

**CHAPTER 8**

**SECTION B**

**ELIZABETH MARIE STEWART BESEMER**

**MY BEAUTIFUL WIFE**



**APRIL 13, 1929 TO APRIL 7 1978**

## CHAPTER 8

### SECTION B

ELIZABETH MARIE STEWART

4/13/1929 - 4/7/1978

When we moved to the country, on Hickory Road, I went to Stuckey Grade School from the 4<sup>th</sup> through the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. This school was on the northwest corner of Douglas and Ironwood Roads. There were at least three grade schools in Clay Township and they all fed into the junior high 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grades at the Washington-Clay high school on Darden Road. None of these specific school buildings that Betty and I attended exist today.



BETTY [ABOUT AGE 4] NORMA AND THEIR MOM

Betty was born on April 13, 1929 and lived in a bungalow at 188 East Brick Road. She attended the Webster Grade School. Her sister Norma was born exactly on the same date three years later. Both of her parents migrated from Wisconsin to South Bend. Her Mother, Elizabeth Hei, came from the Plum City area and her father, Charles Stewart, came from Durand. Her father came to work his trade as a wheelwright at the Studebaker plant initially building wooden wheels for wagons and would eventually become the automobile press room supervisor. They produced two more children, a son Charles and another daughter Carol Ann, all approximately on three year intervals. It is perhaps significant to note that our three children: James, David, and Linda were also born approximately three years apart.



CARROL, CHARLES, NORMA, AND BETTY STEWART

I first saw Betty [Elizabeth Marie Stewart] when I first started attending the 7<sup>th</sup> grade and was immediately attracted to her. [Picture of kids] I made up my mind already then that I wanted to marry her but made no romantic overtures toward her till we were beginning our high school senior year. We were both cast in our junior and senior class plays. She was dating Charlie Helmen and went to the junior prom with him. I took Ruth Kahre and didn't even escort her to her door when I took her home. What an idiot and jerk I was to one of my best and nicest friends! I always claimed that Ruth was the first girl I ever slept with. [We were both about a year old at the time.] In truth, while I certainly was at ease and enjoyed their company, I didn't seriously date very many girls before Betty.



RUTH KAHRE & JIM



CHARLIE HELMEN & BETTY

Pat Blackburn and a few of the other girls in our class would have parties to which Betty and I, along with other classmates, were invited starting in the latter part of our sophomore year and continuing thru our senior years. On several occasions we were paired up for scavenger hunts or other game activities which then became a regular occurrence in our last year of high school. We had started dating in our senior year and Betty went with me to the senior prom in 1946.



My folks, being strongly protestant, knew that Betty was a catholic girl and tried to discourage our dating by putting little problems in front of me on just about every date. I'd get to take the 1938 Plymouth pickup truck on a date if I would first go get some milk [of course, this would always make me late.] There were times that I would ride my bike over to her house when I was refused the use of the car or truck even after I got out of the navy.

The night of our senior prom my Dad gave me the truck even though I'd asked for the car. When I arrived at Betty's house and her Dad, who now was the well respected press room supervisor at Studebakers, saw the truck he said you're not taking my daughter to the prom in a truck; here are the keys to our car [brand new]. Several years later, we bought that car, a green 1947 Studebaker Land Cruiser, and drove it on our honeymoon out West. It was a real pleasure to drive since it was equipped with overdrive and gave very good mileage regardless of what high speed it was driven. Studebaker cars always seemed to give good mileage. It's too bad they went out of business due to mismanagement and union problems in 1964.



STUDEBAKER LANDCRUSER

After we had been at the prom for an hour or so they called my name on the public address system and there was my father somewhat chagrined and sad looking. He tried to hand me the keys to their car and I said thanks but I don't need them because I have the Stewart's car. He apologized to both of us and slipped me a 20 dollar bill. My Dad knew that he had been wrong and to his credit was obviously very sorry for his actions. Things went much smoother after that and Betty was my steady from then on.



HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION - 1946

I had enlisted in the Navy right after high school Graduation and whenever I got leave to come home I spent as much time as I could with Betty. There was no question in my mind that she was the only woman for me for I was totally smitten. She had a swim suit that I really did like and it was my pinup picture in the Navy



MY PINUP GIRL 1946



LAKE MICHIGAN - 1947 NAVY LEAVE

After my discharge from the Service in the summer of 1948, I registered for fall classes at Tri-State College [Now Trine University] in Angola, Indiana. We had classes, a minimum of 4 solids [plus Labs] every day but no weekend classes. With quarterly semesters it was a fast three year schedule to graduation, provided you went through the summer quarter, which I did not except for my senior year. I would come home weekends to see Betty and usually leave to go back to College about midnight on Sunday night from her house. I never got to take the family truck or car back to school and Jim Moore and I had some bad experiences hitch-hiking home together during our first year of College. One time my Dad, unhappily, had to come over to Elkhart to pick us up. In my second year of college I eliminated this travel problem by finally purchasing a used but clean 1941 Dodge coupe. I had a real scare one Sunday midnight as I was returning to college on route #20. I was passing a semi truck when all of a sudden directly in front of me an Amish buggy turned on its lights. I immediately cut in front of the truck and thankfully, in a coordinated effort, the truck driver hit his brakes. I had just missed having a horse and buggy hood ornament. The Amish person was entirely at fault in that they should have had their battery lights on at night. It was a miracle that I didn't hit them. When I came home the following Friday evening there was an Amish buggy completely destroyed in the ditch at the same highway location but on the opposite side of the road.

It was a good time to be in college with so many serious exGI students [90%] who didn't have time to mess around and just wanted to graduate and get into the work force. As fraternity pledges we didn't take a lot of crap either. No beanies! There were only 9 coeds on our campus and they were not beauties but never the less several ended up in a family way.

I pledged a fraternity, Sigma Mu Sigma, and we had semiformal dinner dances at the end of each quarter. Betty came down by bus for the first one and I didn't know that the bus stopped for dinner on the west side of Angola and waited downtown an extra hour for her to arrive. I could have had one of my Fraternity brothers with a car pick her up if I'd known. She stayed in the only hotel downtown and I stayed in my fraternity. They were just a short 3 block walk apart. The dinner dance was not local so we rode in a fraternity brother's car. We walked around the town square the next day, ate lunch and took in a movie before I had to put her on the bus again that evening. However, even after I got out of the Navy, there were always date roadblocks until I purchased the aforementioned 1941 Dodge 3 passenger coupe. It had a huge trunk in which Jim Moore would on occasion ride during the few times when I had other paying riders. With my own car the bus was no longer relevant and I was able to bring Betty to all of the fraternity related activities as they occurred.

I asked Betty to marry me and gave her a ring on Christmas of 1949. Her boss, Mr. Abe Berman, asked me if I would let him procure the ring for Betty, who was his very well liked sales person and loyal bookkeeper ever since she graduated from high school. He assured me it would be top quality. He was pleased to do so and in later years it was appraised at three times the price I paid for it. He was a very kind man who liked Betty a lot and was also very kind in finding part time sales jobs for me during the Christmas season. When Betty showed her father the ring, Charlie came up to me [actually he towered over me for he was taller than I] and wanted to know what the hell I was doing without asking him first. I was quite nervous and didn't know what to reply. Then he laughed and shook my hand and all was well. He was a good guy but cancer took him too soon and he only lived to see one grandchild.

Now the real serious discussions started between Betty and I and it took us a long time to reach an agreement for I was not Catholic and didn't want to convert. We reached a very, very stupid compromise, mostly due to my stubbornness, in that I would agree to get married in the rectory of her Christ the King Catholic Church however our children would be raised in my church, Zion United Church of Christ. In later years, had I realized the anguish and heartache this decision would cause Betty when our children were young and time for first communion arrived, I would never have made such a compromise. The lesson here is when you marry a person you should both go to the same church. It is true that I also was a little more than angry with her priest since at that time [no longer true] us non Catholics could not be married in their church and the real crusher, I had to sign a pledge to raise our children Catholic! I also had to submit myself to 6 one hour weekly lessons on Catholicism and its background with all the mandatory conditions and tribulations presented in the 6<sup>th</sup> and final lesson, on a take it or leave it basis. Our final solution was not very satisfactory especially for Betty since the Catholic religion was so deeply ingrained in her life but I wanted our children to be free to choose the religion they wanted and felt that my signature was nothing more than a means to an end. The result of this effort was that they were all baptized and confirmed protestant and one of our children married catholic, one protestant, and one does not attend church of any particular denomination.



