

A Few Highlights in my Life – David Gilliam

I begin my story with a disclaimer: *At this time in my life, with my mind beginning to jumble the facts from my youth and play other tricks on me, I cannot vouch for the exact order of all the events described in this story. Everything happened in more or less the order described below. I regret any significant omissions but I tried to give credit to many that have helped me over the years. To any I may have missed – I am deeply sorry!! One final disclaimer - I am not a writer and while I realize that you are bound to see many typos and grammatical errors in this writing, I can only ask your indulgence and forgiveness for this shortcoming.*

The most natural place to start my story is the Summer of 1960. I boarded a greyhound bus in Los Angeles bound for Malta Idaho and a new life. I can still remember my nervous anticipation during the bus ride across Nevada, Utah and finally into Idaho. There I was a kid of almost 14 going to live for a while with my uncle Allen and aunt Thelma. Allen had always been a real hero to me (my hopalong cassidy). My only uncle that was a real cowboy.

About midday the bus pulled into Malta and stopped at the valley cafe and there to greet me were Thelma and her parents. Within the next few weeks I began to learn many useful skills - hauling hay, milking cows, riding horses, driving farm equipment, etc. One of my most memorable early experiences occurred one day in the Fall after school had started when I borrowed Allen's horse Sadie and rode to Malta. While out-and-about I ran into Clair Teeter who was also out riding. We spent the day together and spent the best day I had had up till that time in Idaho. After that day I began to also have less trouble being accepted at school – I don't actually know if the events were in anyway related but I will always believe they were.

In California I was a C to D student but for some reason this part of my life was much better in Idaho – probably because I studied harder– but also I enjoyed school more. My freshman year I particularly liked our math teacher James Carrell who was also faculty adviser of our freshman class. High school sports was the biggest new thing to me since I had played no real organized sports before coming to Idaho. Over the years I got better and when the dust settled I was not bad in football and managed to letter in both track and basketball as well. These were major accomplishments for me and I very much enjoyed high school sports. Also I definitely remember the freshman class party in a meadow creek near Sublett (I think that's the name, I should remember the name since I lived there a couple of summers later while working on Jack Pierce's dry farm). This was the first time I got to know many of the classmates and I learned what great folks they were and just how much fun life in Idaho could be.

In the spring of my second year I got my first real farm job on a potato farm in Idaho owned by two brothers – Thelma recently said that she thought their names were the Cole brothers. Soon after helping with planting season they hired me to work full time and I moved to their farm where I enjoyed living in a railroad boxcar. On the farm I again picked up a few more tools of the trade including irrigation which turned out to be my strength – I took great pride in small achievements. In the next year of school I did much better in football. While I wasn't particularly good at passing, running or catching the ball but I did do a good job of blocking and tackling folks.

During this period I also became better friends with Ray Barker with whom I spent considerable time studying and having fun. In fact, I spent as much time as I could visiting his family home in Elba. On one memorable occasion I was having lunch with his family and met for the first time Ray's brother,

Ruel who had recently returned from a mission. While their father was saying a lengthy grace over the meal Ruel was quietly putting food on my plate and when the prayer was over everyone opened their eyes to see me sitting there with a full plate. I was so embarrassed that when I picked up my glass of milk, took a drink and set the glass down – I accidentally set it on an uneven joint between to tables and the glass fell over spilling all over the table. Funny the little things that stick in our minds. Ray’s mom and dad were great and treated me like one of the family. Ruel became our high school coach – I think he was a good coach and was always fair with me. I learned a lot from him. Certainly the two friends during this time from whom I learned the most were Ray and Clair – some things good and some things not as good – but they are good friends and all we did certainly makes for a nice part of the rich tapestry of my life. It was during this period that I took up smoking and drinking. One memorable occasion during the junior year was a trip to Yost with Clair – where he lived on and worked his grandparents farm as I recall. Somehow we managed to get our hands on a couple of six packs of beer and I learned what fun drinking a beer could be – something that has carried on to this day. Somehow that year in school I was elected class president and enjoyed the role even though I had no particular skills that warranted the position.

