

PERSONAL HISTORY OF MARY AND OYREL KEARL
Chapter Sixteen - The Early Years in Louisville.

General Electric decided to continue building one model, a TRP 15, in Erie for another three months after they had planned to have their move to Louisville completed. I was asked to stay in Erie as the liaison engineer there until they stopped assembling refrigerators at this plant. I roomed in Lawrence Park and finally relocated to Louisville on July 1, 1955. I was given a Management Award of \$600.00 for the work I did in those months. This was a cash award given to individuals selected for some extra effort that they had made. A few years later I received a 2nd Management Award for a particularly rewarding cost improvement in the Fibreglas insulation used in Refrigerators.



The children playing at the creek which was down at the bottom of the hill behind our house.

Our home was built on an 1/4 acre lot at 605 Indian Ridge Rd on the east side of Louisville just off Route 42 across from the January Taylor National Cemetery. Our house was built at the top of a hill and had a back yard that was 300 feet deep with a small creek at the bottom of the hill. Mary happy

hours were spent there building dams, wading in the creek, catching crickets and stoddie. It was a delightful place to have a home.

During the three months that I remained in Erie, Mary had all of the work and responsibility of getting us settled in our new home. I would fly down to Louisville each week and then fly back to Erie on Mondays leaving her with a list of tasks to be completed during the week.

A funny thing happened at Thanksgiving of that year. The Gas Company had assured us that we wouldn't have gas on our street for 3 to 5 years. So we bought an oil furnace, put in a storage tank and had it filled with oil. In the fall they started laying a gas line down our street. We ran out of oil on Thanksgiving Day so Mary inquired about getting 100 gallons of oil instead of filling the tank, as a gas line still wasn't connected to our house. The furnace people misunderstood her and while she was away converted the furnace to gas. As a result we had no heat at all and had to hurriedly get the furnace re-converted back to oil that evening of overline day.

We lived in Louisville for almost 12 years, from April 1, 1955 to December 1966. All of the time in this same house. Our children spent most of their childhood there. They attended Chenoweth, Wilder, and Silvers grade schools and Wagner and Westport High Schools on the East side of the city. They changed schools when a school got crowded and students had to be transferred to accommodate the growing population in

The suburbs.

Ed, Gary and Alan attended Silvers School. It was cheaply constructed (made of 1/4" asbestos sheets) and was called the "Cardboard School." It became overcrowded and so our neighborhood was sent to a new school called Wilder. Later Wilder became crowded and our neighborhood was once again shifted to Charwell. By the time Ed was 6, our neighborhood had been shifted back to Silvers.



Marty, Jamie, and Alan in front of
the Wilder School.

1964 was our worst school year. It proved to be a very exhausting year for Mary. Westport High had double sessions. Gary caught the school bus at 8:00 a.m. Edward went to Weaver High School at about 8 a.m. Al went to Silvers Grade School at 8. Marty and Jamie went to school at 11:00 p.m. Gary came home at 1:08, Ed at 2:00 and Al at 3:00 - Marty and Jamie at 8 p.m. Mary felt like she was cooking all day and was never free to do much or go anywhere.

The early development of space travel was begun in the early 60's. The children watched the astronauts land on the moon while they were in these schools. Mary did volunteer work in nearly every school the children

attended. She worked in the Librarian and was a Teachers Assistant and did other chores. One year we ran the concession stands at the athletic events to raise money for the band. She became very familiar with most of the teachers and the administration at the schools our children attended.



Edward studying in his room.

All of our children were very capable and intelligent and did well in school but didn't seem to have the drive and dedication required to be outstanding scholars. Ed was in an advanced class during Jr. and Sr. High School. Al graduated 2nd in his class in High School.



1960 - Working on the basement with
in Louisville, Ky. Barring some more of
that sweet soufs.

In every home we ever owned we left some part of the house to be finished by Mary and I. In the house in Louisville we built rooms in the basement and finished the walls with a beautiful cedar paneling.



Mary doing a little cement finishing.

Mary finished the concrete for the walkway in front of our house. She was a very willing and good helper on these "do-it-yourself" projects. We had some trouble when we built the porch/airport. We couldn't seem to get it level and found out that one of the line levels we

were using was defective. She almost divorced me before we finished that job.



Jane in front of the porch we built over the airport in 1998.

We added a very large, really nice, reduced porch above our carport. We ate most of our meals on it during the spring, summer, and fall. Sometimes the children slept out there. We did a lot of living on that porch.

Twice while we lived in Louisville, all of my brothers, my sister, and my parents were able to take our vacations together.

The first time in 1988 at Hixoux, Mo, and then later we went to Fontana Hill age in the Smoky Mountains National Park in 1992. Cy was 11 part of the time at Hixoux. Ed was across the line which added several years to Mary's age in a few short



The Keel Family at Hixoux, Mo, on a family Reunion.

minutes.

Porters we rented five cottages, near each other, one for each family. We played games and visited for a week. Whatever we were doing during any day there would be groups of children of the same age who would play and have fun together. At Porters there were thirty five of us. Our days were filled with swimming, boating, fishing, playing games, golfing and just visiting.