JIM AND BETTY



NORMA, BETTY, JIM & RON

We were married in the rectory the following August 5, 1950 and the very small group included a lovely Tante Marie Arent, Ron Favorit my Navy buddy as best man, Betty's sister Norma Stewart as brides maid and both of our folks. We had our reception outdoors in the Stewart's side yard and Gene Mutzl took photos. We went to Chicago for the night and returned the following evening and began our real honeymoon two weeks later, first visiting her grandmother in Durand, Wisconsin. Then we drove up to Fargo, N.D. to visit Ron, who wasn't home and continued west on to the Badlands, Rapid City, Mount Rushmore, Yellowstone, the Tetons, Salt Lake City, Denver, and all points in between. Near Rapid City we stopped in a park that overlooked a very deep Valley from which Beebe launched his high altitude balloons and where a very beautiful large orange colored cat slowly approached us. I picked it up and petted it. It was much larger and heavier than a domestic cat and didn't purr. It had wisps coming out of the tips of its rounded ears and was really a very beautiful large cat. A little later another car drove up and a dog barked. There was no way that I could continue holding that cat in my arms and it took off like a shot. I did not realize until later that I had been holding a real beautiful wildcat. We later continued on after visiting the Devils Tower with its adjacent fields of prairie dogs and entered Yellow Stone Park after encountering every type weather condition possible coming thru the high pass and broke out into sunshine as we entered through the Eastern route. We continued thru to the west side and stayed overnight in a cabin just outside the western edge of the Park. We toured the Park the next few days and watched old faithful spout off and visited the beautiful blue morning glory pool with vents of steam along side the wooden pathway as we walked to and from it. There were a number of black as well as brown bears wandering about with signs posted all over the park cautioning everyone not to feed them which a number of people totally ignored. We stopped to watch and unexpectedly a huge brown bear came right up to our open right front car window and put its head into the car. Luckily Betty was in the back seat at the time unpacking our lunch. I yelled at her to give me a sandwich which I tossed into the bear's mouth and when it dropped down to get the crusts we sped quickly away. That's what happens when you ignore warning signs. We then continued out the south entrance to Jackson Hole



stopping to photograph the spectacular Teton Mountains and the lake before continuing on toward Salt Lake City. As we approached the pass high above the city and the Great Salt Lake came into view we encountered the Mormon monument identifying “This is the place” from which the original Mormon pioneers coming thru the pass viewed and made the decision to settle in the salt lake area.



THE MORMON THIS IS THE PLACE MONUMENT

We headed for home after spending a day exploring the area. At the outskirts of Salt Lake City we picked up two young San Diego based sailors from Detroit who were hitch hiking home on leave. I dropped Betty off at our Denver motel and then took them to the eastern outskirts of Denver. The next morning there was a knock on our door and the sailors declared that they were taking us out for breakfast. They had met two girls that had picked them up, offered them a place to sleep, and gave them the use of their car. We were not sure if they ever made it all the way home.

That September I went back to college and moved into the fraternity while Betty went back to work at Berman’s Sport Shop. By December we decided that we really wanted to be together full time as husband and wife so we found a nice upstairs apartment for \$50/month and by January 1st were living a block from campus. Betty got a full time job in the cafeteria as cashier and everyone on campus knew she was my wife. I worked part time between classes as a dishwasher. With mostly G.I. students on campus the times were good even if I took a lot of flack about how did such an ugly guy like me get such a beautiful wife?

My senior year was one of our happiest as witness the fact that we were living together at last. Betty quickly became pregnant sometime in January, stayed in the apartment through June, got

her wives college degree, and went back home to stay with her folks in mid July while I finished up and became an August graduate.

I moved back into the fraternity, worked nights at the foundry in Coldwater, MI. shaking out castings throughout the summer, coming home to the Stewarts and my wife on midnight Friday after work finally graduating in late August of 1951. My engineering job at Bendix was waiting and I started the first of September. Our first child, James Jonathan, was born October 1, 1951 and my first Bendix pay check was used to pay Betty and my son's hospital bill. My starting salary was \$225/month. We were still living with her folks at the time.



4733 WEST SAMPLE STREET

We moved into our first home [a two bedroom cape cod] a few weeks later after having secured a GI loan at 4% with payments of \$84/month. Betty was household book-keeper and thanks to her we survived. We had \$3000 budgeted for furnishings and with our wedding gifts made it do. Our folks both loaned us enough money to make a down payment on our first house at 4733 West Sample Street where we lived till we moved to Connecticut in 1964. My mother insisted that I sign a paper for the loan while the Stewarts cashed in some bonds and never required any kind of note or even a handshake. This kind of upset me and I resolved to and did pay back the Stewarts first. Mother said that she was just protecting my sister Rosemarie. The "poor Rosie" syndrome began then and went on for years. My folks could not grasp the fact till years later that after college graduation Rick and I started at a salary equal to or higher than what my father made as a very skilled tool and die maker.