I really remember my senior year as a wonderful time. I was student body president and there were so many fun times that it would be impossible to list them – so I will leave the topic with the simple statement – It was one of the most enjoyable times in my life. Lots of little things like buying the school dance music with Ray and our choices not sitting well with Mr. Miller. The senior trip to Idaho State University and stopping to watch TOM JONES (the movie) on the way back. The swimming trip when some of us drove in Jim Kimber’s folks new car (in which I unleashed some of the lime voda we

had been drinking several times both inside and out while he was driving). Running around in my really not so fancy car - plymouth cambridge that I bought from Allen and Thelma for \$50 (it had well over 100,000 miles on it when I bought it). I have fond memories of the science club, the drama club, all the sports, great friends and really good times going to school in Malta Idaho. In general it was a very good time in my life.

Probably the most important skill I acquired in Malta though was that I learned to work.

After high school Ray and I headed off to college at the University of Idaho in Moscow Idaho. Ray and I lived in a dorm - Lindley hall which was in many ways more like a fraternity (amazingly that is also where Jack Pierce lived when he attended school there many years before). Ray and I both showed up with great vigor and with our plans set – we wanted to be math majors. Our first big shock came in the second semester of our first year. We had calculus in a class with over 400 students and presented on television. On the first test I got the lowest grade in the class and was devastated. This jolt changed my life! After that I went to bed each evening after dinner, then got up at midnight and studied the rest of the night by myself. It worked cause I got one of only 3 A's given in the class. My first experience with a very important fact: *hard work makes up for a lot of missing brain power.*

My main problem during this period of my life was a real lack of money. For that reason I only lasted at the University of Idaho for one and a half years. At the beginning of the second year Ray and I were joined by Skeeter who only lasted for a few weeks before he got homesick for Malta. That was to bad because shortly after that he got drafted and got shot-up in Viet Nam.

Back to my Moscow story (as I have already mentioned, during high school I

had begun the bad habits of smoking and drinking). Bad habits cost money even though back then such things were relatively cheap. Its funny, at that time, the only group I knew of that considered things like smoking and drinking sins were the Mormons – now everyone knows that they are sins against our bodies – guess those Mormons were smarter than we thought. In any case I remember rolling my own cigarettes and either buying really cheap Vino Fino wine or making Hard Apple Cider in my dorm room to get by during this time.

Finally even with my great cost cutting measures I ran out of money and headed to California to attend school at Cal State Northridge. Since California was still considered a state of residence for me I could go to school there for \$49 a semester for tuition. I worked various construction jobs during that semester including lawn sprinkler installation, hod carrier (plastering with my Uncle Dewey), carpenter and sheet rock hanger. Those jobs all convinced me of the importance of staying in school. Mostly thanks go to my Uncle Dewey who worked my ass (pardon my french) off in order to instill in me the importance of staying in school so that I would not have to work at physical labor my whole life. Thanks for the good lessons.

Anyway, by the end of that spring semester in California I, like Skeeter, was homesick for Malta. So when school was out in the May of 1966, I packed up and headed back to Idaho. My plan was to work on farms through the summer and then attend Idaho State University in the Fall. I will never forget that time. A few days after arriving in town I was told that Jack Pierce was looking for me and wanted to offer me a job. I did not know Jack and, to be honest, I was a bit scared of him. Anyway I found him in town at the gas station. We talked a bit – to me Jack was a man of few words and it was hard for me to figure out what he was thinking – but he offered me a

job and I jumped on it. At this time in my life I had become somewhat of a bum (and did not want to impose my bad habits on Allen and Thelma) so when I first got back from California I lived in my car in the gravel pit west of Malta. But after a short time some migrating gypsies drove me out and Calvin's Edwards folks, Barb and Otis, offered me the chicken coup in their back yard to live in. The only real drawback of the chicken coup was the thousands of flies and a bed that had a serious tilt to it. In the mornings I would spray the whole room with a fly-killer insecticide and when I came home from work I would scrape away all the dead flies. This lasted for a while but one night I stepped over the line and fell asleep on the kitchen floor which resulted in my getting evicted. Made sense to me!

Jack had many interests but I would say his main business was cattle ranching and this was something I knew almost nothing about. I think Jack figured this out pretty quick but he also saw that I was willing to learn and not afraid of work. On a very few occasions I had to be involved in rounding up cattle on my own or he would send me out to move some cows by myself up on black pine mountain. Knowing that this was not my strongest area he would send me with his horse so that at least one of us knew what we were doing. I remember that it was all I could do to hang on when his horse was keeping the cattle from straying while moving through a grain field. If a cow even turned its head Jack's horse would react and the cow would get right back in the pack.

