didn't have specific goals for my life. I just took advantage of opportunities which came my way. Some of these were a real challenge, but that was something I welcomed.

Graduating high school in 1942, during World War II, and during the presidential years of Franklin Roosevelt, there were many new programs for young people. Many new projects were set up by the President to help with the battered economy, one of which was the WPA (Work Projects Administration). This office in Helena was set up in the minaret, the tower attached to the Shriners building, now called the Helena Civic Center. Anyhow my first job right out of high school was the receptionist in this office. I remember we had to climb up a spiral staircase to get there. I worked there for three months that summer answering the phone and doing correspondence. It was an eye opener for me at that time on how our nation was suffering.

In September of 1942, I started a new job with the Mountain Bell Telephone Company which paid more. This office was in the Colorado building on Main Street. My job was in the mail room, and every day I had to be at the Post Office at 8:00 o'clock in the morning to pick up mail

for that day. The bags of mail were huge, and I had to lug them down Park Avenue, down the hill and across Main Street to the Colorado building even in the winter when the walks were icy. This job was really not for a girl, but most guys were serving in the military and not available. I had wanted the job to save money for college. Some of the girls working there I had known in school and were ones that I liked. We had to learn several different machines I had never heard of, but it was good experience. I stayed with this job for about a year.

The year of 1943-44 my friend Bette and I entered Northern Montana College in Havre. At that time Great Northern Railroad ran from Butte to Havre with stops in Helena and Great Falls which was a godsend for our transportation. We shared a room in a new dorm, and I remember we had matching bedspreads. There was a really nice dining room and the food was pretty good, but the wind would howl under the doors all winter--sometimes it would actually whistle. Bette and I were not in the same classes, but went to different activities together. I remember I took an archery class, and we would practice outside, which was fun especially when you hit the target. I also walked across town to St. Jude's Jesuit Catholic church and attended the Newman club. Since this was during WWII there were not many activities, and since I could use extra money I did a lot of baby sitting for one of the professors. This was a two-year school at that time, but I only went for one year. Bette stayed for another year and graduated.

When the school year was up I returned to Helena and lived at home. I immediately entered the Helena Business College as I felt I needed to keep up on my business skills of typing and shorthand. However, the instructors said I did not need any more training, but they would like me to work with their clients who came to the college for help with correspondence. Consequently, I took shorthand and did the letters, etc., for the CEOs of two or three different mining companies. This went on for a few months until there was a request from the Secretary of State's office at the Capitol for a secretary for approximately three months. I was hired and worked directly under Sam Mitchell who was then Secretary of State. He now has buildings named after him. I worked there for thirteen months and could have stayed longer as they wanted to keep me, but they did not have the budget money to pay me.

It did not take me long to find another job as this was right after WWII, and it seems the job market was wide open. I was hired as a secretary to the auditor at the United States Fidelity and Guaranty Company in Helena. They had a new building on Eleventh Avenue and dealt in various forms of insurance. Besides working with the auditor, I also did correspondence for two of the claims adjusters--one was Bill Rossitor who was very prominent in the community. I worked there from 1946 to 1948. Frankly I wasn't too enthused with the insurance business.

About this time new friends I had made in the business world and some from the business sorority would take short trips in the area. One place we went on weekends and holidays was to Boulder Hot Springs. This was something I looked forward to. We would leave Helena Saturday morning, check in at the hotel there for the night, and then go swimming in the afternoon at their pool or go horseback riding. In the evening we would enjoy the bar and the music they had there.

Another friend I had kept up with was Florence. We were in grade school together and had lived across the street from one another on Raleigh Street. We were both working in Helena when she invited me to a meeting of a business sorority, which I joined, and I ended up as their secretary to the chapter Epsilon Sigma Alpha. All the girls worked in the business world, and we had a very active chapter. We were always celebrating something with a luncheon, dinner or picnic. Some of us would just get in one of the girl's cars and drive through the area singing our hearts out. We knew all the modern songs and would drive to the airport to watch the planes land and take off (if there were any).

Epsilon Sigma Alpha had headquarters in Colorado with a lodge at Loveland where members were welcomed as guests. So Annabelle, Hazel and I took the bus to Loveland. We traveled through Utah and had to change busses in Ogden. We had a good time and stayed at the lodge where we had our meals. We met a number of girls from other parts of the country, and we toured Estes National Park. We also had a day or two in Denver before coming home. This was in the middle forties when everything was fresh and new.

COLLEGE IN IDAHO

After I arrived home, I decided it was time I consider returning to college before I was too old. I always liked school and especially learning new things, so I searched for a school I could afford. I discovered the University of Idaho had a dorm where girls could work for their room and board. I applied and was immediately accepted to live in Ridenbaugh Hall. I was assigned a room which we had to keep clean and share with a roommate. All the girls had to sleep on an open air screened porch which was rather cold in the winter. Sometimes I would stay in the room as we had a couch. Our work schedule was two weeks as waitress, two weeks bussing tables, and two weeks in the kitchen either making salads or drying pots and pans, which the Mormon guys washed.

I also worked part-time in the school Library Reference Section where I filed topographical maps and Federal and State legislative bills. This gave me a little extra spending money. I majored in Liberal Arts and minored in Business. I always liked piano so enrolled in a class and then had lab-time for practice. I was really busy, but enjoyed all the classes I took: more shorthand, economics, geography, Spanish, music appreciation. I was also in Orchasis, which was an extracurricular course on various forms of dance. Because of this dance group, we were in a program dancing a modified jazz version of the Blue Tailed Fly. It was a lot of fun as my roommate and I were both in it.

The University had ballroom dances every Friday evening at the various dorms, sororities and fraternity houses. I went to many of them as they had really good, live music and many guys to dance with since this was right after WWII. These guys were very serious about a career and liked to meet all the girls. I think there were about three guys to every girl on campus. Of course most girls would have a special someone to date. I was dating one guy from Coeur d' Alene, but when he wanted me to go with him to meet his parents, I lost interest. It was just not for me.

The University had a beautiful campus and there was a creek which ran through the area. There were two snack bars available to the students to just sit down for a coke and snack. On one occasion we were out for a walk and had to cross the bridge to get to the Perch for a snack when the girls stopped on the bridge for a cigarette. They insisted I try one, so I did, but that was the first and last time for me as I could not stand the taste, and I also thought it was a total waste of money. There were many activities on campus which I enjoyed going to. And the climate was so mild at that time we could sunbathe on the roof of our dorm in February.

YEARS IN SPOKANE

When going to the University of Idaho my summers were spent in Spokane. I never found it difficult to find a temporary job, and this was a blessing, as I needed to keep up my bank account for the next college year. The first year I worked for Home Insurance Company dealing with claims for hail insurance, and the people I met there were a really fun group. The second year I was a secretary for Standard Oil of California, located in the Old National Bank building. They liked me and my work, but I didn't care for the subject matter of oil. The manager gave me an IQ test of which I scored fairly high. Anyhow the assessment was that I needed to have a career as a doctor. But that really wasn't feasible for a woman at that time.

I had gone to the UI during my sophomore and junior years of college and had returned to enter my senior year only to discover I would not be able to get my diploma as I was deficient in math credits. Since I really didn't need more training for the business world I returned to Spokane to look for a job. This was in January 1950 and I started working for the Favorite Amusement Company with an office off the lobby in the famous Post Theatre--they also owned and operated a couple drive-in theatres. I was secretary to the accountant and never knew there were so many taxes involved in the amusement world. I also relieved the cashier on her break time. But on my break time I would go into the theatre to watch the news reels, which were very enlightening.

In Spokane I lived in girls clubs. At first I stayed in the Catholic one, which was very formal, but had pretty good meals. We always had chipped beef on toast every Sunday morning. They did not have dinner on Sundays, so we would eat out or have a snack in our rooms. I made friends there, and we would walk to the Cathedral for Mass on Sunday morning and then go to the Davenport Hotel Coffee Shop for brunch. During this time most all the girls joined the USO (United Service Organization). Being a member of the USO we were invited to dances at Fairchild Air Force Base, and they would send a bus to pick us up every Friday evening. We always had a good time and dated different service men. Because the Dean of this Club didn't like who I was dating, I was asked to leave.

Consequently, I moved across the street to the Lutheran Girls Club. The Dean there was a sweet little lady who welcomed me, but said I would have to attend their Bible group every Sunday night. That was okay with me, but I would use my Catholic Bible. I lived there about five years and really liked it as I made beautiful friendships which I kept for years. One of these friends I even had when I moved to Tacoma, but I also had friends from the Catholic Club who had moved to Seattle whom I would visit at that time. Anyhow we would also go to the Air Base dances, and this was when I became really interested in Bible study.

Also because of my job I belonged to the Spokane Business Women's Club which met at the Davenport Hotel. We had wonderful dinner meetings, and participated in some city policy. Then after nine months of work for the theatres I had a call from the newly built Veterans Hospital to come for an interview. I was hired directly as secretary to the dietician before the Hospital was opened for patients. I really learned the quality of foods on this job, but was there only a few months when they transferred me to the Registrar's office where they trained me in medical terminology. At that time, 1951, there were no schools offering these courses, but I had a good background for it as I had taken two years of Latin in High School. I was there for about a year. Then I moved to the orthopedic floor for several months, and then I moved to the medical floor. I also filled in for the girl on the surgical floor. I really liked working for the VA and had excellent doctors to work with. They said I had more medical knowledge than the nurses.

Several of the secretaries at the hospital decided to play golf, me included. So we went to Down River Golf Course near the Hospital for lessons every week. After some time we would play the short nine off and on. A couple of years later I would play with a friend at Wandemere in north Spokane, again the short nine, but we rarely kept score. One of my friends from the Catholic Club wanted me to take a trip up Lake Chelan to Stehekin in Washington wilderness, and this was to be over a three-day weekend. Francis was going up earlier and took the boat from Chelan, but I had limited time off so I took the float plane from Chelan. We had a good time there and rode horse back on one of their trail rides. I flew back to Chelan on the float plane and home on the bus.