My folks would always willingly loan me money without interest when things got a little tight but I always had to sign for it, so I would only borrow when there was no other choice. Years later, I bought a Ford car and took out a loan from the Ford Motor Company, when my father found out he was very upset because I had not borrowed the money interest free from him. He finally persuaded me to borrow from them and agreed that I would not have to sign a paper. However sometime later mother went into her hang dog look and after several months of her verbal pressure, I finally agreed to sign a paper. I believe my mother's money attitude stems from her very frugal upbringing and is why my Dad never bought the right full size riding tractor and equipment that he needed for farming. He nearly broke his back farming our 4 acres of land with his walk behind, sometimes having to push, 4 horse power Sears Handyman tractor.

We had two more children: David Charles on August 18, 1954 and Linda Marie on March 2, 1957. A subsequent forth attempt a few years later resulted in a difficult miscarriage for Betty that scared the hell out of me and we both decided it was best that I have a vasectomy.

I had told my children that if they wanted to go to college they had to pay for their first semester as proof that they really wanted to obtain a college education and they, of course, did. James became a Software Engineer majoring in computer functions, David a Chemist, and Linda, after a few tough years, a successful Artist and Occidental College professor. Betty and I were equally and truly proud of all three of our children and their accomplishments.

### HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION PICTURES



JAMES JONATHAN  
1951



DAVID CHARLES  
1954



LINDA MARIE  
1957

We had finished out the upstairs into two bedrooms and a storage room with desks and bunks built in and a large ceiling fan. The boys shared a bedroom together while Linda had her own room. She was reluctant to take naps and Betty would lie down with her to get her to sleep. Unfortunately, Betty would fall asleep and Linda would open her upstairs window and climb down the TV mast and go play returning later by the same route to lie beside her still sleeping mother.

I soon became deeply involved with the Nerva program [a rotary actuator to control an atomic pile] where I ended up spending almost a year traveling back and forth on a weekly basis to our Detroit corporate design facility while leaving Betty alone to take care of all things, both domestic and otherwise, at home during the week. She never ever complained but it was very obviously an additional burden for her. I wore out our 1957 Dodge auto driving back and forth Mondays and Fridays for 8 cents/mile when I didn't choose to use the airlines.

Shortly after I started at Bendix we formed a lifetime friendship with Bob and JoEllen Riggs. At one time they even rented the house right next door to us before purchasing one of their own. On occasion Betty and JoEllen would take the morning South Shore Railway to Chicago to shop while Bob and I would drive up after work, park in the downtown underground garage, meeting our wives at the "Top of the Rocks" bar [Top floor in the Prudential Building] and either go out

to a stage play, if the gals had purchased some tickets, or eat in a fine restaurant and on a few occasions both before coming home.

We had a great time together when they later came out to Connecticut and stayed with us for a while. When I could get away we would travel around together in separate cars and the children split up with girls in one and boys in the other. The nine of us toured around and drove up to the top of Mount Washington crowded into our station wagon thru thick fog with everyone leaning to the left of the car so as not to fall over the edge. We parked in the lot at the top but could not see a thing. It was totally fogged in. There is a cog railway train that travels up and down the mountain just arriving and by following the sounds of its puffing and whistle we were able to find the lodge at the top where I purchased this post card so that we would at least know where we had been. P&WA had an engine test stand up there but we never even had a chance to see it. Had it been a clear day we would have been able to see all the adjoining states.



MOUNT WASHINGTON CREST WITH LODGE AND COG RAILWAY TRAIN

While the children were still young, we became quite interested in camping; initially with a fold out Nimrod camper and a separate cook tent. Our favorite campground was at the Ludington State Park in Michigan. Those were the days when no one worried about security. Betty once left her purse on our picnic table and we returned several hours later from the beach to find it still sitting there untouched. That changed in later years and you had to be a little more concerned about security. We eventually bought a solid 15 foot Smokey camping trailer and visited a number of different camping areas mostly in upper and lower Michigan. One time we camped on the shore at the North base of the huge bridge connecting the two. The Hofferberts joined us on several occasions and we had a great time together.