During this period while attending Idaho State and driving back and forth to work at Jack Pierce's ranch (and then later when going to National Guard meetings in Burley), I spent a fair bit of time as one of the notorious "Malta Bums." This gang was a group of guys that included, at one time or another, Gary 'Cactus' Ward (owner of the homestead), Ralph Williams, Billy 'John

Donk' Hutchison, Tommy Wake, Calvin Edwards, me (of course) and probably many others whose name I do not remember. For several years we even had a float in the homecoming parade thanks to cactus coming up with a tractor and trailer. Lots of good times! Two of these guys, Calvin and Ralph were responsible for getting me into the Burley National Guard when I was about to be drafted.

Anyway, it was at about this point that Jack and Mabel offered to let me live in a back room of Jack's parents house and it was much nicer than any of my previous digs that summer. I am not sure what the girls, Ann and Mary, thought about having a bum like me around but I do remember that little Mary really gave me a hard time now and then. Even hid my boots once and I can't remember how long it took me to find them. In any case Jack and Mabel will never know what a major impact their kindness had on the future direction of my life. At the time they gave me a good job, a good place to live and let me eat my meals with them – they were really great to me and besides being a wonderful and thoughtful person, Mabel was a very good cook. At some point I also lived in a camper on their farm/ranch that had been taken off a truck and fixed in the yard. I think this occurred during the vacation periods when I was attending ISU and traveling back and forth. In addition Mabel also arranged with her sister (I am so embarrassed I cannot remember Mabel's sister or mothers names), who lived very close to ISU, for me to rent a room in the basement of her house. There were two bedrooms with two boys in each room. I shared a room with one person whose name I no longer remember and the other room was occupied by Dale Bollingbrook and Brent Tovey (or something like that). I was in my third year of college and this period began a new phase of my life.

For the first time I finally got to be friends with other math students and

faculty. The main faculty were instructors Errol Green and Larry Kratz – two really smart educated guys from which I learned a lot and who had a significant impact on my life. In any case I did okay in school, had more fun with less money than you might think possible. For the first time I was learning that I might have a future outside Malta. I continued to work in Malta on Jack’s ranch in the summers and holidays (and many weekends) but by my senior year I began looking for work in Pocatello. One such job I remember was unloading railroad cars and delivery trucks at Craven warehouse. During that school year, Fred Nye and I roomed together, first in a small duplex south of the downtown in Pocatello. While there I remember one day an old friend Dennis Spawnbauer (I am sure the spelling is wrong), who had lived in Malta but moved to Pocatello, stopped by and said “Hey Dave! I dropped by to have a beer and dinner.” I told him I had no food and no money. He laughed but after checking out our apartment when he came back in the room I was in I noticed a tear had come to his eye. He apologized and he went out and bought a bunch of groceries. That evening we ate like kings. He also bought enough to last us a week or so - Thanks Dennis. The next semester was a wild one. Fred and I moved into a trailer court south of the university. This was a very wild semester but I think it is best not to go into details here. It was a crazy time with a bunch of Oakley wild-men lead by Brian Ward.

As I’ve already mentioned, this was during the Viet Nam war and one day I received a second notice for physical which meant I was about to be inducted. I got it during the summer and after some thought I had about decided to head for Canada when the next major event took place in my life – Calvin Edwards and Ralph Williams managed to convince the Captain of the Burley Idaho National Guard to move me to the top of a very long list and late on a Friday night (so drunk I could hardly stand with Cal and Ralph holding me

up) I was sworn in to the Idaho National Guard.

Of course this meant going to basic and advanced infantry training right along with all the guys headed to Viet Nam. I was off to Fort Dix New Jersey. What a terrible place (my opinion of course). Actually even there I had some good times and met some good guys. In particular this is where I met Jimmy Paul from Atlanta Georgia, who, even though we have lost touch, will remain a friend forever. I understand the importance of military but it was just not for me – I just don't like being told what to do and when to do it.