Our family at Porters Village.

Spence usually rented a boat and was the skipper. He stayed for the night with whichever family he chose.



Bertie heading to the water skiers at Porters in 1952.



1952 - Russ ready to take another load of skiers out.

I took the little ones fishing. They loved watching croppies. As the children get older and get involved in school activities and summer work it was no longer possible for everyone to get together and the reunions ended.



Marty with Ed's Ice Cream cart.

Our children usually had some type of a job to earn a little of their spending money. Mowing lawns, delivering papers, selling ice cream, etc.

We also did the landscaping for our home. An old church had burned in Louisville and we bought beautiful stone for \$15.00 a ton and built several stone

retaining walls. Most of the ones I laid fell down and I finally had a stone mason lay them for me.

My Dad and Mother finally left Michigan and settled in Logan in 1960. They were both in bad health. Dad had hardening of the arteries and mother had heart trouble of some kind. The move to Logan was a difficult one for them to make. They had help with the physical part of the move but there were emotional and mental stresses for which there were no cures. They weren't sure where they were going to settle nor if the Sugar Company would provide an adequate retirement for them.



Mother and Dad in the living room of their home in Mt. Clemens - 1966.

In Logan they were a long ways from most of their family, and at their age it was hard to get acquainted with people in the community. They were never happy in Logan. They hadn't developed any hobbies or avocations. Dad did a little gardening but not much else.

In Mt. Clemens they had felt that they were needed. They were an anchor for all of us children. We only visited them four or five times a year but it was a long ways from most of our homes to

go to Utah. Beldridge Field was nearby in Michigan and they were the surrogate parents of every transient Mormon family that was stationed there. In Logan they were nothing at all. Most of the time they were in Utah they were confused.



Mother and Dad's new home in Logan.

Without Mom I'm not sure how they would have ever have been able to have made move from Michigan to Utah. He rented a house for them to live in while he built a very nice home for them just over the hill from the Logan Temple.



Mother in her later years.

Finally my mother died of a heart attack on April 11, 1961. She was 72 years old. When I review her life I'm proud of my Mother. The early days in Bear Lake, raising us children in Preston. Moving to Michigan when she was in her 50's. Teaching school all those years. Learning to drive when she was almost 60. She was a great person.

After my Mother's death we had my Father live with each of us children for 3 months at a time. This only made him more confused and disturbed. We made a bad decision when we did this but he couldn't live alone and he wouldn't think of going into a nursing home.



Father and Dad on the porch of their home at the time of Mother's death.

A few months later my father also died on October 3, 1961. He was 71 years old when he died. His example of what a person can do when he's determined was great. He had started with no help at all and had educated himself, been one of the most respected persons in Paris and Preston as the County Agent and then struggled to make a success of the Sugar Factory in Michigan. He was the heart and soul of the church in the Mt. Clemens area. He was at our home when he died. It was a very pathetic thing to

see a talented and capable man become confused, helpless and irrational.

Mary, after wrestling with the children all day, and I after the pressures of work, were probably not as tolerant of his health problems as we should have been.



Dad at Churchill Downs watching a horse race in 1960.

We brought Dad to Logan and he was buried next to Mother in the Logan Cemetery. Their lives had been real successes. They had been kind to everyone they met and were supportive to us children. From them we received intelligence and vitality and the support to allow these gifts to find fulfillment. They had been role models for us and had seen to it that we had opportunities to develop our talents. We were exposed to situations that challenged us and had been given the ethical, practical, and the formal training needed to live in the world. They had given the best that was in them and we are a reflection of their lives. At this writing they had been responsible for 6 children, 21 grandchildren and 73 great grandchildren.

After Dad's death we sold the farm for \$85,000.00 to a Farm Equipment Company and it is now owned by a

company that makes windows and doors for homes. Russ bought back some portion of it later and is developing a sub-division on it.



Alan in the hospital.

Alan was born in Louisville on March 28, 1955.



Marcy, Mom Halvor, and Jamie at Alan's homecoming.

When we brought Alan home the TV was playing, the stereo was on and a stream of neighborhood children kept coming in to see him. Mom Halvor was sure that he would never get any sleep. Alan was much younger than all of the other children. They dearly loved him and enjoyed the novelty of a little brother. It was kind of like having a

real live doll to play with. Every day, after school, each of our older children would be anxious to see Al, play with him, and wanted to know what he had learned to do that day. He never had to worry about getting a baby sitter.



Al in the bathtub.

He was a happy child and was easy to raise. He always tried to please.



Alan dressed as a girl for Halloween one year. He was a smashing Al.

For Halloween one year Alan was smashing with a wig, a party dress and boys shoes. He was a real hit at each home he visited that Halloween.

In 1961, while we were in Louisville, we started going to Canada each

spring to fish, (Just the boys and Cyril) First Gary and Cyril and then as each child reached his 12th birthday, he'd be added to the fishing party. We fished on a lake called Escanabel which was north of Nipigon Lake on the north shore of Lake Superior.