I lived at the Lutheran Girls Club about five years and then decided to move to an apartment where I had a couple of friends. At that time I was on a bowling team which met every week. Also I had another friend who wanted to go skiing. We took the ski bus up to Mount Spokane where we tried to learn. It was a thrill to ski down the mountain but I really wasn't too enthused with this activity. Anyhow on one trip I was skiing down the mountain, and the snow was icy on the top. Consequently I couldn't control where I was going. Toward the bottom I fell into a hole and broke my wrist, which was painful. I think this was in the afternoon, and we had to wait for the bus until 7:00 p.m. to get back to Spokane. My friend took me to the hospital where I had to wait again until almost midnight to be treated. Then when I called the VA Hospital to say my arm was in a cast and I needed time off as I didn't think I could type, my boss said "no way." I could come in and train some other girls. Thank goodness I always had someone to give me a ride to work. For over a year I rode with a guy who worked in the mail room. He arranged get-togethers at the Spokane Elks with him and his wife, and I would go with his son.

At this time there were many nightclubs along the Washington/Idaho border where they had wonderful meals, live music and dancing. Many of the girls from these Clubs would have dates, including me, and sometimes we would double date. One of the Clubs I liked was called "Happy Hour." We also spent many Sunday afternoons on the beach at Lake Coeur d' Alene.

I also had a good friend, Dorothy, at the Lutheran Club, and she was from Montana. She was dating a guy who was career Air Force. They decided to get married, and she asked me to be her maid of honor. They were married at the Chapel on the Air Base and had a wedding dinner at the Davenport Hotel. It was a beautiful ceremony and dinner party. Dorothy and I kept up with

each other for years and eventually met again in Tacoma where he was stationed at McChord AFB and where I went to work.

When Dorothy left Spokane and two of my very good friends got cancer, I was getting a little weary of life in Spokane. I always have subscribed to the daily newspaper and one day read in the Spokesman Review to come to Seattle for an interview to work in Foreign Service. I asked my neighbor if she didn't want to apply for Foreign Service. She was eager to go to Seattle and do this. So we drove to Seattle for endless tests: written, oral, physical and mental exams plus interviews. They were especially interested in my studies of the Spanish language, also the Latin. We passed the exams, but my friend, Ophra, decided she didn't want to travel any distance from home.

MY TIME IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

I was called to accept a job (on the job training) at the Department of State in Washington, D.C., which was a transfer from the Veterans Administration. They shipped my belongings, and the next thing I knew, I was working as the secretary to the Secretary of European Economic Affairs under John Foster Dulles, who was Secretary of State. All the correspondence I did had to be explicitly exact. Many times they would change a word, and I would have to type it all over again. Sometimes they would call for a limousine for me to take papers to the Pentagon. That was a different experience for me as I had to walk a long distance to get to the right office. I met many wonderful people who were dedicated to working for our Democracy.

All the time I was in Washington, I lived at St. Catherine's girls club where I met many new friends--some I was close with until they passed away. Seems I have out-lived so many people! During the spring and summer we would meet for lunch outside at a quaint little restaurant which had wisteria growing overhead--such a pleasant atmosphere. Many of these friends were secretaries to the congressmen at the Capitol. Vivian was a close friend and worked for the congressman from Ohio. This was at the time when John Kennedy was a Senator. She would always know when he would be speaking to Congress, and she would tell some of the girls, and we would rush to the Capitol to listen as he was such a great speaker with a great sense of humor. It was such a thrill for us to be there sitting in the gallery.

Another friend, Grace, who also worked in the State Department, and was eventually assigned to Paris, France, had a car. She was from Massachusetts and liked to drive. She would take some of us to the Chesapeake Bay on the Virginia coast and up into the Appalachian mountains. One time we had an all-day trip to Shenandoah National Park. These were beautiful areas at that time, but I think the western U.S. has many more areas which are much more spectacular.

My friend Grace was the only one I knew who had a car. Most of us would flag a cab, which were numerous in Washington, or ride the trolley. I always liked riding the trolley, especially to work, as it would take me right to the door. Going other places a cab would be more accommodating, and I don't think we even had to pay in the main part of the city. We would take advantage of this to go to the many sites of interest. I visited the Smithsonian Museum which had endless exhibits. Many of these were early American history, some prehistoric, and

some on space. There was also biological, plant life, wildlife, and just everything imaginable. We could spend days going through this museum.

One place several of us visited, thanks to our friend Vivian, who worked for the congressman from Ohio, was the White House. She had obtained special tickets for us to view many extra exhibits which were set up in the basement of the White House. We saw the inaugural dresses of all the first ladies from the beginning of the presidency, plus the state dinner place settings, among other things. We also toured the Oval Office and the East Room. We saw a guest room on the second floor where other famous presidents had slept, Lincoln and Teddy Roosevelt. All this was very fascinating.

Viewing all these places of interest in Washington made you feel like you had a special "look" into the history of our country. The Portrait Gallery with statues of all the Presidents was fascinating as they looked real life. Then there was Statuary Hall in the Capitol with two representatives of honor from each state. Montana had Jeanette Rankin, who was the first woman senator in the U.S., and Charlie Russell, a great western artist. Washington State had Walt Whitman from WallaWalla and Mother Cabrini from Seattle, both of whom had founded educational and medical facilities.

We were privileged to visit so many places of interest. At Christmas we attended the midnight Mass of the nativity of Jesus at the Carmelite Mission for which we had to have a special invitation. My friend Lorraine who worked for the Navy arranged this. This was a cloistered convent and it was impressive to see all the nuns behind a screened partition. The Mass and the decorations were beautiful.

Another special event was the Good Friday Service at the Franciscan Monastery. This was like a pageant enacting the crucifixion of Our Lord with real live people. It was remarkable what they did in the three hours of this special day. Another friend from the Girls Club who was a friend of the Franciscans had set this up for a number of us to attend this service.

On Easter Sunday several of us girls went to Mass at the Cathedral in downtown Washington and afterward we walked in the Easter Parade down Pennsylvania Avenue. We really had a good time viewing all the spectacular hats--hats everywhere--even the guys had special hats. Of course we had special hats too. I think I had a pillbox hat as I was always interested in what Jackie Kennedy would wear, and that was a big thing with her. There were also beautiful dresses on view. And the cherry trees were in full blossom at this time too. I will always cherish these wonderful experiences!

At this time the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception was being built. I was hoping it would be finished before I left Washington; however, Bob and I toured it at a later date on a visit to D.C.

I think it was Memorial Day, also the Fourth of July, Labor Day and of course Veterans Day when they would have patriotic concerts on the grounds of the Capitol. They were presented by the American Service branches: Army, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard. Since I lived only a couple of blocks from the Capitol, a number of us girls would always go. The music was

wonderful, and afterwards we could go for a snack in that area. At certain times of the year, and especially on hot summer days some of us would walk downtown Washington to one of the famous hotels cocktail lounge to have a mint julip. We also walked on the Mall and toured the Washington Monument and the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials.

One of the places I enjoyed most in Washington was the National Gallery of Art. Perhaps this was because I had taken Art Appreciation at U of I and also music (piano) and this gave me a better appreciation of the different schools of art and music. They would have a concert (classical), Mozart, Chopin, and others every Sunday afternoon. I thoroughly enjoyed the music, and afterward we would go through the different galleries of the many artists: Van Gogh, Monet, Degas, and many others. After viewing one or two galleries we would go to the cafeteria for dinner. They also had a big variety and very good food. There were different schools of art in the different galleries: Landscape, impressionists, the old masters, modern, religious, etc. All were really great to see.

One Saturday we all went to the Gallery as we knew there would be an unveiling of Salvador Dali's painting: 'The Sacrament of the Last Supper.' We stood in the Gallery and watched this flamboyant artist strip the sheet off his painting with a sweeping gesture. The painting was so large the canvas almost covered the whole wall. He then explained every part of the picture: The last supper in the upper room, the area of Galilee and the lake, plus the crucifixion. We were all very impressed and went to the gift shop to buy prints of his painting, which I now have and really do like.

Another artist's paintings which I really liked to view were works of Degas, an impressionist, who painted ballet girls, and of course, there were Van Gogh's art forms which left a lasting impact. These are experiences I will always cherish. In all my 96 years I have never encountered anything as remarkable and fulfilling as my years in our nation's capital.

Of course we would go to the department stores there, and at certain times they would have wonderful bargains. I always liked Burlingtons and the Hex. However, I would shop for my clothes at a specialty shop on Connecticut Avenue where I could buy a size tall ten. I believe this was in northwest Washington and would take the trolley out there. Connecticut Avenue was only a block from Massachusetts Avenue where all the embassies were located, so we would encounter people speaking different languages.

A couple of times while in Washington another girl, Jo, and I took the commuter train to New York City. It was a rather short ride which a lot of people did every day. One time we went during the Christmas season on a long weekend. We stayed at the YWCA in the heart of the city. We had meals at the Rockefeller Center overlooking the ice rink, which was very pleasant and of course the decorations were beautiful. We went to the Rockettes show, took a tour down the rivers, and saw many different things.

Another trip I took while in Washington was on a boat down the Potomac River to Mount Vernon, George Washington's home. This is a national historical monument and very well preserved. The house gave one an idea of what life was like in the 1700's, and the acreage was very well kept with little station houses along the tract where the gardens were. This was a lesson in history, and a thoroughly pleasant trip.

Assignment to the FOREIGN SERVICE INSTITUTE: It was almost a year of on-the-job training as secretary to the Secretary of European Economic Affairs at the State Department when I was enrolled in classes at the Institute. In this school, the emphasis was on Democracy with classes in Diplomacy, Protocol and for me profuse instruction in the Spanish language. When I entered the door in the morning every little bit of conversation had to be in Spanish. I had had two years of Latin in high school and two years of Spanish in college, but they really enhanced and increased my knowledge of the language so I was able to more or less understand it and make my way in South America. After about a school year, I was assigned to Buenos Aires, Argentina, as secretary to the American Consul at the Embassy.

Having worked in the European section of the State Department, I was supposed to be assigned in Europe, but there were no openings for a Spanish speaking secretary, so was sent to the South American area. Buenos Aires was a choice post for girls in the work force as they were included in the social activities of the Embassy. This was not true in Europe. My friend, Grace, was assigned to Paris and the girls there had to make their own way and were not invited to any of the activities which included the foreign office people.