In any case the time went fast and, just as I finished with advanced infantry training and was preparing to return home, my stepfather died in California and I was released two days early to attend the one and only funeral I have attended up to this point in my life. I really don't like funerals. After the funeral I flew to Salt Lake where Calvin Edwards, Brad Smith and a Barlow boy picked me up. So there I was – in Malta, no money to go back to school, my car had been repossessed while I was gone and it was winter time so not much chance for farm work. Denny Whitaker had heard of my plight and hired me to cut cedar posts up by Elba. Calvin helped me and provided the necessary equipment – chain saws, car, etc. I slept in a sleeping bag on the Edwards garage floor and it was one damn cold winter. Calvin felt so sorry for me that he moved into the garage with me. One night we set a bucket of water on the floor by us and in the morning it was frozen solid. I don't know if Denny Whitaker really needed the posts or if he ever went up and hauled them out but I do thank him for the help. I had to miss a semester of school during that time but next Jim Kimber also offered me a job helping him rail cedars down near Snowville. Things went well with this job until Jim got into trouble with the motel owner (something about his daughter) – the

owner kicked us out. During the summer I worked at the Forest service with Cal (he got me the job) and we lived together in a little trailer on the Forest Service grounds. We had a great time that summer and besides working at the Forest Service, I also hauled hay at night and some weekends. It was about this time that Lindy and Rosella Neddo lent a hand in helping me out in various ways – thanks to them.

By this time I had gotten my car back from the collection agency but it did not run properly. At this point Allen and Thelma gave me some money (allowing me to use the car that did not run and some books I had stupidly been talked into buying as collateral). After selling all my guns – a 30-06, two 22 rifles and a shotgun, I finally had enough money to get back in school and this time Calvin Edwards and Roger Musser (along with Barbara and their first born) decided to give a try as well. We all went to Pocatello, rented a house together and got jobs at Lamb-Weston potato processing plant in American Falls. I worked the swing shift and Calvin and Roger worked the graveyard shift. We both used Calvin's Volkswagen beetle to go back and forth to work.

That was my last semester of undergraduate school. I got my first college degree BS in Mathematics. That had been my main goal when Ray and I headed off the Moscow years before. But having nothing better to do I was talked into going to graduate school in math at ISU. The next semester Roger and Barbara got an apartment of their own and Calvin and I moved back to the basement of Mabel Pierce's sisters house. At this point I finally got my first non-physical labor job – Teaching Assistant (TA) in the mathematics department. Roger and Cal also had left the potato plant by this time and were now working at a truck stop on the way out of Pocatello. There I was a TA in the math department teaching college algebra. So what happens but

the very first semester I walk in the room and see Roger and Calvin signed up for my class. Cal was getting an A in all his classes but Roger was not doing well in my class. After a somewhat heated argument Roger finally decided to drop. With only a few weeks left in the semester Cal decided to quit school and just never went to another class - I went around and dropped his classes for him so he wouldn't get F's. He bought the North Main Radiator Shop which provided him with a great life for many years – mostly fishing, hunting playing golf and having a good time. His passing away on September 12th of 2003 was devastating to me.

During this period I also spent a good deal of time with some rowdy guys that lived or were connected in some way with a house at 936 East Lovejoy in Pocatello. What a house full of so many memories and through which I met a bunch of crazy characters. The names of some of these wild dudes included Jim Lunstrum, Gary Messenger, and Dale Mink. It was also during this time that I hung out some with Tom Wake from Burley but with roots in Malta. I think Tommy still lives in Pocatello and I must stop and see him some time. I somehow have it in mind and now only vaguely recall that I had first met Gary messenger some years before when I went to school in Moscow – I think he was from Declo. I've no idea what ever has happened to these guys but we surely had us some good times.

At about this time Cal, Roger and I sort of went our separate ways hanging out more with different groups of people. I spent more time with my fellow graduate students and faculty in the math department. I still saw Cal a lot and he helped me many times. About this time I met a few other wild and crazy guys to add to the list of Errol Green and Larry Kratz, namely, Roger Johnson, George Parker and Mike Waterman (I should also mention Mike Bates and Dan Carrol). I had a lot of good times with these guys and began

some terrific life long friendships. Since this story is already getting to long I will not go into any details but we really did have some amazing times. Mostly we became somewhat notorious at Buddies Bar. I guess I should mention Lee Lords who saved my ass the time I had not paid my federal income tax for a few years. The government had finally tracked me down and grabbed my checking account. Lee loaned me the money to pay Uncle Sam off and (my good buddy) Tommy Wake's mom helped me get things straightened out at the bank in Burley. Tommy and I also had some very good times like my being the best man at his first wedding – in the back of the church Tommy wanted to sneak out the back door before the marriage but I wouldn't let him. I probably should have since the marriage didn't last long as I recall. Oh! Well! I can't tell every story or we'll be here for ever.