I always was interested in photography and had become a member of the South Bend camera club with Gene Mutzl as advisor. I had set up a small dark room under the basement stairway and an area in the basement complete with backdrop. Betty was my willing and patient model

who posed for a great number of photos most of which are no longer available. I loved to take and develop pictures especially of her.

We sold our home on Sample Street and moved to Connecticut in the summer of 1964 when I took an assignment as the Bendix Engineering Representative at Pratt & Whitney Aircraft jet engine plant in East Hartford.



LEAVING FOR EAST HARTFORD, CN.

We were immediately socially accepted by their engineers who were a real party group and spent a total of 3 years on this particular assignment that initially was only supposed to be two years. However, Betty had a near nervous breakdown diagnosed as extreme nervous exhaustion as we neared the end of the 2 years initially agreed upon. This was due to the pressures that were put on my beautiful wife while I worked as much as 14 hour days covering both the engineering and production areas in the PWA plant, leaving her with total responsibility for everything at home including occasional house guests that were sometimes a very unhelpful strain. When we returned home for a visit she had not slept for several nights and when we finally got her tranquilized and recovering, thanks to my sister in law, Pat Stewart, [Betty slept for two days] the doctor strongly recommended that there be no immediate change in her environment. Thus, with my supervisor's concurrence, we remained there for another extra year. I received two Bendix technicians to eliminate all my production responsibilities allowing me to restrict myself to an eight hour day or less and just basic engineering activities. It was a long overdue wakeup call for me and I finally realized that I needed to start paying a lot more attention to my wife and family. No job was worth the pressure and stress that Betty had been forced to endure [without complaint] throughout my engineering career. I was so busy trying to be a good engineer that I had totally ignored my basic family obligations.



COVERED BRIDGE CONNECTICUT



WASHINGTON D.C.

I now had a much reduced work load and we began enjoying life as a family making longer trips about the country side, visiting places like Sturbridge Village [A colonial restoration] and even Boston where we purchased round loaves of warm Italian bread from a bakery behind the old North Church. We visited Rose and Rick more often in Williamstown and later in Ithaca, NY where we sampled the product of numerous wineries along the Finger Lakes. We also traveled much more extensively in the third year spending several days visiting such places like Washington D.C. [during cherry blossom time], the Worlds Fair in New York City, Bar Harbor and Acadia National Park in Maine, and continued visiting Sturbridge Village just a half hour drive north of our home where we had a supporting membership. On distant trips we stayed in local motels as we traveled leisurely taking in all the sights of interest along the way.

In the summer of 1967, on one of my last business trips back to our South Bend plant, JoEllen Riggs called me to let me know that a four bedroom trilevel house was for sale in the Wedgewood Park area just 5 houses away from where they lived, and suggested I look into it. I did and took pictures of it to show Betty on my return to Connecticut. I purchased the home with Betty's approval even though she did not get to see it in person before we moved into it a few months later. I was much relieved to see that Betty was not disappointed when she actually saw it and our children were pleased to have their own individual bedrooms at last.

During our first year in Connecticut, our neighbor who was a Lutheran minister invited us to attend his beautiful A-frame church located only about a half mile away on a hill overlooking the entire valley. Betty embraced this church saying that she could readily accept it and we attended church as a family regularly thereafter. Jim was confirmed in this same church. When we returned to South Bend Betty and Jim were readily accepted into Zion church which we thereafter also attended as a family and in which both David and Linda were later confirmed. Betty became deeply involved in a number of church activities including making bandages for cancer patients.

Life in our new home returned to normal and I was assigned to the engineering group with responsibility for the CJ-B6 gas generator fuel control used on the PWA TF-30 jet engine. Betty and I again became part of our old social group and attended the parties and the occasional dances sponsored by the Engineers Club. I also became involved with the Bendix Management club. We continued to go camping in our Nimrod foldout travel trailer and eventually purchased

a solid Smokey travel trailer which we used for several years until our children became more interested in other things and we finally sold it.



OUR NIMROD CAMPING TRAILER WITH HEIDE GUARDING IT



SMOKEY TRAILER WITH COOK TENT

On our last family camping experience I bought Betty the tiniest white bikini I could find which she reluctantly wore a few times just to please me. She was still my pinup girl at age 40.