SOUTH AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

After receiving the assignment to Buenos Aires I was granted time off to go see my family in Montana for a few weeks. I then flew back to Washington for a couple of days to get my travel papers in order, and I boarded American Airlines flight to Miami, Florida. I had a few hours layover before getting on a Pan-American flight to Lima, Peru, which was an overnight flight to Lima. I flew first class and had a berth to sleep in, and the stewardess insisted I try lying down to sleep. To me it was so plush it felt like I was in a coffin, so I sat up all the way to Buenos Aires, which, if I remember right, was something like thirteen hours. Pan-Am was wonderful! They served full meals, plus snacks and cocktails. Everything was truly first class.

On arriving in Lima, I remember the plane's descent to the airport when flocks of chickens were flying up toward the airplane, and thank God we didn't hit them. When we arrived in Lima, I had to speak Spanish to get a cab to the hotel. When we got there they didn't have a reservation for me, so I had to call the Embassy in Lima, and they informed me I was at the wrong hotel. I'm not sure why this happened, but I had a friend from Washington working there who came and took me to the right hotel. I stayed in Lima a couple of days and toured the city. There were a number of shops catering to tourists where they sold gold/silver jewelry and other articles. They had beautiful things at such low prices. I also visited the Catholic Shrine of Saint Rose of Lima, who is a great saint and honored still today.

Following my days in Lima I boarded Pan-Am again on the long flight to Buenos Aires. We stopped in Santiago, Chile; to refuel then flew across the Andes Mountains to Buenos Aires. I was thankful these flights were mostly in the daytime. We arrived in Buenos Aires about 8:00-9:00 p.m., their time, and the Personnel Officer from the Embassy met me at the airport and drove me to the hotel Crillon where I stayed for the next few months. At this time she explained a number of things including how I was to get to the Embassy for work the next day. The staff did not have cars as did the officers.

Marian Conroy was the Personnel Officer, and she explained that I would be living in the hotel until I could find suitable living quarters--an apartment--and a maid, as all the girls were expected to hire one. Living in the hotel was a unique experience for me, but I met a couple of other girls who were also working at the Embassy and waiting for an apartment. Actually the Personnel Office was helping us to find one. During this time we girls would get together for dinner in the hotel dining room. In Argentina you could not get dinner before 8:00 o'clock in the evening, and this dining room had a huge dance floor. Argentines loved to do the tango. There were many couples who would come for dinner and dance the tango. It was fun for us to come for dinner, which was usually wonderful beef, and then watch the dancing.

We always had to walk to the Embassy for work, which was about five blocks from the hotel. This was down a main street, and at this time of the morning the locals would be cleaning the streets, hosing them down and sweeping in front of their property. They would do this since they allowed horse traffic on the streets in the downtown area, in fact throughout the city, so they really kept it very clean. Of course we would stop at the coffee bars, which were on every corner, before getting to work. These bars were all built the same: horseshoe shape. Everyone would stand at the bar, and there would be different men following in line to serve you. The first one would take your money, the second would pour a demitasse cup of coffee for you, which would be like syrup, the third had sugar, and the fourth would serve a huge blob of whipped cream. I would always have the whipped cream. All their foods were natural--not artificial or chemical.

When we got to the Embassy for work, in my section, the Consular, there would be lines of people waiting to get in up the block and around the corner. All of them were waiting to apply for visas to get into the States. The building itself was on the main plaza of the city which included the Catholic cathedral and CasaRosada, comparable to the White House.

The first day I started work, the Personnel Officer took me through the Embassy complex and introduced me to everyone and told me about all the different job areas. I was to work with the two American Consular officers, Mr. Taliaferro who was fluent in at least three languages and Mr. Harold Wood who had an outstanding command of Spanish. He had lived in Brownsville, Texas on the Mexican border and was married to a Mexican woman. I was to work in the American citizenship section which included dealing with the Argentine Foreign Office. Our correspondence was in Spanish and I had Spanish letters on my typewriter. I also registered all American citizens coming into the country, renewed their visas, made new passports, and issued new temporary visas for Argentines coming to the U.S.

Every Monday morning there would be a row of Mormon missionaries waiting to be registered into the country, sometimes there would be ten of them, which really kept me busy. All this information would be sent to the Argentine Foreign Office. I also did correspondence in English which had to be sent back to the States in 'code.' My roommate was a cryptographic code clerk, and she would have to work long hours, sometimes 36 hours straight, and then come home and sleep 36 hours. We really were busy during these years as there were many Europeans, mainly German, coming to Argentina to gain residence and then apply for entry into the U.S. under the Argentine quota. Also it was after the fall of Juan Peron, and Argentines were leaving the country. The Peronistas at that time were very active and did not like Americans. In fact, we would receive phone calls at 5:00 o'clock in the morning telling us not to come to work as they were anticipating raids on the Embassy.

I remember one incident on my job when I had to take a deposition verbatim in shorthand. It concerned a family of gypsies, American citizens, I believe from Oklahoma. They had been in jail in Argentina for entering the country illegally. It was an amazing story as they had driven all the way from the States through the various countries without being picked up until they got to Argentina. They drove an old truck on dirt roads and through rivers into countries crossing borders and never being stopped for questions. We had to prove they were American citizens, and Mr. Wood had to translate this deposition into Spanish. This was a part of our job--really interesting, but very demanding.

Immigration laws at this time, especially in the U.S. and Argentina, were very strict and they were enforced. The U.S. required a person entering our country on a permanent visa to have so much money set aside, a sponsor, a place to live, and a job, and we had to establish all this was in order. In my section I worked with two Argentine ladies, Rhoda and Colinette, who both were fluent in at least three languages. Colinette loved to go to the pizzerias after work and would take some of us girls. These were like glorified bars and she would always order scotch old fashions for me--I guess because of all the wonderful fruit you got with it. We would also go to the American Club after work and at times for luncheons. Most of the time, we had wine. Conversations, many times, were about all the Nazis and ordinary Germans who were entering the country to establish residence and then apply to enter the U.S. In fact when I lived in the hotel, Ruth and I would walk by a couple of the houses where we knew Nazis lived.

There were four of us girls who hung-out together and three of us were red heads, Ruth, Dorothy, and me; Norma was a blonde. (I think the State Department wanted red heads to represent the country.) We would go to the American Club, where you did not have to speak Spanish, and we would have lunches and dinners, and go on trips together. We also joined the Buenos Aires Country Club, which was a few miles out of the city. We would take the train and carry our golf clubs, but it would stop almost at the door of the Club. We would stay in the hotel there where we had wonderful meals, and would play golf, and sometimes swim, and they also had a bowling alley. We spent many weekends there.

One thing the girls were told in our orientation on arrival was that we were expected to attend all the cocktail parties given by the staff and the Ambassador. We were told to mingle with the foreign guests, but never to discuss our jobs. I always enjoyed going to them and would try to get information from the guests about Buenos Aires and the Argentine country-side. I especially

liked going to the Ambassador's as he had wonderful food from the U.S.--salmon and caviar, plus Argentine beef. His house was very impressive with a grand entrance and beautiful staircase which lead to a huge banquet room. I thought it was a privilege to go to these parties, and especially to work in the Embassy with these people.

Another person who seemed to be acquainted with all the Embassy staff was a Jewish guy who was always throwing a party for all our staff in his penthouse apartment. It was always a fun time, and I remember viewing the lights of the city in all directions. We could even see the river and the port. Many times the conversations would lead to the Nazis in the city. One thing he did was help we Americans celebrate all our holidays. The embassy itself was on the main plaza of the city, but around the corner, just a block or two away, was Herrods Department store. This was the famous store of London origin, and they carried everything imaginable. It was fun just to go through it floor by floor, and many times I would have lunch there as they had excellent food in their lunch room.

Evidently there were sources within the city who thought we girls did not have enough to do so they would call some of the officers to see if we would volunteer to help them out. One such source was La Pecania Compania de Maria Hospital, The Little Company of Mary Hospital, which was run by that order of nuns from New Zealand. Of course we were asked if we could volunteer and we were glad to do so. My three friends and I would go to the hospital quite often and cut and roll bandages out of bolts of gauze. We would assemble different sizes of these bandages for use in their medical procedures. This was very different from in the U.S. as ours were already made up.

Another place where we volunteered our help was at an American mission in Buenos Aires, which I believe was the Salasians from New York. We would go there on a Sunday afternoon to help with the children, and there were a number of them. I guess it was like an orphanage. It was play time for boys and girls, and they would try and teach us the Argentine folk dances. This was a fun time, but we were astounded at the number of abandoned children. There were children who were just living on the streets whom we would encounter in the downtown area. They would know we were from the U.S. and would come running to us to sell holy cards which they took from the churches. I would always buy some, but we didn't dare give them a peso which would have been way too much. They were really cute, but it was a sad situation. I think they lived in the churches which were always open.

As I mentioned all the girls were expected to hire a maid, and Ruthe and I had decided to share an apartment. We moved into a second floor apartment building on Aguaro Avenida which was on the subway line. Ruthe really didn't like being on the second floor so we put our names in for the first floor. It was not a long wait when we were able to move to the first floor bordering the courtyard which was very well maintained and we had a lemon tree outside our glass-paneled door. I would pick lemons off the tree to eat as they were very sweet.

Both of these apartments had maid's quarters, so when we were on the second floor we hired a maid named Dora, but she didn't last very long. All the girls working in the Embassy were expected to socialize, getting together with the other girls on staff. So we had a luncheon one Saturday for some of these girls and had bought some items from the Embassy Commissary- one

being Campbell's soup. We planned to have soup as part of the luncheon, and had explained to Dora how to prepare it. But when she served what we thought would be soup, she had fried it. This was quite a joke for the girls but rather upsetting for us. Consequently we let her go!

We had to interview and consider other women, then decided to hire Ramona. She was not wanted by others since she had a one-year old little boy she would bring to live with her. We thought it would be kind of fun to have this little boy with us. We had maid's quarters off the kitchen where they stayed most of the time. Julito was a cute little guy, and before long was speaking English as well as Spanish. Ramona was an excellent maid and did everything for us. She prided herself on shopping for food and would get excellent bargains.