When I finally graduated with my Masters, once again I had no special plans so at the suggestion of Mike Waterman (who was my masters advisor and also played a major role in my life in math) I applied to graduate school again – this time for a PhD. Since I only scored 7th percentile on the verbal part of GRE exams (not even as good as a trained monkey) my choices were somewhat limited. Of course my grades on the math part were good and once again various helped people bailed me out. This time Larry Kratz, who had left the faculty at ISU and returned to the University of Utah (U. of U.) to get his PhD, put in a good word for me. Together with strong letters from the faculty at ISU I was off to the U. of U. and my first “high paying job” as a teaching assistant in math making something like \$3,200 a year.

At first the new income seemed like a lot of money to me and the beer came flowing in – what a deal – what a life. About this time I met my next life long friend in a local beer hall – John Lund. We both began graduate school in math at the university and had never seen each other at school – beer has

a way of bringing people together. He soon had me hooked on playing the “dingers” (another word for pinball machines). By the next summer with no income I was in a bit of a squeeze again when a good friend saved the day. One day I received in the mail a package from George Parker containing a check for several hundred dollars and a planters peanut pencil (which I still have). The note with it just said something like study hard and pass your tests. By the way it is not that George was rich, in fact I think he borrowed the money from a relative. This money allowed me to study for the prelims which I took just before school started in the Fall. Out of 35 people that took the exams only three of us passed all of them. I am still quite proud of this fact. During my second year I lived with the same group of guys from Cedar City in a duplex south of town this time. While there one of the most memorable occasions was the party paid for by John Schulenberger and during whose only whose only request was that we not tell anyone where the money came from for the party – Opps! I just told. I will never forget at the party when John began to get a little friendly with Ulla Taylor and Joe grabbed her off to the side and said “Ulla - you better be careful , he’s not Coles, he means it.” Anyway we did have a very good time and no one got killed.

The third year at the U. of U. began a new era with John (ridgerunner) Lund and a new life long friend (wild) Bill Emerson. Together with the three friends from Cedar City we moved into a house bought by my advisor Hugh Maynard. This became a very well known party location among the faculty and students at the U. In fact several departmental parties were hosted at the “Maynard Hotel.”

I know I seem to focus on money issues a lot but being poor was always a plague of mine and my ability to waste money did not help. This leads to

the story of the time that the University screwed up and overpaid me for a whole semester. Rather than checking it out to make sure it was a mistake I figured what the heck and spent it all. Then the next semester they found their mistake and what a painful experience living on almost nothing. As I recall I borrowed money from John Lund and Bill Emerson both just to pay bills. It was during this year that my mom got shot and almost died. I was contacted by my aunt Rachel who came in from Duschene Utah on a bus at midnight. As soon as she arrived we headed for LA. I drove us straight through to Los Angeles in my clunker Gremlin. This was a very scary ordeal but I must say I have a mighty tough mom – she survived but lost a kidney, part of her spleen and other vital parts.

During this time I also became quite good friends with several faculty at the university - Joe and Ulla Taylor, Don Tucker (who was graduate advisor when I was accepted at the U), Ann and Keith Reed, Hugo and Rickie Rossi, Hugh Maynard and the list goes on and on (Bill Coles, Benny and Gale Rushing, Frank Stenger, Les Glazer, Johann and Iain Raeburn). Certainly my greatest achievement while attending the University of Utah was passing the required 2 language exams on the first try by studying for them by myself for only two weeks each. As far as I know I am the only student in Math at Utah (up to that time) to ever pass both language exams on the first try (German and French) without every successfully taking a language as a student. I know of several others that attempted this after I did but, to my knowledge, none were successful on the first try.

Having no family near by and little money to travel, I began a several year tradition of going from house to house (of friends of course) on Christmas morning with some cheap wine and having a drink with people. By noon I was usually completely wasted. John Lund did this with me a few times

and later, Joe Taylor even went with me once or twice. During holidays we always looked forward to the annual New Years eve party at the Taylor's house. Best I don't get into details about these parties or many of the others at the Maynard hotel. I had some really wild experiences living in Salt Lake City but in order to protect the (not so) innocent, I think it is best not to go into any real details. Suffice it to say that I took 6 years to get my PhD and would probably still be there if they hadn't said I had to go. My most memorable times were the many trips camping in the mountains and trekking through canyon lands , the Uintas and elsewhere – these trips were usually led by Joe and Hugo.