STILL MY BEAUTIFUL PINUP

Betty and JoEllen also resumed their close friendship and occasional trips to Chicago. Several years later these outings no longer became a possibility when JoEllen unexpectedly passed away one night due to a brain aneurism. We tried to socialize and stay involved with Bob as much as we could thereafter.

In October of 1976 Betty, who had not been feeling well, during the process of having a hysterectomy she was diagnosed with ovarian cancer. When her obstetrician told me this very terrible news while Betty was still in recovery I was completely stunned and dissolved into tears. Seeking solace and hope I immediately drove to our family doctors office [Dr Ben Biasine in Roseland] and burst in without an appointment. He was a very kind man and had me sit in his office for a few minutes till he was finished with his current patient. He then sat down with me and we then talked about the disease and when I asked about life expectancy he said that past statistics have indicated Betty would probably live for 18 to 24 months. I said to him what in the world can I do? He very wisely replied you will love her as long as you can. Her OB doctor broke the news to Betty for I could not. When we talked about it day or two later she said she knew right away there was a problem since I had made no immediate comment right after her hysterectomy. She always knew what I was thinking. I had just recently been elected president of the Bendix Management Club and with this bad news was planning to resign to spend more time with Betty but she would have none of that. Betty was determined to beat this disease and she maintained this very brave attitude right up till she died in my arms.

Her illness obviously affected my work and Bendix gave me unlimited time off without question thru the entire time that she survived. I remained as president for the remainder of my term which concluded on Ladies night in June of 1997. As was the custom the outgoing presidents' wife was presented with a bouquet of flowers. I made a short and quite emotional speech about



my love for her and her bravery and kissed her as she held the flowers to a standing ovation from all 400 members and their wives. I'd unthinkingly worn that loud jacket to work that day and had no thought to change into something a little more dignified. Thank God this picture is not available in color.



LADIES NIGHT JUNE 1977

Work was difficult during this time period but we had agreed to travel while seeking treatment locally since she had confidence in her cancer doctor. I did not share this confidence for I thought that he was quite unconcerned about my needs when he very reluctantly agreed to talk to me just one time before starting treatment and said thereafter I could get all further information directly from my wife. Betty remained very determined to beat the disease and lived as normal a life as she could. We agreed to spend our future time together traveling between scheduled chemo treatments that were 3 weeks apart and immediately spent a couple weeks with Norma and Jerry in San Diego, California. We made a trip together south along the west coast down into Mexico together and when we returned to South Bend her cancer doctor inquired if we had tried Laetrile while we were there which we had not. A month later we spent the Christmas 12 day plant shutdown in our travel trailer on Florida's east coast. Linda was able to join us for part of the time and then took a train back to Indiana University. We stayed a few days longer before starting back home. In the summer of 1977 we took the whole family to Germany and visited all of our relatives. Language was not a problem and they totally embraced us and made us feel very welcome. Their kindness was almost overwhelming [my cousin Walter in particular] and they showed us many beautiful portions of their country. Rick had made arrangements for us to stay in a German doctor's two story mansion [complete with an elevator and an outdoor swimming pool] in the city of Manheim where he was teaching at the university. We used it as a base and visited the relatives from there.



HEIDELBERG CASTLE

We visited the nearby Heidelberg castle and while exploring about the courtyard we discovered that they were having an outdoor dress rehearsal of the Student Prince in English which became an exciting and outstanding surprise.

Our relatives let us know they were very grateful for the Red Cross food packages that contained peanut butter and other nonperishable foods my folks were allowed to send them after the war for they were quite destitute at that time and needed them to survive. They treated us like royalty.

All the German people we met were very friendly and a number of them could speak some English. Since English is taught in school the young people all were capable of speaking it. Linda was very much interested in art so the kids, Mark, Jim, Dave, & Linda took off together to visit Italy while we continued to visit and tour with our relatives. My cousin Walter and his wife Mia were our chief escorts and they took us down to the Boden Sea [Lake Constance] and the Rhine falls which flows out of Lake Constance and is the origin of the Rhine River. We had lunch in a restaurant located there and later watched lake activity that continued through out the afternoon and into the evening. We were seated on the shore adjacent to the Rhine Falls. The American black knights provide a parachute demonstration complete with smoke trails emanating from containers fastened to their feet landing in the water directly in front of us as well as an air show featuring the French national air force team [comparable to our Blue Angels] that was somewhat limited due to the low cloud ceiling. The lake itself is quite large with

numerous cities about its periphery and good size cruise ships navigating on it even though they are unable to escape beyond the boundaries of the lake itself.