Ruthe worked long hours as everything, all correspondence, had to go back to the States in code. Sometimes she would work 36 hours straight and come home and sleep 36 hours. She was a chain smoker. She got the cigarettes in the Commissary. We also bought Sherry wine there which was imported from Spain, and Ramona would help herself to it. Anyhow I guess I had more time with Julito! Ruthe would get a cab to work, but I would try to ride the subway as some of the other girls did. This was not the best thing to do as the seats were made of some porous material and because of it, I would get flea bites on my legs--no fun. On leaving the subway and going up the steps, women would get pinched on their butt. Men seemed to enjoy that! I would turn around and chew them out in English. Thank God - He was with me.

Of course we were interested in this country we were living in. So whenever we had some time off we would take a trip, short or long. I remember visiting their Shrine to the Virgin Mary called Luhan, where Mary had appeared. The church itself was not completed. It was just an open area inside except there many crutches and wheelchairs left there as miracles had taken place. Now I have heard the Pope speak of that Shrine. This was a few miles out of the city so guess I took the train down there. In Buenos Aires I would attend Mass at the Cathedral which was on the same plaza as the Embassy.

Attached to the Embassy were liaison offices--the Attaches of the Army, Navy and Marines. The Naval Attaché was a pilot and had access to an airplane. He was very gracious to the girls on staff and would take us on some of his flights to various cities. I got to go on some of these over long weekends. One was to Ascension, Paraguay where Ruthe and I went for a few days. We stayed in the Embassy compound which is surrounded a courtyard, and that is where the offices were as well as the living quarters. I remember seeing a coral snake right outside their office. It is a rather primitive country and the hotel was rather eerie. The city is on the Paraguay River, and everyone had said we should visit the Guarani Native colony which was on an island in the river. They were noted for their music which was beautiful and played in most of the restaurants in Buenos Aires. So Ruthe and I got in a row boat. What an experience! A native Guarani Indian manually rowed us across the river. Thank gosh we made it! I'm sure the river was full of piranha fish and it would have been a disaster if we had tipped over. He also brought us back to Ascension. It was a primitive village on the island, but with this beautiful music.

In Ascension the main attraction was a wood carving shop. We spent hours there as they carved everything imaginable. They also tooled leather products which had beautiful designs. We both bought several things. I remember I bought their wood carved salad bowls and plates, which had the spoon and fork with them, an exceptionally carved horse, and a leather ottoman with a design on the top. Another flight we took on the Navy airplane was to Salta, Argentina, in the north and bordering Brazil. This was a very different landscape, a smaller city with quaint shops. We spent a couple of days there, and it was good to get away from our jobs.

We were always busy going somewhere, and one day some of us girls decided to go to the race track near Buenos Aires. I think we took the train; they were always a good source of transportation. Argentina had beautiful horses, but there were no women at the track. We were overwhelmed--there were hoards of men who would take a leak anywhere. We couldn't wait to get away from there. Another trip we took was across the river one evening to Montevideo, Uruguay. We only stayed one night and day just to see the place as it was very much like Buenos Aires. I think this was a trip on a ferry.

Argentina would celebrate all the religious feast days and everything would close for that day. Sometimes this would give us a three-day weekend, and this would be a good time for another trip. At one of these times we decided to go to an ocean resort, Mar del Plata. We were going to fly as it was quite a distance south on the Atlantic Ocean. We got to the airport and on the plane, but when we flew a few miles from the city we could see oil dripping from the motors. The next thing we knew, we were back at the airport to wait as they had taken the plane up for test flights. We knew their airplanes were used U.S. planes--not the best. So after several of these flights and their weak excuses, we did not want to waste more time and went back to Buenos Aires and took the train.

The beach was beautiful and grass grew right down to the sand. There were many little huts where tourists had stayed in the summer. We were there off-season. The hotel was right on the beach as were a number of casinos. It was stimulating just to be there and we loved walking on the beach. There were huge sea lions just rolling around and not far from us. The hotel served meals and Argentina also had excellent fish. All in all this was a great trip. Of course there were cool breezes from Antarctic, and a little to the west was the area of Patagonia.

I had made friends with Nellie who worked in another area of the Immigration Section. She invited me to stay a weekend with her and her mother. They were of French descent and had a villa outside the city at LaPlata. Their house was on a private courtyard, and most of the rooms opened onto it. Nellie spoke at least three languages: French, Spanish and English. They were very gracious and it was an interesting experience. I know they had a maid too. A few years later Nellie came to the States for a visit and stayed with me.

There was another girl who worked in another area of the Embassy who was always organizing get-togethers for the girls. She would get it all planned and set up then invite us girls to participate. One such event was a boat trip up the main river through Argentina (the Parana) from its mouth which was at the ocean. We were in a small motor boat going by Buenos Aires up the river. I don't remember how far, but it was to a hut built on stilts over the river. We had

to climb up some kind of stairway to get into it, and really had to be careful not to fall as there were camen there in the river, their alligators. We spent an afternoon there. I guess we had brought a lunch. Argentina had wonderful empanadas. I think God was always watching over me as there were many times I was in hazardous situations. The scenery was beautiful but this trip was quite risky.

Argentina observed more holidays during the year than in the States, and they would have more time off. So after being in Buenos Aires for a while and having the week off between Christmas and New Year's, it being summertime, my friends and I decided to take a trip to Rio. We flew El Real Brazilian Airlines and this was a rather exciting trip. We stayed at a Ritz Hotel overlooking the ocean on Coppa Cabana beach. In fact the beach was lined with hotels and had a long promenade the full length. But from there we could look up on the mountains and hills in back of the hotels and see thousands of cardboard shacks (favelas) which housed so many people of Brazil. There were many blacks in this area who had been brought to Brazil as slaves. It was so sad to see so much of this. I believe it still exists- maybe even worse. There was absolutely no sanitation.

We visited the Embassy there as some of us knew some of the girls there. They informed us of different places to see and go. So one evening we took a cab out of the city to a cliff which overlooked another ocean beach. We were on this cliff which looked down on an area of the beach where a voodoo ceremony was taking place. It was an exciting place but scary. People down below were in a frenzy--dancing with violence, and hardly any clothes. They had become so insane they would throw themselves into the ocean surf. We were amazed at the antics. I can still see it in my mind's eye, and do not want to see it again.

The next day we took a trip to downtown Rio to Sterns Jewelry store. I think they were affiliated with New York. We had to ring a doorbell to get into the store, being flanked at the door by guards on each side. Then two more guards came to usher us into a room where guards brought trays of jewels for us to view and select. They had mounted gems and loose gems--beautiful glittering stones: Diamonds, topaz, amethysts, emeralds, beryl, aquamarine, and tourmaline--every jewel you can think of. We looked at all of them, and then tried to decide what to buy. I don't remember what we bought, except for aquamarine and amethysts, plus I bought a loose stone of topaz and a mounted amethyst. When we got back to Buenos Aires, I selected a mounting and had it set in Argentine gold which was a much better quality.

In Rio there were many places to go and to see, so we visited the Embassy to find out where it was best to go and how to get there. They recommended a certain cab company who would made suggestions and drive us there. First we visited Sugar Loaf which was like a huge rock in the Bay of Rio. We took a tram ride out over the ocean which seemed a little frightening to me. Then we took the cab up a mountain in back of the city to the Christ statue which has been a landmark overlooking the city for many years. What a beautiful view. We could see all areas of the city plus out over the ocean. The language in Brazil is Portuguese, but they could understand Spanish which we tried to speak with them.

The day before New Year's Eve we flew to Sao Paulo mainly to see Mardi Gras, which the Brazilians begin on New Year's eve. This is a huge event loaded with activity and it lasts until Lent begins. Our hotel overlooked the main street where the colorful parade went directly under our windows. The costumes were elaborate (outstanding) and the Latin music and dancing was wonderful. There were many people in this parade, all very active and expressive-joyous. Carmen Miranda was in the parade with her huge, high hat and beautiful dress. We thoroughly enjoyed this event which was quite lengthy.

After a couple of days we flew to Santos, a port city on the Atlantic. Both here and Sao Paulo were industrial cities. I think Santos was the port city for Sao Paulo. This was a rather quick trip. From there we flew back to Buenos Aires. All in all visiting Brazil was an interesting, exciting trip.

Back in Buenos Aires as I remember one day the Consular Section was invited to an estancia which is (in our terms) a huge cattle ranch on the pampas. These ranches were owned and operated by the elite of Argentina, so it was a real privilege for us on the staff to be invited. The girls rode with some of the officers who had cars which they could bring into the country--we could not do this. It was quite a drive in the countryside through the pampas. The estate was huge with elegant buildings and we could see cattle in the distance. We were escorted to an area where they would have an asado. This was a wonderful meal, the main course, of course, was beef which was cooked over an open fire pit, the meat on spits surrounding the fire, and it was delicious. We spent the afternoon here just enjoying the pampa and watching the gauchos.

Americans have not been able to drink the water in many countries of the world, although they said it was okay to do so in Argentina. However, we did not think that was true as some people had gotten sick with hepatitis. I was one of them and landed in the hospital there for three weeks. The hospitals there relied on families to take care of the patients, and since I didn't have any there some of the nuns and the doctor looked after me. This hospital was run by the Little Company of Mary an order from New Zealand. Dr. Kelly was my doctor who had gone to Tulane University in the States. After I was discharged I had to go back to work half time for three weeks and then full time. It seemed a little much at the time, but Ramona was very good to me.

The Embassy had a crew of Marine guards, seven or eight. I dated one named Duane a few times. I forget where he was from. For a certain party we were having at the Bocca, which was like a nightclub part of the city in the port area, he had hired a horse drawn carriage to take us there. This was to be a fun evening for dinner and to watch the Argentine folk dancers in their beautiful costumes, and they had wonderful music. During the evening Duane thought he had to get up and move in with these dancers, which he knew nothing about. Evidently he was drinking too much and getting pretty rowdy. At one point he threw a wine glass to me which cut my wrist, and then he came rushing over and poured wine on it. Our officers came and took him out of the club, so I had to have another ride home. The next day I learned he was shipped to an island in the Pacific, as they would not tolerate such behavior.