The float plane (a beaver) that we flew into Escanabel Lake in.

Escanabel Lake was 18 miles from the nearest town, Nipigon. There were no roads into the lake and the brush was so thick that the only way it could be reached was by a pontoon plane.



Yidd - Gary and I ready to fish.

It was a big lake and because of it's inaccessibility there were never many people fishing on the lake. I always thought that fishing on that lake must

have been very much like it was when the first white man discovered it.

We would fish for the entire week. This was a new experience since we weren't very good fishermen and fishing in Kentucky was never very good. On Escanabel it was easy and fun.



Alan, Marty, and Don Taylor with a fish on every fish.

Sometimes each person would catch 75 fish in a single day. We could keep only



Marty with a big, big Northern Pike that he had caught.

The trio gave me an opportunity to know my sons in an entirely different way than I could have in our daily routines. There was a sense of adventure to our fishing trips. You could catch six fish per person/day but could only take 6 fish out of Canada so we released most of those we caught. Most of the fish we caught were Walleyes and a few huge Northern Pike. At noon we would have a shore dinner on fish and every other night we ate fish for our supper. He had daily prizes for the one who caught the largest, smallest and the most fish. One year the man who ran the camp killed a nuisance little black bear and gave Alan the hide. For years it was his trophy. We ate our meals with the people who operated the fishing camp. They prepared some old fashioned dishes such as rice pudding and kidney stew. We used to joke that the kidney stew was so good because she cooked the stew out of it.



The cabins we stayed in, all snowed out.

The cabins we stayed in were built by Fless with only axes for tools and were the finest crafting I've ever seen. They cut the logs with their axes so that they were almost tongue & groove fit as good as a planing mill could have

done.

Cliff Taylor and his boy went with us one year and Jim Bloor and his son another. Both of those families were good friends of ours at church in Louisville.

Louisville was on the Ohio River and was easily accessible from our house for water sports and recreation. In 1968 my older brother, Spencer, gave us his boat. It was a German built mahogany hulled boat powered with twin 45 Mercury Engines. It took me a little time to learn how to run the boat and I almost wiped out a couple of weeks before I finally got the hang of it. This boat could move right along when it was planing.



1968 - Gary and Spencer's boat about ready to go out on the Ohio River.

Spencer was generous to his little brother. I remember once admiring a Peiffer camera that he had and when I went home I had to take it with me. Often when I was young he would give me the very nice shoes, ties, or shirts that he had just bought for himself.

This boat had two canopies that slid along tracks and could enclose the boat. We usually launched it at Harrod's Creek and then went down the creek to the

Ohio. At nights when we came back from home we had to watch for sunken logs and debris in the creek and river. I'd put one of the children on the bow with a flashlight watching for debris.



Looks us at a station on Harrods Creek.

There were floating restaurants along the banks of the Ohio and lots of nice boats were kept on the river including one that Pee Wee Reese, a big league ball player and sports announcer from Louisville, owned.



Martin, Chris, Horvay, Larry, Hutton and others swimming in the river at Skulls Island.



Alan, Marty, and Jennie getting a camp set up on the shore of the Ohio River.

We spent many Saturdays on the river at one of the islands, picnicking, camping, swimming and water skiing. One memorable week-end I took Ed, Gary, Marty, and some scouts to 18 mile island. The weather, when we started, was great. By midnight, it was pouring down rain. I remembered an old barn in the middle of the island and we decided to sleep in it. We finally found it in the pitch black night, about a half mile away in the wet field. There were cattle in the field making it even more spooky for me severely adult and 10 little boys. We finally got to sleep in our soggy sleeping bags under a leaky barn roof. The miserable night was forgotten the next day when the sun came out, our clothes dried and we even and skied on a beautiful river.

Many times we'd picnic on an island or camp along the shore line on a nice sandy beach. I remember one night when, by accident, we camped near a sand dredge that started operating in the middle of the night and kept us awake all night. Mary, Alan, and Jennie would sleep in the boat and we men

sleep on the shore in a tent.



1901 - Janie and Alan and the dredge,
that kept us awake all night.

When we took the boat and camped on the Ohio River bank, Mary fixed the meals and was plagued with sand that blew in the food.



Mary, Alan and Gary cooking a shore
dinner.

One time we went in that boat up the Ohio to the Kentucky River and down it almost to Frankfort. All along

the river there were old hand operated locks that were built in the middle of the 18th century when river travel was a very important part of our nation's transportation system.



1901 - Going through one of the locks
on the Kentucky River.

To go through the locks it was necessary to walk up to a nearby house and find the farmer-operator who would crank the locks open and shut by hand. It took hours to travel a few miles. At night we'd pull into shore, beach the boat and camp.

Often we went up to Hickman, Ky and watched the speed boat races that were held there each year. You could wander along the river front and visit the floating repair shops where the mechanics were getting the engines of their boats tuned up and ready for the races.

We liked out-of-doors activities and occasionally we went to Cumberland Lake with our boat for a weekend. We would rent a cabin at one of the state parks there and fish for crappies, catfish and