RHINE FALLS OUT OF BODENSEE-THE BEGINNING OF THE RHINE RIVER

There was a fantastic one hour fireworks display early that evening emanating in sequence from three cities located on the Boden Sea complete with the smell of knockwurst and beer. At the conclusion of the ceremonies they had a huge spectacular candle light display on the water with candles in hundreds of paper cups of different colors all floating toward and over these falls.

We toured two of the beautiful castles constructed by mad King Ludwig called Neui Schwanstien and Linderhof.

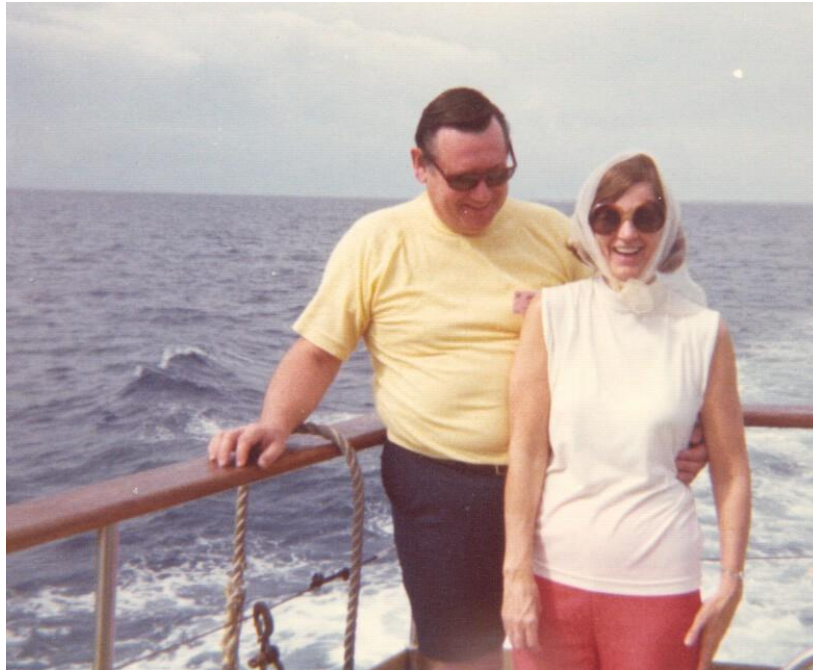


NEUI SCHWANSTIEN



LINDERHOF

After our return home we settled in for some quiet time socializing with our friends and just relaxing. In December we spent the Christmas and New Year holidays touring the Hawaiian Islands Maui, Oahu, Hawaii, and Kauai together.