The Marines celebrated some of their history with different events, and one was the Marine Ball at the Buenos Aires Yacht Club. Duane had already left, and one of the girls in the Embassy wanted to make sure we could all attend, so she arranged blind dates for a number of us, with Argentine men. This was an elegant and formal event and I had a date with an Argentine, Roberto Ballet. We had a little difficulty with the language, but it was another experience for me.

Not long after I received word my tour in Buenos Aires was up, and I was being transferred to the British protectorate of Port of Spain, Trinidad in the Caribbean. This was not to my liking! Of course I had interviews with the Personnel Officer in Buenos Aires who said I needed to discuss the transfer with the State Department when I returned to D.C. for orientation. However, they made all my travel arrangements back to the U.S. Since I wanted to go back by ship they said it was best to leave from Lima, Peru as that would be a more direct route rather than from Argentina or Brazil.

I was scheduled to leave Buenos Aires the end of August, 1958. My travel plans included stop-overs in Ascension, Paraguay, and Rio de Janeiro. I was fortunate to travel with a couple who worked for Swift Meats in Buenos Aires. We both had a day in Ascension and were at the same hotel where we had our meals together. An evening was spent in the hotel night club where we listened to the music and watched the folk dancers. I was able to visit the wood carving shop again and ordered some things to be sent to the States. The next day we were on the same flight to Rio on Brazilian airlines. Our pilot said he would fly us over Iguassu Falls. When we arrived there he invited us into the cockpit to view the falls which were spectacular. I think they are comparable to Niagara Falls in the U.S. He circled them a couple of times so we could really see them.

Upon arriving in Rio I stayed on Copacabana beach again and had a day's visit there. I had diplomatic immunity so did not have to go through customs, but went to the Embassy the next day to find out how best to get around Rio. I wanted to visit the arboretum which was a little ways out of the city, and friends in the Embassy recommended taking a cab there. I went there at dusk and never in my life have I seen such gorgeous tropical plants plus numerable species of beautiful birds. I couldn't believe all the colors and exquisite plumage. This was a time for their songs and you wouldn't believe all the melodies--all the different bird songs sung at the same time. This was a fabulous experience!

The next day I boarded a Braniff Airlines flight across the continent to Lima, Peru. Braniff was a very plush American airline, and I was flying first class. Again the pilot was very gracious and said he would fly around one of the volcanos in the Andes Mountains, which he did. We flew around one and could look down into the crater. Amazing! This was an all day flight, and we landed in Lima in the evening.

The next day I went to the Embassy to see my friend Libby, who introduced me to a couple of teachers from the States, and who were going to take a tour of Machu Picchu, a place I really wanted to see. They were happy to have me go with them on this trek into the Andes Mountains to view the "lost city of the Incas," and I thought what good fortune to find people to go with. The next day we boarded Fosett Airlines to Cuzco. When we got off the plane there a couple of

the passengers fainted since it was such high altitude and thin air. As I remember I went to Mass at their Cathedral that evening.

The next morning the teachers and I got on a little train which traveled along the Urubamba River. We had one stop before reaching the base of the mountain of Machu Picchu. There we entered a mud hut where people lived and saw rats scurrying over the dirt floor. We hurried back on the train and our next stop was the base of the mountain. The altitude was already high and we looked up to even greater heights. From here we boarded an old truck standing in the back. We zig zagged up on a dirt path - very primitive! As we drove along we were amazed to see that the mountain was completely terraced where the Inca had grown all their food crops. To think that they had cultivated the side of a steep mountain was mind boggling. We were going to an ancient archaeological Inca Indian city on the top of an Andes mountain.

We then arrived at the gate to an ancient prehistoric city. There were many buildings on the top of this mountain, all constructed of stone, and precisely cut to fit one against the other. It is hard to imagine how they brought these stones to the top of this mountain. There were many buildings there, probably houses and stores, but no roofs as they were of thatch, and no doubt blown away. There were plazas with huge altars where they had made their sacrifices. I have read they were human--I think young girls. They also worshiped sun gods in these areas. We went in some of these buildings which were amazing. There were niches in the walls to store things, areas for windows and many other things. There were walk ways all of smooth stone and we walked to the edge of the city and looked down, thousands of feet, to the river valley below. They had evidently pumped water up the mountain for their use.

Their civilization was absolutely amazing--mind boggling to us. Today there are no records of what happened to these people. We spent several hours there then got back on the truck which took us to the train and back to Cuzco. I was there not too long after the discovery so it was still very primitive. It was a unique experience to view this wonder of the world. As it happened I had read a book in high school by Richard Halliburton who was one of the original discoverers which had sparked my interest as a place I wanted to see. Today I understand, 2021, there are resorts, hotels, stores, etc. at the base of this mountain catering to tourists. I was there in 1958.

The next day in Lima I got a cab to take me to Callao, the port town for Lima. According to my travel plans I was to leave at 12:00 noon on the SS Margarita, a Grace Line cargo ship--a glorified freighter since they took passengers. I had shown the cab driver my travel papers (where I was to get the ship). He took me to a dock completely devoid of ships, people, or anything else, and just dumped me off. I was completely abandoned and afraid I had missed the ship. There were no cabs in this area, no ships and no one to ask anything. I did not know what to do, and just stood there and cried. I did not know how long I was there, but finally a guy came by and asked if he could help. I had to explain to him in Spanish that I thought I missed my ship, but he said the ship was at another dock, a number of blocks away. The only thing I could do was tote my luggage and walk there, hoping I would get there before it left.

When I arrived at the ship and found it was the USS Margarita the gang plank was down, so I walked up to the entry, and as it happened the ship's doctor met me at the doorway. He looked at my papers and welcomed me on board, but said they had changed the time of departure to 12:00 midnight, but I was never informed about it. Thank God they let me on at that time. Anyhow someone took me to my cabin and the ship's doctor got me scheduled in the dining room to sit at the captain's table for my meals. This included the doctor. We sailed at midnight and the next day docked in northern Peru where they loaded shrimp. The following day we docked in Guayaquil, Ecuador, where they loaded bananas. There were hundreds of small boats in the harbor loaded with fruit waiting to unload their cargo onto our ship which were placed in the hull of the ship. Plus they hung a number of hands of these bananas on deck where we could break off a banana to eat anytime. They tasted so much better than what we get in the markets today. Usually I would be on deck watching all of this activity.

We were on this ship for two weeks from Peru to New York, USA, and we had perishable cargo, so they did not want to have any delays in travel. I was amazed there was a doctor on the ship, but they had a number of crewmen and thirty passengers. They had a small cocktail bar and a theatre where they showed movies almost nightly. I liked to spend time on the deck just watching the albatross and the sea mammals, porpoise and whales. I think our meals were fairly good, and I remember a Peruvian guy at our table who would douse everything with pepper.

After a few days at sea we arrived at Panama and docked at Panama City. The Captain gave a talk on the engineering of the canal and also stated we could get off the ship and ride a train across the isthmus to Colon on the other side, and some of the people did just that. I preferred to stay on the ship. Going through the Canal was a wonderful experience. I stood on the deck and watched the water levels in the locks flow up and down moving the ship which had only a few inches from the walls on each side. This engineering feat is absolutely outstanding, and I felt privileged to view such an achievement. At Colon the people got back on the ship with purchases they had made, duty free.

On entering the Caribbean the Captain spoke and said we would be following a hurricane. This happened to be in early September 1958. I don't remember the name given to this storm but the ship was already sloshing from side to side and we hadn't moved that far from Colon. Then the ship's doctor came and assured me I would not get seasick, so we went to the cocktail bar and he ordered double martinis for us. True the Doc, Captain and me were the only ones on the ship who did not get sick.

When we sailed somewhere past Cuba the Captain spoke again and said we would be going through the Bermuda Triangle which could be dangerous. What a relief to be free of the hurricane! But we all wondered what could happen in the Atlantic. However, going north was smooth sailing all the way to New York, our destination. When we arrived there we had to set anchor in the harbor (as it happened right below the Statue of Liberty) since it was Labor Day and there weren't any pilot boats to escort us to the Grace Line pier in the city. We spent a day in the harbor but had an excellent view of the Statue.

The next day the ship docked in the city, and I was grateful I did not have to go through customs since I had diplomatic immunity. There were always lines of people waiting to get checked into the country--not like today. I had a couple of days in New York and stayed at a hotel in the heart of the city. The ship's doctor lived in New York City and called to come by and take me to the Stock Market. This was a unique and exciting place and really sparked my interest. We were seated in the gallery watching all the activity. There was ticker tape at least a foot deep covering the floor, and stock rates flashing on all three walls with people wading through it. It was a very stimulating setting! We also went to the theater area and went to a movie there. I also visited St. Patrick's Cathedral and the famous Penn Station where I got on the train to Washington, D.C. Later I corresponded with the Doc for about a year.

In Washington I was assigned to a hotel across from the State Department where I had a number of interviews and orientation sessions. In consulting with the Department officials I asked to be assigned to a different Embassy as I did not want to go to Trinidad. However, they insisted I go there as that was where there was an opening for an English/Spanish speaking person. If I did not take this assignment I would have to resign. (Not like today where people can choose where they want to go.) So I said I would resign as I did not want to live on an island in the Caribbean. After a few days there meeting with friends I had known, I returned to Montana, and my possessions were sent there also.

BACK IN THE UNITED STATES

I arrived home to stay with Mom and Dad the latter part of September 1958. It seemed like I was still trying to recover from hepatitis, so getting back to Montana's climate was good for healing. However, something was lacking in my diet and I had to have shots of vitamin B12--believe it or not, I think it was the beef! Come December I applied to work at the State legislature starting in January. I was hired to work in the Secretarial Pool and assigned to the top committees--Agricultural and Judicial. To me this was a disaster as I didn't know anything about Montana law or agriculture. I had to sit in on the committee hearings, take dictation and transcribe it. I thought it was difficult but they said I did a good job. I remember Senator Rice, head of the Agriculture committee, who would fly his airplane back and forth to his ranch every day. He was very nice to me. I remember the Legislative session ended in April at which time the Agriculture Committee surprised me with a gift. I thought that was really something!