The Maynard hotel finally broke up just before my last year and I took an apartment over a barber shop on 5th (or 6th) south. After I graduated, Hugo Rossi (who was chair at that time) provided me an opportunity stay an extra year so I could work with the John R. Schulenberger who once again was visiting the University for a year. No one I have mentioned so far in this story can stack up to the craziness of J.R.S. who came for a year to visit after spending a few years at a research institute in Venezuela. John helped me make a transition in my research from abstract functional analysis to partial differential equations. Hugo also hired me during the summer for a couple of years after I graduated. These were some fun times in which John Lund and I rented apartments near downtown (where we learned to play tennis) and the “foothill manor” where we had some wild times indeed (so did his brother but we won't get into that since he now a very prominent Doctor).

Another important figure in my life appeared during my last couple of years at the U of U, Chris Byrnes, who came to Utah as an instructor. In reality he was an outstanding mathematician and the last student of a famous American mathematician, Marshall Stone. In any case Chris was several years younger

than I but nevertheless served on my PhD committee (and many years later even introduced me to Marshall Stone – we even went to his house).

When I graduated the job market was tight and I was lucky (thanks again to Hugo Rossi) to get a visiting instructor position at Texas Tech University (TTU). After the first year I was promoted to Assistant Professor (along with 2 other instructors Gary Harris and Wayne Lewis). Thankfully, John Schulenberger carried me in research for several years and we produced many monumental works under the auspices of ANAH Corporation (AN Ass Hole). Alas, if it didn't involve a little humor then JRS didn't want any part of it – that is, with the one exception of mathematics which he took quite seriously. Not long after coming to TTU I began to look around at other places and began applying for jobs elsewhere – University of Nevada Las Vegas (where I was offered a job but I turned it down), University of Texas San Antonio (where I was offered a job but I turned it down), Colorado State (where I was not offered a job), University of Colorado Denver (where I was not offered a job), Utah State (where I was not offered a job). Anyway you get the idea. Then instead of applying for jobs I decided to go on a leave of absence which I also did quite regularly – Arizona State University (twice), Colorado School of Mines, University of Texas at Dallas and Washington University in St. Louis. I should also add that since coming to Lubbock in 1977 the city has changed a lot and so have I – it is now my home and a good place to live. Texas Tech is also a very good institution and I am proud to be a faculty member at Tech – besides academics they play pretty damn good sports as well (sometimes!). In 1984 I was promoted to Associate Professor and in 1990 I was promoted to Full Professor. Over the years I have published well over 100 research articles and given more than 100 talks at conferences. These numbers don't really mean anything special but I include them for the folks that think we only teach. Actually when asked what I do by non-math people

I usually say “I do long division.”

My collaboration with John Schulenberger certainly played a big part in my getting tenured at TTU but not long after that I became more closely associated with Chris Byrnes, once again, who had left Harvard to work at Arizona State. Incidentally, it was I that had first invited Chris to ASU to give a talk during one of my leave of absences when I visited ASU in 1980 – Chris will remember that I taught him how to kick rocks during this sad time in his life). Anyway starting somewhere in the mid 1980’s we began working together and have been working together ever since. In 1989 he moved to Washington University in St. Louis and made me an affiliate professor there. Along the way there have been several other folks that have influenced my life including Jerry Goldstein, Giorgio Picci, Anders Lindquist, Alberto Isidori, John Burns and H.T. Banks all who have supported me and written letters on my behalf over the years. If not for them who knows how things might have turned out. Thankfully they have all become good close friends as well over the years. But as these are more recent times and this story is going on and on I will not go into details of these friendships.

Due in very large part to my association with Chris I have had the opportunity to travel quite extensively (for me) to such exotic places as Italy (many times – Rome, Venice, Florence, Podova), The Netherlands, Germany, Sweden (twice), Austria and Canada (several times). I have turned down many other opportunities and quite honestly I much prefer to stay at home or, if not, then go to the mountains. Two of my greatest recent trips were meeting Ray Barker (and hanging out for a couple of days – wish it had been longer) to attend our 40th class reunion and a summer trip to Utah to help fix fence with Clair Teeter for a few days – not long enough. I also should mention John Burn’s guided tour of Washington DC for Kathleen in 2004. As some

years pass I will elaborate more on the good times with more recent friends since they are not really part of my history yet but more a part of my life now – this story was supposed to be about the things I was worried that I might forget.

You will notice that I have intentionally omitted any reference to girlfriends along the way. Suffice it to say that I did not get married until age 45 at which time I married the sweet heart of my life - (Kathleen) Xiaoning Li Gilliam. And we live happily-ever-after in Lubbock Texas.