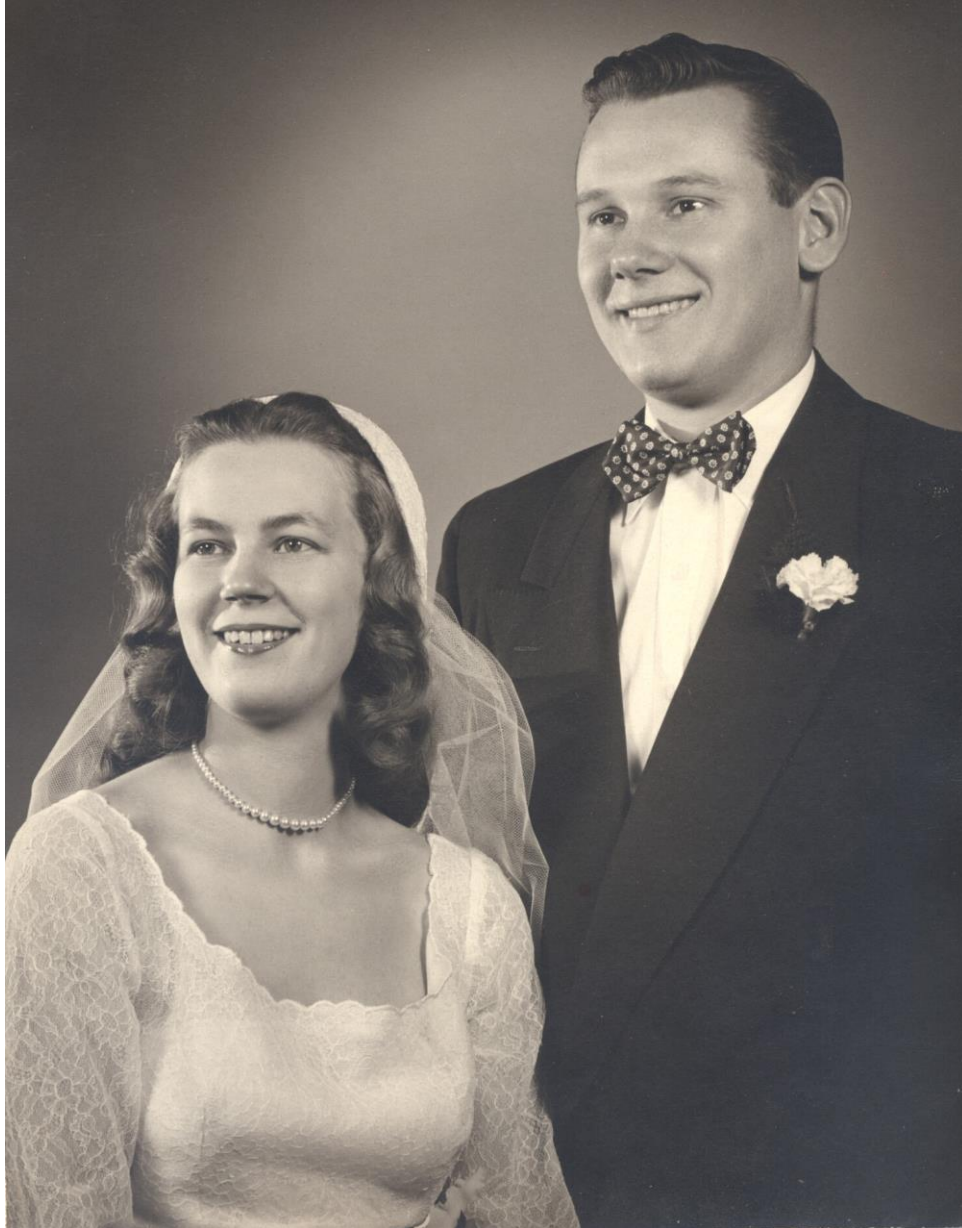


KONA COAST OFF THE BIG ISLAND HAWAII

In late January of 1978 Betty said that she had enough traveling and would rather just stay at home. We went to an engineering dance in late February and she was the life of the party. Unfortunately she was then hospitalized in early March. We lost her on April 7<sup>th</sup> just 6 days before her 48<sup>th</sup> birthday and almost 18 months to the day, with both Linda and I at her side. She loved babies [she called them new life] and children but never lived to see any of her very own grandchildren. After we lost her I pretty much buried myself in my work but still missed her terribly. It was most difficult going to our empty king size bed at night knowing that my very beautiful wife would never be beside me again. Inside, at the funeral home viewing, [closed casket with a picture of Betty on top] one individual who shall remain nameless, approached me and remarked that it was too bad we didn't try laetrile for it would have saved her. This same individual died within a year or so later of cancer. Laetrile was later proven to be a very rich Mexican doctor's scam. After the viewing as I was aimlessly standing outside Linda approached me and asked what I was doing. I replied; waiting for your mother. My mind just could not accept that Betty was gone. The funeral memorial service at our Zion church, just as at the viewing, was packed. I was totally amazed at the number of my fellow workers and their wives that were in attendance and very grateful to my brother-in-law for writing the beautiful eulogy that was read by our pastor during the memorial service. Linda, in her own way of dealing with the frustration over the loss of her mother, did a number of paintings that I just could not look at or forget without bursting into tears. I do remember one painting in particular that portrayed our family group, including pets; all gathered in front of the TV with Betty standing on the adjacent stairway and it was entitled "I'll be going upstairs now." There is no question in any of our minds that she truly was upstairs with God. Betty was most certainly a beautiful woman both

inwardly and outwardly and an excellent wife and mother who had a great love for family and all children as well as her own which was reflected throughout her entire life. Our own children totally confided in her on all matters big and small. She was very slow to anger and infinitely patient with our families and her husband. The patience she had with her husband surely qualified her for sainthood. Her death was a great loss for we all loved her very much. I am grateful to God for her life and all of the exceedingly short number of years that I was privileged to love and be with her. I am sure that the words in this text are inadequate in expressing how much this lovely woman meant to our whole family and to the guy she married.

A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN AND A VERY LUCKY GUY



AUGUST 5, 1950