Then in May I applied for a job with the Yellowstone Park Company. I was hired to arrive there by Memorial Day and think Mom and Dad drove me there as I still did not have a car. I worked in the Registration office of the Campers Cabins at Canyon Village. It was a beautiful huge log building heated with an old stove which, if I remember right, burned wood. The manager who took care of the place and the cabin boys would attend to this stove. We worked on the main floor and lived on the second floor of this building. We also had a Dean or House Mother who lived upstairs with the girls. My job was to take reservations and when the people arrived, register them, and we also rented bed linens and pots and pans. They had wood supplied for them at the cabins. We had to balance account money every day. One woman was fired because she was not doing this correctly, and she was one who had a car and would drive us around. We

had buses to take all the employees to meals at Canyon Lodge. There were the office girls and a number of boys who worked in the cabins who were from Texas.

We would go to breakfast early in the morning, about 6:00 o'clock, and to this day I can still see the huge elk standing on a cliff above the road. It was a beautiful sight! We had quite a few bears coming into the camp every day, and these cabin boys would tease them which was not good as the bears could meet with tourists later on the highway. Later after my friend who had the car left the Park, I met a guy who worked as an Inspector for the National Park Service. He would take me on some of his inspection trips to different places in the Park, and we took a couple of trips to Jackson Hole in the Tetons, so I really got to see much of the area and the Parks.

Then on August 15, 1959, I just got off work and went upstairs to my room when the building started to shake. It became quite violent and I knew it was an earthquake, so I went into the hall and yelled for the girls to get under an arch and not run outside. But that is exactly what they did except for the housemother who stood in the hall and cried. I couldn't believe what they did; however I had had training for earthquakes in grade school in Helena. The next day Tiger (can't remember his name) came by and asked if I wanted to go around with him on an inspection tour. Evidently the quake had changed the water levels in many areas of the Park. First we went to Morning Glory Pool where the water had dropped about six feet, then on to Norris Geyser Basin. Tiger said we had to be very careful to stay on the board walks. It was very eerie walking through this area as some geysers which had been dormant were spouting and others which were active seemed to have water levels which had dropped considerably. We spent a number of hours going through these areas so he could record this information. Of course, the Park was closed so there were no other people around.

Immediately after the quake the Park was closed to visitors and all the employees released and sent home. The housemother was staying and they asked me to stay to work with her doing inventory. I worked almost to the end of September counting all types of linens and other articles used by the guests. When the job was finally over, one of my brothers came and drove me home. When I got home Brother Don helped me find a car and tried to teach me how to drive. He thought I should have a car with a clutch. I tried but after hundreds of jerks and pulls I decided I needed an automatic. We finally found a 1955 Ford Fairlane, which later was a classic. Then after driving it a couple of years in Tacoma it was stolen.

A friend and I had gone to a movie and I parked this car at her house which was two blocks from the theater. When we returned from the movie we could not find my car. We searched the neighborhood to no avail, and I finally called the cops. Lu took me home and came the next morning to pick me up for work. She also worked on the Base. I managed to find rides to work every day until the police called and said they found my car in Kent, which was about 20 miles north of Tacoma. My boss drove me there and I drove the car home, but I could not stand getting in it again as it actually stunk inside and was stripped of all identification on the outside. Plus the license plates were changed. The police told me that 14 year old boys had lived in the car and had driven it really hard. Consequently, I turned it in (but I think they junked it) and I bought a 1962 Chevy Nova, a classy little car, which after a couple of years Bob totaled. Then I got a Mercury Comet. I always liked the Fords!

After a few months I took Mom and Dad on a trip to California where I thought I might look for another job. At that time Mom's brother Ed and his wife Cap ran a motel and their sisters Dora and Jo worked at the motel, and that is where we stayed. We all enjoyed the visit, and I explored the work environment at two of the air bases just out of Sacramento where they lived. Frankly I did not like anything about this area and did not want to stay and work there. After a few days we traveled north to Portland, Oregon, to visit Dad's brother and sisters. We enjoyed time with Uncle Bud, Aunt Pearl and Aunt Hazel who lived in Salem. It seemed Mom and Dad really enjoyed these visits since it had been some time since they had seen one another.

From Oregon we crossed the Columbia River into Washington where I had a really good friend in Tacoma. I had been her Maid of Honor at her wedding in Spokane and in our correspondence she had wanted me to come to Tacoma to live and work. After visiting with her I decided to apply for a job at McChord Air Force Base and was hired almost immediately to work as a secretary in Military Personnel. Next Mom and Dad were trying to help me find an apartment, and at one of these places Mom tripped, fell, and broke her hip. She was in the hospital in Tacoma for a while, and Dad and I had to find an apartment for the three of us since Mom could not travel to go home. They stayed with me for a few months until Mom was able to travel. I then got a different apartment which was a duplex off of Pacific Avenue.

In Tacoma I was making new friends and adjusting to the military work force. I was with the MAC Command, which was the Military Airlift Command and they transported people and much of the military cargo. Most of their flying area was throughout the Asian/Pacific and many flights to air bases in Texas and California. My boss was a career military officer and had been with the cavalry prior to WWII. He was a really neat person, but what a character! He had progressed through the ranks with the Army until they developed the air corps. Then he was automatically with the Air Force and he definitely knew all the procedures. He always said he really missed his horse but had to give him up when they placed him with the Air Force. There were only two girls working in this section--the other was Marietta. We became close friends and have been for some sixty years. Most of the men we worked with had been in WWII and what neat guys! They were very protective of Marietta and me and we could take extra time on coffee and lunch breaks.

After getting settled in an apartment in Tacoma I thought I needed to be registered at one of the Catholic parishes. I went to the parish which was centrally located and one that looked like the Cathedral in Helena. The church was gothic architecture with beautiful stained glass windows, but smaller than the Cathedral in Helena. This was a Benedictine parish run by their order of priests and nuns. When I met with the pastor to get registered he said to me, "I want you to teach CCD (religious education)." I said I didn't think I was qualified to do that, and he said they would train me which they did. The Benedictines are a teaching order and so I became well versed in Catholicism. They assigned me to fifth grade so I taught the sacraments to fifth graders for many years. The classes were held in their school building and I never had a problem with the kids. I had become good friends with the nun, principal, for this school program.

Our CCD classes were on Saturday morning and afterward another lady and I would go to a bakery in the area for lunch. The church had quite a large property area and the nuns had a garden at the back of the convent. I would see this guy doing maintenance work for Father and the nuns. It so happened I would see him at the Air Force Chapel for daily Mass and at the NCO Club after work at the Base, and I had a strange feeling he was spying on me. Kind of ridiculous, but this was not too long after I had returned from Mexico where I had visited the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe and I think the Virgin Mary was pushing us together.

My friend Lu and I were becoming really good friends and we would play golf during the week at McChord and on weekends, trade off driving to Westport. We would leave on Friday after work and return to Tacoma Sunday afternoon. We spent a lot of time on the beach and stayed in cabins nearby. On Saturday evening we would go to a local bar where they had live music and dancing. On Sunday we would go to Raymond, Washington for Mass.

After some time Lu and I joined a Catholic singles group which was set up by a Jesuit parish priest, for singles over 35 years. But Lu was not allowed to stay since she had been divorced. However I would go to the activities and would see the same guy (usually working at the potlucks) whom I had thought was following me. Then I found out his name was Bob. Anyhow if he saw me at the potluck he would always bring me cookies. Sweet?? How did he know I liked cookies?

Over Labor Day in 1964, Mom and Dad came to visit me in Tacoma. They took the train and I had made reservations for us at Westport on the ocean. Dad had said he wanted to get his feet in the sand and walk on the beach. We were to meet Lu there also. Friday afternoon before we were to leave Dad and I went to the gas station to have my car checked out. We were there a little while and then returned to my duplex and started loading the car for the trip. In this process Dad collapsed in my driveway and he just could not respond to Mom or me. I called 911 and the medics came and took him to the hospital. I didn't know many people or doctors but we called one I had been to. He was excellent with Dad and said he had had a massive stroke and he would get him transferred to the VA Hospital in Seattle. Dad was very ill and could not communicate.

I took time off work and Mom and I drove to Seattle every day for ten days straight. During this time my brothers, Joe, Don and Fuzz flew to Seattle to see Dad but he could not communicate with them. They were just there over a weekend, and then returned home. I finally decided to go back to work, but had to leave Mom alone in the apartment, which I did not want to do as she could not see very well. On that day the VA called me to say Dad had passed away. I hated to tell Mom but we had to go back to Seattle to make arrangements for his body to be transferred back to Helena. Mom wanted to see him before arrangements were made. I had to do the viewing and tell her how he looked as she could not see him very well.

We were told we had to accompany his body on the train which of course we were going to do. Also that this particular train did not go through Tacoma but we would have to go to Auburn to board. When I told Lu she said she would be glad to take us there, thank God. After we arrived in Helena my brothers took over. I remember Dad had a large funeral as he had lots of friends. He died at age 72.

Not long after Dad had died Aunt Dora came from California as she was more or less alone there. She had been taking care of their sister Jo who had passed away from cancer. She had said to me that she wanted to take care of Mom and let me be free so as not return to Helena which she knew I did not want to do. Anyhow after a year or so, I decided to take Mom and Dora on a trip to California. We went to Sacramento and stayed with their brother Ed at his motel. I know they enjoyed the visit and I was glad I had made the decision not to live in California.

Above the altar hung the tilma of Juan Diego, the Native American Indian, who had seen Mary and followed her instructions to build a shrine in her honor on that spot; this was in 1531. After the Mass and ceremony we watched the Indian people dance and sing in the plaza outside the church. It was a beautiful, colorful event.

On this tour my friend Ann said we should take off on our own since I still spoke Spanish. So I said okay. Then we took a bus to another part of the city actually to a guitar factory. We spent some time there watching them make guitars and sometimes playing them. This was a real experience and we each bought one of these guitars. Actually with our money they were a real bargain. Then on our way home Western Airlines said it was their ruling we had to buy an extra ticket/seat for the guitars.

Included in our tour were visits to museums which were fabulous as we gained a real insight into Native American cultures. We also visited the cities of Puebla and Taxco, Cuernavaca which had beautiful roses everywhere and a city of many American retirees, plus Acapulco. In Puebla we went to the main plaza and visited the Cathedral there. Then in Taxco we went to the silver shops which were numerous with so many different artifacts all made out of silver. Of course we had to buy some of these things to bring home. Next we spent a few days in Acapulco at a resort on the ocean. From this place we could see the cliff divers jump many, many feet down into the ocean which was spectacular. We just waded in the ocean as the surf was quite high. Then on a walk to the village we found ourselves in the middle of a coconut farm. There were palm trees with coconuts all around us and the workers there came and offered us a drink of coconut milk. They were very pleasant and opened the coconuts for us plus cut reeds from the ground which we could sip through. What an experience!

Ann lived in Vancouver, Washington, right out of Portland, Oregon, and would come to Tacoma ever so often when we would take short trips in the area. One such trip was to Orcas Island which was quite a long ferry ride but we could take her car and she would always drive. Occasionally I would go to Vancouver and we would go to Portland for some activity. She seemed very solicitous of me and a few years later when I was about to marry Bob she dropped me like a hot potato. I thought we were good friends but I have not heard from her since. My very good friend from Idaho whom I have been close to said she always wondered if Ann wasn't a lesbian.

After Ann and I returned from Mexico I would still teach religious education at my parish and I would see Bob helping with various things for Father. I was going to daily Mass on the Base and would see him there too. Then a few months later over Memorial Day I actually bumped into

him going out the side door of church. He immediately said "would you like to go to breakfast?" I thought it was a good idea so we went to a smorgasbord in downtown Tacoma. From that time we became good friends. This was shortly after I returned from Mexico and the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe. I have always felt that this was something Mary did for us - bringing us together and eventually for marriage.

I was very good friends with Lu who also worked on the Air Base. She was in the process of building a cabin/house on the beach at Tokeland, so we would spend many weekends there to work on her house. In Tacoma we joined a Catholic over 35 singles group which had a number of members and many activities. Bob also belonged and I would see him there working at the potlucks, and he would always bring me some of the homemade cookies. When Lu and I were at the beach we would go to Westport to the dances to live music on Saturday nights. However, I was seeing more and more of Bob. In early 1970 I had surgery on my mouth and gums. Bob was so attentive and helpful to me that after that we decided to get married.

After this decision to be married I thought it would be good to take Mom on a trip before I was tied down, and she might be losing her vision completely. I asked her where she might like to go and she definitely wanted to visit family in various States, which I thought would be a great trip. She said she would like to visit Walter, Dad's brother, in Arizona, her cousins in Oklahoma, South Dakota and Minnesota. I took off work for a couple of weeks, and Fuzz drove us to Butte to catch a plane to Arizona. We had a layover in Salt Lake so we decided to visit the Mormon Temple complex. What an experience!

We had a guide to take around the complex, which was interesting. He took us through the Tabernacle and explained the acoustic system which is probably the best in the world--you could actually hear a pin drop. Then he ushered us into a room where we had to listen to everything about the Mormon faith. This was taking too much of our time as we had a plane to catch. The door to get out was locked and I was really getting upset. He did not want to believe me when I said we had a plane to catch. Finally I had to show him our tickets. We were able to promptly get a cab and just made it in time to board the airplane. We flew to the Grand Canyon for a couple of days before going to Phoenix. Mom did not enjoy this part of the trip as she could not see well enough.

In Phoenix we were met by Uncle Walter's granddaughter, Bobby, who was very good at taking us around. She is Cousin Phyllis' daughter. We enjoyed our visit with Walter and Mabel, and I know they enjoyed having us in spite of the fact that Walter was suffering from Parkinson's disease and Mabel was catering to all of his needs. Bobby was a big help to them too. Years later when I was married Mabel came for a visit with us. After a few days Mom and I boarded a cross country bus traveling across New Mexico to Oklahoma City where the Scholens met us and took us to their farm. It was a beautiful expanse of land and Mom enjoyed visiting her cousin, Margaret but it was her daughter, Teresa, who was taking care of everything. They are on the Gross side of the family, Mom's mother's sister.

Leaving Oklahoma we took another bus to Watertown, South Dakota. It was such a long trip I decided we needed to stop for the night and get a good sleep before meeting more cousins, so we stopped in Lincoln, Nebraska. The next day we continued riding the bus to Watertown where

Mary Ramel, Mom's cousin, met us. She was a lot of fun to be with and we stayed with her a few days until Clarence and Marie Bauer came and drove us to their farm. Their farm was maintained exquisitely but very old fashioned. I believe they had electricity but no indoor plumbing. There was a pump in the kitchen to get water and a long table there for dining. Their parlor was beautiful with antique furnishings, and I remember they had potty jars in all the bedrooms. Clarence and Marie were brother and sister and had lived there all their lives. Clarence maintained the farm and Marie had dozens of chickens and sold eggs to the local community.

The Bauers were very gracious to us, and one day took us to Waverly, South Dakota to a homestead where Mom had grown up. The house was very old and had neither electricity or plumbing. The kitchen area was huge with a long table for dining and a pump for water. There was a bedroom on this floor and a small living room with a staircase to the attic where all the children slept. This was very nostalgic for Mom and I know she enjoyed viewing everything in this area in spite of her eyesight.

After a few days Clarence and Marie drove us to the next stop, the Dorns, also cousins in Vining, Minnesota. Here we stayed with Victoria who had a great sense of humor and couldn't stop laughing. I know they did a lot of fishing on the lakes around there and we had a really good visit with them. We also saw May Gappa, another cousin whose son, Herb, was an ordained priest with the Maryknoll Ministries in Tanzania, Africa. May had just returned from there where she had spent time helping her son. She had many interesting stories to tell and was planning to return there in the near future. After much time spent visiting with all these cousins we got a ride to Minneapolis where we boarded a plane back to Billings. From there I flew on to Seattle and Fuzz took Mom back home. In Billings we got to see Jill, Fuzz' daughter, who was only two months old at the time.

When I returned home I found Bob already doing some work on the piece of land we had bought. We had searched Tacoma for a house we might buy. It was very slim pickings--either not a good location or poor quality or just did not suit us. Finally we decided to find suitable land where we could build. Bob did a lot of exploring to find a good piece of property, and was really excited when he found the perfect lot, almost half an acre. The people we bought from had a mini farm and were trying to downsize that. At the time we bought this land there was only a dirt road into the area. It was in the district of Pacific Lutheran University, in the Tacoma suburb of Parkland, and close to the Air Base. There were many trees on this property: 14 fir trees, one Granny Smith apple which I got from my friend Pat, four plums which our neighbor Marie had given us, and two pear which Bob had obtained from my Mom in Helena. They were sprouts from her trees in the yard.

As it happened when I had attended Idaho one particular course I took included designing floor plans for houses. So I got busy and with Bob's input we drew up plans for our house. We found an independent builder who thought the plan was great and he then compiled the measurements. This was in May and the house was supposed to be ready to move in that fall. It had features we wanted such as an attached double garage, a shop, patio, and fireplace, plus a bay window at the dinette, and a skylight. This builder even asked us if he could have the plan to build himself a house.

At this time we also met with our parish priest, Father Felix, whom we both knew personally. We had decided we would like the wedding to be toward the end of November, maybe around Thanksgiving. Father explained he would have to get clearance for Bob to be married in the church since he had been married before. We thought this would be an easy task since he was not married in the church in the first place, and that wife had since passed away of cancer. But actually it took months. November passed, then December and January. Bob Talked with Father about this delay and finally we were married February 27th.

Our wedding was at Holy Rosary church where we had both put in many volunteer hours. We knew Father and the Nuns and they were most helpful with all the arrangements. In fact the Nuns were all invited. My Mom and Aunt Dora came as did Brother Fuzz and Shirley. The evening before the big day we celebrated in Seattle with dinner at Ivar's Salmon House. In the morning the six of us had breakfast in my apartment. The wedding was at six o'clock in the evening and our attendants were my friend, Lu and Fuzz. I did not wear the traditional long gown, nor did Lu, as I wanted to have that money available for our house. My Uncle Bud and aunt Pearl came as did Bob's mother and his brother Edward, plus son Sonny and his foster mother, and a number of our friends.

The wedding Mass was beautiful. Uncle Bud said the nicest he had ever seen. Father gave a wonderful talk and Sister Rosewitha who was the music teacher for the Benedictines, played the organ with an outstanding selection of songs. After the ceremony Bob and I made a special tribute to the Sacred Heart by laying roses at that altar. Our reception was held at Top of the Ocean supper club, a special restaurant built over the waters of Puget Sound. I had made reservations for a group of people. They had live music and dancing and a delicious buffet dinner including all kinds of meat and fish. We did not have a wedding trip at that time--just went home to our new house. Later in the spring we took a trip to Waterton Lake, Glacier and Yellowstone Parks. Of course, we stopped in Helena and from there went to Lincoln, Montana for a few days. It was a really pleasant trip.

We were both still working at McChord AFB and we're trying to complete the finishing touches on our house. We had to get carpet, drapes, and some different pieces of furniture, although we both had a number of pieces which fit in. Bob was doing the landscaping which was a huge job, but one he liked. We had one and a half acres with fourteen fir trees, eventually four plum trees, an apple and two pear trees. The apple tree was given to us by my friend Pat from Idaho, and Bob had taken two sprouts from the pear trees in my Mom's yard, which grew beautifully, as did the plum trees which were given to us by a neighbor.

Many weekends during this time were spent at the ocean, Westport, Washington, and we always had a place to stay, either at Bob's brother's house or with my friend Lu. We were trying to help Lu build her little house at Tokeland and we did most of the painting both inside and outside. At Bob's brother's we always had a buffet dinner. Of course we took some of the food. During the summers we would always have a deep sea fishing trip for salmon and other seafood. We always got a supply of king or silver salmon. I remember on one of these trips I had hooked a large salmon and struggled to reel it in but had to have help, either Bob or the Captain. After working at it for a time, the Captain grabbed my pole and ran around the other side of the boat.

He said the salmon had swum under the boat to the other side, and we were lucky it did not break the line. Finally he was landed on deck and weighed 28 pounds. That was the largest fish either one of us had caught, usually they ranged from 17 to 23 pounds.

We both worked at McChord for a number of years and I really enjoyed working for the Military as did Bob. I liked the discipline and there never were discrepancies and lack of knowledge about doing a job. Bob was an electrician and worked on the high voltage lights on the runway. He received hazardous pay but wouldn't tell me when he was on a dangerous job. His Shop wanted to make him Foreman but he would never accept it as he didn't like the responsibility. We both worked a good five years for the Military after we were married. Then in July 1976 Bob had thirty years of service with the Government and decided to retire. He was eager to just stay home and work on our property. The guys he worked with gave him a retirement party/sendoff with a deep sea fishing trip from Westport. He came home with salmon but said most of the guys had become seasick as they celebrated with too much beer, but Bob didn't drink.

At this time I had transferred to the Base Library as the doctors I was working with had put me in for higher pay and this was denied by Civilian Personnel. They thought I should transfer to the Army Hospital at Fort Lewis but that was something I didn't want to do, so I accepted a position in the Library. I worked in the Reference Section but did many other tasks. Frankly, the other women there only wanted to sit and read books while I did the work, and our boss would completely ignore the situation. I liked the work but after five years I was ready to leave. Then in September 1976 there was a reduction in force and they were to down size civilian jobs and the first place to reduce staff was the Library. I was offered the choice of another job on Base or I could retire with a reduced pension since I was under age but had 25 years of service. I chose to retire as I didn't want to work as Bob was at home, and he thought it was okay.

After his retirement Bob literally 'dug' into maintaining our yard/property. He had a compost pile and an excellent garden. He had such good crops of beets and carrots that he sold some to the fruit stands on Pacific Avenue. We were both active in our Parish. Bob would help with their maintenance work, and especially for the nuns at our former Parish. I decided to work part time to get my Social Security quarters in for Medicare since we did not receive these benefits through Civil Service. I worked for an ENT specialist for about a year, then for Kaiser Permanente in their preventive medicine clinic, plus I also taught religious education at our Parish which I really enjoyed.

At Holy Rosary Parish, I had taught fifth grade and later sixth plus seventh and eighth grades together for a Bible study group. At Our Lady Queen of Heaven I taught sixth grade, then later had the Confirmation class for five years plus lead an adult Bible Study group. At Confirmation time Bishop Hunthausen always came to administer the Sacrament. We had an excellent program for the kids who had to be at least sixteen years of age. It included two retreats, a liturgy service, a work project, plus the catechism class. I even had a field trip for the kids to the Grotto of the Sorrowful Mother in Portland, Oregon. When these classes concluded parents would ask me what I had done for these kids as it seemed they were more dedicated to being helpful in different ways. Of course it wasn't me, it was the Holy Spirit. A few years later I

tutored at Spanaway Elementary for at least ten years. During all these years I really enjoyed being with the children in all the different classes.

I also worked at Our Lady Queen of Heaven Parish part-time for seven years and certainly learned a lot of what goes on behind the scenes. I was secretary to the Director of Religious Education who was also a retreat master. Consequently I would have to type all the talks she gave at the retreats, At Queen of Heaven I had religion classes for twelve years, adult education for eleven years, and classes at Holy Rosary, our former Benedictine Parish fourteen years, plus tutored at the elementary school about ten years. It seems amazing to me now!

At Queen of Heaven we had an administrator who was retired Air Force and had the privileges of the NCO Club. So for many years all the teachers were invited to celebrate our year at the Club for dinner and dancing to live music. This was a great time since the Parish paid for it. Bob and I and Marietta would also go to the retirement luncheons held there every month. Our property was one-half acre and Bob did all the landscaping. Seemed we were always busy but found some time to play horseshoes in the back. We then built an extra garage where Bob stored his Thunderbird. When we were married he had a 1957 classic which he drove to our wedding. As it happened that evening it snowed slightly but the Thunderbird climbed the hills with ease. Later he had a 1958 and a 1960.

We would travel to the Phernetton family reunions almost every year in Wisconsin. One such year Bob's brother and sister-in-law went with us. We traveled in Bob's new F150 super cab truck, with Bill in the front seat with Bob driving. Bill and Alice were chain smokers- Bill smoking cigars. Of course Alice and I got the benefit of that smoke sitting in the back of the cab. But she also did a lot of smoking and we had taken our shoes off to be comfortable. I didn't complain about the smoke but all of a sudden my slipper was on fire. I screamed for Bob to stop which he did promptly and somehow we got the slipper out of the truck and the fire out. We then stopped in Deadwood, South Dakota at the Casino for some fun and the next day at Wall Drug, which was a wonderful place to tour.

We spent weekends at the ocean, Westport/Tokeland, and always had a place to stay, either at Bob's brother's house or with my friend Lu who was building a retirement home at Tokeland. I usually took a pot roast to share and meal times were a fun time. Then in 1979 we signed up for a pilgrimage to the Holy Land through an organization we belonged to. This was a Sacred Heart tour led by a priest/guide who was experienced in European travel. Of course we went to the Sacred Heart Shrine, plus Notre Dame Cathedral and many other renowned churches in and around Paris, and spent time viewing the magnificent art at the Louvre. The beauty exhibited in these places was remarkable!

Actually we flew from Seattle to New York to Rome, and had to change airports in New York City. We landed at LaGuardia and were supposed to have enough time to reach JFK for boarding to Europe. We immediately got on a bus going to JFK but the traffic was so bad we knew we would miss the flight. We got off the bus and literally ran to JFK to catch our flight. Thank goodness we just made it as they were closing the doors to the plane. And the stewardess said it was good we could travel with our tour group. However, our luggage did not reach Rome

for a couple of days-a little inconvenient. On our flight across the Atlantic we viewed the northern lights which were spectacular-beautiful colors!

Rome was fantastic! There were so many places to see and we marveled at the works of art and the architecture. We stayed in a hotel which was very near the Vatican so we could walk over there any time of day. We had a guide who would setup these tours and also had Mass said at the various altars. There were marble angels everywhere and beautiful stained glass windows plus endless columns of marble. We were taken on a tour down to the crypt in the Vatican where most popes are buried. We attended Mass said by Pope John Paul II and had an audience with him. Because of the guide we had we were able to visit the Archives. This was remarkable since we could view some of the original texts of the Bible and other ancient books, plus art work.

Our tour included some meals; one was a special Italian dinner. I could not believe all the courses which were served. They began with pasta and appetizers, soup and salad, the main entree, dessert and of course wine of your choice-really too much food. There were so many things to see in Rome. We toured the remnants of the Colosseum (the amphitheater from the first century where many Christians were martyred). We also walked through a portion of the Catacombs, the underground cemetery from ancient times. There were shelves of bones lining the walkways. These things have certainly lived on in my memory. We passed many fountains where you could throw in a coin and make a wish. We climbed the Spanish steps and visited many other churches with beautiful art work and stained glass windows. We attended Mass at St. Paul's Outside the Walls, the Pope's parish.

After a number of days we boarded a plane for Tele Aviv, Israel. Our tour bus met us at the plane and drove us to Jerusalem where we stayed at a hostel run by the Vatican. It was outside the Jaffa Gate near the Christian quarter of the city. There were many denominations staying there from different countries. The city itself was divided into Jewish, Christian, Muslim and Armenian sections. One of the first places we toured was the Hebron Valley and the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus prayed before His passion. The olive trees there were tremendous--some they said dated back to the time of Christ. The trunks were huge and gnarled. Nearby we walked along the Wailing Wall (Western Wall) of the ancient Temple where people placed prayer petitions between the rocks. Everywhere at the different places we would stop we had Scripture readings which pertained to that place.

Another day we toured the Temple of the Flagellation which for me was a real spiritual experience as I felt the presence of Jesus. This was where He met with Pilot and was sentenced to death. From here we walked the steps of Jesus on the ViaDolorosa (the way of the cross) to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher--Jesus journey carrying the cross to Mount Calvary. This was for us a great experience showing us the hardships of the journey. There were many vendors along the way which was rather disturbing. Inside the church there were many areas relating to the crucifixion--one the tomb where Jesus was buried. We were able to enter it and found it very ornate, maintained by the Greek Orthodox Church. We were able to visit the Upper Room where Jesus took part in the Passover meal and instituted the Sacrament of the Eucharist, and of course we had the readings from John's Gospel.

We visited Bethlehem and the area where Jesus was born. This village had numerable shops selling articles pertaining to the whole of Israel. Our bus tour took us north to Galilee where we had a boat trip on the sea, and viewed the area of the Sermon on the Mount. We took a day to drive down to the Dead Sea and it was a really hot day. On the way we passed charred busses and viewed Bedouin camps in such barren areas you wondered how they stayed alive. They all had a number of goats. We stopped at one camp to get a better view when a young girl came to the bus. Of course we wanted to give her a little money. She evidently didn't think it was enough, and came and spit on the bus. We finally reached the Dead Sea and the temperature was 120 degrees. Bob went in the shop and bought a few articles, but I stayed on the beach and watched people float in the slimy water. This was one place where you can't sink.

Conclusion - **Not written by Lois**

As much as Lois wanted to make it back home to her apartment in Vista Square in Helena, Montana, to finish her memoir, she was unable to do that, and she passed away on the afternoon of June 13, 2023, at the age of 98.

In 2017 Lois had moved back to Helena, Montana, and became a member of the St. Mary's parish community. She resided at the Vista Square apartments where she met many dear new friends. She spent time with her family and friends, attending various functions in the Helena area.

In preparation for writing her memoir, Lois completed a writing class at the local college, and she then learned how to use a new, touch-screen computer. She wrote the memoir first by shorthand and then transcribed the words to electronic format on her computer--all while having macular degeneration in both eyes.

Lois was an inspiration in the way she lived her life--always looking and ready for a new adventure. Growing up in a time when females were not able to hold high positions, she was able to find opportunities that likely helped open doors for future generations of women. More than that, Lois was deeply religious, and spent much of her time in prayer.